

LOVE
&
AUTHORITY
2 CORINTHIANS



Sermon Series Notes

"The New Covenant" (II Corinthians 2:12-3:18)

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I. THE TEXT

2:14 The image Paul had in his mind here was of an army in that day coming back to town after a victory. People would line the streets and cheer. It was like a "ticker tape parade."

* See Rom.8:28-39; Phil.1:21

3:1 Here goes Paul and his sarcasm again! Some false apostles had come into the church at Corinth, and one of the things they did was to encourage the church to doubt the genuineness of Paul's ministry. They no doubt came with letters of recommendation, and when they heard about Paul, they asked what letters of recommendation he had. They could have labeled him as an independent rebel, or at least someone ministering with no real authority

* See Phil.1:15-17

3:2 The greatest recommendation any minister can have is the fruit of their ministry. I don't care how many cemetery degrees a person has if there is no fruit in their ministry.

3:3 Here he contrasts the ministry of the old covenant with the ministry of the new covenant. As he does, he reminds them that they are the result of his ministry, the ministry of the new covenant. He now expounds on that ministry.

3:6b I Cor.15: 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

II. LESSONS

A. Characteristics Of The Old Covenant

1. A Covenant of Law

* Based on obedience/works (Rom.10:5)

* External demands (Ex.20:3-17)
- Not The Ten Suggestions!

* God's purpose for it was to lead us to Christ (Rom.3:20; Gal.3:24a).

* Some still foolishly miss the purpose of the law and convince themselves they are good enough to make it to heaven (See Luke 18:9-14).

* Those who miss the purpose of the law have a veil over their hearts/minds.

2. Condemns/Kills

* No matter how good I look compared to others, if I look honestly at the law, I know it condemns me.

* My conscience (unless seared/calloused) tells me that I am guilty.

* Heb.9: 9 This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered (under the law) were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper.

* Gal.3: 10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

* To be cursed is to be damned

3. It's Glory Fades

* See Ex.34:29-35

* You're excited about it at first, but when you try and live it out, the excitement fades. When Moses came down from Mt. Sinai after receiving the ten commandments, his face shown with the glory of God. You look at Moses and think, one day I'll shine like him. But what you don't realize is that Moses was only reflecting the glory of the Lord. Before long Moses' face was just like it always was.

4. Keeps us in bondage

* Acts 15:10

* Failure; You never feel like you measure up to God's standard of righteousness, always striving for something impossible to attain by human effort.

* Illus: Raccoon at dumpster, trying to climb the walls to freedom

* Fear of judgment/death

- Ex.19:10-13, 16-25; 20:18-21; Heb.12:21/Deut.9:19.

- Heb.10: 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

B. Characteristics Of The New Covenant

1. A covenant of grace

- * The new covenant & the Abrahamic covenant
 - See Gen.15:2-6; Gal.3:6-19a

- * By faith, not works (Rom.10:1-10; 3:21-24)

- * Where do The Law & Prophets testify to this righteousness that is by grace through faith?

 - Gen.3:8-13, 21; Gen.22 (Abraham and Issac); David (Rom.4:7-8; Ps.32:1-2); Hab.2:4, etc.

- * Confidence/competence through Christ alone

 - Rom.3:27-28; II Cor.11:12-22, 30; Luke 18:11-12; Eph.2:8-9.

- * Motivated by internal desires rather than external demands.

 - Jer.31: 33 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.

 - Heb.10:11-18; Ezekiel 36:26-27

- * A story is told about a son who woke up one Saturday morning and got the idea to mow the lawn and wash the car without anyone telling him to. But before he could begin, his dad told him that he was going out to run some errands, and while he was out he wanted the son to mow the lawn and wash the car, adding that the son would suffer the wrath of dad if he came home and those things weren't done. So the son lost all desire to work for his dad.

- * Luke 15: 29 But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.

2. Brings righteousness/life/acceptance

- * Heb.10: 22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience

- * See Rom.8:1-4; II Cor.5:21

3. Ever increasing glory (3:18)

- * My future is bright. I'm headed for greater glory!

- * I John 3: 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

- * KJV = *beholding as in a glass* the glory of the Lord

* 2734. katoptrizomai, kat-op-trid'-zom-ahee; mid. from a comp. of G2596 and a der. of G3700 [comp. G2072]; to mirror oneself, i.e. to see reflected (fig.):--behold as in a glass.

* Note: The more I focus my attention on Christ, the more like Him I become. The law causes me to focus on my failure, whereas the new covenant causes me to focus on my freedom in Christ.

4. Frees us from the bondage of law

* Freedom from equating righteousness with religious rules, regulations, & observances (Gal.5:1-4; Col.2:13-17).

* Freedom from the fear of death/judgment

* Heb.2: 14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil--

15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

* Heb.12:18-24a

* Note: Anyone who seeks to live based on law loses their joy (Gal.4:15a).

* Heb.1: 9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy." (from Psalm 45:7).

C. The Challenge Of Not Going Back To Old Covenant Ways

* See Galatians 4:9-10; 5:2-4; 2:11-16, 21; Acts 15:10

CONCLUSION

* Some of us who have been changed by the truth of the new covenant really needed to hear this, because we've gone back to trying to live for God with an old covenant mentality see Gal.3:3

* Some of us really needed to hear this, because we've never come to really understand the truth of the new covenant. But today the light finally came on! That light came on through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. And now God wants to seal the deal in your heart