

Six Essential Characteristics of Types

1. There must be one or more points of resemblance between the type and the antitype (Col. 2:14-17; Heb. 10:1).

2. The type must be prophetic in all points of resemblance with the antitype. It must truly prefigure something to come (Jn. 3:14; Rom. 5:14; Col. 2:14-17; Heb. 8:5; 9:23-24; 10:1; 1 Pet. 3:21).

3. The type is merely the shadow of the realities to come, not the realities typified (Col. 2:14-17; Heb. 8:5; 10:1).

4. The type is always earthly while the antitype could be earthly or heavenly (Heb. 8:5; 9:24; 1 Pet. 3:21).

5. Since both type and antitype must be preordained as part of the same plan of God, they cannot be chosen by man, picked out simply because certain details resemble some future truth (Rom. 5:14; Heb. 9:23-24; 10:1-21).

6. The only authority for types and their application is Scripture. More than a mere resemblance is needed to constitute a type. In true typology no meaning should be accepted without positive scriptural support. Historical events that bear some resemblance to N.T. truths should not be taken as true types unless substantiated by two or three plain passages proving a connection (2 Cor. 13:1). This would require at least a plain scripture on the antitype as well as the type.

A genuine type is a true figure or shadow of the reality to come—the antitype (Jn. 3:14; Rom. 5:14; Heb. 9:23-24; 10:1; 1 Pet. 3:21). Centuries or even millenniums may lie between them but the shadow is never lost and the figure is never destroyed. The fulfillment or reality always comes. Furthermore, a type has its own meaning apart from the antitype (Jn. 3:14 with Num. 21). The details of a type (as with parables, allegories, and symbols) are not to be stressed; nor are they to be interpreted apart from the antitype; only the intended truth should be emphasized.