

The Two Covenants

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2 Corinthians 3:6 "...not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

THE OLD COVENANT

The Law of Moses

Written and engraved on stones

A ministry of death and condemnation
(2 Corinthians 3:7-9)

CHRIST IS THE FULFILLMENT OF THE LAW AND THE END OF THE OLD COVENANT.

The veil is taken away in Christ.
(2 Corinthians 3:14)

When one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.
(2 Corinthians 3:16)

Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.
(2 Corinthians 3:17)

THE NEW COVENANT

In Christ Jesus

Written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart. (2 Corinthians 3:2-3)

REVEALS THE PROBLEM – SIN

The Law was holy and good, but it could not give life.

Sacrifices for sin – once a year on the Day of Atonement. Two goats: one sacrificed, one sent away.

It reveals sin, shows our need for God and holds us accountable.

There was a veil over Moses' face and over the hearts of the people.

It could not take away sin or transform the heart.

RESULT:
DEATH, CONDEMNATION AND SEPARATION
The letter kills.
(2 Corinthians 3:6)

REVEALS THE ANSWER – JESUS CHRIST

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death.
(Romans 8:2)

Jesus offered Himself once and for all. There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)

The Holy Spirit writes God's law on our hearts. He leads, gives life, and transforms us from glory to glory. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

We behold the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, and are being transformed into His image from glory to glory.

We are a holy temple of God—loved, called, chosen and appointed by God.

RESULT:
LIFE, RIGHTEOUSNESS AND FELLOWSHIP
The Spirit gives life.
(2 Corinthians 3:6)

! DON'T MIX THE COVENANTS

Mixing the covenants causes us to live under the old when we have been called to walk in the new.

- Earning God's acceptance by works or rituals
- Believing we must offer works for sin
- Living under condemnation and guilt
- Trying to live by our own strength
- Returning to legalism or Old Covenant rituals

We are not under the Law, but under grace. (Romans 6:14)

KNOW THE COVENANT, KNOW YOUR BLESSINGS

The New Covenant is the encyclopedia for life—a word for every season and a solution to every problem.

- ✓ Understand your new contract in Christ.
- ✓ Study the Word with the help of the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ Receive the promises and walk in the good works God has prepared for you.

The Holy Spirit opens our understanding and helps us see and understand what God has given us in Christ."

WHAT DO WE TAKE AWAY?

- The Old Covenant revealed the problem; the New Covenant reveals the answer—Jesus Christ.
- The Old Covenant was written on stone; the New Covenant is written on our hearts by the Spirit.
- The Old Covenant brought condemnation; the New Covenant brings righteousness and the law of the Spirit of life.
- The Old Covenant had a veil; in Christ, the veil is removed—our eyes are open to receive new revelation.
- The Old Covenant of death and condemnation could show our need for God; the New Covenant gives the Holy Spirit to live in us, lead us, transform us, and resurrect us from the dead.

Let us walk according to the Spirit, not according to the flesh, and live in the freedom, life and glory of the New Covenant in Christ Jesus our Lord.

AMEN.

2 Corinthians 3.1 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some others, epistles of commendation to you or letters of commendation from you? 2You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the **Spirit of the living God**, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

4And we have such trust through Christ toward God. 5Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, 6who also made us sufficient as ministers of **the new covenant**, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the **letter kills**, but the **Spirit gives life**.

7But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, 8how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? 9For if the **ministry of condemnation had glory**, the ministry of **righteousness exceeds much more in glory**. 10For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. 11For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.

12Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech— 13unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. 14But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil

remains unlifted in the reading of the **Old Testament**, because the veil is taken away in Christ. 15But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.

16Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18But 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 by the Spirit of the Lord.]

What's Going On Here?

Paul is making a distinction between the two covenants. The first covenant was the Law of Moses, the **Old Covenant** which included the Ten Commandments and many other laws and commands that the people were required to obey. Yet, because of human sinfulness, no one could keep the Law perfectly.

The Old Covenant

Paul refers to this as the ministry of **death and condemnation**, written and engraved on stones. The Law was holy and good, but it could not give life. Its purpose was to reveal sin, show people their need for God, and hold them accountable.

Under the Old Covenant, sacrifices had to be made for sin. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest made atonement for the sins of the people. Two goats were involved: one was sacrificed, and the other was sent away, symbolically carrying the people's sins away. The Law revealed the problem of sin, but it could not take away sin or transform the human heart. That is why we needed Jesus Christ and the **New Covenant**.

The New Covenant

So the new covenant, written not with ink but by the **Spirit of the living God**, not on tablets of stone but on **tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart**.

In Christ, the veil is removed. We are no longer separated from God by a veil of Moses. Through the Holy Spirit, we can behold the glory of the Lord and are continually being transformed from glory to glory into His image. The new covenant is like a new legal document when you come to Christ, all the condemnation has been **legally** removed.

Romans 8, give us this further picture to help us understand [There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are **in** Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. 2 For the **law of the Spirit of life in** Christ Jesus has made me free from the **law of sin and death**.

Know the Covenant, Know Your Blessings

Since we are under the New Covenant, we should all become familiar with the law of the Spirit of life. In a sense, we are like spiritual lawyers. The more we understand and study the New Covenant, the more we can understand and enter into His promises and the good

works He has prepared for us to walk in. It's the encyclopaedia for life, a word for every season and a solution to every problem.

It is similar to starting a new job or moving to another country. You need to understand what you have signed up for, your contract, what you agreed to. If your job provides benefits but you do not know about them, you may miss out on what is available to you. Likewise, if you move to a new country that offers certain benefits, but you do not know they exist, you may fail to receive them, even though they are already provided for you.

In the same way, many of the blessings and promises we have in Christ can remain unknown to us until they are revealed. This is why we need to study and understand the New Covenant. And we are not left alone to do this, because the Holy Spirit of life is the law of the Spirit. He opens our understanding and helps us to see and understand what God has given us in Christ and how the Kingdom of God works .

Misusing the Covenants

This is why we must be careful to understand which covenant we are living under and not mix the two. We do not misuse the scriptures, we should try to be clear and understand what Christ has told us to believe and follow. The Old Covenant was based on the Law given through Moses, while the New Covenant is based on what Jesus Christ has **accomplished for us** through the cross.

[Satan knew the Scriptures and even quoted the Word of God, but he misused Scripture to tempt Jesus and failed. Satan today still tries to get many to believe and live under the law of Moses, where he condemns them.

Knowing the words of Scripture is not the same as understanding and living in God's truth by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit confirms and illuminates the Word. He does not contradict the Scriptures He inspired. The Holy Spirit brings in the new covenant, the new creation and the mind of Christ, He is the Spirit of the law of life.

Examples of mixing the covenants include:

If we do not understand the difference we can lose out, its like being promoted in your job but still holding to the old contract instead of using the new

- Trying to earn God's acceptance through keeping laws, doing rituals or works, rather than **receiving** righteousness through faith in Christ.
- Believing we must offer works to God for sin, when Jesus offered Himself once and for all. Believing we are still sinners and never the saint. Remember the power of sin was broken at the cross, we are now practicing righteousness, not sin.
- Living under condemnation and guilt, rather than understanding that there is **now no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus.
- Trying to live by our own strength and effort rather than walking according to the Holy Spirit and living being led by the Holy Spirit.

- Returning to Old Covenant rituals, legalism or religion as a means of being made right with God, rather than trusting in Christ alone.

This does not mean that the Old Testament has no value. It is the Word of God and we learn how God works. However, we must read and understand it through the life of Jesus Christ and the New Covenant we have entered into the law of the Spirit of life.

“Who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”

We are no longer called to live by the power of the flesh, trying to achieve righteousness through our own efforts. We are called to walk according to the **Spirit**, trusting in what Christ has done and allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us. [Share example women under the law]

The Two Covenants What Do We Take Away?

- The Old Covenant revealed the sin problem; the New Covenant reveals the answer Jesus Christ. He broke the power of sin, curse and the devil, and saved us from hell
- The Old Covenant was written on tablets of stone; the New Covenant is written on our hearts by the Spirit. This means a relational God, internal dwelling and peace.
- The Old Covenant brought condemnation; the New Covenant brought righteousness and a new law of the Spirit of life.
- The Old Covenant had a veil; in Christ, the veil is removed. Eyes are open to receive new revelation to live an abundant life
- The Old Covenant of **death and condemnation** could show us our need for God; the New Covenant through Jesus Christ gives us the Holy Spirit to live in us, lead us and transform us and to resurrect us from the dead . We are a Holy temple of God, loved, called, chosen and appointed by God

Let us end in prayer.