

"The New Covenant"

Part 5

2 Corinthians 3:6-18

Introduction: Tonight as we continue in our study of 2 Corinthians 3 we shall look at Paul's conclusion of this chapter. We have come tonight to 2 Corinthians 3:17-18. Now we need to understand that verse 17 connects back to the beginning of this section.

Notice 2 Corinthians 3:6

At the end of this verse Paul tells his readers that the Spirit giveth life and then he launches into the section which we have looked at in which he tells us why the New covenant is better than the Old Covenant. Then Paul picks up his thought concerning the Spirit again.

Notice 2 Corinthians 3:17

Here we see the pinnacle of Paul's teaching in this section. He tells us that the Lord is that Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. The word "liberty" in this verse comes from a root word which means:

1. *freeborn*
 1. *in a civil sense, one who is not a slave*
 2. *of one who ceases to be a slave, freed,*

So the word "liberty" means "to be free".

Now let me remind you again of the context because this will really help us to understand what Paul is saying here. The Judaizers had come into the church at Corinth and they were trying to place the believers at Corinth under the Law. They were teaching the believers that salvation was not possible apart from the Law. But the Judaizers were blinded to how the Law was never given to save anyone. It was given to reveal the true sinfulness of man and to help him to see his need of a Savior. No man could keep the Law and therefore the Law condemned every person who came before it. For those who were under the Law they were shackled with a burden they were not able to carry.

Acts 15:1, 7-10

And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

⁷ *And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.*

⁸ *And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;*

⁹ *And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.*

¹⁰ *Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?*

To place people under the Law is to place them under a weight which no one can carry because there is not one of us who are able to keep the Law. Paul refers to the Law as a ministry of death and a ministry of condemnation in this section we are in. But in contrast to the Law Paul tells the Corinthians that the Spirit or the New Covenant gives life and it justifies the person who enters into the New Covenant. But this is not all the Spirit does.

I. The Spirit Gives Liberty

Notice 2 Corinthians 3:17

Tonight we are going to walk through a list of freedoms which we have with the Spirit that no man can have under the Law.

1. We have freedom from the penalty of sin.

John 3:14-18

¹⁴ *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:*

¹⁵ *That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

¹⁶ *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

¹⁷ *For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

¹⁸ *He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

This freedom from the penalty of sin is eternal and permanent not by our power but by the finished work of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 10:10, 14

¹⁰ *By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

¹⁴ *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

All of our sin debt was paid by the blood of Jesus Christ. There CANNOT be ONE sin that Jesus did not pay for on our account for if there can be one sin that we can commit that is not covered by His Sacrifice and His blood then we are forever damned.

Hebrews 10:26-28

²⁶ *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.*

²⁷ *But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.*

²⁸ *He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:*

The willful sin here is to stand at the foot of the cross and then turn and walk away without accepting Jesus Christ. To do that leaves a person with no hope because there is NO OTHER SACRIFICE FOR SIN. The point is that Jesus paid for EVERY SIN we would ever commit and therefore we have freedom from the penalty of sin.

2. We have freedom from the power of sin.

For those who were under the Law there was no power to overcome the power of sin. To help us to see this point I want to take you to the book of Romans 7.

In Romans 6-8 Paul tells of his journey from legalism to liberty. In chapter 7 we find the key to what Paul learned. In this chapter Paul describes 3 stages which he went through.

a. Paul's conversion.

Notice Romans 7:1-6

Here we see Paul as the man who is dead to the Law so that he can be married to another. This is what happened when we came to Jesus Christ. We were baptized into the body of Jesus Christ and since Jesus died we also died and therefore we are free from the Law. A man is bound by the Law as long as he lives so in Christ we were crucified and so we are dead to the Law. When this happens we are given the Holy Spirit and so the very power that raised Jesus Christ from the grave now lives within us. Paul had this power but he only experienced glimpses of the new life. After Paul was saved he had what is known as

the "wilderness experience". But before he describes his wilderness experience he looks back to life before Jesus Christ.

b. **Paul's pre-conversion experience.**

Notice Romans 7:7-13

When the Law found its way into the life and the heart of Paul it made him painfully aware of his true sinful condition. When the Law came in to his life it revived the sin which was in the life of Paul.

Now Paul is going to describe his wilderness experience.

c. **Paul's struggle after salvation.**

Notice Romans 7:14-23

Paul tried his best to produce a standard of righteousness by his own strength and works which God would accept. In this attempt he became a legalist. Paul battled with this internal struggle with his mind and his members. The mind desired to keep the Law but his members desired to live in sin. He found himself living a life of defeat.

Notice Romans 7:24

Here we see the frustration in Paul's carnal wilderness experience. But he made it out of Romans 7 and into Romans 8.

d. **Paul's victory in Jesus Christ.**

Notice Romans 7:25

His victory was in Christ.

Notice Romans 8:1-3

Here was and is the answer!!

Paul had to learn that he received eternal life through Jesus Christ and he could also live the victorious life through Jesus Christ.

When Paul was saved he had to come to the place where he stopped TRYING to earn God's favor and start TRUSTING that he as a doomed sinner could be accepted in Christ. In the same way Paul had to learn that as a defeated saint who was conquered by lust, that he

had to stop TRYING in his own power and start TRUSTING in the power which was given to him by the Holy Spirit. The key was FAITH for the just shall LIVE by faith.

Application:

The point is that we who have been saved also have the power within us to live the victorious life. When we stop TRYING in our strength and we start TRUSTING in God's strength it will bring the legalism to an end.

So the point is we are free from the power of sin.

3. **We have freedom from guilt.**
4. **We have freedom to be ourselves.**
5. **We have freedom death.**
6. **We have freedom from fear.**
7. **We have freedom to access God.**

Conclusion:

This list could go on and on but these are some of the freedoms we have in Christ and these are freedoms which were not available to those who were under the Law/Old Covenant.

We must understand that it is Satan's desire to bring us under bondage and to strip away our liberty in Christ.

Galatians 2:4

⁴ And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

Galatians 5:1

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.