

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXIV Old Covenant/New Covenant Comparison #1

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Today we're going to do a comparison between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Before we get into that, let's cover something very important; let's come to John 4, and I think maybe you can understand this in light of the New Testament, even more than we have in the past. We've gone over this many times, but let's see what this is really telling us in the light of what Jesus said, and in the light of other Scriptures, which help define it for us.

John 4:19—the woman at the well talking with Jesus: “The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father. You do not know what you worship. We know what we worship **for salvation is of the Jews**.... [this becomes a very important point.] ...But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth; for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and in Truth” (vs 10-24).

- What kind of Jew is Jesus talking about?
- Does this mean, as most people interpret it, that Christianity came out of Judaism?

or

- Is this the basis of what is called ‘Judeo/Christian’ religion or ethic?

Let's examine this just a little bit more. What is He talking about here? *He's talking about true worshipers!* Were the rabbis, the Pharisees and the priests true worshipers of God? What did Jesus say? *To keep your traditions you reject the commandments of God.* (Mark 7).

So, they weren't the *true* worshipers. We'll see in a minute that they had some former knowledge, but they are not the *true* worshipers. The way we answer the question is *salvation is of the Jews* so we know that it is not Judaism, and we know it's not from Jews, but from God! It says that you have to **worship Him in Spirit and in Truth!**

Let's see what Paul defines as to who is a Jew in the *spiritual* sense. Jesus was not talking about coming to the temple and worshiping. He said, ‘You're not going to be worshiping in this mountain nor at the temple.’ What He's talking about is New

Testament worship. What kind of Jew? Let's look at Paul's comparison here; let's see something concerning *physical* Jews and *spiritual* Jews. What Jesus is really talking about in John 4 are not the *physical* Jews, but the *spiritual* Jews, and Paul defines that for us; to show the difference between the *physical* Jew and the *spiritual* Jew. Some people get all excited when they find that they have Jewish blood in their *physical* genealogy background. Don't count it a blessing unless you obey God. Here's what Paul says:

Romans 2:17: “Behold, you are called a Jew, and you yourself rest in the Law, and boast in God, and know *His* will, and approve of the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the Law... [they have the framework of the Law] ...and are persuaded *that* you yourself are a guide of *the* blind, a light for those in darkness, an instructor of *the* foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of the knowledge and of the Truth *contained* in the Law” (vs 17-20). This is the same boast that we have clear down to this day.

Verse 21: “You, then, who are teaching another, do you not teach yourself also? You who preach, ‘Do not steal,’ are you stealing? You who say, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ are you committing adultery? You who abhor idols, are you committing sacrilege? You who boast in law, **are you dishonoring God through your transgression of the Law?**” (vs 21-23).

That's interesting! In one case there's a definite article: ‘you who boast in law’ meaning all their traditional laws, everything else, they're boasting as if it's from God. “...are you dishonoring God through your transgression of **the** Law?”—*God's Law!*

Verse 24: “For through you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, exactly as it is written. For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* Law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of *the* Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision” (vs 24-25).

That's the greatest insult you can tell one who claims to be a *physical* Jew. If you don't believe that, I challenge you to go to the so-called land of Israel and go into the Orthodox section where the Orthodox Jews live and tell them that their transgression of the Law makes them uncircumcised and see if you get out of there without being stoned! That's the highest insult possible!

Verse 26: “Therefore, if the uncircumcised...” Whom they hate and call ‘goyeem’; and lie, cheat and steal to take from them because ‘it’s their right as the chosen people’ to do so.

“...is keeping the requirements of the Law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? And shall not the uncircumcised, who by nature is fulfilling the Law, judge you, who, with *the* letter and circumcision, *are* a transgressor of the Law? For **he is not a Jew who is one outwardly**, neither *is* that circumcision, which *is* external in the flesh; rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly, and circumcision *is* of the heart, in the spirit *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God” (vs 26-29). This is what Jesus was defining! The *spiritual* Jew, not the *physical* Jew!

Let’s see something else that ties in with Alan Knight has been writing in the *Primitive Christianity in Crisis*.

Revelation 3:7: “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia, write: These things says the Holy One, the One Who *is* true...” Why is that so many ministers call Him a liar, when He says, ‘I am the Way, the Life and the Truth’?

“...the One Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one shuts, and Who shuts and no one opens. I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, and have kept My Word, and have not denied My name” (vs 7-8).

Those who do that Paul said are *spiritual* Jews—of the heart—because circumcision is of the heart and that’s the key to understanding the comparison between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Very profound! Very important!

Notice what they are confronted with; notice where the battle lies, v 9: “Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who proclaim themselves to be Jews and are not, but do lie...”

Meaning they are not converted, spirit-filled Christians who have had the circumcision of the heart! They belong to Satan the devil. And just like Satan has always done, he counterfeits what God does. He calls God a liar; calls Jesus a liar. Isn’t that the way that liars always do when they’re caught? *Yes!* Or they attack the messenger. Christ is going to take care of it. He has a way of doing that. He is going to intervene for us.

Here’s what He’s going to do. Go study the book of Esther and read about Mordecai who was distained by Haman the Agagite, and who he wanted to kill. He wanted to get rid of Mordecai. What happened? You read about the fate that came to

Haman the Agagite. This is what happened:

“...behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you” (v 9). That’s going to be very galling, indeed. The great of the world are going to ‘bow down’ to the least in the world who have been resurrected. Why?

Here’s the key of true *spiritual* Jews, v 10: “Because you have kept the Word of My patience... [constantly keeping the Word of God] ...I also will keep you from the time of temptation, which *is* about to come upon the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown” (vs 10-11).

Even though He does not correct them for any sin, notice what He says, this is very important:

Verse 12: “The one who overcomes...”—which means you still have to overcome:

- human nature
- the world
- Satan

How do you do that?

- with the Spirit of God
- with the righteousness of Christ
- with the Word of God

That’s how you do it! ***Walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!*** That’s how you overcome. We are to be *perfected in Christ!* That’s profound!

“...will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and *I will write upon him* My new name. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (vs 12-13).

- How is it that they faithfully kept the Word of God?
- How can you do it with so much religious confusion in the world, especially among professing Christianity or Christendom today.

They do not understand the Truth of the New Covenant when compared to the Old Covenant. What they say is that God has changed! God has NOT changed! What did God say? ***I change not!*** Very important! Another error that they have so that they don’t understand is that they have what is called ‘dispensationalism.’ That means that:

- those *before* the Flood received salvation one way
- those *after* the Flood received salvation

- another way
- those who were called of God from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—the children of Israel, and were given the law—were saved another way
- now we have the new *spiritual* dispensation and are saved another way

The truth is that when you understand about the Old and New Covenants: ***Only the few prophets and righteous kings received salvation before Christ came***—the very few! God did not offer salvation—*spiritual salvation*—to the nation of Israel. There are no promises of eternal life until you come to Christ.

Let's do a little comparison here, and we're going to see that the basis of what is called *the Old Covenant* and the physical things that they did always pointed to Christ. If you want a good book on that: *The Law of the Offerings* by Andrew Jukes. He shows that the type of everything that was given with the sacrifices and so forth all pointed toward Christ.

Old Covenant—Physical Promises:

The Old Covenant is a physical covenant based upon physical promises. Nowhere does it say that you will receive eternal life. Deut. 28 defines the promises. This gives all the blessings first. Remember what's important is that ***God set before them life and death, blessing and cursing***; therefore, choose life that you and your seed may live long, physical lives. I want you to read all the blessings, we're going to skim a few of them.

Deuteronomy 28:1: “And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God to observe *and* to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth.... [Notice: not going to heaven! Not entering the Kingdom of God!] ...And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you if you will obey the voice of the LORD your God” (vs 1-2).

Notice the blessings, v 3: “Blessed *shall you be* in the city, and blessed *shall you be* in the field. Blessed *shall be* the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your livestock, the increase of your cattle, and the flocks of your sheep. Blessed *shall be* your basket and your store. Blessed *shall you be* when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. The LORD shall cause your enemies that rise up against you to be stricken before your face. They shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways. The LORD shall command the blessing upon you in your

storehouses, and all that you set your hand to. And He shall bless you in the land. which the LORD your God gives you” (vs 3-8). ***Nothing about eternal life!***

Verse 9: “The LORD shall establish you a Holy people to Himself, as He has sworn to you, if you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. And all the people of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you. And the LORD shall make you abound in goods, in the fruit of your body, and in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground, in the land, which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you” (vs 9-11). Then he goes on to open the treasures and so forth.

Then you can read all the curses; He says, v 16: “Cursed *shall you be* in the city, and cursed *shall you be* in the field. Cursed *shall be* your basket and your store. Cursed *shall be* the fruit of your body...” (vs 16-18).

New Covenant—Spiritual Promises:

Now then, let's look at the comparison in the New Covenant, when Christ came. John 3:16 tells us exactly the promise, and this is important to realize: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life.”

That's nowhere given in the Old Testament. There are conditions in order to accomplish this. It's not just divvied out. God has to do the calling.

The New Covenant is a *spiritual* covenant based upon *spiritual* promises. We need to understand that only in the New Covenant with Christ was there the offer of eternal life. Never was there in the Old Covenant, none whatsoever! Paul is giving the comparison between the priesthood of Aaron and the priesthood of Melchisedec, of which Christ was called, and the Lord swore that the Priesthood forever according to the order of Melchisedec.

Hebrews 7:22: “By such a greater measure then, Jesus was made the Guarantor of a **superior** covenant.” The *King James* has ‘better’ but the Greek is **superior**. Why is it *superior*? *It's based upon better promises!* That's why! Which would you rather have:

- physical life with everything your soul desires and death and no more?

or

- the promise of eternal life?

There's no comparison! That's why it's a *superior covenant!*

Talking about the priesthood, v 23: “Now in the one case, there were many priests because they were not able to continue *to serve* by reason of death; but in the other case, because He is living forever, His priesthood never changes. Therefore, He has the power throughout all time to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them. For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest *Who is Holy*, blameless, undefiled, set apart from sinners and made higher than the heavens” (vs 23-26). ***That’s superior!*** We’re going to see you have a *superior* form of worship.

Here’s the great argument: to be circumcised or not {note sermon series on the *Circumcision Wars* (Galatians series)} You do not understand that the conflict in the early New Testament Church was this: Under Judaism—and even according to the Law of God—if a stranger wanted to participate in the worship of God he had to be circumcised. Under Judaism all proselytes were circumcised. That’s where the rub came in with the New Testament.

Old Covenant—Circumcision of the Flesh:

Genesis 17:9 is what Christ talked about concerning circumcision: “And God said to Abraham, ‘And you shall keep My covenant, you and your seed after you in their generations. This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your seed after you. Every male child among you shall be circumcised. And you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin. And it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. And a son of eight days shall be circumcised among you, every male child in your generations; he that is born in the house, or bought with silver of any foreigner who *is* not of your seed. He that is born in your house, and he that is bought with your silver, must be circumcised. And My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant” (vs 9-13).

Notice, there’s no promise of eternal life. Not here! The promise of eternal life was given to Abraham *before* he was circumcised (Gen. 15).

New Covenant—Circumcision of the Heart:

So, in the New Testament we have a higher standard. What we’re going to see all the way through in this comparison is that you have one standard that is *physical*, one standard that is *spiritual*. The standard that is spiritual is a higher standard, requiring a great deal more than just physical circumcision.

Let’s see how this begins; we’ll find that this is a very important distinction. In order to receive eternal life you have to have something beyond you as a person. No one has inherent eternal life in them.

You’ve got to have an addition from God. But you don’t get that unless there is a change.

There is repentance and circumcision of the heart through baptism, Acts 2:38: “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” They need the gift of the Holy Spirit—the seed of the begettal—unto eternal life.

Let’s see what this repentance is to do. If you cut off a little bit of the foreskin in circumcising the male, it doesn’t change the heart. It does permanently change that part of the anatomy, which is ***a sign that spiritual circumcision is to permanently change your mind!*** That’s the comparison.

Acts 3:19: “Therefore, repent and be **converted**...” You don’t find that anywhere in the Old Testament. You have a prophecy about circumcising the foreskin of your heart (Deut. 10), but God never gave the ability to do that because He didn’t send the Holy Spirit.

Let’s see that there is a circumcision of the heart, which is a greater circumcision than the circumcision of the flesh. This is what is important!

Colossians 2:9: “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily... [We’re to become like Christ.] ...and **you are complete in Him**...” (vs 9-10). That’s an important, profound statement! You don’t need the other teachings such as the worshiping of angels and following demonic spirits and so forth. That’s what they were confronted with.

What happens in the false Christianity, they come along and say ‘Well, if you have the commandments of God, that’s not enough, you’re not complete. We need to add a little bit more to that.’ **NO!** God is the One Who adds the more to it, which is His Spirit, through repentance and receiving the Holy Spirit.

He’s talking to those who have the Holy Spirit, v 10: “...Who is the Head of all principality and power **in Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands**, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” (vs 10-11).

You have a changed nature; your mind becomes permanently changed *spiritually* just as physical circumcision changes that part of the anatomy of a man permanently. That’s the comparison. One is *physical*; the other is *spiritual*.

Let’s understand something: The Holy Spirit was never offered under the Old Covenant, so therefore, they could not receive salvation. If you

don't have the Spirit of Christ you're none of His for eternal life! They may be of the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob physically, but not for eternal life.

"...in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ... [here's how it's done]: ...having been buried with Him in baptism, by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead. For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses. He has blotted out the note of debt against us *with* the decrees *of our sins*, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross" (vs 11-14)—that is *our sins!*

Roman 8:7 shows the result of this *spiritual* circumcision: "Because the carnal mind..." The mind of the flesh; one that does not have the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is an addition. Peter said to 'repent and be baptized for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' Only God can give that!

"...the carnal mind... [lacking the Spirit of God] ...*is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can it *be*" (v 7). You can understand this whenever you talk to any carnal-minded person. Especially when you:

- tell them about the Sabbath
- tell them about the Holy Days
- tell them about eating pork, shrimp, lobster

That blows them away!

Just as aside: I heard on the news what the favorite astronaut food is—that they get in tubes? It's all processed and it's guaranteed to last for three years. Do you know how they enjoy a meal up in the space capsule? They get a tube and they squeeze it into their mouths. Do you know what their favorite dish is? *Shrimp cocktail!*

They can't understand! What is their first retort? If they supposedly believe in Christ—based on their version of Christ, they say, 'Well, Christ changed the law; you don't have to worship on that day any longer.' They don't understand the New Covenant. It didn't change the laws; it changed *how we keep them!* That's what's changed—from a *carnal* mind to a *spiritual* mind.

Verse 8: "But **those who are in the flesh cannot please God.**" You think about that whenever you want to add something on to what God says—that 'we ought to have this'; that 'we ought to have this addition to it' and so forth.

Verse 9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh... [before God; this doesn't mean you're a spirit being, capable of walking through walls] ...but

in *the* Spirit, **if the Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you...**" That is *circumcision of the heart!* The Spirit of God takes away the carnality and the enmity and the hostility toward God and His ways and you delight in keeping His laws, His commandments. You delight in the Word of God. You are not looking for arguments for getting around keeping God's way. You're looking for every way to do the things that are right and that are good! You have to have God's Spirit dwelling *in* you.

Here's the dividing line: "...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him" (v 9). That's very profound and very important. Add Acts 5:32, that God gives the 'Spirit to those who obey Him.' That's what's important! You obey in the Spirit of the Law. In the two covenants, God did not do away with His laws. He did not change His laws.

- He changed *the way* that they are kept!
- He changed *the way* that you are justified!

Verse 10: "But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin... [that's what baptism is all about] ...however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live" (vs 10-13). There is a whole different requirement:

- a higher standard
- a spiritual standard
- one that supersedes the standard of the Old Covenant

That's why it's called a *superior* covenant, a *greater* covenant!

Old Covenant—Letter of the Law:

The people did not have the Holy Spirit under the Old Covenant. They would obey in the letter of the law. This is a very important point concerning the covenant, and most people do not understand what it's talking about here. When Jesus was God of the Old Covenant He was married to Israel. {note sermon: *Was Jesus Married?*} He died and that released Israel from that.

New Covenant—Spirit of the Law:

Romans 7:6: "But now we have been released from the law..." That doesn't mean He was

released from the obligation to keep the Law. That means **‘released from the law of marriage’ that bound them to the Old Covenant.** The only way a covenant comes to an end is by the death of Christ. That’s the only way that the Old Covenant came to an end.

“...because we have died *to that* in which we were held so that we might serve in newness of the spirit, and not in *the* oldness of *the* letter” (v 6).

Christ says that in the ‘spirit of the Law’ if you lust after a woman you’ve already committed adultery in your heart. Is that not a higher standard? *Yes, indeed!* That’s the spirit that we are to serve in, “...*the* newness of spirit...” Paul makes this clear.

Verse 7: “What then shall we say? *Is* the law sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! But I had not known sin, except through the law. Furthermore, I would not have been conscious of lust, except *that* the law said, ‘You shall not covet.’”

So, the Law brings out what sin is. This all ties together. Under the Old Covenant, you go back and read Deut. 28, Lev. 26 all the way through the requirement is *obey in the letter of the Law.* Can people obey in the *letter* of the Law? *Yes, they can!* Even though they don’t have the Spirit of God. How many people are out there who don’t murder, commit adultery and all these things? *Billions!*

Converted believers have the gift of the Holy Spirit or obey in the spirit of the Law.

Romans 6:16: “Don’t you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have **obeyed from the heart** ... [that’s the spiritual obedience] ...that form of doctrine which was delivered to you; and having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness” (vs 16-18).

If obeyed in the letter of the Law they could live in the community and worship at the earthly tabernacle. Heb. 9 shows this operation, because Paul said that it’s ‘impossible for the blood bulls and goats to forgive sin.’ What were the sacrifices for them? What did it accomplish?

Hebrews 9:13 tells us: “For if the blood of goats and bulls, and *the* ashes of a heifer sprinkled *on* those who are defiled, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh.”

Notice that it didn’t sanctify to the purifying of the spirit, only to the flesh. That’s why they had different washings and oblations and different sacrifices, which means that under the Old

Covenant, when they came and offered a sacrifice for whatever it was—whatever sin, whatever transgression that it was—it only justified to the flesh. That’s why you had the tabernacle or temple the on the earth. It was:

- a physical tabernacle
- a physical temple
- a physical worship
- a physical obeying in the letter of the Law

—forgiveness to the tabernacle, no further!

Verse 14 shows what the blood of Christ does: “To a far greater degree, the blood of Christ... [the New Covenant] ...Who through *the* eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **shall purify your conscience...**” Again, a permanent change of the mind; it was not possible under the Old Covenant.

“...from dead works to serve *the* living God. And for this reason He is *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant: in order that through *His* death, *which* took place for the release of the transgressions *that were committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance” (vs 14-15). So, it’s a completely different thing under the New Covenant.

Another thing that this facilitates and gives us is—which they didn’t not have under the Old Covenant—they could come to the temple. That’s why Jesus said where the woman was talking to Jesus and said, ‘You say that Jerusalem is the place that you ought to worship’—under the Old Covenant, yes!

- they came to the temple
- they offered the sacrifice
- they were justified to the temple
- God accepted them in the letter of the Law
- they could continue to receive the physical blessings of God

But now—once you have your sins *forgiven spiritually*—something new changes and that is that you don’t have to go to a temple as Jesus told the woman. *You worship God in Spirit and Truth.* How do you do that?

Hebrews 10:14: “For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, ““*This is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,” says *the* Lord, “I will give My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds; and their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again.”” Now, where remission of these *is, it is* no longer *necessary to offer* sacrifices for sin.

Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus” (vs 14-19).

Now you have access directly to God! Profound difference. Before you had to go through a physical priest and a physical temple to offer physical sacrifices for physical justification of the flesh, and it didn't change the conscience. Now you repent to God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above

- through repentance
- forgiveness of sin
- circumcision of the heart

Now you have direct access to God the Father and He has direct access to you with His Holy Spirit! That's something! That's why it's a *superior* covenant!

Let's see how Paul writes of it here, Ephesians 2:18: “For through Him...” Christ! He's our Intercessor! Mediator! He's at the right hand of God! (Heb. 4)

“...we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father” (v 18). God has given you the greatest thing that He can in this physical life: His Spirit and access to Him! That's why the New Covenant is superior!

Verse 19: “So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit” (vs 19-22). So, it's reciprocal, having the Spirit of God!

Old Covenant—Administration of Death:

2-Cor. 3 shows that under the Old Covenant they had the *administration of death*—execute people for certain sins.

New Covenant--Disfellowshipment:

Under the New Covenant, since the Church is scattered throughout the world in many sovereign nations, you cannot have a sovereign church in the middle of the sovereign nation executing the death penalty. The Church does not have that. The greatest authority that the Church has when someone sins is disfellowshipment, that is all! God will take care of the rest of it. That is important to realize when we understand the function of the New Covenant.

However, Paul gives us a warning! There is something to fear!

Hebrews 10:20: “By a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart... [if you have sins to repent of, you repent] (but it's a): ...with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful; and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near. For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins” (vs 20-26).

This is a permanent thing! Once you receive the Holy Spirit of God ***there is no turning back!*** We do have sins, shortcomings, mistakes and backslidings; those things do take place. Happens to all of us! That's why we're under grace and can repent. God will forgive us and we go on again. That's why in the model prayer that Jesus gave: ‘Give us day-by-day our daily bread and forgive us our sins’ because we need our sins forgiven every day. That keeps us in right standing with God.

As we have covered concerning the *unpardonable sin* before, if that is committed there is no longer any sacrifice for sins—*period!* The sacrifice of Christ will do you no good!

Verse 27: “But a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*.... [that's pretty strong language] ...*Consider this:* anyone who rejects *the* Law of Moses dies without mercy under *the testimony* of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace?” (vs 27-29). The stakes are higher! The punishment is greater!

Verse 30: “For we know Him Who has said, “Vengeance *belongs* to Me. I will recompense!” says *the* Lord.’ And again, ‘*The* Lord will judge His people.’ *It is* a fearful thing to fall into *the* hands of *the* living God” (vs 30-31). I tell you what, it's something!

There is a difference. If we have the Spirit of God, have our sins forgiven, have our conscience cleansed, have direct access to God the Father in heaven above, through Jesus Christ, then there's no turning back from that. No turning back!

Under the Old Covenant: if they transgressed the law there was *physical atonement* for certain sins and the *death penalty* for others.

Under the New Covenant: if they transgressed the law, forgiveness *upon repentance*, or the second death for the unpardonable sin.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 4:19-24
- 2) Romans 2:17-29
- 3) Revelation 3:7-13
- 4) Deuteronomy 28:1-11, 16-18
- 5) John 3:16
- 6) Hebrews 7:22-26
- 7) Genesis 17:9-13
- 8) Acts 2:38
- 9) Acts 3:19
- 10) Colossians 2:9-14
- 11) Romans 8:7-13
- 12) Romans 7:6-7
- 13) Romans 6:16-18
- 14) Hebrews 9:13-15
- 15) Hebrews 10:14-19
- 16) Ephesians 2:18-22
- 17) Hebrews 10:20-31

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Mark 7
- Genesis 15
- Deuteronomy 10
- Acts 5:32
- Leviticus 26
- Hebrews 4
- 2 Corinthians 3

Also Referenced:

Books:

- *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight
- *The Law of the Offerings* by Andrew Jukes

Sermon Series:

- *Circumcision Wars* (Galatians series)
- *Was Jesus Married?*

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