

Timothy ... will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.

Paul - 1 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV)

# In Christ

Or don't you know that all of those who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death...burial...and resurrection.

Paul - Romans 6:3-5 (NIV)

David Kuykendall Ministries

Spring 2011

Volume 12, Number 2

## Sufficient Ministers of the New Covenant

David Kuykendall

Obey the five commands listed below and experience your life "in Christ." Experience the abundant life through living by grace. Notice that each command is either to believe something or to choose to do something.

### THE FIVE COMMANDS

#### Believe

Romans 6:11

Reckon (believe) yourselves to be dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord

#### Choose

Romans 6:12

Do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in its lusts

#### Choose

Romans 6:13a

Do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin

#### Choose/Believe

Romans 6:13b

Present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead.

#### Choose

Romans 6:13c

[Present] your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

We can and should obey each of these commands because Romans 6:3-5 teaches that all believers have been baptized into Jesus and as a result all believers have been baptized into his death, burial, and resurrection.

*Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who 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. 2 Corinthians 3:5-6*

With the words "letter" and "kills," Paul is referring to the Old Covenant." With the words "Spirit" and "gives life," he is making reference to the New Covenant.

Four times in the New Testament, Scripture says that the blood of Jesus is the blood of the New Covenant. In Matthew, Jesus says also that the blood of Jesus is for the forgiveness of sins. Only one time, then, He says the blood is for the forgiveness of sins but four times he says it is the blood of the New Covenant. Jesus is giving great emphasis to the New Covenant.

Even though Jesus makes prominent the truth that His blood was the blood of the New Covenant, the New Covenant is not prominent in Christian writings and teachings.

It is obvious that the New Covenant is a different covenant. In order for us to understand the New Covenant we need first to study the Old Covenant.

The Old Covenant is the covenant of the "letter." With this word Paul is referring to the law. Our best understanding of the Old Covenant is looking at the arrangement God made with the Jews when He gave them the law.

Three times during the giving of the law to the Israelites, they said, "What God has said we will do (Exodus 19:8, 24:3 and 24:7).

That is the Old Covenant. God gave the laws and the Jewish nation said, "What God says, we will do." In Romans 8:3, Paul comments on this arrangement with these words:

*For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh.*

Paul teaches in Romans chapter 7 that when one tries to keep the law in his own strength and wisdom, he keeps the flesh in power. Flesh is another word for our sin nature which is that we think we are wise (Romans 1:22).

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The law arrangement was not only weak, it was dangerous. All we need to understand to know this is the history of the Israelites. Repeatedly, they fell into sin. Consider Galatians 5:19-21a

*Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like...*

The law arrangement keeps the flesh in power and results in serious-minded Christians having sin in their lives. This does not mean that all Christians are guilty of all the works of the flesh. It does mean that all can be subject to falling into anything mentioned in the list of Galatians 5:19-21.

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Remember that the law arrangement is reading a command in the Bible and saying, “I will do it” or “I will not do it.” The law arrangement provides no divine resource.

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In 2 Corinthians 6:3, Paul writes that living out that type of arrangement “kills.”

With that word, Paul is not referring to physical death. He is referring to an emotional and spiritual state of knowing he is a failure. He knows that when we keep the flesh in power, we are going to have sins of some type in our lives.

Those of us who teach and preach must be very careful not to teach or preach on a command in the Bible and encourage our listeners to get out there and keep that command. Doing that is placing them under law and in a state of spiritual danger.

With that understanding of the Old Covenant, we can better grasp what Paul is saying about the New Covenant. He says in 2 Corinthians 3:6 “the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.”

The Holy Spirit enters the life of a believer when he receives Jesus as Lord and Savior. He comes in to take over. However, pay attention to Galatians 5:17. It says:

*For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*

When we were born, we were born with a sin nature—flesh. Our flesh is that we think we are wise.

When a person receives Jesus as Lord and Savior a battle begins to take place in his heart. Our know-it-all attitude and the Holy Spirit are both seeking to be in control of our lives.

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So, how can a person deal with this battle taking place in his heart? He first needs to understand that he will be filled with the Spirit when the flesh is put out of power.

He must also understand how to put the flesh out of power. Galatians 5:24 says that when we were saved the flesh was crucified. However, the flesh was not annihilated. The flesh continues to oppose the Holy Spirit until we experience his crucifixion. When the flesh is put out of power, we will be filled with the Holy Spirit and we will begin to live in the New Covenant and not the Old Covenant.

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Romans 6:11-13 gives five directives for us to live by in order to experience our crucifixion, burial and resurrection. When one consistently lives out these five commands under the leadership and power of the Holy Spirit, he continues to be filled with the Holy Spirit because the flesh is out of power.

When we are filled with the Spirit, we walk in the Spirit. The Spirit guides us to read Scripture and then enables us to live out the commands we read.

When we do this, we are engaged in New Covenant living and we are experiencing the abundant life Jesus promised.

God makes us sufficient ministers of the New Covenant when we are experiencing the New Covenant.

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All of us who teach others how to live the Christian life must give up teaching them to read Scripture and obey it in the flesh. We must ourselves receive the filling of the Holy Spirit and teach others to do the same. In that way, God makes us sufficient ministers of the New Covenant.

We now have an abbreviated version of “Oneness translated into and printed in the Karen language. It is now in use in Asia. We have a few copies available to use here in the United States.

Also, this same abbreviated translation has been translated into other languages. We also have an abbreviated version of “Oneness “ ready for printing.

Book orders, newsletter contributions, or tax-deductible contributions may be sent to:

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