

# MESSENGER

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*What is*  
the  
**Gospel?**

# MESSENGER

## Magazine

Issue No. 3 | October 2017

You've probably heard of "the gospel." But what is the gospel?

Do you really know what the gospel is?

Does it matter?

Yes, it really does matter—in the most profound way!

Why? Find out in this issue!

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# What is the GOSPEL?

Rod Reynolds

**Jesus Christ commanded us to believe the gospel (Mark 1:15). Jesus Christ said those who believe the gospel, which also implies obedience, would be saved, but those who reject it are subject to punishment (Mark 16:15-16; cf. Romans 1:16; 10:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 2:13-14; 1 Peter 4:17-18).**

**But to believe the gospel you must know what it is. And there is a great deal of confusion about what the gospel actually is.**

Is it solely a message about the person of Jesus Christ, for example? Is the gospel just a syrupy sweet, sentimental message about “unconditional love” and “unconditional acceptance”? (Many today make no distinction between the two concepts). Is the gospel summed up in the idea of “accepting Jesus as your Savior,” with no real requirement for a change in your conduct?

On the other hand, is the gospel, as some contend, solely a message about the “Kingdom of God,” exclusive of the message of salvation, and the forgiveness of sin through Christ’s sacrifice? Is the history of the life of Jesus Christ a part of the gospel?

Jesus warned that there would be **many** coming in **his name**, proclaiming him to be the Christ, yet **deceiving many** (Matthew 24:5). How? Appearing to be righteous, but **perverting** the gospel so that it becomes a *false gospel* – a **lie!** (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:29-30; 2 Corinthians 4:2; 11:13-15; Galatians 1:6-9).

In order to deal with contentions and questions relating to the gospel, it’s important that we understand what the gospel actually is. That is, what does the *Bible* itself say about the gospel?

For genuine Christians the word of God is the final authority on all matters of faith and doctrine (Psalm 119:105; Isaiah 8:20; Matthew 4:4; Mark

7:13; John 8:31; 14:23-24; Acts 17:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 2 Timothy 2:15; James 1:22-25). One of the keys to Biblical understanding is, **let the Bible interpret the Bible.**

To understand a given subject, gather every scripture on that subject, and examine each in its immediate context and in the context of the Bible as a whole (Isaiah 28: 9-10). And examine each in relation to the others, noting how they add to and complement one another. A major source of misunderstanding and outright deception is taking only one or two or a few scriptures on a subject and misapplying them, reading into them a false meaning, or excluding other scriptures that add information and provide a basis for deeper understanding.

To understand what the Bible reveals about what the gospel is we must consult not just a handful of selected scriptures that form an incomplete picture, but a number of scriptures that can together give us a comprehensive view of the subject. You could, for example, look up every one of the ninety-seven verses where the word “gospel” appears in the New King James Version, and study them in their immediate context. That wouldn’t tell you everything there is to know about what the Bible teaches about the gospel, but it would help you gain a broad perspective on how the term is used in Scripture.

What does the word gospel mean? It’s translated from the Greek *euangelion*, which means “good message,” or, you could say, “glad tidings,” or “good news.”

Jesus Christ, during his three and a half year ministry, proclaimed a “good message,” the gospel. Concurrently, he also trained men he had selected from among his disciples to proclaim that same message after his departure from the earth

(Luke 6:12-13). They are called “apostles,” from *apostolos*, meaning a delegate, or a herald, a messenger, one sent forth to proclaim a message.

What was that message? It was the gospel (Mark 16:15).

But what is the nature of the message they were sent to proclaim? What are its contents?

## The Kingdom of God

John the Baptist had been sent ahead of Jesus Christ, to prepare the way for him, preaching the gospel, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” (Matthew 3:1-3). Coming on the heels of John the Baptist, Jesus also proclaimed the gospel of the Kingdom of God (Mark 1:14-15).

The twelve apostles, even as they were being trained, were also sent to preach the Kingdom of God (Luke 9:1-2; Matthew 10:5-7). Later, Paul was separated and commissioned as an apostle to preach the gospel, and he, too, preached the Kingdom of God (Acts 28:30-31).

Certainly the Kingdom of God is a vital aspect of the gospel. It is this vital dimension of the gospel that most Churches claiming to represent Christ have left out of their teaching. Or they’ve perverted the concept of the Kingdom, often reducing it to nothing more than a sentimental, warm feeling in your heart. Nevertheless, Jesus said the true message of the coming Kingdom of God must be proclaimed right up to the end of this age (Matthew 24:14).

The prophets had long declared that a Messiah (anointed one), eternal, bearing divine names and titles, would be sent to the earth to establish a **literal world-ruling kingdom** that would never end (Isaiah 2:1-4; Daniel 2:44; 7:14, 26; Zechariah 14:1-5. 9, 16-17). The name Jesus Christ helps identify him as the long awaited Messiah. “Christ” is the anglicized Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word for Messiah, or “anointed one.” Jesus plainly said, “I proceeded

forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me” (John 8:42; cf. Mark 8:27-30; John 1:41; 4:42; Acts 2:36). To back up such claims, Jesus publicly worked many miracles, and displayed other signs of the fact that he was the promised Messiah (Matthew 11:2-6; John 5:36; 7:31; Acts 2:22; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8).

In proclaiming the gospel, Jesus Christ and those he sent forth after him taught that he would one day return, no longer flesh and blood, but with eternal, divine power and glory, to establish the promised Kingdom of God (Matthew 24:30-31; Luke 1:33-34; Acts 3:19-21; 1 Corinthians 15:23-25). Having established the Kingdom at his return, Jesus – and with him the resurrected saints – will literally rule over the nations of the earth (Luke 19:11-19; Revelation 2:26-27; 5:10; 11:15-18; 19:11-16; 20:4-6).

But is there more to the gospel? Does the gospel, for instance, also include a message of personal salvation, and salvation for Israel and mankind? Is that, too, a part of the gospel? And the life and teachings of Jesus Christ – are those part of the gospel?

## Salvation

We’ve seen that John the Baptist preached the Kingdom of God, but what else did he preach? In prophesying of the work to be performed by his son, who came to be called John the Baptist, Zacharias, a priest among the Jews, said, “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, To give **knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins**, Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the **way of peace**” (Luke 1:76-79).

Luke wrote also of John, that being inspired of

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God, "...he went into all the region around the Jordan, **preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins**, as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; Make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough ways smooth; And all flesh shall see the **salvation of God**'" (Luke 3:3-6).

Clearly, the message of the gospel preached by John the Baptist included salvation by repentance and the remission of sins, and the way of peace, as well as the kingdom of God. It was all part of his message in preparing the way for the Messiah. Indeed, all these facets of the gospel message are interconnected and all are essential to a comprehensive understanding of the gospel.

Jesus, in explaining the purpose for which he was sent, quoted a prophecy from the book of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke 4:18-19; cf. Isaiah 62:11). The gospel is a message of healing, of liberty, of enlightenment, and of prophecy.

The preaching of the gospel is in part an **invitation** to the "wedding" feast representing the Kingdom of God (Matthew 22:1-3). **Those who hear the gospel are being called to salvation** (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14). God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). (See our articles, "Are 'Many' or 'Few' Called In This Age?"; and "Marriage Feast Parables").

Jesus trained men he had chosen to become Apostles and commissioned them to preach the gospel (Mark 16:15-16). That included their bearing witness to the crucifixion and resurrection

of Jesus Christ, of his exaltation at the right hand of God, and the plan of salvation through repentance and the forgiveness of sins (Acts 5:30-32; 1 Peter 1:3-13).

Did Paul preach a false gospel? He said that he'd been sent to "testify to the gospel of the grace of God," which was a part of the message of the Kingdom of God (Acts 20:24-25). He also

referred to the gospel as the "gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1:13). He said to the Corinthians that he'd been sent to preach the gospel, which includes the "message of the cross," that is, Christ's crucifixion (1 Corinthians 1:17-18, 23). Salvation, and the means through which salvation may be obtained, is an essential part of the message of the gospel.

*"The prophets had long declared that a Messiah (anointed one), eternal, bearing divine names and titles, would be sent to the earth to establish a **literal world-ruling kingdom** that would never end."*

## The Gospel of Jesus Christ

No government is any better than those who administer it. How can we believe in God's Kingdom without knowing the character of the King? The gospel includes vital information about the King – Jesus Christ, the Messiah. He is mentioned many places in the Old Testament. The Messiah's coming was equated in the minds of the Jews with the establishing of God's Kingdom. Four books of the Bible were written to record the story of his birth, life and death as a human being, his teachings, and his resurrection to former glory. These four books, commonly called "the gospels" (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), constitute about one third of the volume of the new Testament. And much more is said concerning him in the other books of the Bible, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

To believe in the gospel of the Kingdom of God we must believe in the King, and the true gospel leads us to such faith (Romans 10:8-17). Note that the message preached is referred to as the "word of faith" (Romans 10:8). We find in Mark 16:15-16 that **salvation requires believing the gospel**. In

Romans 10 we are told that **salvation requires genuine belief in Jesus Christ, in his resurrection, and confessing Jesus Christ**. Obviously, the gospel message contains these elements. The gospel is referred to in Romans 10 as the “gospel of peace” (Romans 10:15). But all of these things are a part of the same gospel, not different gospels (2 Corinthians 11:4; Galatians 1:6). And the various names by which the gospel is referred to do not imply different gospels, but simply highlight facets of the one true gospel. Also, of utmost importance, the gospel must be **obeyed** (Romans 10:16).

Note that Mark opens his “gospel” account with the statement: “The beginning of the **gospel of Jesus Christ**, the Son of God” (Mark 1:1). There is no definite article in the Greek original associated with “beginning” (*arche*) here. The idea is that Mark begins, at this point, his “gospel” – good message – concerning Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The subject dealt with in the book is the preaching and public ministry of Jesus Christ, which identifies him as the Son of God – the Messiah. He begins his discourse by showing that what was to follow had been prophesied. And that John the Baptist, as prophesied, had come to “prepare the way” for Christ. Then he continues with his account of the public teaching and ministry of Jesus Christ.

After his resurrection, Jesus instructed his disciples to take his message to the world, “...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20). Having been beaten and threatened for preaching “in the name of Jesus,” Christ’s apostles were, “...rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and **preaching Jesus as the Christ**” (Acts 5:40-42).

A man named Philip had been ordained a deacon in the early Church (Acts 6:2-6). He soon began acting more in the capacity of an evangelist

(Acts 21:8). Due to a great persecution against the Church in Jerusalem, its people were “scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria” (Acts 8:1). “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and **preached Christ to them**” (Acts 8:5). Further, “... when they believed Philip as he **preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ**, both men and women were baptized” (Acts 8:12).

Saul had likely been a member of the Sanhedrin, the highest legislative and judicial body among the Jews at that time. He had participated in the persecution of Christians (Acts 9:1-2; 26:9-11; Galatians 1:13). But Jesus Christ appeared to Saul as he journeyed to Damascus on a mission to persecute Christians. Saul was struck blind,

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temporarily, and Christ revealed that he had a mission of a wholly different kind for Saul (Acts 9:3-14). Jesus said of Saul, “...he is a chosen vessel of Mine to **bear My name** before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15). This Saul is more commonly called Paul in the New Testament (Acts 13:9).

In his epistle to the Romans Paul wrote: “Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the **gospel of God** which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, **concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord**, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:1-4). Paul wrote in his epistle to the Galatians that God “...separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, to **reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him** among the Gentiles...” (Galatians 1:15-16). In so doing, he preached “the faith which he once tried to destroy” (Galatians 1:23).

Of course, he wasn’t just preaching the name of Christ, nor about Christ’s person, divorced from Christ’s teachings, but as Paul’s writings reveal, he



was preaching and teaching the full message of the gospel, including the obligation to obey it (cf. Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:16-17; 10:16; 16:26; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; Hebrews 5:9). The last we hear of Paul in the book of Acts, he is under house arrest in Rome, where "...he explained and solemnly **testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus** from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets..." (Acts 28:23). And he continued, "**preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ** with all confidence, no one forbidding him" (Acts 28:31).

Peter, in writing to the Church, says: "...you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may **proclaim the praises of Him** who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

In its largest sense, the gospel is the Word of God, God's "good message" to mankind, contained in the pages of the Bible. Where the truth of God's word is being preached or taught, so is the gospel. "In Him [Jesus Christ] you also trusted, after you heard **the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation**; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1:13).

Some of the ministers who worked with the apostles are called **evangelists**, from the Greek *euaggelistes*, meaning one who preaches the gospel. In preaching the gospel an evangelist was to preach and teach the doctrines of the word of God. As Paul wrote to Timothy, "Preach the word... do the work of an evangelist" (2 Timothy 4:2, 5). We find that the same gospel preached in the New Testament Church was preached to the Israelites in the wilderness. "For indeed the **gospel was preached to us as well as to them**; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it" (Hebrews 4:2).

The gospel, the word of God, endures forever. "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, But the word of the Lord endures forever' Now this is the word which by

the gospel was preached to you" (1 Peter 1:24-25). "Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the **everlasting gospel** to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people – saying with a loud voice, 'Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water'" (Revelation 14:6-7).

There should be no confusion about the gospel. The gospel is the message of God to mankind, the message of his kingdom, of his salvation, of the Savior Jesus Christ, and the message of everything else encompassed by the word of God. That is the gospel.

After his resurrection, Jesus instructed his disciples to take his message to the world, "...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20). Having been beaten and threatened for preaching "in the name of Jesus," Christ's apostles were, "...rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and **preaching Jesus as the Christ**" (Acts 5:40-42).



# THE TWO COVENANTS

## ~Part I~

LAW

LOVE

JUSTICE | GRACE  
TRUTH | MERCY

Rod Reynolds

Why does the Bible speak of the two covenants, or “testaments”?

Did God try one system and find that it didn’t work — so substituted another totally different system? Or did God give us an “Old Covenant” to show that man could not Live by His Law — then later substitute a new covenant of “grace” that required no obedience to law?

Is the “New Covenant” the very antithesis of all that the old Covenant stood for — as many assume?

Why did God give Israel the “Old Covenant”? Why did He later institute a “New Covenant”?

The true answers to these questions have been understood by very few — yet they are simple and plain.

Nothing is more essential to an understanding of true Christianity than a knowledge of the relationships between the two covenants. Millions have fallen prey to subtle satanic deceptions because they *lacked this understanding*. Even some who have had a knowledge of true Christianity and have received the Holy Spirit have stumbled and *fallen* over a lack of understanding regarding this issue!

It may prove essential to your salvation that you gain a true knowledge and perspective of the relationship between the Old and New Covenants! Because of the importance and complexity of this subject, this article presents the first in a series exploring the “two covenants,” that is, the Old and New Covenants, and the relationship between the two.

### The Kingdom of God

Why did God institute the Old Covenant — and what was its purpose? The answer lies in a few

very plain scriptures from the Bible. Yet almost *no one* has understood! Incredible, but true! False religion, masquerading under the title of “Christianity” has so misrepresented, maligned and vilified the “Old Testament” and the covenant relationship revealed in it that most people have been utterly confused and deceived as to its true nature and purpose. And, for that matter, the “New Covenant” has been totally misunderstood as well!

To understand, we must cast off preconceived notions based on false and ignorant assumptions. We must examine God’s Word honestly — with minds unfettered by religious traditions steeped in error, even though they may be called “Christianity”!

Our search for the truth will lead us all the way back to the beginning of mankind’s history. It will lead us to a knowledge of the very purpose for which God created human beings.

Let’s begin with a simple statement made by the Apostle Paul. Paul actually tells us more about the true relationship between the covenants than any other Biblical writer. Yet his writings have been twisted more than any other, obscuring the true meaning!

Our first plain statement regarding this important subject comes from the book of Galatians — one of the most misunderstood books of all the Bible. Yet notice how clear and **plain** Paul’s statement is: He asks, “What purpose then does the law serve?” (Galatians 3:19).

Before we proceed to Paul’s plain answer, let’s determine what “law” he is talking about. The word translated into “law” by the King James translators is in every case in the book of Galatians the Greek *nomos*. This Greek word has the general meaning of law, regulation, or principle. The



specific meaning must be determined by examining the context in which the word appears.

Our usage of the word “law” is much the same. We use the word “law” referring to the general body of statutes governing a city, state or nation; or referring, to a specific statute; or in reference to officers responsible for enforcing laws; or in reference to a general principle — a cause and effect relationship, as in science. It is the context which determines the specific meaning in a given instance.

### The Context In Which Paul Wrote to the Galatians

Paul was writing to a church composed primarily of Gentiles, with some Jews and other Israelites mixed in. Israel had a law. The law — as the Jews and Samaritans used the term in general reference — was the set of statutes and regulations written down by Moses in the *Torah* — the first five books of the Bible.

This system of law came to be called the “**Law of Moses**.”

Jesus said: “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and Psalms concerning Me” (Luke 24:44).

Jesus’ statement reflects the manner in which the Jews commonly divided the “Old Testament” Scriptures. The “Law of Moses” (the first five books of the Old Testament), the “Prophets,” and the “Writings,” (or Greek: *Hagiographa*) of which the book of Psalms was representative.

The **Law of Moses**, in this particular context, was that system of government and law instituted under and embodied in the **Old Covenant**. It included **all** of the laws, commandments, statutes, ordinances and judgments incorporated into the Old Covenant.

The Old Covenant was a **national** covenant whereby Israel became the **nation** of God:

“Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom

of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel” (Exodus 19:5-6).

When Paul spoke of the “law,” then, he was most often referring to the Law of Moses, i.e., the **Old Covenant**. But — one should note — he occasionally used the term **law** in a different sense — to refer to:

- 1) Law in general: “...where there is no law there is no transgression” (Romans 4:15).
- 2) An operational principle: “I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good” (Romans 7:21).
- 3) Or to what he called the “law of Christ”: “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).

Another very important use of the word “law” in the New Testament, is the Old Covenant, **along with added Jewish traditions**, which were human devised laws, not part of the laws God gave, and which were rejected by Jesus Christ and the New Testament Church:

“He answered and said to them, ‘Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: “This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men — the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.’ He said to them, ‘All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition’” (Mark 7:6-9).

The scribes among the Pharisees created and transmitted the pharisaic rabbinical traditions. The body of authoritative traditional law which they formulated, called the *Halakah* (which is the subject of and preserved in the *Mishnah*), is extra-biblical.

Although authoritative for Jews who followed pharisaic tradition, much of the Halakah was not supported by Scripture, but was intended as a

“hedge” about the law, to prevent any possibility of its being broken. Yet, in doing this very thing they were breaking the law, for God had said, “You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take anything from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you” (Deuteronomy 4:2; also Deuteronomy 12:32). In adding the weight of their tradition to the law of God they bound “heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders” (Matthew 23:3).

They placed the authority of their traditions above that of Scripture itself, thus blaspheming the word of God. Joachim Jeremias is a late German scholar who authored an encyclopedic study of economic and social conditions during the New Testament period. He points out that the oral tradition was “above the Torah,” and that the esoteric writings containing scribal teachings were regarded as inspired and **surpassing** the canonical books “in value and sanctity” (*Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 1.3). Alfred Edersheim also points out that traditional law was of “even greater obligation than Scripture itself” (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 1.8; also see his footnote).

It’s recorded in the book of Acts: “But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them [Gentile converts to Christianity], and to command them to keep the law of Moses” (Acts 15:5).

The “law of Moses,” as the Pharisees viewed the term, included not only the Biblical requirements of the Old Covenant, but all of the oral traditions of the Pharisees, as well.

The Biblical account continues:

“And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: ‘Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. So God, who

knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?’” (Acts 15:7-10).

## What Law?

Let’s go back now to Galatians 3:19: “What purpose then does the law serve?” What law? We don’t have to guess as to exactly what Paul is talking about here. He specifically identifies the “law” he is discussing. Notice: “the law, which was

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four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant [made with Abraham, verse 16] that was confirmed before by God in Christ...” (Galatians 3:17). What law was given 430 years after a **confirming** of the covenant of promise God gave to Abraham?

Notice, “Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the

end of the four hundred and thirty years – on that very same day – it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt” (Exodus 12:40-41).

The sojourning of Israel, covering a period of 430 years, had **ended** on the day of the Exodus. At what historical event did the sojourning of Israel **begin**? The answer: When Israel began to be reckoned as a nation in God’s sight. When was this?

The answer is in Genesis 17, when Abraham was 99 years old. It was at this time, precisely at the time of year Israel left Egypt 430 years later, that God **confirmed** His covenant with Abraham, and in so doing changed Abraham’s name from Abram — meaning high father — to Abraham — meaning father of a great multitude, or, in other words, father of a **nation** or **nations**.

## Abraham and His Descendants

“When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, ‘I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.’ Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: ‘As for Me, behold, **My covenant is with you**, and you shall be a father of **many nations**. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish My covenant **between Me and you and your descendants** after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. Also **I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.**’ And God said to Abraham: ‘As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations’” (Genesis 17:1-9).

At this same time God gave Abraham for the first time the covenant of **circumcision**, requiring his entire **household** to be circumcised. “This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in

your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant” (Genesis 17:10-14).

This was no longer a covenant between God and Abraham only. Now it was a covenant between God and the **House of Abraham**, and that included his **descendants**. Abraham was looked upon by God now not only as a person but as a **people**. God said in verse 14 that the man of Abraham not circumcised was to be “cut off from his people.” On the same occasion **Isaac** was named (Genesis 17:21), of whom it is said “in Isaac shall your seed be called” (Genesis 21:12).

So the covenant included those who would be descended from Abraham through Isaac.

The Covenant and the promises were to be passed down to Abraham’s seed through Isaac, and only Isaac: “...nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, ‘In Isaac your seed shall be called’” (Romans 9:7).

Sarah’s name was changed at the same time from Sarai to Sarah – princess – and, said God, “I will...give you a son also of her... and she shall become nations...” (Genesis 17:16). When this covenant was sealed by circumcision “that very same day” (NKJV) or (KJV) “the selfsame day” (Genesis 17:23), the nation of Israel came into existence in God’s sight.

*“So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith” (Acts 15:8-9).*

## 430 Years of Sojourning

At this time the **nation** also began its sojourning, for Abraham was in the land of Canaan, “the Land of their **pilgrimage**, wherein they were **strangers**” (Exodus 6:4).

Egypt also was a Land of Israel’s sojourning: Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples!

.....

O seed of Abraham His servant, You

children of Jacob, His chosen ones!

.....

Saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan As the allotment of your inheritance, “When they were few in number, Indeed very few, and strangers in it. When they went from one nation to another, From one kingdom to another people,

.....

Israel also came into Egypt, And Jacob dwelt in the land of Ham. (Psalm 105:1, 6, 11-13, 23).

That this was the beginning of the 430 year period of sojourning for Israel is further adduced by the fact that the covenant of circumcision was given a renewed emphasis with Israel on the very day of the Exodus (Exodus 12:43-51).

And it says at the time a renewed emphasis was placed on this covenant of circumcision — the **sign** of an Israelite — “And it came to pass, on that very same day **[430 years — to the day — from the beginning of the**

**sojourn]**, that the Lord brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt...” (Exodus 12:51).

The Old Covenant is spoken of in general terms in the Bible as the covenant which God “made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt” (Deuteronomy 29:25) . It took almost a year’s time for the Laws of this covenant to be fully revealed and implemented.

The sequence of events follow a similar, although perhaps not identical, pattern in both the year of Israel’s original “birth” as a nation described in Genesis and the year of her “rebirth” 430 years later as described in Exodus. At the confirming of the covenant Abraham was told that Isaac would be born approximately one year later. “But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year” (Genesis 17:21).

Within three months Isaac was conceived: “And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken. For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him — whom Sarah bore to him — Isaac. Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. And Sarah said, ‘God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me’” (Genesis 21:1-6).

It should be noted that if Isaac was conceived early in the third month (Sivan), in the normal gestation period of about nine months, he could

have been born, and a period of time corresponding to the purification period completed around the time of the Passover on the following year. This, however, does not imply that either the Passover or the purification rituals of the Old Covenant were being kept during the days of Abraham and Sarah, as they were not instituted until later (Exodus 12:25-27; Leviticus

*“The sojourning of Israel, covering a period of 430 years, had ended on the day of the Exodus. At what historical event did the sojourning of Israel begin? The answer: When Israel began to be reckoned as a nation in God’s sight.”*

12:1-8).

In the third month (Sivan) after the Exodus, Israel came to mount Sinai and agreed to the national covenant. According to a Jewish tradition they came to Sinai on the first day of the third month, on the day following Moses went up to God, then the next day, Moses gathered the elders and rehearsed to them God’s words, then on the third day after that (the sixth day) the law was delivered to them (*John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*). The idea is that the law was delivered from Mt. Sinai on the day of Pentecost. Although that, at least, seems likely, whether this tradition is accurate or not bears further investigation. Scripture tells us:

“In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the Wilderness of Sinai. For they

had departed from Rephidim, had come to the Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness. So Israel camped there before the mountain. And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: "You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself." And God spoke all these words, saying: "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.' So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and Laid before them all these words which the Lord commanded him.

Then all the people answered together and said, 'All that the Lord has spoken we will do.' So Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord. And the Lord said to Moses, 'Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever.' So Moses told the words of the people to the Lord" (Exodus 19:1-9).

Three days later they received the law:

And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

.....

So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes. And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not come near your wives." Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who

were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.

.....

And God spoke all these words, saying: (Exodus 19:11; 14-17; 20:1 ff.)

Less than ten months after that the tabernacle was raised up: "And it came to pass in the first

month of the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was raised up" (Exodus 40:17).

The sacrificial laws and other Levitical Laws were part and parcel of this covenant — having been given in summary form from Sinai along with instructions for the building of the tabernacle, then given in greater detail after the tabernacle was raised up.

So the **confirming** of the Abrahamic covenant spoken of by Paul and the beginning of the sojourning of Israel coincided. Four hundred thirty years later the sojourning ended and God enjoined **the law**, the **Old Covenant**, to Israel.

It should be noted in passing that the occasion in Genesis 17 was not the only time the covenant with Abraham was confirmed by God. It was confirmed several times during Abraham's lifetime, both before and after Genesis 17. But Genesis 17 marks the beginning of Israel's sojourn.

That the "Law" of Galatians 3 is the Old Covenant is finally conclusively proven in chapter four. Paul says Christ was sent "to redeem them that were under the law" (Galatians 4:5). Then he draws an analogy between the two sons of Abraham and the **two covenants**: the Old and The New. Speaking to those who desire "to be under the Law" — he says the two sons represent "the two covenants, the [older] one from the mount Sinai ...which ... corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children" (Galatians 4:24-25).

Paul likens in his analogy those who desire to

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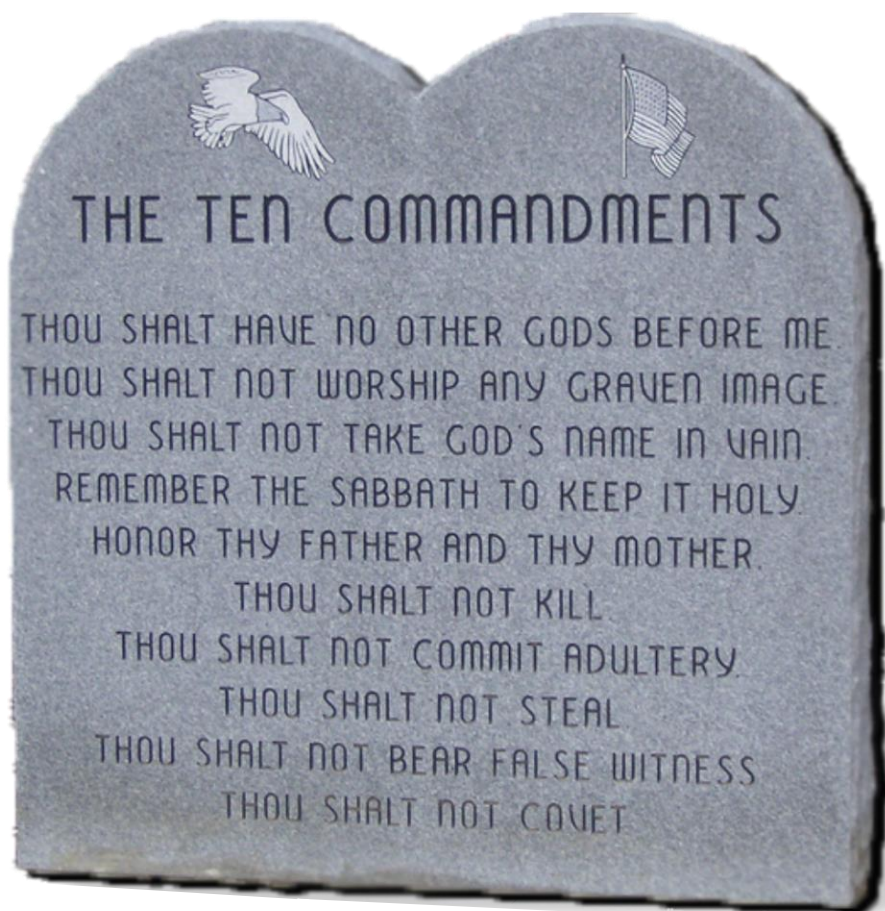
be “under the law” to Ishmael, the son of a bond servant (or bondwoman) — who represents those who are circumcised Israelites under the legal authority — or law — of the Old Covenant. Paul thus plainly equates the “law” with the Old Covenant — the covenant agreed to at Mount Sinai, 430 years after the beginning of the sojourning of Israel in Abraham’s loins. It was by this covenant that Israel, in the flesh, was in a sense, restored to their calling as the nation of God.

‘Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words

which you shall speak to the children of Israel” (Exodus 19:5-6)

So then when Paul wrote, “Wherefore then serves the law?” in Galatians 3:19 he was asking why was the **Old Covenant** given — that is — what purpose did it serve? Notice now the answer that Paul gives this question: “It was added [or enjoined] because of transgressions....” We have here the basic purpose for which God instituted the Old Covenant, It was enjoined to Israel **because of transgressions.**

*What does this mean?* When we have fully explored the answer to this question, we will *understand* the **purpose** for which the “Law” — the Old Covenant — was given.





# Abide in God's Word

Rod Reynolds

**Jesus Christ commanded us to believe the gospel (Mark 1:15). Jesus Christ said those who believe the gospel, which also implies obedience, would be saved, but those who reject it are subject to punishment (Mark 16:15-16; cf. Romans 1:16; 10:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 2:13-14; 1 Peter 4:17-18).**

Is it your desire to be a true disciple of Jesus? If so, it's absolutely vital that you abide not in some particular organization of men, or a religious tradition imposed by the flawed teachings or reasonings of men, but in God's word, correctly understood.

Jesus prayed shortly before his death concerning his disciples, "They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth" (John 17:16-17). The word of God is the truth. And the truth of God's word is what sanctifies his disciples. To sanctify (Greek: *hagiazō*) means to "consecrate or set apart persons or things to God" (Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* on John 17:17).

In John 4 we find recorded a conversation Jesus had with a woman of Samaria, a region which had been inhabited by a portion of Israel before the Assyrian captivity. When the Assyrians took Israel into captivity in the eighth century B.C., they brought in Gentile peoples from other areas — primarily Chaldean cities or regions — to settle the land alongside the remnant left in Israel (2 Kings 17:24; Ezra 4:7-10; cf. 2 Chronicles 34:9, 21). The preponderance of both Biblical and secular evidence indicates that only a relatively small number of Israelites was left in the land after the Assyrian captivity.

Inhabitants numbering 27,290 were recorded as being deported after a three year siege from

the city of Samaria by Sargon II in an Assyrian inscription (*Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, Daniel David Luckenbill, ed., University of Chicago Press, 1926, vol. 2, p. 26). Some have carelessly assumed that this was the total number deported from among the Israelites by the Assyrians. But this assumption is not supported by Scripture nor by Assyrian records. In reality those were but a small portion of the total numbers carried away, killed or driven out of Israel during successive campaigns spanning decades. An Assyrian inscription records the boast of the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III, "The land of Bit-Humria [house of Omri, Israel] ... all of its people, together with their goods I carried off to Assyria. Pakaha [Pekah], their king they deposed and I placed Ausi' [Hoshea] over them as king" (*Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. 1, p. 293; cf. 2 Kings 15:29-30). Among other Assyrian kings who subjugated Israel, Sargon II boasted that he plundered and devastated Samaria and the whole land of Israel, and carried Gentile peoples in to settle their land (*Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. 2, pp. 2, 7, 26, 40, 46, 51, 61; 2 Kings 17:6, 18, 24; 1 Chronicles 5:26; Josephus, *Antiquities*, 9.14.1). For evidence indicating Sargon II and Sennacherib were two names for the same king, see *A Revised History of the Era of King Hezekiah of Judah and its Background*, Damien Mackey, p. 166; also "Mackey's Thesis Assessment After Ten Years (2007-2017)." (Both documents have been published at [www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu)).

The new population, called Samaritans, or Cutheans, remained predominately Gentile, though at times they claimed to be descended from Joseph (Matthew 10:5; *Antiquities*, 9.14.3). Later, a number of Jews migrated to the area (cf. *Angus-Green Bible Handbook*, p. 598). The

Gentiles who moved into the area of Samaria brought with them their pagan gods, and their religions were blended with the apostate Yahweh worship of Israel (cf. 2 Kings 17:21-41), and later, elements of Jewish Temple worship.

Over time, due to various reforms, many of the more readily apparent pagan influences were suppressed, and in many respects Samaritan practices eventually resembled those of the post-exilic Jews. For example, they kept the weekly Sabbath and the annual feasts commanded in the Law. But there were significant differences, as well.

Under the veneer of Mosaic ritual the old pagan sentiments appear to have remained strong and ready to surface at opportune times. When

Antiochus Epiphanes instituted a persecution against the Jews in the second century B.C. the Samaritans sought favor by naming their temple after the Greek god Jupiter (*Antiquities*, 12.5.5; *2 Maccabees* 6:1-2). In the first century and later, Samaria was a hotbed of gnostic heresy. Of the heretic Simon Magus, it was said by Justin Martyr, who was born in Samaria, that

"...almost all the Samaritans... worship him, and acknowledge him as the first god" (*First Apology*, XXVI). Evidence indicates the Samaritans, unlike most Jews and Christians in the early Christian era, used pagan icons in their worship (cf. *The People That History Forgot*, E. L. Martin, ch. 4). Scripture condemns the use of idolatrous images in the worship of God, and condemns the blending of heathen customs in such worship (Deuteronomy 4:15-19, 23-26; 5:7-9; 12:1-4, 29-32).

The Samaritans of Jesus' day claimed to worship the same God as the Jews, and used as their Scriptures their own version of the Pentateuch. Nevertheless, their worship was marred by false practices and superstitions. The Jews at the time of Jesus' sojourn in the flesh regarded the Samaritans as a mixed race of apostates (Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the*

*Time of Jesus*, p. 354). Jews usually avoided contact with Samaritans, and there was deep animosity between the two peoples (cf. Luke 9:52-53; John 4:9).

Jesus, knowing the flaws in both the prevailing religion of the Jews and that of the Samaritans (cf. Matthew 16:6, 11-12; Mark 7:6-13), told the Samaritan woman, "...the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him *must* worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:23-24, emphasis added).

Abiding in the truth, God's word, separates God's people, God's Church, from the world (John 8:31; 17:14, 16-17). So if we are to be genuine

*"Is it your desire to be a true disciple of Jesus? If so, it's absolutely vital that you abide not in some particular organization of men, or a religious tradition imposed by the flawed teachings or reasonings of men, but in God's word, correctly understood."*

Christians, if we are to indeed be truly a part of God's Church, we each, individually, and we as a Church must abide in God's word. That means our conduct, our teachings and practices must conform to God's word. Not only our identity as genuine Christians, but salvation itself hinges on abiding in God's word.

### ***Why would I say that salvation hinges on abiding in God's word?***

1) James wrote, "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness [i.e., repent], and *receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls*. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:21-22, emphasis added). The implanted word is able to save — if you do it.

2) In Ephesians 2:8 we are told that we are "...saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." But in Romans 10:17 we are told, "...faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." So a key to *acquiring saving faith* is *hearing the word of God*.

3) In Colossians 1:27 we find the phrase, "Christ

in you, the hope of glory." In other words, Jesus Christ dwelling in us is the foundation of our hope of being resurrected into the same glorified state that he now enjoys. And the key to Christ dwelling in you is to keep his word.

Jesus said, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him" (John 14:23; see also John 14:21, 24). Note that keeping God's commandments — his word — is also the key to having and using the Holy Spirit (John 14:15-17).

As we saw earlier, true Christians are those who believe and keep God's Word (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 John 2:5; 2 John 1:9).

4) In order to thrive we must bear spiritual fruit, and the key to bearing spiritual fruit is abiding in Christ, and letting his words abide in us (John 15:1-8).

All sorts of spiritual benefits flow from abiding in the word of God.

God's word is "light." As light enables one to walk a sure path, the Bible is a sure guide to conduct that produces happiness and avoids pitfalls which tend toward catastrophe. "Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105).

One who obeys the word of God can be

confident that he is following a sound and proven path. God's word not only comes from the source of infinite wisdom, but it has met the test of time, and it is applicable not just to a particular time and place and people but is valid for all ages, and all peoples everywhere. "As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him" (2 Samuel 22:31).

"The entirety of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever" (Psalm 119:160).

If your steps are directed according to God's word, iniquity shall not rule you. "Direct my steps

by Your word, And let no iniquity have dominion over me" (Psalm 119:133). It equips you for every good work (2 Timothy 3:14-17).

The word of God is food for the spirit. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4; cf. Hebrews 5:12-14). Just as we cannot continue to thrive and live without physical food, we will wither and eventually die in a spiritual sense if we neglect the spiritual food of God's word. Desire the milk of word that you may grow (1 Peter 2:1-2). Abiding in God's word will enable you to thrive spiritually, to develop, grow and be changed more and more into the likeness of Christ.

Abiding in God's word is a simple concept, it's not difficult to understand at all. Essentially it simply means to keep God's word, to live by it. However, mankind throughout history has shown itself unwilling or unable to abide in God's word. Why is this?

A big part of the answer is that human beings have tended naturally to resist the word of God. Israel in the wilderness is a good example (Hebrews 3:7-8, 12). If you resist God's word, if you harden your heart to it, it will not have the effect of helping you to grow and change, and you will place your salvation in jeopardy.

Most of the Jewish leaders of the time of Jesus'

*"...if we are to be genuine Christians, if we are to indeed be truly a part of God's Church, we each, individually, and we as a Church must abide in God's word. That means our conduct, our teachings and practices must conform to God's word."*

sojourn on earth did not have God's word abiding in them because they did not truly believe it (John 5:38-39, 45-47). They put their own tradition ahead of God's word, making it of no effect (Mark 7:6-13). Mankind in general has done the same thing down through the ages, and this pattern continues among most today, even those call themselves Christians.

However, you can succeed where others have failed. God told the Israelites whom he had led to the land he had promised them, "the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it" (Deuteronomy 30:14). They were

given a clear choice, and encouraged to make the right choice to receive the many benefits available to them (Deuteronomy 30:11-20). We, also, must choose where to set our minds, and how to conduct ourselves (Colossians 3:1-16).

You may say, "But it takes God's Spirit to obey his word." Yes, it does, but to those who repent and show a willingness to truly obey his word God will give his Spirit (Proverbs 1:23; Acts 5:30-32).

***Following are three specific steps that will enable you to abide in God's word.***

1) **Hear the word of God.** To walk in God's word we must first hear it, and not only hear it but receive it as the word of God and be willing to be taught (John 6:45).

Israel was given many opportunities to hear God's word. Prophet after prophet was sent to them to testify and call them to repentance, yet they refused to hear (Nehemiah 9:29; Isaiah 28:12; Zechariah 7:9-13).

The Jewish leaders also refused to hear Jesus' words. "He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God" (John 8:47).

He who is of God — and of the truth — hears God's words (John 18:37). "We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error" (1 John 4:6). Note that the way to tell where the true Spirit of God is working is in whether God's word is truly heard.

Scripture is often twisted and perverted to support error (2 Peter 3:14-17). Rather than allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture, people often read their own ideas into Scriptural passages. As a result, false concepts become embedded in their minds, and the minds of others who may be subject to their influence. Yet, Scripture says, "no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:21).

We must learn to correctly understand the

Scriptures (2 Timothy 2:15). Never build a doctrine on one or two obscure or ambiguous Scriptures. Use Scriptures with clear meanings to interpret ambiguous or obscure Scriptures. Go to all the Scriptures on a subject, studying diligently, and allowing Scripture to interpret itself (Isaiah 28:9-10). "Theology is the whole meaning of Scripture — the sense taught in the whole of Scripture, as that sense is modified, limited, and explained by Scripture itself" (*Angus-Green Bible Handbook*, p. 201). "It has often been said that the best commentary on Scripture is Scripture itself. Nowhere is this more true than in Hebrew word studies. The best method for determining the meaning of any Hebrew word is to study the

context in which it appears" (*Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, Thomas Nelson, 1985, p. xvi).

Follow the example of the Bereans, who were receptive to truth, yet did not gullibly swallow everything they were told, but "searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11). For any

teaching to be considered authoritative, it must be not the product of human imagination, rationalization, or speculation, but rather, in full accord with a sound understanding of Scripture.

2) **Believe the word of God.**

The Israelites heard God's word, but did not believe it (Hebrews 3:15 – Hebrews 4:2).

Believing the gospel, the word of God, is necessary for salvation (Mark 16:15-16; John 12:46-48).

3) **Obey God's word.**

Obedience is the test of genuine faith (Acts 7:37-39; Hebrews 11:8; Romans 16:25-26; verse 26, "of faith," as in the KJV, is the correct translation).

Salvation is given to those who obey God (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; 1 Peter 4:17; Hebrews

*"One who obeys the word of God can be confident that he is following a sound and proven path."*

5:9-10; Revelation 22:14).

*Immerse yourself in God's word through daily Bible study. Meditate on it often. Strive every waking moment to put it into practice.*

PSALM 119:97-104  
KJV

MEM

O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.

I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.

I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.



# IN THIS ISSUE

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“What is the Gospel?” — The gospel is key for a believing Christian to understand. But what is “the gospel,” exactly? Is it about Christ? The Kingdom of God? See how the Bible answers this important question!

“The Two Covenants - Part I” — The Bible is divided into two major sections: the Old and New Testaments. Within these are detailed the old and new covenants. What are the roles of these covenants and why are they significant? Begin your exploration in this introductory study!

“Abide in God’s Word” — What are a true Christian's beliefs based upon? Christ said in John 14:23, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word.” What was Christ talking about? See what the Bible reveals about this incredibly vital subject!

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