

## **TOPIC VI.**

### **THE OLD AND NEW COVENANTS**

#### **INTRODUCTION: LOOKING AT THE PROBLEM.**

From the beginning of the spread of the gospel in the New Testament to this very day there has been ignorance about the provisions of the New Covenant as opposed to the Old Covenant. The apostle Paul in one of his earliest epistles said it this way,

"I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!" Galatians 1:6-8

Paul faced the distortion immediately in his ministry and this distortion still exists today in nearly all the churches on the planet. It is simply this problem: the failure to distinguish between the provisions of the Old Covenant and the New. In asking the simple question to pastors and teachers of all stripes and levels, "When did the Old Covenant cease to be in effect and the New Covenant take effect?" They are not only unable to answer the question but object to the idea that the Old Covenant has ceased to be in effect. Yet we will see that Biblically this is indeed the case and that this study is the about most important topic the Christian can ever absorb and understand.

The reason for this controversy is that the church has been is clogged with theological doctrines developed by, absorbed by and taught by theologians, institutions and priests, pastors and teachers for over two thousand years since Paul objected to the very same doctrines taught this very day that ceaselessly confuse and disturb Christians.

The Old Covenant, as defined by the apostle Paul is simply the totality of the laws, covenants, commandments, regulations, stipulations, ordinances and requirements

delineated in the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup> He rightly defines the law as, "...holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good."<sup>2</sup> However, this is the same law and commandment he states brings death to all for all have sinned against the law and the holiness of it and of God.<sup>3</sup> Because it is holy, righteous and good, it stands in stark contrast to our unholiness, unrighteousness and lack of goodness and condemns it. It is this law, every letter of it and even of the ten-commandments that imposes death. It condemns and kills.<sup>4</sup> The wages of sin is death. All have sinned. Death is the sentence for all humanity under the law. This is the sentence even for those who attempt to keep the law. Even if they keep it in terms of the outward requirement, Jesus is clear that this is a spiritual matter of the heart as well. He said,

"You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell." (Matthew 5:21-22)

And,

"You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Matthew 5:27-28<sup>5</sup>

Both murder and adultery were a violation of the law and subject to the death penalty. And, according to Jesus, even harboring these thoughts in one's heart is a violation of the Law of God because this is where the root of the problem lies. Under the Old Covenant, God instituted a sacrificial system as a temporary substitute to pay for the sins committed,<sup>6</sup> and it required the death of the sacrifice. But this was both temporary and inadequate for the salvation of people. This was

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<sup>1</sup> II Corinthians 3:5-14;

<sup>2</sup> Romans 7:4-12.

<sup>3</sup> Romans 7:1-11;

<sup>4</sup> Romans 3:23, 6:21-23; II Corinthians 3:5-9.

<sup>5</sup> And, in contrast to the concern over the dietary laws, Jesus said, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man." Mark 7:20-23

<sup>6</sup> Except when death was mandated for a crime.

apart from sins that would result in the death of the offender.  
Hebrews 10:1-4 states,

"For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."

But what if there could be a sacrifice offered on the altar of the Temple potent enough to obliterate the sins of all the people of the world for all time? The law would then lose its purpose because it could not reveal or condemn sin and thus the need for repentance and a sacrifice would be abolished. No further sacrifice would be necessary and thus there would be no point for the law. But, if such a sacrifice took place, releasing people from responsibility and accountability for their sins, but the nature of people was not changed, the world would be filled with evil to the point of destruction of the human race. Hence, the Old Covenant, as the writer of Hebrews points out, can never, "make perfect those who draw near" or "take away sins."<sup>7</sup> In a recent T.V. program, a western, a lead character said after a shootout, "Unless you can change human nature, this will always take place."

The question is then, did Jesus' death on the cross accomplish all of this or was it only a partial solution leaving the remainder for people to work out? Here is where the church generally fails in its understanding of the provisions of the New Covenant and the finished work of Christ.

For example, from the church we hear, on the one hand, that Jesus died on the cross to pay for the penalty we deserve for our sins. On the other hand we hear that if we sin we move out of fellowship with God until we repent and get right with Him. On the one hand we are told that Jesus' death also brought forgiveness for our sins once and for all. On the other hand we are told that our sins will not be forgiven if, 1: We do not confess them to God (with the I John 1:9 "support") to a priest in the confessional, or if we do not forgive others (Matthew 6:14-15). Then we are told that we are no longer under the law but under grace and then told we must tithe and if we don't we will not be eligible for God's blessing and are in

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<sup>7</sup> Hebrews 10:1,4.

danger of being cursed. Then we are told we are saved but also subject to losing our salvation. And the list goes on and on.

So the Christian hears, "You are forgiven and saved by faith in Christ." Now, to continue in that state here are things you must do...." So our initial salvation is by grace, but to sustain it we must do it by works. These works are often under the direction of the Law. But since no one can keep the Law as God intended, we are in a constant state of apprehension as to whether we are really saved or not. Then we hear and read of "freedom" in Christ yet many are in bondage.

Here is the reason: Mix together life in Christ with death in the Law; hope in Christ with fear under the Law, peace in Christ with struggle to be righteous under the law, joy in Christ with discouragement under the Law and what do you think you get in the life of the Christian? A member of our study group answered and said, "Schizophrenia." One has to wonder what on earth Jesus wasted His time going to the cross to accomplish.

Yet the church glibly teaches the "Finished Work of Christ." Well, what was finished? And for how long? Was anything actually finished? When Jesus said, "It is finished" What did He mean? Maybe it was just a hoax or He erred because He was in such pain. Well apparently, based on what I keep hearing, basically what He "finished" was nothing. Oh, maybe the "ceremonial law" was fulfilled, but not the "moral law." Where is that in Scripture? Maybe we could find out at mass or in the "confessional" where we confess our sins and are given penance and then have to come back and do it again and again. Or if we give enough money we can get a blessing or a prayer answered by God. My friend Bill Tongue calls all of this, "The Confession and Forgiveness Industry." Yeah, the finished work of Christ. Right! What is the real difference between what the churches teach about this and Judaism? Something is desperately wrong!!!!

I call the result of all this the disastrous "d's;" Discouragement, disillusionment, distress, disappointment, dismay, depression, disenchantment, disaster, defeat and death to everything we are supposed to enjoy in Christ. "C"onfusion is not only the letter that come before "D" but the least of the problems, yet the door to letting them all in. I know Christians right now who are in the throes of this but refuse to believe that they are in error in their thinking. And they are miserable. But somehow fear that if they believe something different they will certainly be damned. I love this "grace" taught in the churches.

I'll never forget one new believer who asked me, "Before I was a Christian God loved me. Now that I am a Christian He doesn't love me anymore. Why?" My answer was simple. "Because you went to church." Sorry, but there it is.

One thing that has happened is that the church does not want to appear to disrespect the Old Testament and the Ten Commandments. So, rather than understand the purpose for the Law, it includes it within the Christian life so as not to be accused of ignoring it. Those who set it aside totally are called antinomians (against the Law) and were criticized or persecuted by the church. Still are today. But the problem comes in grasping the proper place and purpose for the Law. Here is the matter at hand. As I said above, the Law stands as God's standard of holiness, righteousness and goodness and it stands firmly against and shines a spotlight upon our unholiness, unrighteousness and lack of goodness. The proper response to this is found in Luke 18:9-14 and demonstrates what the purpose of the Law is intended to be.

9: And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: 10: "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11: "The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12: 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' 13: "But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' 14: "I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

## **EXAMINING THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE OLD COVENANT**

The "Old Covenant" refers to, "The Law of Moses", The Old Testament", "The Law", "The Law of God", The Law of The Lord", "The Commandments", "The Works of The Law", The Statutes, Judgments, Ordinances", etc.- see Psalm 119:1-8.<sup>8</sup>

The initial purpose of the Law was to give the people of Israel a clear sense of their identity with themselves, their relationship with God, their community and with others<sup>9</sup> as well as their purpose as a people in this world. This purpose included that the nation and people of Israel would be the agency of God's blessing to the world.<sup>10</sup> Further, it was a clear statement of the might, holiness and righteousness of God and with it carried the very clear contrast to the unrighteousness and sinfulness of man. Thus it should have motivated one to seek mercy and grace.

However, the people of Israel distorted everything God had said and, 1. Used the law as a means of self-righteousness rather than a mirror of their own unrighteousness and need of mercy and, 2. Rather than become inclusive to the world and share the blessings of God and His truth with the world, became exclusive, essentially denying all others from God and His blessings. This attitude continues to this day. Knowing this would occur, God preplanned for Jesus to come into the world to complete the mission the Jews failed to complete. Yet, at the same time, they inadvertently brought forth the Messiah who would complete and fulfill the work they were supposed to do.

Now, the essence of the Law, whether kept or violated is found in Deuteronomy, chapters 27-30. The consequences of either breaking or keeping the covenant are essentially earthly and temporal. The only stipulation is that the unbelieving, disobedient and unrepentant will suffer eternal damnation as well.

So, let's look at some of the definitions and provisions regarding the Old Covenant (or the Law).

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<sup>8</sup> The general format of covenants and the covenants with Noah, Abraham and the Sinai covenant are discussed in the appendix.

<sup>9</sup> These are summarized in the Ten Commandments.

<sup>10</sup> See: Genesis 12:3; 26:4; 28:14; Psalm 72:17; Jeremiah 4:1-2, 11:1-4, etc.

A. The nature of the Law (Old Covenant) as viewed from both Old and New Testament teachings. 1. Psalm 19:7-8, "The Law of The Lord is perfect." 2. Deuteronomy 4:8, "Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole Law...." 3. Romans 7:12, "So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good." 4. Romans 7:14, "For we know that the Law is spiritual....". 5. I Timothy 1:8, "But we know that the Law is good." 6. Luke 2:22-23, it is "The Law of Moses" and "The Law of The Lord."

B. The Purpose of The Law (Old Covenant): Romans 3:19-20, 5:19-21, 7:7-13; I Corinthians 15:56; II Corinthians 3:5-9; Galatians 3:10,17-25.

C. The breaking of the law defined as sin: Nehemiah 9:29; Isaiah 42:24; Jeremiah 44:23; Zechariah 7:9-12; Romans 4:15, 5:12-13; I John 3:4.

D. The penalty when the law is broken: Leviticus 26:14-18 ff.; Deuteronomy 8:19-20; 28:15-68; II Kings 17:13-20; Isaiah 24:1-6; Jeremiah 11:1-5, 16:11-13; Ezekiel 5:5-17; Galatians 3:10.

E. The penalty for sin: (includes spiritual ramifications): Exodus 32:33; Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 1:32, 3:23, 6:21-23; II Peter 2:4-10; Hebrews 9:16-22.

F. The remedy or cure for sin is not found in the sacrificial system and there is no remedy in the Old Testament in terms of what people can do that ultimately removes sin from a person. So, we have :

1. Under the Old Covenant: Isaiah 1:10-15; Amos 5:21-22; Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 10:1-4; 10:11; Hebrews 7:18-19.

2. Under the New Covenant: John 1:29; I John 3:5; Romans 6:6-7; Colossians 2:13-14; Hebrews 9:24-28; Hebrews 7:26-27; Hebrews 10:11-18.

G. The works of the Law (flesh) and justification<sup>11</sup>: Galatians 2:16, 21, 3:1-5, 5:2-4; Romans 3:19-24, 28, 4:16, 7:1-6, 8:1-4; Philippians 3:1-9.

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<sup>11</sup> "Justification" under the New Covenant means that the sinner is now declared to have had no sin, has never sinned and will never be found to have sinned ever again. He is now found to be righteous by divine verdict due to his complete faith in Jesus Christ. The Greek for "justification" and "righteousness" is from the same root word.

H. The Law is temporary. Galatians 3:16-19; Ephesians 2:14-16;  
Colossians 2:13-17; Hebrews 8:13, 10:5-9.

I. The weakness of the Law: Acts 13:38-39; Romans 8:1-5; Galatians  
2:15-16, 3:11, Hebrews 8:6-7.

J. The Christian's relationship to the Law. Romans 6:14, 7:4-6, 8:1-2  
Galatians 2:21, 3:21-25, 4:21-5:1; 5:18.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Other verses already cited reference this as well.



## **EXAMINING THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE NEW COVENANT**

In the first chapter of his gospel John says, "For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ." 1:16-17

Paul says it this way to Titus, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds." 2:11-14

The coming of the New Covenant was announced in the writings of the Prophet Jeremiah and others some 600 years before Christ. And so, 600 years later, Jesus sat with His disciples at the "last supper" and, "while they were eating, Jesus took *some* bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to his disciples, and said, "take, eat; this is My body." And when he had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it all of you, for this my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26:26-28) Luke's rendering is, "...this cup which is poured out for you is the New Covenant in my blood." Paul repeats the phrase in 1st Corinthians 11:25..."This cup is the New Covenant in My blood". It was at this moment that Jesus announced that The New Covenant would be instituted in His blood on the cross. At that moment, when Jesus died on the cross, the Old Covenant ceased to exist, and at His resurrection and ascension the New Covenant went into effect.

So God's grace in Christ's sacrifice of love was offered to all people, not based in works - even of the Law - but in faith.

To the church at Ephesus Paul wrote, "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace

in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." 2:4-9

And in Romans,

4:16: "For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all..."

5:2: "... through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God."

6:14: "For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace."

11:6: "But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace."

8:1-4, 1: "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. 3: For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, 4: so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

It should be clear from these few verses that the New Covenant is one of grace, not law, of faith not works, involving the heart not just the flesh. It is a spiritual covenant, making it an everlasting covenant just as prophesized, not an earthly, temporary covenant.

Further, as Romans 8:2 says, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has "set you free" from the law of sin and of death." This freedom from sin and death is also reprised in:

John 8:31-36, 31: "So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If

you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32: and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.' They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You will become free'?' 34: Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. 35: The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. 36: So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.'"

And in:

Romans 6:20-22, 20: "For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21: Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. 22: But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life."

And in:

Galatians 4:21-5:1, 21: Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? 22: For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. 23: But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. 24: This is allegorically speaking, for these women are two covenants: one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. 25: Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26: But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. 27: For it is written, "REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT BEAR; BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR; FOR MORE NUMEROUS ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE THAN OF THE ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND." 28: And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29: But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. 30: But what does the Scripture say? "CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON, FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE AN HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN." 31: So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman." 5:1, It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery."

And;

Hebrews 2:14-15, 14: "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15: and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives."

So, are we now free from the Law in every aspect? It's amazing that after hearing from God Himself through the scriptures, I still get blank and doubtful looks. Here may be why. Though the law is no longer in effect regarding sin, there is one aspect of the law that does affect us and we will look at that in a second. But as to sin, we are completely free and no longer under its jurisdiction. This is the "forensic" or legal application of the Law which no longer applies as it, like sin, is removed due to what Jesus did for all the world.

So, are we free to sin? Of course. We will sin regardless. But is an account of that kept by God? No. Should we feel free to sin and indulge in sinful and ungodly practices without restriction? No. Why not? One reason is conscience. This is the area the law has a lasting effect. On the heart and conscience. It is a quiet reminder of the righteous standard God has set.

Jeremiah 31:33, "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Romans 2:14-15, 14: "For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15: in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,

II Corinthians 1:12, "For our proud confidence is this: the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you."

An example of this would occur if someone said to you, "Let's steal something from that convenience market." Immediately your conscience would remind you that this is wrong. If you did steal something your conscience would

haunt you. You would not be subject to the penalty of God's law, but to the consequences of the act. That consciousness is how the law written on our hearts works. The same with any sinful thought or action.

Paul notes this, "He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need." Ephesians 4:28

Notice he doesn't say one is not to steal or else he will be judged by God's law and suffer the consequences.

Thought the law written upon our hearts can be a guard for us against doing ungodly things, it does not lead us at all in our Christian life. It is a preventative, not a leader or guide. That is the job of the Holy Spirit. Later on that.

Going back to the freedom we have then, what other thoughts are there in how we ought to conduct ourselves in this liberty and how not to conduct ourselves in the liberty?

Romans 6:1-2, 1: "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2: May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?"

Romans 6:15-18: 15: "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!" 16: Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? 17: But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, 18: and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness."

I Corinthians 8:9, "But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak."

Galatians 5:13, "For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

I Peter 2:16, "Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bond-slaves of God."

Now, the "New Covenant" harkens back to the fulfilment of the promise given initially in Genesis 3:15 when God said to the serpent, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel." This hypothesis is a theological premise of course.

The actual promise we can find reference to in: Isaiah 55:1-3; 61:8. Note that the phrase "everlasting covenant" suggests that the Old Covenant or Law is indeed temporary. Hosea 2:18-23; Ezekiel 16:60-63; and most significantly, Jeremiah 31:31-33.

Let's look at the nature and provisions of the New Covenant. We saw this with the Old and now we will see the contrast in the New.

A. This Covenant will be an internal covenant not one written on stone. (Jeremiah 31:33-34) This is a spiritual work changing the heart of man and not just his outward performance. This looks ahead to the work of The Holy Spirit wherein people will know The Lord and He "will forgive their sin and their iniquity He will remember no more." This will happen, not at the end of the world, but at the time of the initiation of the New Covenant. The New Covenant is spiritual, internal and eternal, not physical, external and temporal. It is entered into by faith, not by works. These are the major differences between the two.

Review as necessary: Matthew 26:28; II Corinthians 3:5-6; Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 13:20-21.

B. The New Covenant was envisioned and active before creation, and those of faith benefitted in advance of its initiation in the coming of Christ in our time frame. God, being outside of time, is able to see the end from the beginning and make provision thereto. Now, we see the importance of the following passages:

For example, in Matthew 25:34 Jesus is describing the judgment of the sheep and goats and says, "Come you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." In John 1:2 Jesus is described as being "in the beginning with God." Hebrews 4:3 notes that the works of God

(in Christ) “were finished from the foundation of the world.” Peter notes the following in his first epistle, chapter 1:18-21, “knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for your sakes.”

In Ephesians 1:3-4 Paul writes, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.” In Revelation 13:8 John writes, “And all will worship Him who dwell upon the Earth who do not have their names written in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain from the foundation of the world”.

C. The Old Covenant was fulfilled and the New was initiated on earth beginning with the birth of Christ, then by His life, His death, His resurrection and then His ascension.

The essential elements of this establishment of a New Covenant are Jesus ' death and resurrection and the application of both to those who believe. Note: Luke 22:20; I Corinthians 11:25; II Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:7-13, 9:15-16, Hebrews 12:22-24.

D. The New Covenant replaces the Old Covenant.

In Christ's life, death and resurrection the Old Covenant was fulfilled. Its purpose including all its regulations and requirements are fulfilled. Note: Matthew 1:22, 2:15, 2:23, 3:15, 4:14, 5:17-18, 8:17, 12:17, 13:35, 21:4, 21:56; Mark 14:49; Luke 24:44; John 12:28, 15:25, 18:9, 18:32, 19:24, 19:28, 19:36; Romans 10:4, Hebrews 10:8-18, etc.

With this in mind, we can conclude that the Old Covenant no longer has authority over mankind. In other words, when Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the law, it was fulfilled for all people, not just a few "elect" or just for those of faith. Then what does have authority over mankind? This is quite simple. The answer is "death." And that is now the problem for mankind, "death" not sin.

Here are a few verses to that effect.

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned-- for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come."  
Romans 5:12-14

"The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:20-21.

"For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death."  
I Corinthians 15:21-26

"But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I Corinthians 15:54-57

Hebrews 2:9, "But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone."

Hebrews 2:14-15, 14: "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15: and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives."

With Jesus fulfilling the Law and initiating The New Covenant, the issue between man and God is not sin, but death. The Gospel is supposed to be



"Good News" that Jesus took away the sin of the world and paid it on our behalf and now forgiveness is given to all and life is offered to those who would come to Him in faith. He came to give "life." "He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life."<sup>13</sup>

E. Because the New Covenant was in force before the foundation of the world this helps us understand that The New Covenant applies to sin, - past, present and future. This is indicated even in the Old Testament, and has already been discussed. But, for example,

Psalm 103:8-13, 8: "The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. 9: He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever. 10: He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11: For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. 12: As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13: Just as a father has compassion on his children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him."

Isaiah 43:25 "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins."

Isaiah 44:21-22, 21: "Remember these things, O Jacob, And Israel, for you are My servant; I have formed you, you are My servant, O Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me. 22: "I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud And your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."

Jeremiah 31:34 "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

And in the New Testament,

Acts 13:38-39, 38: "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, 39: and through Him everyone who

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<sup>13</sup> John 10:10, I John 5:12; John 3:36..

believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses."

Hebrews 10:17-18, 17:"AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE." 18: Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin."

God keeps no record of sin. It is, as if it had never happened. But the condition for this in Old Testament times is not that of the Mosaic Law, but that of faith.

F. All of this is based on Jesus' sacrifice on the cross on behalf of all mankind. We know this because:

Matthew 20:28, "...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

John 1:29, "The next day he \*saw Jesus coming to him and \*said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

John 3:16-17, 16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him."

II Corinthians 5:18-19. 18: "Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 19: namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation."

I Timothy 1:15, "It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all."

I Peter 3:18, "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;..."

I John 2:2, "...and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world."

G. This is also based on the understanding of the finished work of Christ and what that entails. Let's see if we can grasp it.

John 19:30, "Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished!' "And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit."

Hebrews 4:3, "For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world."

Hebrews 7:23-25, 23: "The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, 24: but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. 25: Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

Hebrews 9:24-26, 24: "For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25: nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. 26: Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

And again, Hebrews 10:10-14, 10: "By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11: Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; 12: but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, 13: waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET. 14: For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified."

Hebrews 12:2, "... fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Romans 10:4, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone

who believes."

H. Is then the Law abolished as far as sin goes? Of course.

Ephesians 2:14-16, 14: "For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15: by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16: and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity." The word for "abolishing" in the Greek is καταργέω (kata-ar-geh-oh) meaning to "nullify", "render inoperative", or "do away with."

Colossians 2:13-14, 13: "When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14: having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." The word for "cancelled" is ἐξαλείφω (ex-alei-pho) meaning "obliterate", "wipe away" or "erase."

This is a good place to point out that contrary to much church doctrine, forgiveness does not mean one is saved. For example, Jesus "forgave" those who were crucifying Him. But were they saved at that moment? Of course not. For example, let's say a boy from a very poor family accidentally threw a stone through your \$500.00 plate glass window during horseplay in the street out front. You know neither he nor his parents can afford to pay to have it replaced. So you forgive him and take care of his debt yourself. Did your forgiving him now change his nature, make him a member of your family, and heir of your estate? Of course not.

Jesus forgave many people of their sins, but He never declared that they they were now saved and members of the kingdom of God.

Forgiveness is a forensic act of God's grace accomplished on the cross for all mankind. Way too many churches (especially the "higher" churches like the RCC) think that forgiveness makes a person right with God and assures salvation. Other "ordinances" such as mass, communion, confirmation or baptism are also mistakenly thought to assure salvation. But salvation is the recognition of God's grace in Christ and a humble setting aside all of self and casting oneself upon the

mercy of God in faith. Paul said it most effectively, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9) The focus is no longer on "how good I am" or what "I am doing" but on what He has done. This is now discussed.<sup>14</sup>

## I. The promises and provisions of the New Covenant.

1. The New Covenant Condition. Faith. One does not decide to simply leave the Old Covenant and become a partner in the New Covenant. Joining a church, being baptized, confirmed, participating in sacraments, etc. does not allow one to be a part of the New Covenant. For this to happen, death must result. This death is called a "redemption", a buying back or paying off a debt for another. This is the effect of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The New Covenant is ratified by the death of Christ. His death on the cross allows the New Covenant to take precedent over the Old. Note Galatians 3:10-14, 4:1-7 and especially Hebrews 9:11-28.

A "second death"<sup>15</sup> takes place when one turns to Christ in faith, thus becoming an heir of the promise and of the New Covenant. In Romans 7:4-6, Paul writes, "Therefore my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God. For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter." In Romans 4:22-5:2 Paul notes, "Therefore also it (faith) was reckoned to him (Abraham) as righteousness. Now not for his sake only was it written, that it was reckoned to him, but for our sake also, to whom it will be reckoned, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, He who was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification. Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in the hope of the glory of God."

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<sup>14</sup> For a fine bonus, see the appendix and read the preface to Bill Tongue's book, "You are forgiven."

<sup>15</sup> It could be said that there are two "second deaths." We are familiar with the pronouncement of this as it applies to the wicked and unbelieving in Revelation 2:11, 20:6, 20:14, and 21:8 picturing their eternal obliteration. But those who come to Christ in faith are also pictured as dying to the Law and to the temporal life and raised with Christ in newness of life with the assurance of eternal life. So a second death for some to obliteration and a second death to others to eternal life.

In chapter 6:1-7, Paul continues to fill out this theme. "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is free from sin." (See also II Corinthians 5:14-21, Romans 4:13-17, 10:8-13, Ephesians 2:1-9)

Thus we become united to the New Covenant because we are united to Christ by faith.

2. The promises and provisions of the New Covenant. Let's look at them.

### **A. Death to life.**

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." John 5:24

"For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

Romans 5:10

"...so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:21

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ

Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39

"Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,..." II Timothy 1:8-10

"We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death." I John 3:14

## **B. Darkness to Light.**

Jesus told Saul of Tarsus, "But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." Acts 26:16-18

"For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." II Corinthians 4:5-6

"...for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth)" Ephesians 5:8-9

"For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son," Colossians 1:13

"...for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of

darkness;" I Thessalonians 5:5

"But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY."  
I Peter 2:9-10

### **C. Bondage to Freedom\***

"Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death." Romans 8:1-2

"And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, 'THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,...' Luke 4:16-18

"So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." John 8:36

"It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery." Galatians 5:1

"For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life." Romans 6:20-22

"For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole Law is



fulfilled in one word, in the statement, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'" Galatians 5:13-14

\* A note on "freedom." Freedom carries with it responsibility. Freedom without responsibility is anarchy and lawlessness. Those who wish to be free to do anything their flesh desires do not wish to bear the responsibility for the consequences of their actions. Thus, society takes away their freedom. Though free, we still bear the responsibility and consequences of our actions for that is what freedom requires. This makes it clear then, that freedom relates to other people and our world. We are responsible for how our actions affect others as "no man is an island unto himself." (John Donne) For the Christian, the standard is higher. We are to be led by the spirit and our conduct must be based in love.

**D. We are now members of God's family and are His children through faith in Jesus. We have a new identity.**

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12-13

"For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God..." Romans 8:14-16

"Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,' says the Lord. 'AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAR; And I will welcome you.' 'And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,' Says the Lord Almighty." II Corinthians 6:17-18

"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:26

"Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" Galatians 4:6

"See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us,

because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is." I John 3:1-2

"So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." Galatians 6:10

"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household," Ephesians 2:19

**E. Being members of God's household and His children, we are heirs of all the promises and the kingdom of God.**

"For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified;" Romans 4:14

"...and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him." Romans 8:17

"And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise." Galatians 3:29

"...to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel," Ephesians 3:6

"...so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:7

"In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath", Hebrews 6:17

"Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?" James 2:5

**F. This inheritance includes:**

"This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life." I John 2:25

"Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt." Daniel 12:1-2

"And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life." I John 5:11-12

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:14-16

"The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:20-21

"Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago," Titus 1:1-2

"For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith." Romans 4:13

"And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according

to promise." Galatians 3:29

"...so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory." I Thessalonians 2:12

"...that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God." Romans 8:21

"And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles." Romans 9:23-24

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit." II Corinthians 3:17-18

"For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory." II Timothy 2:10

"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." II Peter 1:2-4

"...for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Romans 14:17

"Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation." I Peter 4:12-13

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our

Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God."  
Romans 5:1-2

### **G. There will be, one day, a new heavens and a new earth**

"Because he who is blessed in the earth Will be blessed by the God of truth; And he who swears in the earth Will swear by the God of truth; Because the former troubles are forgotten, And because they are hidden from My sight! "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind. "But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing And her people for gladness. "I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; And there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying. Isaiah 65:16-19

"For just as the new heavens and the new earth Which I make will endure before Me," declares the LORD, "So your offspring and your name will endure."  
Isaiah 66:22

"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells." II Peter 3:10-13

"This expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire. Hebrews 12:27-29

"I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever." Ezekiel 37:26

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.' And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' And He \*said, 'Write, for these words are faithful and true.'" Revelation 21:1-5

## **H. Authority and Rule**

"And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." I Peter 2:4-5

"Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years." Revelation 20:6

"John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood-- and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father--to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen." Revelation 1:4-5

"But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY." I Peter 2:9-10

"You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." Revelation 5:10

"It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself."  
II Timothy 2:11-13

"Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? If the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life?" Colossians 6:2-3

## **I. Feasting and Rejoicing**

"The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son." Matthew 22:2

"You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent ahead of Him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full." John 3:28-29

"Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps."

"And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut." Matthew 25:1-4, 10

"When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" Luke 14:15

"And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes." Luke 22:17-18

"You are those who have stood by Me in My trials; and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Luke 22:28-30

"Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he \*said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he \*said to me, "These are true words of God." Revelation 19:7-9

## **J. The Unknown**

"... but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."

I Corinthians 2:9

"Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is." I John 3:2<sup>16</sup>

"Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years." Revelation 20:4-6

"Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under

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<sup>16</sup> This may refer to the fact that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Thus we will see Him in our own transformed bodies (I Corinthians 15:35-53)



the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him." Daniel 7:27

"And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life." Matthew 19:28-29

"He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father..."

Revelation 2:26-27

"Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear; But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist. And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the young goat, And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little boy will lead them. Also the cow and the bear will graze, Their young will lie down together, And the lion will eat straw like the ox. The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea." Isaiah 11:1-9

"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing And her people for gladness. I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; And there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying. No longer will there be in it

an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Will be thought accursed. They will build houses and inhabit them; They will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They will not build and another inhabit, They will not plant and another eat; For as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people, And My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands. They will not labor in vain, Or bear children for calamity; For they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD, And their descendants with them. It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent's food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the LORD." Isaiah 65:17-25

The unknown element comes in that there is a clear picture of God's kingdom being established on earth with Christ as king. What transpires during that period of time (the millennium in Revelation) is not made clear to us. Will it be in rebuilding after God's Day of Wrath? What will we be doing? Ruling? Judging? Teaching? Or? Then after all is done, a new heavens and a new earth are created in which righteousness dwells. What will this be like? Will redemptive history be repeated once again? Or is our history a repeat? Or is this the only universe there will ever be? We are not told.

### **SUMMARY**

Placing God as the center of our life and faith, and honoring His Son in all He is and did, at the exclusion of any of our own self perceived righteousness is such a miraculous act that God honors it with His love, grace, and His gift of a magnificent inheritance beyond one's wildest imagination. Just reflecting John the Baptist's statement, "He must increase, but I must decrease" is pleasing to the Lord.<sup>17</sup>

Again, our relationship with God is not based on "What I have done or am doing, but on what He has done for us."

We come under the New Covenant when we place our faith in Christ alone. At that moment we are "born again" into God's family and now walk in newness of

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<sup>17</sup> John 3:30

life and are to be led by His Spirit, not the Law or the flesh. We are completely and fully under grace from this point on into eternity. We are also transferred from darkness to light, from death to life and from hopelessness to the assurance of the hope of eternal life.

In addition we become heirs of all the promises God has given to His faithful from the beginning. This inheritance is beyond our comprehension. But we know we will have a real fellowship with Christ Himself and with God the Father in some way. We also know that, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" as Paul states in I Corinthians 15:50-58,

50: "Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51: Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52: in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53: For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54: But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. 55: "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" 56: The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57: but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58: Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord."

## QUESTIONS

1. Under the New Covenant, what is our obligation regarding tithing? The church often mentions this when the offerings are collected. Yes, since we are no longer under the Law, it is not required. But what is the main reason it was instituted in the first place? We will see in a moment that the writer of Hebrews particularly focuses on this matter.

The word "tithe" is an Old English word meaning "tenth." The Hebrew word is "Maasrah" also meaning a "tenth part." There are sixteen mentions of the tithe in the Old Testament, two in the New but both of these are identical statements of Jesus recorded in Matthew 23:23 and Luke 11:42 where He says, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others." Other than this, there is no other mention of it in the New Testament.

There is a very good reason for this. Let's look at what this was all about. We begin with the tribe of Levi who were assigned the priesthood and ministry at the temple. Moses and Aaron were of the tribe of Levi and Aaron was made priest by the word of the Lord. The details of Aaron's priesthood and that of the Levites in relationship to the service of the tabernacle and later the temple are listed in many Biblical passages. Among them are: Numbers, chapter 3; Leviticus, chapter 27; Numbers, chapter 18.

The Levites were not given a portion of land in Israel as their tribal territory like the other tribes, and had to live within the territories of the other tribes. However, they could not own property or provide for themselves through agriculture or animal husbandry. Their entire livelihood was dependent on the "tithe."

The "tithe" was a tenth of the produce and livestock grown by the remainder of Israel. It was brought to the tabernacle (or later the temple) as an offering to the Lord by command. It served a double function as providing food for the Levitical priests and their families. Essentially, it was a tax to provide for those who were engaged in the worship services and it was a law and must be accomplished or severe penalties could ensue.

Deuteronomy, chapters 12, 14, 26; II Chronicles 31, Nehemiah 10 and 13, and

Malachi 3:6-11 all give instructions and information regarding the tithe. Here are a few key verses;

Deuteronomy 12:10-12, 10: "When you cross the Jordan and live in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies around you so that you live in security, 11: then it shall come about that the place in which the LORD your God will choose for His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution of your hand, and all your choice votive offerings which you will vow to the LORD. 12: "And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, since he has no portion or inheritance with you."

Deuteronomy 12:18-19, 18: "But you shall eat them before the LORD your God in the place which the LORD your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God in all your undertakings. 19: "Be careful that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land."

Deuteronomy 14:22-29, 22: "You shall surely tithe all the produce from what you sow, which comes out of the field every year. 23: "You shall eat in the presence of the LORD your God, at the place where He chooses to establish His name, the tithe of your grain, your new wine, your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and your flock, so that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always. 24: "If the distance is so great for you that you are not able to bring the tithe, since the place where the LORD your God chooses to set His name is too far away from you when the LORD your God blesses you, 25: then you shall exchange it for money, and bind the money in your hand and go to the place which the LORD your God chooses. 26: "You may spend the money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen, or sheep, or wine, or strong drink, or whatever your heart desires; and there you shall eat in the presence of the LORD your God and rejoice, you and your household. 27: "Also you shall not neglect the Levite who is in your town, for he has no portion or inheritance among you. 28: "At the end of every third year you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in that year, and shall deposit it in your town. 29: "The Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and the alien, the orphan and the widow who are in your town, shall come and eat and be satisfied, in order that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do."

Nehemiah 10:37-39, 37: "We will also bring the first of our dough, our contributions, the fruit of every tree, the new wine and the oil to the priests at the chambers of the house of our God, and the tithe of our ground to the Levites, for the Levites are they who receive the tithes in all the rural towns. 38: The priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes, and the Levites shall bring up the tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse. 39: For the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of the grain, the new wine and the oil to the chambers; there are the utensils of the sanctuary, the priests who are ministering, the gatekeepers and the singers. Thus we will not neglect the house of our God."

Malachi 3:7-12, 7: "From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts. "But you say, 'How shall we return?' 8: "Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. 9: "You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! 10: "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. 11: "Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes," says the LORD of hosts. 12: "All the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land," says the LORD of hosts."

Why was there need for "food in God's house?" (Verse 10)

So then what was the purpose of the tithe? (To support the worship services mandated by God and administered by the Levites who were fed from the agricultural and animal production of the nation who brought the best of their production to the tabernacle and temple for these various services and sacrifices.)

Was this a physical response to a spiritual problem or a spiritual response to a physical problem?

When Christ died on the cross what happened to both the priesthood and the sacrificial system?

To answer this accurately, first, we need to note that Jesus became not a High Priest from the order of Levi, but became a High Priest according to the higher order of Melchizedek. "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." Hebrews 6:19-20

Note Hebrews 7:11-18, 23-25,

11: "Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? 12: For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also. 13: For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. 14: For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. 15: And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, 16: who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. 17: For it is attested of Him, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK." 18: For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness."

23: "The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, 24: but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. 25: Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

Verse 17 comes from Psalm 110. Here it is,

1: **A Psalm of David.** The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."

2: The LORD will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of Your enemies."

3: Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You as the dew.

4: The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

5: The Lord is at Your right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.

6: He will judge among the nations, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country.

7: He will drink from the brook by the wayside; Therefore He will lift up His head.

Hebrews 8:1-2, 1: "Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2: a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. "

And the sacrificial system?

Hebrews 9:11-12, 11: "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; 12: and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption."

Hebrews 9:24-26, 24: "For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25: nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. 26: Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

Hebrews 10:11-12, 11: "Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; 12: but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,"

So, in His own person Jesus fulfilled and completed the work of the priesthood and the sacrifices on behalf of sin forever. This is indicated by His "sitting down" at



the right hand of God.<sup>18</sup>

Therefore, a tithe to support a Levitical priesthood is unnecessary, why? Today, churches and pastors ask for your "tithes." Many threaten God's disapproval if you do not do so. However, since there is no more priesthood to support, and, considering that most pastors own their own property and possessions, the tithe is not only not required, but actually illegal based on biblical teachings.

Then on what basis do we give to the church (or the Lord's work) and why? Paul's answer in II Corinthians 9:6-7,

6: Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7: Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Now this all sounds fine except that the reason for giving in the New Testament is not to build buildings, pay for programs or finance extravagant ventures. Remember, context is everything. Just from this one passage, let's see if we can determine the basic reason for why we are to give.

Let's look at verse 12. "For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God."

What or whom was this collection for? Let's find out. Paul speaks of it in Galatians 2:1-10,

1: "Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. 2: It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain. 3: But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. 4: But it was because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage. 5: But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so

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<sup>18</sup> Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3,13; 8:1, 10:22, 12:2

that the truth of the gospel would remain with you. 6: But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)--well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me. 7: But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised 8: (for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles), 9: and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. 10: They only asked us to remember the poor--the very thing I also was eager to do."

Luke writes in Acts 11:29-30,

29: "And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. 30: And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders.

And in 20:35,

"In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Now, perhaps the remainder of II Corinthians 9:8-13 can be understood more appropriately,

8: And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed; 9: as it is written, "HE SCATTERED ABROAD, HE GAVE TO THE POOR, HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS ENDURES FOREVER." 10: Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; 11: you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. 12: For the ministry of this service is not only fully

supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God. 13: Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel."

We should be able to remember the admonitions of the Lord regarding the poor and needy.

On the other hand, Paul also taught in I Corinthians 9:9-18,

9: For it is written in the Law of Moses, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING." God is not concerned about oxen, is He? 10: Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops. 11: If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? 12: If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ. 13: Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar have their share from the altar? 14: So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel. 15: But I have used none of these things. And I am not writing these things so that it will be done so in my case; for it would be better for me to die than have any man make my boast an empty one. 16: For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. 17: For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me. 18: What then is my reward? That, when I preach the gospel, I may offer the gospel without charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel."

In Matthew 10:7-10, Jesus says to His disciples,

7: "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'  
8: "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give. 9: "Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, 10: or a bag for your journey, or even two coats, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> This is likely the quotation Paul is thinking of in I Corinthians 9:14

In Luke 10:3-9 we also read,

3: "Go; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. 4: "Carry no money belt, no bag, no shoes; and greet no one on the way. 5: "Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house.' 6: "If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you. 7: "Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house. 8: "Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you; 9: and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

And in Galatians 6:6,

"The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him."

However, in all of these, there is no requirement to tithe, give, donate, contribute or any such mandate or command.

So, what is the bottom line? You should be able to figure this out.

## QUESTIONS CONTINUED

2. Some denominations insist that it is necessary to keep the Biblical Sabbath Day as a day of rest and worship. Is this a commandment we ought to keep?

But first, let's note that the Biblical Sabbath Day is the seventh day of the week. In the Biblical sense, this day falls on Saturday, not Sunday and in fact, since the Biblical calendar is based on a lunar system and not a solar system, the Sabbath begins on Friday evening at sunset until Saturday evening at sunset.

In Exodus 20:8-11, the commandment is established.

8: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9: "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10: but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 11: "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy."

Certain holy days and feast days are also referred to as "sabbath days" in which no work was to be done. These are noted in Leviticus 23:26-44 for one example. The groups that hold to the belief that the sabbath day must be kept do not keep the other specified "sabbaths." This reveals the confusion about what this all involves and means and what they are supposed to do about it.

There are many references to God's displeasure toward those who fail to keep the sabbath day and the "sabbaths."

Ezekiel 20:21 "But the children rebelled against Me; they did not walk in My statutes, nor were they careful to observe My ordinances, by which, if a man observes them, he will live; they profaned My sabbaths. So I resolved to pour out My wrath on them, to accomplish My anger against them in the wilderness."

Exodus 31:15, "For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy to the LORD; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death."

So the fear of breaking the Sabbath is a heavy motivation for those groups who literally keep it each week.

Well, how is this resolved for those under the New Covenant? Once again, we will see that the writer of Hebrews particularly focuses on this matter in chapter 3 and 4 of his epistle. Paul addresses this as well. Here are comments from him,

"Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day-- things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ." Colossians 2:16-17

"Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God." Romans 14:4-6

Paul's argument is that one must be careful not to cause a stumbling block for those he terms as the "weaker brothers." None of these matters are the real issue, but some have not grown to understand the total application of the New Covenant and that is something that we who do need to be aware of in dealing with those who don't - who are in the majority.

In Hebrews, we find that the "Sabbath day" is an earthly picture of a spiritual reality. As is said in Colossians 2:17, all the earthly regulations and commemorations are just a "shadow" of the reality which is heavenly or spiritual.

Hebrews 8:1-7, 13, notes,

1: "Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2: a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. 3: For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer. 4: Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; 5: who serve a copy and shadow of the

heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, 'SEE,' He says, 'THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN.' 6: But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. 7: For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second."

13: "When He said, 'A new covenant,' He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear."

Then, Hebrews 10:1 states,

"For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near."

Next, we will see that the Sabbath itself is fulfilled spiritually for those who are in Christ, under the New Covenant and that it is constant, sustained reality all the time forever. Believers have entered the divine rest, the eternal Sabbath and thus it is kept by them through the completed and finished work of Christ who fulfilled the entire law, sat down in the "rest" now the work is done and therefore it applies to those in Him who sit in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:6). It is Hebrews, chapter 4 that presents more of this truth.

4:1-3, 1: Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. 2: For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. 3: For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world."<sup>20</sup>

4:8-10, 8: "For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another

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<sup>20</sup> Psalm 95:7-11; Numbers 14:23-30. (Verse 30 of this passage is interesting as one wonders if Jesus' comment in Luke 18:16-17 might be an illusion to this, "But Jesus called for them, saying, 'Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all.'")"

day after that.<sup>21</sup> 9: So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. 10: For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His."

The promised land of Canaan, where the descendants of Abraham actually owned the land, was to be the place of rest for the people from slavery and bondage. It corresponded to the Sabbath Day of creation and the Garden of Eden in Genesis. But because of the faithlessness of the people, God made it clear they would not enter the rest He had prepared for them. Psalm 95 calls it "His rest." This suggests that there is more than just a physical rest in an earthly territory, and that there is a spiritual/relational idea here from what the author of Hebrews writes.

It is Christ however, having fulfilled all righteousness gives the spiritual and eternal rest to those who do believe and thus the Sabbath rest is accomplished for all who are in Him. He is our Sabbath. In other words, those who are in Christ have also "sat down at God's right hand" because there are no more works necessary to complete under the Law as by faith alone the Sabbath is fulfilled for all who believe.

In 3:18-19, the analogy is presented, 18: "And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19: So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief."

But in 4:3 we read, "For we who have believed enter that rest..." and in 4:10, " For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His."

The importance of this is that by faith, we enter HIS REST not our own. The Sabbath Day for our temporal rest is simply a shadow of the real rest that is accomplished in Christ. When we are seated in heavenly places in Christ by our faith, as Jesus' works are done so are ours. The eternal rest by faith takes precedence of the temporal rest of works. The purpose of the 7th day of creation is then fulfilled.

Conclusion. We have learned that in Christ we are the heirs and beneficiaries of God and fellow heirs with Christ because we are His family and His children. That fact alone should convince us that the keeping of a temporal, physical day does not

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<sup>21</sup>Joshua 1:13-15



relate to an eternal spiritual reality in which the entire law is fulfilled and the intent of God for us who have believed is complete.

The Sabbath Day is simply an earthly, temporal portrait (or shadow) of the spiritual reality God wants us to all enjoy. Once we enter the spiritual reality by faith, there is no more necessity to remain in the shadow.

## THE NEW COVENANT

The Lord God Almighty, The Creator of Heaven and Earth, The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, The God and Father of Jesus Christ and all have received Him as Lord and Savior hereby bequeaths to all His children in Christ all things delineated below. This Covenant supercedes and negates all other covenants, wills, and conditions previously in force until this time<sup>1</sup> and is an eternal Covenant, which can never be revoked.<sup>2</sup> This Covenant is ratified in the blood of His Son and guaranteed by The Holy Spirit through the new birth and adoption into His household and family for all those who believe.<sup>3</sup> All provisions listed are grounded in His revealed Word as noted.

**The New Covenant Promise – The full inheritance of the blessings promised to Abraham including redemption, forgiveness, justification, sanctification, glorification and eternal life.**

**The New Covenant Condition - Faith. “Believe in The Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved”.**

**The New Covenant Sign – The Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead.**

### Declarations:

**Declaration #1. Forgiveness and Redemption. Not a pardon written for you, but no record at all. God looks upon you as if you have never sinned. “I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.” Note: John 3:18; 5:24. Your sins are completely gone. They are not in an obscure place waiting to pop up to condemn you at a later judgment day. The apostle, Paul, devotes an entire chapter to this subject. II Cor. 3:1-5. You are declared forgiven – forever.**

**Declaration #2. Justification. “The forensic, judicial, or gracious act of God by which the sinner is declared righteous, or justly free from obligation to penalty, and fully restored to divine favor” (Romans 5:8-9; Romans 3:19-26). You are declared justified.**

**Declaration #3. Sanctification. You are set apart unto God. You are sealed with The Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14), redeemed with the blood of The Lamb (Galatians 3:13-14, Romans 3:21-26, Hebrews 9:11-15, Romans 5:8-11), Transferred to His realm (Acts 26:15-18, Colossians 1:13-14, Ephesians 2:4-7, Ephesians 2:19-22, Philippians 3:18-21). You are declared sanctified, no longer your own, you belong to Christ, purchased with a price.**

### Provisions:

**Provision #1. A new birth: (John 3:1-8; II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15-16; I Peter 1:23-24; I John 5:1-5; Romans 10:8-13). You are new person, designed to walk in newness of life.**

**Provision #2. A new heart (mind, attitude, spirit) Infusions into the heart: (Acts 15:7-11; Romans 5:1-5; II Corinthians 1:20-22, 4:5-7; Galatians 4:6-7; Ephesians 3:14-19; II Thessalonians 3:5)**

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 4:13-16; Galatians 3:16-17

<sup>2</sup> Genesis 17:7; I Peter 1:3-5; Hebrews 6:13-20, 12:18-29

<sup>3</sup> Luke 22:14-20; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:4-7; Ephesians 2:1-10

**Provision #3. A new identity. We are changed and our identity is changed. We stand no longer under the condemnation of the Law, but free under grace (Romans 4:13-14, 8:1-2). Hence, our conduct changes. Here is who we are now: (Romans 8:16-17; Ephesians 1:4c-8; 2:10; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:1-5; I Peter 2:9-10; II Peter 1:1-4; II Corinthians 5:21). No longer are we to be under and bound by The Law (Romans 6:14; Galatians 5:1-3)**

**Provision #4, A new hope. (Romans 5:1-5, 8:28-39, 12:9-13; I Peter 1:3-5, 21)**

**Provision #5 A new purpose and life style. (Romans 6:4, 7:6; Galatians 5:22-25, 6:15; Colossians 3:1-17; Ephesians 4:17-32)**

## ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

### **The New Covenant Sign**

When Jesus was asked to produce a sign to verify His claims of deity, He said, “An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign, and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth”.

It is critical to note that Jesus was born under the law and kept the law as it was intended to be kept. Note Galatians 4:1-9. “At that time” in verse 8 refers to the time prior to the redemption provided by God in Christ at the cross. Jesus’ taught under the Law and most of what He taught applied the Law to its fullest intent to the lives of the people He confronted, especially the self-righteous religious leadership of Israel. He did not come “to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it” (Matthew 5:17). And He did so through His life, teachings, death, burial, resurrection and ascension. He was circumcised, kept the Sabbath, and all the feasts and holy days because He was born under the Law.

His teachings for the most part, therefore, do not apply to the Christian since it is the work of The Holy Spirit to stamp the parameters and nature of righteousness on the heart. Empty ritual is not what God wants. This was the gist of Jesus’ teachings. The issue is not one of outward obedience, but obedience that comes gladly from a changed heart, desire and mind. Those who produce outward righteousness without regard to inner righteousness have missed the intent of the Law.

An example of how His teaching is properly understood is found in Matthew 6:5-15, the “Lord’s Prayer”. In verses 14 and 15, Jesus makes an application to His hearers. “For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.” Is this true under The New Covenant of Grace through faith in Christ? Paul answers this in Ephesians 4:32. “And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other just as God in Christ also has forgiven you”. So when did our forgiveness occur? In chapter 1 verse 7, Paul writes, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the

forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished upon us.” Also in Colossians 3:13, Paul notes, “...forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.”

Another example of Jesus contrasting the outward obedience with the true condition of the heart is found in Matthew 5:27 and 28. “You have heard that it was said, ‘you shall not commit adultery’; but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for has committed adultery with her already in his heart. If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.” Here there is no mistake. Lustful ogling results in the destruction of the person. Adultery is a capital crime under the law. Further, how many are ripping their eyes out over this common sin? None. The application of the severity of the Law is made clear here. But even Christians who think they must abide by every word of Jesus balk at this one.

Those who believe that Jesus’ teachings apply to the Christian are inconsistent. For example, Jesus told the man He healed from leprosy to, “Go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.” Yet Christians admit that this is actually not required. Why? Because they divide the Old Covenant into sections, “some of which we are supposed to keep, and some of which we are not supposed to keep.” They make a distinction between “ceremonial law” and “the moral law or the commandments”. However, Christians are not under the “Law”, which includes everything. The above account in Luke, chapter 5 makes it clear that Jesus was still under the law and instructing the proper application of the law to all peoples. There are many such examples.

In Galatians 4:21-5:6, Paul makes the case for those who still want to be under the law even after Christ has fulfilled it in His own blood. Paul concludes, “You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.” This does not mean that a born again believer has lost his salvation. What it does mean is that his life has tumbled from the blessings, freedom and leading of grace down to the bondage, guilt and condemnation of the law again. When Christ fulfilled the law, it means that every demand of the law was met and the ultimate sacrifice to satisfy the law’s

demand for every sin was made and was infinitely applicable to all peoples, past present and future.

Tithing, Sabbath keeping, and all of the commandments etc. all fall under the law. It is not as if the law is now awful or horrible. We have already seen that it is perfect, holy, good and righteous. But once one is born by the Spirit through faith in Christ, the law has done its work by bringing us to our knees in recognition of our own un-holiness, corruption and need of a savior. It is not able to produce life, righteousness, joy, love etc. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. So the Christian must let go of the hand of the law which can bring us only so far, and grasp the hand of The Holy Spirit who will lead us further on.

**The Transformation - Walking in newness of life.** If it's not "Glad Tidings of Great Joy", it's not The Gospel.

What happens? We are transformed from death to life.

The Word of Truth. God's Word expressed through the Gospel message sets His love and provision for us in Christ against the hopeless despair and death in us and offers us a choice. Note: Luke 1:67-79.

Jesus' message presented the Kingdom of God to man and the means whereby one may enter it. He did this in both word and deed. He noted that one cannot enter the Kingdom of God unless one is born of the Spirit. This new birth is a result of an individual's repentance (involving conviction and contrition) and then faith in Him whom God has sent. Note: John 3:3-8. Also, John 6:28. Now the descriptions of what happens on behalf of those who turn to Christ as Savior and Lord is immense. But they boil down to two categories.

I. Forensic. Our previous standing with God has changed. Several simultaneous events occur.

A. Forgiveness is applied. This is the best illustration of Grace. Forgiveness is not simply an overlooking or covering of our sin. Some teach that our sin is really still on the books, but God chooses to ignore it-until such time, of course, He needs to remind us of our horrible corruption and what He did for us so He can manipulate us through guilt fear of losing our salvation into some sort of shame so we will get our act together. I left a church that

taught that very thing. That church has grown and is filled with people waiting for God to take their head off at the first slip.

No, God is not like us in that regard, holding our past mistakes over our head. (Note on our relationships) On the contrary, the pages of God's Book, which had recorded all of our sins, are made blank-and, no new entries are ever placed in there again. (Ears, eyes as projectors illustration) So, now are we free to just go and sin since it is all covered? Romans 5:20-6:2

Is it true that nothing else is placed there against us to accuse us before God? Romans 8:28-39; Romans 5:1-2, 8:1-2; Ephesians 1:7-8a; Jeremiah 31:34; Hebrews 9:24-28, 10:10-18.

Forgiveness. Aphesis, Aphiemi from apo (off, away, separate from, removed, to send) and eimi (me, I, I am)

John announced Jesus as "The lamb who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). The word translated as "take away" is "irow" meaning to take up or take away. What all this means is that sin is no longer, and will be no longer attached to you. Your sin is gone. It is not stuck away somewhere on some divine ledger with God waiting until you really get to Him and push Him to drag it all out again against you. God no longer sees it and it does not bring you under the judgment of death anymore because you are not under the law, but under grace. (Romans 6:14-15)

B. The second forensic occurrence is called justification. Romans 5:8-9; Romans 3:19-26. This is truly amazing and it is a natural result of forgiveness. What does it mean? Well, let's look at a common example. A police officer is called to the scene of a robbery at a convenience store. As he pulls up to the convenience store, the robber emerges brandishing a gun. The officer takes cover, identifies himself, and warns the suspect to put his weapon down. But the suspect begins firing at the officer. The officer fires back killing the suspect. After the investigation is complete, the shooting is ruled justifiable. The officer was justified in what he did.

The dictionary defines the word this way: The legal definition is, "To show sufficient reason for something done, rendering the doer clear of any accusation or charge". The theological definition is, "The forensic, judicial, or gracious act of God by which the sinner is declared righteous, or justly free

from obligation to penalty, and fully restored to divine favor”. The Greek is simple. *Dikiwthentes* – to declare and make one righteous. (Abraham) So, when I turn to Jesus for salvation and place my faith (my life) in him, that act brings not only forgiveness but renders me, including my whole life and the totality of my sin as justified.

Why? Could it be that my sin is now accounted as a justifiable means to God’s goal because it brought me to Christ when His word of truth, The Righteousness of God revealed in the law, and the conviction of The Holy Spirit clashed with my lost-ness in sin. Is this another way God brings good from evil? Romans 5:20-6:2; 7:5, 7-13, Gal. 3:22-24. Well, I’m not sure, but we stand justified before God in Christ, we are declared righteous. The charges against us are more than dismissed, our past history (our record) no longer exists. There is no sheet on us anymore, and there never will be again. With forgiveness, this is the essence of Grace. Why such lavish gifts from God? Because, through our faith, we have honored His Son as our Lord and Savior. We honor what He did on the cross when He gave his life for us, and God responds to our recognition of that sacrifice with love, mercy, grace and eternal gifts. (Ephesians 2:4-7)

C. The third forensic occurrence is called sanctification. This means to be set apart, which is the true definition of holiness. Both words are from the same root in both the Hebrew and the Greek. We are set apart to God exclusively and our lives are to be in service to Him. There are several parts to this, and they are all simultaneous .

1. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13-14)
2. We are redeemed. Closely related to forgiveness in that a price was paid providing for the redemption and forgiveness we enjoy. The Greek is “*exagorazw*”. It comes from two words, “*ex*” meaning “out of, and “*agora*” meaning market place. An illustration might go like this. One day Jesus goes into the market place to a shop owned by Lucifer. It is a pawn-shop. He looks around at the goods and finds nothing for sale. He asks Lucifer if there might be any other goods for sale. Lucifer brightens up immediately and says, “Yes, in my basement I have a product called ‘all mankind’ bound in chains. They came to me when they fell to my temptation in the garden. God was so foolish to tell them they would die and fall to me, but I knew. Then God gave them this law, are penalized them to death for breaking it, which He knew they would. How stupid can God be? So, the price to buy them back is extremely



high”. “How high”? asks Jesus. Lucifer rubs his hands with glee. “It would cost you all your blood, Oh Son of God-and only those in the basement that believe you are the Son of God after you are dead will be redeemed. Are you willing to pay the ultimate price for this rubbish, under those terms”? “I am” says Jesus. Lucifer is overjoyed, but conceals it craftily. He thinks, Jesus would not fall for the temptations in the wilderness but I have this ace in the hole, and He cannot resist because of His foolish Love. Well, it will cost the fool dearly. Lucifer agrees immediately to the sale thinking He would be rid of the Son of God forever and finally bring God to His knees.

But, Lucifer had learned nothing from his encounter with God and Job or from anything else he and his demons had suffered under the authority and power of God and his Son. But, this foolish Son had taken on human, mortal form. It would be over soon. And so Jesus Redeemed mankind back with his own blood. Lucifer was true to his word. He released everyone who believed in Jesus. Of course, he was totally shocked when he realized that Jesus rose from the dead. It was a killer blow. He never expected it. My, he learned nothing from watching God raise the dead through Elijah the prophet, did he.

So we are redeemed. And the Bible tells us we are redeemed from “the curse of the law” (Galatians 3:13-14, Romans 3:21-26, Hebrews 9:11-15, Romans 5:8-11).

3. The third aspect of sanctification is that we are transferred-moved. This most clearly defines the actual meaning of the word “sanctification” or “being set apart”.

Acts 26:15-18 – (Paul’s testimony) From darkness to light

Colossians 1:13-14 – From darkness to the Kingdom of God’s Son

Ephesians 2:4-7 – From death to resurrection in heaven

Ephesians 2:19-22, Philippians 3:18-21 – From worldly citizenship to heavenly citizenship. (From the headship and family of the first Adam to the headship and family of the second Adam.

This forensic reality is expressed by many contrasts.

Death to life

Darkness to Light (Truth)

Estrangement to fellowship

The Kingdom of this world to fellowship with God

From being fearful to being loved  
Being under condemnation to grace-being under no condemnation.  
Guilt to peace.  
Despair to hope.

4. Circumcision contrast: Romans 2:25-29; Ezekiel 44:6-7; Leviticus 26:41-42; Jeremiah 4:4, 9:25-26; Philippians 3:2-3; Galatians 6:12-16; Colossians 2:10-14.

We are heirs of Abraham, not because of a physical act of human hands, but because of a spiritual act not of human hands. Since circumcision was the sign of the covenant with Abraham based on his faith in the promise of God, so in Christ, a spiritual circumcision is the sign of the fulfillment of the promise for all those who have faith in Him. A spiritual relationship depends on a spiritual act and reality, not on a fleshly one. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit". (John 3:8)

## II. Spiritual – Of the Spirit and the heart.

### A. The New Birth

1. John 3:1-8
2. II Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15-16
3. I Peter 1:23-24
4. I John 5:1-5
5. Romans 10:8-13 (sedge-way to "heart".)

B. The Transformation Of The "Heart" (or "mind", "spirit", "conscience") First, what our heart is like. Genesis 6:5, 8:21; Jeremiah 17:9; Ecclesiastes 9:3; Mark 7:20-23; Romans 3:9-19.)

1. Infusions into the heart: Acts 15:7-11; Romans 5:1-5; II Corinthians 1:20-22, 4:5-7; Galatians 4:6-7; Ephesians 3:14-19; II Thessalonians 3:5)

Other: Hebrews 9:13-15, (10:1-4, 19-25) We enter His "rest". The Sabbath (Law) issue resolved. We rest from works in Christ. Hebrews 4:1-10

What are we to believe? What are we going to decide to believe? Do we want to know the truth? What is the truth? Will we believe it if we hear it? Jesus personifies the living truth. It is not what you believe, but whom you believe in. Here is the truth: Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father but through me."

The Father loves us with an everlasting, unconditional love. His nature is Love and thus he does not express Himself to us in a manner contrary to His nature and character.

The pinnacle of His expression is seen in His Son, Jesus Christ who lived, died and was raised again from the dead for our sakes. This placed the New Covenant into effect, making the Old Covenant under Moses null and void. "God's love is for the entire world without exception or condition. For "God so loved the world..." we are told. Paul assures in Romans 5:5-11 of God's love. God's unconditional love for us includes all the forensic declarations we have examined including forgiveness, justification and sanctification. We are clean, put in a right relationship with God, freed from bondage to sin and death declared by God's holy law, and set apart into his household and kingdom forever. We are moved from death to life, from darkness to light, from deception to truth, from guilt to peace and from despair to hope. This alone should be motive to live a thankful and gracious life. Please note a wonderful example of this in Luke 7:36-50. But wait, there's more! We are born a new, changed by his power from one tarnished glory to increasing brighter glory, made into a new creature designed to walk in newness of life. Paul describes this as God pouring out his love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5, 8:9-11). (Law and Grace Skit)

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We are changed and our identity is changed. Hence, our conduct changes. Here is who we are now:

Romans 8:16-17; Ephesians 1:4c-8; 2:10; Philippians 1:1, Colossians 1:1-5; I Peter 2:9-10;  
II Peter 1:1-4; II Cor. 5:21

If we believe what God has said in the scriptures, what are we to do? How do we understand what the "Christian life" is all about and in what way do we walk in obedience to God if we are not under the law? There are several things that must join together to understand our walk in Christ. (1) The forensic reality God has declared on our behalf for all who trust in Jesus. (2) The inner reality God has performed in us by his Spirit. (3) The truth about who we are in Christ and of our new relationship with God our Father. (4)

Our decision about the direction of our lives and behavior based on these truths.

What we are to decide: Romans 6:1-5, 20-21. We are to decide to walk in the newness of life God has provided us with, without fear, in the truth of who we are in Christ, in His victory over life and death. Further, because of the confidence we have in God's Love for us, we can minister to and love others without fear. I John 4:10-21; II Corinthians 5:14-15; I Peter 2:9-12 (note: chapter three); Ephesians 3:20-4:3; Philippians 2:5-16; I Thessalonians 3:11-12 etc.

In deciding to believe what God has said and done in Christ, we set our feet on the path of Newness of Life. How are we to be guided now that we are not under the law? By a living reality not by tablets of stone. Remember, the sign of the New Covenant is the resurrection-alive from the dead-and we are now, "dead to sin and alive to God". So guidance will be a living reality, that which is within, not an external standard. This is the whole issue of the matter of the "Heart". So many churches teach that the Christian is saved by grace through faith but that their lives are to be mandated and judged by the Law. Note: Romans 1:5 and especially Romans 7:6

1. Holy Spirit - (John 14:16-17, 23-27; Galatians 5:22-26). Plants seeds for fruit.

2. Law written in our hearts, becoming not an external standard or mandate, but an internal reality. Our desires regarding righteousness change from resisting it to wanting it. Jeremiah 31:31-34; (Hebrews 8:7-13, 10:15-18); Romans 2:14-16, 13:8-10; II Corinthians 3:1-3; I John 5:2-5 (3:23-24, 4:7-12, 21); Matthew 22:34-40. (The action of conscience - Hebrews 9:8-15; 10:1-22; II Cor. 1:12; I Timothy 1:3-5, 1:18-19, 3:8-9; 4:1-2; Titus 1:15-16; I Peter 3:13-16. "suneidoh" from "sun" - "with", "together", "next to" and "eidoh", "see", "perceive", "understand". Ultimately - "to see inside yourself"-conscience.)

"The Law written in our hearts" places the full intention and purpose of the Law regarding righteousness and conduct in our hearts (minds) so that godly righteousness and conduct becomes instinctive and desired rather than mandated in contrast to our will. (Rom. 2:14-16)

3. Faith, Hope and Love (Romans 1:5, 5:1-5; II Corinthians 5:14-15; I Corinthians 13:13)

4. New Covenant Teachings of the Apostles: I Corinthians 4:14-17;  
Ephesians  
5:1-4; Philippians 4:8-9; I Peter 1:3-5, 10-2:3; 2:9-25ff.; 4:1-11; II Peter 3:7-18; etc.
5. Prayer and thanksgiving. I Thessalonians 5:16-18; Philippians 4:6-9; Ephesians 6:10-20; etc.
6. Thinking and meditation to train the mind. Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 5:15-20; Philippians; 4:8-9; Colossians 3:1-17, 18ff.