

2Corinthians – Week 8

I. Review

A. Paul's confidence came from God through Christ who made him a minister of the New Covenant!

i. In 1Cor. 15:9-10, Paul said that the grace of God was working in him.

B. The Old Covenant vs. The New Covenant

i. The Old Covenant called "*the letter of the law*"

ii. The New Covenant called "*the Spirit*"

iii. The OC was written on tablets of stone.

1. It is written with the Spirit upon human hearts.

iv. The OC was inaugurated through Moses at Mt. Sinai

1. The NC was inaugurated through Christ's blood (Luke 22:20; Hebrews 9:15)

v. The OC brought death!

1. 3000 died the day it was first introduced (cf. Exodus 32:28)

2. The NC brings life!

a. 3000 were saved the first day it was introduced (Acts 2:36-41).

vi. The OC could not justify (Gal. 3:11)

1. The NC brings justification by the resurrection of Jesus (cf. Rom. 4:25).

vii. The OC declares no one as righteous because it makes us conscience of sins (cf. Romans 3:20)

1. The NC declares those in Christ as righteous before God through Christ (cf. 2Cor. 5:21).

viii. Under the Old Covenant, God has set up a sacrificial system to deal with sin.

1. These sacrifices pointed to the one-time sacrifice of Jesus.

a. The blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins (cf. 10:4-11)

b. These sacrifices were merely a promissory note of the forgiveness that could come through the blood of Christ.

ix. Paul is probably bringing up the old and the new covenant concepts to the Corinthians (a Gentile church) because of the Judaizers.

1. The Judaizers taught that in order for the Gentiles to be saved, they needed to obey the Law of Moses, even circumcision (Acts 15:1-5).

2. In Galatians, Paul had to correct the influences these Judiazers had on the churches in Galatia.

II. Continuation: Old Covenant vs. New Covenant (part 2)

A. From glory (OT) to surpassing glory (NT)!

i. 2Cor. 3:7-8 (ESV), "*Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, ⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory?"*

1. The Old Covenant called "*the ministry of death*"

a. Why? Because of what was said earlier:

i. 3000 died the day it was inaugurated.

ii. It cannot justify nor can it make righteous.

b. Paul refers to Exodus 34:29ff, where Moses descends Mt. Sinai after receiving a duplicate set of tablets (he broke the first set in Exodus 32).

i. Moses' face was so brilliant they could not gaze upon it.

1. By the way: The passage does not say they could not look upon Moses' face.

2. Just like the sun: We can look at it, but we cannot gaze upon it.

- c. The term “*which was being brought to an end*” seems to be pointing to the veil which Paul later brings up in verses 13-14.
 - i. Reason being is because the Greek word (“*katargeo*”) denotes to cease, to nullify, to destroy, to abolish, to vanish, to do away with.
 - 1. In some translations, this Greek word is translated to mean “fade away.” But it doesn’t convey the action of something diminishing as time goes by but rather as something abruptly ceasing.
 - ii. When Moses placed a veil over his face, in that context, the glory ceased.
 - iii. Paul uses this same Greek word in verse 14, where it’s translated, “*taken away.*”
 - iv. Some, however, believe this was referring to the old covenant.
 - 1. But the sentence structure seems to be referring to the glory on Moses’ face.
 - 2. Later on, however, in verse 11, “*katargeo*” is used when referring to the “*ministry of death.*”
- 2. The New Covenant called “*the ministry of the Spirit,*” outshines the first!
 - a. Think of the New Covenant as the noonday sun which overpowers the lights of the stars and planets in the sky.
- ii. 2Cor. 3:9 (ESV), “*For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory.*”
 - 1. The Old Covenant called “*the ministry of condemnation*”
 - a. Why? Because of what was said earlier regarding it!
 - 2. New Covenant now called “*the ministry of righteousness*”
 - a. It is not a ministry of condemnation!
 - i. Romans 8:1-4, “*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*”
 - 1. No condemnation!
 - a. All made possible under the New Covenant, called here “*the law of the Spirit of life!*”
 - b. By the way, the law of the Spirit is not “lawless!”
 - c. Antinomianism (freedom from obedience to any law) is a false view of the new covenant.
 - ii. Now, Imagine that? No condemnation!
 - 1. The righteous requirements of the Law are fulfilled IN us THROUGH Christ!
 - 2. This is the exceeding glory that Paul was referring to in 2Cor. 3:9!

- iii. 2Cor. 3:10-11 (ESV), *“Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses it. ¹¹ For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory.”*
 - 1. In other words, the Law of Moses, which had glory (seen on Moses’ face), was to become obsolete!
 - a. That is, its glory was not permanent!
 - b. Hebrews 8:13 (ESV), *“In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.”*
 - i. Here, the Hebrew writer establishes a principle truth:
 - 1. Anything that is growing old (a tree, a garment, a person), will soon disappear.
 - ii. The Old Covenant was to disappear.
 - 1. The gospel of Christ removed the old and brought in the new!
 - 2. This new covenant would never vanish!
 - iii. By the way, this shows that there are no more “covenants” to come despite what the Mormons teach, since they claim their book is ‘another testament’ of Jesus Christ!