

Gospel Power



"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation..." (Romans 1:16)

The Gospel Power is published in interest of New Testament Christianity and to enhance the work of the Anderson church.

**Anderson
church of Christ**
5900 Highway 207
Anderson, Alabama

Visit Us On The Web
Anderson-church.org

Volume XI

August 15, 2004

No. 32

A New and Better Covenant

David A. Cox

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Hebrews 8:6).

In this verse, we see the Hebrew writer is affirming the fact that there is a new and better covenant. Earlier in this letter to the Hebrew Christians the writer reminds and teaches them that Christ is our great High Priest. Following this instruction the writer mentions the greater or "more excellent" ministry of Christ. Let us consider a few things about this "more excellent ministry" in the new and better covenant.

What Is A Covenant?

A covenant might simply be thought of as an agreement or a contract between two parties. Under a covenant, each party has certain obligations or responsibilities. Agreements such as this are made between two individuals, two countries or between God and people. In the making of contracts between men concerning physical things, there is often a give and take attitude as the terms are negotiated. But in a contract between man and God this is not the case. God sets the terms and He expects us to submit to them.

The Old Covenant

God never intended the old covenant to be the final covenant between Him and his people. Paul, speaking of the old covenant, says that the "law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Galatians 3:24). What the law did was to bring "the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20) to us and to show us our need for forgiveness. People simply did not live up to the standards required under the law of Moses. Sacrifices were made for sin, but the sacrifices of bulls and goats could not remove sin (Hebrews 10:4). Rather, the sins were

Men Priviledged To Serve: Sunday, August 15th

Bible Classes

Song Leader
..... Eddie J. Hammond
Bible Reading (Isaiah 22:15-25)
..... Daniel Clemmons
Prayer
..... Scottie Goode

Morning Worship

Song Leader
..... Eddie J. Hammond
Prayer
..... Rocky Rose
Lord's Supper
Presiding Jerry Dickey
Assisting Andrew Gatlin
Serving Chase Williams
..... Eddie Hammond
..... Rodney McCrary
..... Ethan Pressnell
Closing Prayer
..... Claus Martel

Evening Worship

Song Leader
..... Brian Word
Bible Reading (Isaiah 23:1-10)
..... Mike Rogers
Prayer
..... Mark McIntyre
Lord's Supper
..... Jerry Dickey
..... Andrew Gatlin
Closing Prayer
..... Aric Butler

just rolled forward till an acceptable sacrifice for sin was offered (1 John 2:2; Romans 3:25-26).

The Hebrew writer quotes from the prophet Jeremiah saying, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah” (Hebrews 8:8; cf. Jeremiah 31:31-34). This shows that from the beginning God knew the old law would not remove sin, but was a “shadow of the good things to come” (Hebrews 10:1-2) and that it would be replaced. It was to this end that God made provisions for the coming of Christ hundreds of years before Christ came.

The New and Better Covenant

The Hebrew writer refers to the new covenant as “a better covenant, which is establish upon better promises” (Hebrew 8:6). Why is this a better covenant? Because under the old there was no real forgiveness of sins, just the rolling of sins forward to be dealt with again later (Hebrews 10:3). But with Christ as our High Priest, we have the sacrifice offered for our sins that takes them away. So the promise of forgiveness is not temporary; it is permanent (Hebrews 10:16-17).

The access to God in the old law was through the sacrifices offered, but on the day of atonement they were reminded that was not enough. The high priest would offer a sacrifice for the sins of the people once each year, but that still did not remove their sins. But in the new covenant we have access to God through Christ at all times for all needs (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 4:16). As we fail we can confess our sins and God will forgive us (1 John 1:9). How much greater is this new covenant!

Lastly, the new covenant is superior to the old in that the “better promises” are not temporary, but permanent. The land that God promised and gave to the children of Israel was a great and precious blessing to them, but it was temporary. They lost it. But the promises given to the faithful people of God of all the spiritual blessings that are in Christ are not temporary (Ephesians 1:3): a new body and a permanent home, a place

without all the sorrows and struggles of life, a place that is eternal for the people of God.

May we ever be mindful and thankful that we are allowed to live under this “new and better covenant.” May we accept the covenant of God, submit to it, and never turn aside from it.



Except Someone Guide Me

Glen Young

“And Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some one shall guide me? And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him” (Acts 8:30-31).

I am fascinated by the Ethiopian man’s desire to understand the scripture. It is my experience that such men and women are rare. Too many are of the conviction that they do not need instruction. Their minds are settled. The one thing they do not want is someone coming along and confusing the issue.

God, in His infinite wisdom, gave to mankind the ability to mentally ponder information, then reach a conclusion. At times and for various reasons, we need someone to come along and ask the question Philip asked of the Ethiopian.

A person may need help to understand scripture because of poor reading skills. We all know the statistics. Our school system is allowing students to graduate without basic reading skills of comprehension. It should be obvious to all that reading is fundamental to understanding. Does this mean a person with poor reading skills cannot understand the scripture? No, they could allow someone to guide them!

A person may need help to understand scrip-

ture because of prejudice. Most, if not all, enter a study of the Bible with pre-formed opinions. Parents, teachers, grandparents, and a host of others have influenced our thinking about life in general and religion in particular. Does this mean that someone indoctrinated into a particular religious theology cannot understand the Bible? No, they could allow someone to guide them!

Personal relationships often hinder a person from understanding the scripture. A son or daughter may fear the disapproval of parents, should they accept a different doctrine. A desire for peace and harmony in the home may cause a spouse to remain ignorant of Bible truth. A sibling who craves the companionship of brothers and sisters remains faithful to that bond rather than to Bible truth. All of these, can and do, cause a person to fail in their understanding of the scripture. Does this mean that a person with close personal relationships cannot understand the Bible? No, they could allow someone to guide them!

The great wise man, Solomon, identified those who would take counsel as those who are wise. He also said that those who are right in their own eyes are fools. Hear his words! "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes; But he that is wise hearkeneth unto counsel" (Proverbs 12:15).

The example of the Ethiopian man illustrates one willing to heed wise counsel (Acts 8:35-39). Can the same be said of you? Do you understand what you are reading? Seek out the wise counsel of faithful teachers of God's Word that you may go your way rejoicing.

-via *The Road Creek Bulletin*, Elkhorn City, Kentucky



Remember Our Bible Class Periods

Sunday at 9:45 a.m.
Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

"Just A Member"

Don Truex

Have you ever felt that you have nothing to offer because you are "just a member"? Let me assure you, there is no such thing as an "ordinary member of the church." That is like saying you have an ordinary eye, or hand, or foot. Every member is vital to the body, both physical and spiritual. What can you do?

1. You can warmly welcome the visitors to our services, making them feel "at home." The importance of this can hardly be measured.

2. You can act upon the announcements made during the assembly regarding the sick, area meetings, maintenance needs, etc.

3. You can see your neighborhood and work place as your "mission field." Provide the proper example and then invite and teach.

-via *The Gospel Observer*, Denham Springs, Louisiana.

News and Notes

THE SICK: *Willie Ridgeway* is to have an aspiration done on a spot on his lung this week...*Amber Hammond* was sick and unable to be at Bible study Wednesday night...*James McConnell's mother, Della Mae McConnell*, is in the ECM hospital in Florence... *Mike Rogers* was sick this past week and was unable to be at services ...*Myrtie Williams* continues at home ...*Hoyt Hammond* is at home and is unable to be out ...*Signa Skipworth's sister, Ann Luffman*, had a cancer removed this past week ...*Helen Trousdale's sister, Margaret Neal Newton*, is taking chemo treatments about every three weeks ...Remember *Mattie Blanche Word* continues at home ...*Kathy Smith's sister-in-law, Sue Gilliam*, is undergoing chemo and

radiation treatments... *Marcia Cooper's and Brian Word's uncle, Paul McCafferty* is at the Countryside Nursing Home in Lawrenceburg ... *Jerry Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson*, continues at home ... *Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunter*, is in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski.

YOUTH LECTURESHIP: The *Vestavia church* in Vestavia will be having a lectureship on Saturday with a focus on teens. *David Miles, Jason Moore, and Phil Robertson* will be speaking

OUT OF TOWN: *Signa Skipworth and Cathrine Parker* are visiting their sister in North Carolina... *Helen Stewart* is visiting her sister in Ohio this week.

SONG SERVICE: Tonight will be the time for our regular scheduled song service at 6:00 p.m. I hope everyone will make their plans to be back as we lift our voices in song of praise to God. *Brian Word* will be directing the service this evening.

COMMUNICATION GROUP: Tonight will be the night for communication group three to meet. If you are in group three remember to meet with your group this evening.

THE RECORD: *For the week of August 8th*

Sunday:

- Bible Classes 111
- Morning Worship 126
- Evening Worship 94

Wednesday:

- Bible Classes 88

Gospel Meeting

September 26-29

Jim Deason, Speaker

Anderson church of Christ
Highway 207
Anderson, Alabama

Schedule of Services

Sunday

- Bible Classes 9:45 a.m.
- Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
- Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

- Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

Elders

- Michael Clemmons (256) 247-0836
- Scottie Goode (931) 565-3391
- Monroe Pressnell (256) 232-0780

Deacons

- Jimmy Glass (256) 247-0571
- Mark McIntyre (256) 233-1953
- Phil Pressnell (256) 232-8509
- Rocky Rose (256) 247-0011
- Larry White (256) 247-0988
- Brian Word (256) 229-5823

Evangelist & Editor

- David A. Cox (256) 247-1049
- Office-(256) 247-5539
- E-mail address: dacox@hiwaay.net

U.S. Postage
Paid
Bulk Rate
Anderson, Alabama
Non-Profit
Permit #6

Anderson church of Christ
P.O. Box 66
Anderson, Alabama 35610

Return Service Requested