



The *Pulpit Exchange*

It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (1 Corinthians 1:21)
So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. (Nehemiah 8:8) Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. (Proverbs 27:17)

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The Difference Between Old and New Testaments

I want to discuss a basic doctrine and that is the difference between Old and New Testament. I feel this: the lack of proper understanding on this has brought confusion to many minds and is at the root of much of deteriorating professed Christendom. In Galatians 4:19–31, we want to notice a few doctrinal principles in relation to this. It is something that is not only a church position. It is a

truth that needs to be understood as to rightly dividing the Word of Truth. It is only as we rightly divide the Word that we can have a right practice. It is the only way. We do not depend on visions and dreams or mere (so to speak) spiritual movements. We believe that the Spirit of God and the word of God cannot be separated. The Spirit of God cannot lead differently than what the Scriptures would direct. It can-

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not be that way.

“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, (20) I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you. (21) Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? (22) For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. (23) But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of

the freewoman was by promise. (24) Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. (25) For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. (26) But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. (27) For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest

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not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. (28) Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. (29) But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. (30) Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman. (31) So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.”

Notice and remember, Paul said this is an allegory. It is an illustration — a figure of speech. One of the reasons I was led to consider this is that we have been studying for a little while now from the Old Testament. It is necessary for us to have a proper understanding in the Sunday School lessons of the relation, and how we look at the Old Testament Scriptures in comparison to the New. The Old Testament is part of God’s inspired Word. It is something that needs to be a part of rightly dividing the truth. Paul had a problem here. The book of Galatians is a book that is written to correct some of this.

In the book of Acts we have, a number of times, mention made

of the priests who were converted by the preaching that was taking place. Acts 6:7 says, “And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.” It does not say how many here. Then, in chapter 15, I want to read a few verses to have it serve as a background to the book of Galatians. We understand why we had the problem as we see Paul experienced it in the Galatian letter the way he did. “But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.” (Acts 15:5) That is kind of a paradox is it not? They believed, and yet they were promoting Scripture. One more Scripture in Acts 21:20, “And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law.”

The book of Acts represents about thirty years of activity on the part of the Early Church. That period, we would call a transition period from the Old to the New Testament. That is, it is as much a winding up of the Old

Testament as it is an introduction to the new economy. However, those thirty years did not resolve all the problems. That is the occasion. If you keep in mind that there was a misunderstanding of the division between the old and new economy for the people of God. If you keep that in mind and read the book of Hebrews it will make more sense. Paul is writing to these kind of people that I read about in Acts 15. They were zealous of the law. Paul has a special epistle. (I am saying Paul. We are not exactly sure, but we think it is Paul who wrote it). It is written to the Hebrews and the Hebrew believers to help them to understand that the New is the better covenant and is what God was moving toward.

In the book of Galatians, Paul's apostleship was challenged as well as in the Corinthian letter because of he was not promoting the ceremonial practices of the Old. To not see this can confuse a person's experience and relationship. We notice a person can lose or can keep from growing and developing if he does not have a clear understanding of this. Galatians 4:19 says, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again. . ." That implies they had it, and lost it, and he is struggling to get it

back for them. "Until Christ be formed in you." He is struggling to bring that back to them. Paul is now here using the allegory of Abraham's two sons as an illustration to convince. He is saying the one persecuted the other and he is pointing out how the one served from Mt. Sinai and the other one comes from heaven.

Now, let us look a little bit at the place of the Law or the Old Testament. In Galatians 3:19 we have a statement that helps us to understand it. "Wherefore then serveth the law?" That word Law means the Old Testament. "Wherefore serves the Old Testament?" What places does it have in the economy of God? Then the answer is right there, "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." The Scripture says, "The Law was added . . ." to what? It was added to the plan and place that God had for Israel in His purpose and plan. The purpose and plan for Israel was that they would form a nation through whom He would bring the Messiah — the Saviour — to the world. That is what God was doing. Why were they taken to Egypt? Why were they to tell the Egyptians that they were shepherds? It was because

“every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians” (Genesis 46:34), and that would have separated them from the Egyptians.

God’s plan and purpose, and sovereign direction was to form them as a people. He had that all in mind when He called Abraham. When He led them to Egypt and all of that to form a people through whom He could bring the Saviour, that was the purpose and plan. Now they were out of Egypt. They no longer were under bondage of the Egyptians. In Egypt they were persecuted. They were under bondage. They were in slavery and that well contained them. It is a little bit like the Russians that have come over to North America in the later years. Some are in British Columbia. Some are in Washington state. We lately have contact with some in Rochester, Washington and they all come over the same thing. I sat with David Burkholder one Saturday in the Missau Colony in British Columbia with several from Germany, and some of their leaders there. One of the questions they had was, “Tell us what does it take to be a separated people in a free country?” That was a very legitimate question. They said in Russia we were persecuted. A number of them were in

Jail.

In Rochester, Washington there is a large group that wants help from us. One of the questions we presented to them when we were sitting with them was, “How many of you were in jail?” A number of hands went up. Well, they were kept. They told us then why and how they were ostracized and persecuted and reflected against and looked down upon, in school, their children, in jobs, in the workplace etc. They said, “Here we have freedom. They tell our children to take the courses that they have in public high school and you must do it to fit into the mould of the American culture.” Then, he said, “How do we . . .” One of them said, “In five years we will not have anything left. They will all be out in the world.” That is an illustration of what he is saying here.

Galatians 3:19 says, “Wherefore then serveth the law?” They were out of Egypt. They were across the Sea. They were going toward Canaan and they no longer were under bondage. Now the law, “was added. . .” to bring restraints and restrictions upon them to keep them together by outward restraint until the Messiah would come. It was to be until the new economy was brought into what

the Scripture calls in this epistle, “When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.” (Galatians 4:4) He was made under this economy. It took that. It took the restraint.

I would like to give an illustration here that I think is appropriate and that is the same way with our background. People reflect against a church that has a standard and operates with a discipline, disciplining members that are violating it, etc. They reflect against that as something mediocre and as something that is not spiritual. We hear, live with that. We have been exposed to this, and they point back to (many of them have to me already that know their history) to Europe and say they did not have the restrictions and the restraints. That is not altogether true. There were some regulations, but it is true that in the American settlements, the migrations to America, especially in the latter part of the 19th Century more regulations and rules were added to the Mennonite Church here in America than what were added or applied previously. Part of that is because of the culture, or the industrial revolution. We do not have time to go into that, but take yourself back in history

before the industrial revolution at the latter part of the 19th century and it looks to us like a foreign country — completely different. When the cloth became cheap and was commercially made, the church saw the need to set up some regulations on how to dress and what kind of clothing to wear. That was one of them. In contrast when it was made from the spinning wheel from the “ground up” it was a little different.

I use that as an illustration that in a free country with the privilege to have all the things (what we would call affluence) at our disposal, there is a need here to apply some rules and regulations borne out of spiritual minds, collectively, to help the individual find his way. That is simply the way it is. We told these Russians the same thing that this is what you need to do, and pointed out what they were doing and finally it will not work. It will not work here in a free country. They assured us that they want that.

Looking more at the place of the Law. The Scripture says the Law, “was added.” Now notice Galatians 4:30, “Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” The Old Testament

is done away. That includes the Ten Commandments. Sometimes we have people pointing out that the Old Testament is done away but the Ten Commandments they stand. That is nixed. That is not true. That does not hold up. The principles of the Old Testament existed before there was a Decalogue. The Decalogue — the term means Ten Commandments. Cain knew it was wrong to kill. Depending on the Ten Commandments for direction will ultimately spell confusion. It would call for a division of all its aspects and applications. Simply notice Galatians 4:4–7, “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” We have that clearly outlined here.

We hear terms like this, “We are not living under the Old Testament Law, we are now under grace,” and imply grace gives us liberty to do what we want to do. That is not true

either. The Scripture does say in John 1 that “The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). Right, but that does not say that grace and truth were not in the Old Testament. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. The Law came by Moses. The Old Testament was a tangible earthly people economy but there was grace there. “Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD,” we are told. Where did he get it? He got it from Jesus Christ before the cross. Grace was there. New Testament grace refers to a New Testament package of truth. That is God’s basis now for working with us — a New Testament package of Scripture, the entire body of truth. Truth is a package.

We want to look a little bit at the relation of the Old Testament to the New Testament. The Old Testament is understood by the New, and the New Testament is also helped to be understood by the Old Testament. However, we understand the Old Testament by the New. In the Old Testament we see typology. We see types. We see shadows and figures of truth. Isaiah becomes rich in the New Testament because we understand it in light of the New. That is clearly illustrated with the eunuch in Acts 8. He said, “of

whom speaketh the prophet this?" (Acts 8:34) He was reading from Isaiah 53. Then, Philip drew near "and preached unto him Jesus." That thrilled him. He was converted through it. All of that is a part of it.

We want to notice a few things that are different. There is a term we use. I do not know if I gave that earlier or not but "The New is in the Old concealed; And the Old is in the New revealed." That is rhyming and so it is easy to remember. The difference between the Old and the New. Let us just look at a few of them. We have a different temple than what they had in the Old. We are the temple. We have a different ordinance of circumcision. That was a type of the circumcision of the heart, a change of heart, putting away of the flesh of the heart and giving, or rather it calls it a stony heart and cutting that away and giving it a new heart.

We have a different sabbath than what they had in the Old Testament. We cannot go into explanation of all this but there is a difference. The people who do not see the difference finally will be confused. We have different sacrifices. Our Lord is the one and only sacrifice. We have a different Gospel. They had the Old Testament. Our Lord handled the Old Testament. The

New Testament was not written in the time of the book of Acts, and in the time of our Lord being here. Therefore, we have a different Gospel. We have a different mission in the world. In the Old Testament they were not told to go out and to witness. The New Testament tells us and it implies it. For example in Matthew 16 we are promised that "The gates of hell shall not prevail against [the Church]" (Matthew 16:18). Well, no army ever took their gates along to the warfare and battle but the gates were used to defend themselves against an invading army. Therefore, the gates of hell will not prevail against the church that is on the march and is out there confronting.

The mission is different. They were not told to go out. The psalmist makes it clear. He says that the kings of the earth shall, "bring presents unto thee" (Psalm 68:29), "Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee." God gave them rules and regulations on how to receive a proselyte, people who were attracted to them and come to them like the queen of Sheba, the eunuch, and others who came there to worship. God told them how to receive them and gave laws and regulations on how to take care

of a stranger when he comes.

Now, like I said the Old Testament becomes rich to us when we see all this. We find an example in 1 Corinthians 9:10. Notice verse 9 says, "For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?" Paul had the same problem in the book of Corinthians as he had in Galatians, and that exists in Hebrews. Paul said, "Is God giving us Scriptural direction on how to take care of oxen?" Well, we guess the animal rights people would think that today, but the point is that while God does want and gives direction that we should not be cruel to animals, He is not writing Scripture to tell us how to feed oxen. Notice that I can prove that. "Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope." He says, "Well, you would not muzzle an ox when he treads out corn." He uses that as an illustration as a type of remunerating those who minister to you in spiritual things. Paul was giving this to prove that he has a right to receive from them some remuneration for their services.

Paul then turned around and did not accept it to prove that he was sacrificially living. Nevertheless, Paul is saying it is for our sakes. Thus, that is a Scripture that proves that the Old Testament was rich with typology and figures of speech.

There are a number of areas we could touch like, for example, the confusion that exists between Church and State and the different approaches we have. God is sovereign over the nations. We see that in all this Old Testament Scripture that the place of nations is used of God as a "battle axe" (Jeremiah 51:20), and they are used of God to sovereignly arrange circumstances so that His people will be forming the way He wants them. The subject matter of why our forefathers come over to America is a very interesting one. Why? It is obvious. They were pressing them out through severe persecution. They had dire straits in the Palatinate in Germany, and a number of situations like that show that God is sovereignly using the nations. Unless we see that we end in confusion. Therefore, the Church is a distinct entity in the world but not of the world. That is the clear outline of Scripture. We are having a citizenship in heaven, "From

whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3:20).

Our worship patterns are different. People who are confused in worship patterns will have elaborate buildings, and the building is the Church to them instead of the meeting place. The saints in the New Testament are different than what they were looked upon in the Old Testament.

I want you to notice Jeremiah 31:31–33. “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. . . (32) Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: (33) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Jeremiah 31:32, 33). As a result of this He says we should make, “melody in [our] heart[s]” (and that word melody does refer to stringed instruments if you look in the Hebrew) but it is to be in the heart. You do not put hard-

ware into the heart. You put the Spirit into the heart and then that will be the way that God expresses it. Our hearts are the material from which God will draw the music. That is clear and it is patterned here in the light of Scripture. Our mission work is different.

I would like to view some concluding examples how the Old Testament serves to us tremendous interesting events, and through that gives us forceful teaching. I would like to cite a few of them here. This will be my last point to show now that Old Testament is completely done as far as for law keeping, ceremonial law and all of that is concerned. However, it is a book rich with communication about how God operates through a people that have the benefit of this new covenant. He has made this new covenant with us. We will use Genesis 22:3–5 for one example. That is the account of Abraham offering Isaac. “And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. (4) Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. (5) And

Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.” Keep that in mind.

Then, we have the account here of them going up. I will not go over the story. We know how Isaac and Abraham had a dialogue and how Abraham was preparing to offer him by killing him with a knife and the ram caught in the thicket becomes the substitute. Then, notice something in verse 19, “Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.” Do you notice a difference between verse 19 and verse 5? Isaac was not along. Isaac was along to go, but Isaac was not along when he came back because Isaac is now offered. He is now crucified as an offering. Notice Abraham did not say, “Isaac and he.” He did not say, “We will come again to you.” “I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.” Thus, Abraham returned. Why? The type tells us that after the cross our Lord ascended to heaven and He is not here. Isaac is not. We do not read about Isaac anymore until Genesis 24 where he is out in the field meditating, a type of our Lord’s return and there meeting

Rebekah — the bride. Not until He is out in the field will our Lord come back for the Church, and catch Her up to meet Him in the air. The world is the field. We are told that, but He will not come down here to the ground. He will do like the psalmist said, “He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth” (Psalms 50:4), because he is in between and that is a type here that we see. We see the type of our Lord’s ascension. We have the resurrection implied there because from 11–14 Isaac is no more then and then Abraham had believed that God was able to raise him from the dead.

Let us look yet at Genesis 24:5, 6. I want to notice a few types there. We want to see this to test us whether we are living in the New Testament or under the law. “And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? (6) And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again.” Then you will notice that he put a test out. Why is that stated? In Genesis 24:13, 14 he puts a test, “Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: (14) And

let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.” Did he not take a tremendous risk? Who would want to draw water for so many camels? Who would want to sacrifice so much? The fact is coming down in verse 17 where he saw a damsel by the well, “And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.” That is all he said, and she said, “And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. (19) And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.” (verses 18, 19) That is a beautiful type of the Church that functions by love, for we serve by love a labour of love, a work of faith, a patience of hope. That is the principle of the New Testament.

In light of that He knew that it takes care of everything else. “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Romans

5:5). As a result it brings to us the entire body of truth into the heart. As we feed upon we “Walk in the Spirit, and [we] shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16). That is the new economy. That is why the Old is done away because of the provision of the New. The Church is born of the Spirit and then again like I said earlier in the last part you have a picture of “the rapture,” I call it, a picture of the Church being called home in verses 61–67, “Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels.” Are you riding upon the camels of God’s Word this morning? The question comes to me, “Am I riding on the body of truth, the many details of the New Testament by the law of love?” “And they rode upon the camels, and followed the man.” Who is the man? The man is the Holy Spirit — a type of the Holy Spirit, Abraham a type of God, Eliezer a type of the Holy Spirit, Isaac a type of Christ and Rebekah a type of the Church. You have it all the whole body there clearly unfolded to us. “(62) And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahairoi; for he dwelt in the south country. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field.” I have a picture of our Lord meditating when the moment comes that He will get

the word from God, “Go.”

Scripture says, “Expecting.” It talks about our Lord, the apostle Paul does “From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool” (Hebrews 10:13). He is meditating at the eventide, in the evening of life, not quite the end, not quite dark, but He will come, before the total end He will come at the eventide. “(63) And he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.” That must have thrilled his heart. As Christ sees the body — the Church moving toward Him, He sees the camels coming. Are we riding upon all the doctrines and the body of truth? The New Testament truth is a body unfolded and unveiled and explained in the epistles. The Gospels show to us our Lord and the foundation for it all. He shows to us God sending forth His Son into the world to redeem us. The Holy Spirit is out there to get a bride, and in the epistles we see all the details related to it. As we read that our faith is stimulated and strengthened and we are moved with an inward urge to move toward that meeting place. “For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master” (verse 65). We wonder a many a time what do all these

unfolding of endtime events and signs mean to us? He said, “It is my master.” We see the footstep of Lord. We hear the footsteps of our Lord coming toward the door. Then, “know that it is nigh, even at the doors” (Mark 13:29). “Therefore she took a veil, and covered herself.” That is, she took her place. You know, “every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (1 John 3:3). “And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.” The Holy Spirit is faithful, He will finally give a full account of all His activities. Are we ready to do that? Are we ready to come before Him and say, “This is what we did as stewards of your Gospel.” “And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent.” You know the mother is “Jerusalem which is above” (Galatians 4:26). “And took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.” That is the place we fill.

I want to close by reading a few verses more in connection with this. This is not the only place it is written but this is such a graphic, clear and plain Scripture. Matthew 9:16, 17 says, “No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up

taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. (17) Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.” This shows the danger of trying to mix the Old and the New. It shows that the

new wine which will ferment and expand has room to do so by the new provision. May God help us. “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:24, 25).

The Place of the Old Testament Scriptures

This living message that we have in our possession is the living message from the living Lord. It is the Word which the New Testament says is “quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword” (Hebrews 4:12). It is the Word of God which is able to meet our needs.

This subject, *The Place of the Old Testament Scriptures* could be answered in a few words. The Old Testament Scriptures have a very vital place, as it relates to our understanding of the will of God. In Deuteronomy 8:3, God, through Moses, gave His people this truth that “man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD.” Therefore, we are eager to hear the Word of the Lord because It is what we live by. It is food for the soul. It a means of growth for our Christian life. Notice there that it says, “every word that pro-

ceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD.”

I trust that as we centre our thinking on the Word of God we would be able to say with the psalmist, “How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” (Psalms 119:103), as we understand what it means to have, in our possession, the Word of God. We are here in the world. We need direction, sustenance, and guidance in life. Here we have the Word of God to provide that for us.

My mind went to the words of the apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3:15, when speaking to the young man Timothy. There he spoke of how, “that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation.” At that point, the reference would have been to the Old Testament Scriptures. Paul was recognized

the effect that those Old Testament Scriptures had on this young man. They were “able to make [him] wise unto salvation.” Thus, we see the great value of the Old Testament Scriptures. There are many other references like that, which we could point out.

We know that our Bible is divided into two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The former part, giving to us the Word of God before Christ came, and the latter part giving us His Word since Christ came. We want to recognize that they are not the same. There is a difference between the Old Testament and the New. The Bible is clear that there is a difference. Today, as we look about us in the world and hear some of the thinking and theories of men, we hear some strange doctrines primarily because men do not recognize the difference between the Old Testament and the New.

Some examples of this are when we hear people who would defend carnal warfare. They would say that it is the duty of even the Christian to fight for his country. Why is that? It is because they have not made a difference between the Old Testament and the New — between the old covenant and the new. There are many other

examples such as divorce and remarriage being tolerated or loose and substandard living being “winked at.” Perhaps they say “Well, such and such a character in the Old Testament did this. The Bible tells us that there were some things that God “winked at” (Acts 17:30) in the past “but now commandeth all men every where to repent.” We see there is a difference. Also, perhaps if we do not make that distinction the blessings of grace and freedom through Christ may not be fully realized if we do not see a difference between the Old Testament and the New. Or, the indwelling power and presence of the Holy Spirit may not be emphasized as it should. Therefore, we do want to make that difference.

As we think of the place of the Old Testament Scriptures, *I would like to emphasize five points which shed some light on this thought of what is the place of the Old Testament Scriptures.*

- 1) *God, who is the Author of the Scriptures is unchanging.* This is a very primary one, and I would like to emphasize it again. While we recognize a difference between the Old Testament and the New, we know that Author of those Scriptures is the same. God has not changed as far as His character, purposes, or His will.

It is the same. God is unchanging. Malachi 3:6 gives us this simple truth. "For I am the LORD, I change not." Thus, when we talk about a difference in the Testaments, we do want to recognize that God is the same. James 1:17 tells us that God is the One, "with whom is no variability, neither shadow of turning." That is a precious truth to us that God never changes. His will does not bend over time but it is the same.

Psalm 119:89 says, "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." Whether we are talking about the Old Testament or the New, God is the same and His principles of truth and righteousness remain the same. Ephesians 3 tells us that God's eternal purpose is to save the world. That purpose has never changed. Therefore, in His essence, attributes, counsels, and will, God remains unchanged and unchanging in comparison to man who has his ups and downs, his fits and starts, his eclipses and changes, his high tides and his low ebbs, his cycles of thought and emphasis. We can easily see, as we look at the history of man, that man is seemingly ever changing. In contrast, in the midst of all that, the glory of God shines fixed brightly forever. God is the same. His standard of

holiness remains the same. His promises and His purposes never change. What may appear to be changes to us are simply His change in actions that vary according to man's response to His eternal purposes. God is the same.

2) *While God is unchanging, His revelation to man is progressive.* We can easily understand as we study the Scriptures that God unfolds the truth as we can grasp it. He does that to you as an individual. God takes you where you are with your limited understanding and ever seeks to move you to greater enlightenment and fuller understanding. God has done that same thing with the entire race of man. He has from the beginning of time gradually unfolded more and more of Himself and His truth as man is able to grasp it. Therefore, what we have in shadows and types in the Old Testament is more clearly unfolded in the New. In that we can see a continuity between the Old Testament Scriptures and the New.

An example is the promise of the Redeemer. God did not bring the Saviour there in the Garden, when the Saviour was first needed. Why not? Why did not God simply bring the answer to man's problem right there? We would say, in our thinking, that could

have spared all those long years of (could we say) uncertainty perhaps. (From our New Testament way of thinking it was that way). As long as man was looking forward, generation after generation, he needed to look forward to the time when the Saviour would come. Why did He not do that? It was simply because man was not ready for that. Man could not yet grasp all that was involved in this glorious truth of the great and holy God providing redemption for sinful man.

Thus, we have the Old Testament Scriptures. We have the giving of the Law for a purpose. The purpose was 1) to emphasize the holiness of God. God needed to drill into man's thinking, man's mentality, that God is a holy God, and this problem of sin is a serious problem. We have all through the Old Testament the various manifestations of a holy God — the thunderings and lightnings, the smoke, the shaking of the pillars, and all of that to impress upon man the holiness of God. Also, God impressed upon man the sinfulness and costliness of sin, and man's inability to save himself. Until finally, the time would come, as the New Testament says, "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth

his Son" (Galatians 4:4). In the fulness of time that Saviour appeared. Suddenly it was openly revealed "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). I say the purpose of the Old Testament Scriptures was to bring man to that place where he could finally grasp the coming of the Redeemer and the plan of salvation.

Therefore, we would say that even though the Old Testament is not the full and complete revelation of God, it is a true revelation. It is satisfactory for the time it was given and it is a tremendous blessing for us today which we would like to think of. However, in this unfolding of truth we see God as a great Revealer of Himself. God is ever seeking to unfold Himself — reveal Himself to you, and to all of us. The challenge is for us to be open to receive and accept the light that we have and continue to grow in our understanding of the Lord and His truth.

3) What is the place of the Old Testament Scriptures? *The Old Testament is profitable.* 2 Timothy 3:13–17 gives a very present application to our own day today. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. (14) But continue

thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; (15) And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (16) All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (17) That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” We can understand from this that it is the will of God that we would be perfect and would have all the resources that we need in order to face life today, and in order to withstand the evil men and the seducers that are waxing worse and worse, even before our very eyes. God’s way of doing this is through the Scriptures. The primary truth, and the point that I would like to make is in verse 16 that all Scripture is inspired of God.

Today we do not use the New Testament only. Most of us come to church with both Testaments in our Bible, because we believe that all Scripture — the Old Testament and the New are inspired of God, is authored by God, and given to us for our benefit and for our spiritual blessing. As New Testament Christians we

sustain a real relationship to the Old Testament. We will be talking some about our relationship to the New Testament, but I would like to emphasize this point *The Old Testament is inspired of God*. We do not believe that what is given in the Old is inferior in that respect. In its inspiration, it is all given by God. We should diligently study the entire Bible, because of what the Scripture says here. It “is profitable.” The Old Testament is profitable for doctrine.

Imagine with me where we would be, and how limited we would be, in our knowledge in our understanding if we only had the New Testament. What would we understand about the creation of the world? How much would we know? There are a few references in the New Testament but very limited. *Therefore, the Old Testament is profitable for doctrine*. What would we know about the fall of man? We would not. There are references in the New, but as far as the experience, and the doctrine itself, the unfolding of the doctrine, it is in the Old Testament. There are many other illustrations of in the area of doctrine. What about prophecy — prophecy concerning our time, and concerning the nations. Much of that is in the Old Testament. Therefore, the

Old Testament is profitable.

4) *It is profitable for illustration.* In Romans 15:4 we have this truth emphasized. The apostle Paul says, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” That is simply the way it is brethren and sisters. The Old Testament was written for our learning. As we study and enter in to the truth of the Old Testament, and enter into the record of God’s people in the Old Testament, it has this effect on us. (At least it should). “That we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” Yes, we read of the Old Testament patriarchs, and the tests and trials that they faced, or the fiery trials as Hebrews 11 speaks of, and we learn patience. We learn that the things that we are facing are not unique to us. God’s people, through many years and generations have face trials like this.

Thus, the Old Testament is profitable for illustration. It contains illustrations of faithfulness, of the accounts of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joseph, David, Daniel, and the whole host of patriarchs of old. It contains their experiences, struggles, failures, and successes. It is a testi-

mony of faithfulness. It is an illustration for us of what God can do, what God did in their experience, and what He will do for us. There are many illustrations of the rewards of righteousness, the rewards of unrighteousness, and of the consequences (I should say) of mistakes and unrighteousness. It is recorded for us in the Old Testament.

Where would we be without those examples of purity of life, of victory over temptation, and of standing firm in the midst of persecution? It is there — illustrations of faithfulness for us. I am sure all of us would bear testimony of many rewarding and enriching sermons that we have heard from the Old Testament texts down through our memory which we think of. Sometimes our older brethren and sisters tell us that there used to be more preaching from the Old Testament. I am not sure if that is the case or not. I know the brethren talked about it over the communion services that it was often the traditional way that the minister would go through the Old Testament and noticing the various types and shadows. Time after time that was gone over and it was such a blessing. It was so rewarding to follow God’s unfolding plan of redemption through the Old Testament.

Perhaps we could use more of that type of preaching today.

5) *The Old Testament is profitable for its rich devotional value.* Where would we be without the blessing of the Psalms, for instance, and those outpourings of one who was in love with his Lord, and his communion with His God. The psalmist David said in Psalm 42:1, “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God,” and many other similar thoughts and sentiments. There are the prayers of the various men of God. I love to study the prayers in the Old Testament. They are an encouragement and an inspiration. They are models for our prayers. We can see how they would exalt the Name of God and adore Him for His character and for His position. Then, we see how they would humbly fall before Him and pour out their heart’s need. It is a blessing — the devotional value of the Old Testament. I would urge you to pay special attention to the men of faith in the Old Testament and the record of their godly and pious lives. These are men and women who lived and were people who are of “like passions as we are” (James 5:17), who faced life in their generation.

6) *We would conclude that the New Testament builds squarely*

upon the Old and that there is continuity. It is said if we would total all the direct quotations from the Old Testament that are found in the New, and the seed thoughts and the references in the New from the Old there would be more than 1,000 of those direct quotations or thoughts taken from the Old and recorded in the New. Jesus Himself shows us the value of the Old Testament by His many references back to the Old Testament teaching. Therefore, the place of the Old Testament is a very vital place in the life of the New Testament Christian.

II) *Today we are living under the New Testament.* We are not living under the Old. We are New Testament Christians. I would like to turn to a number of references here. There is discussion sometimes about the old covenant and what is done away with, and what is still in effect and all of that. Some would say (and I do not have a big problem with that terminology and line of thinking) that the ceremonial law is done away with and the moral law is still in effect. Hebrews 7:18 tells us (speaking of the relationship between the old and the new covenant), “For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness

thereof.” There it plainly tells us that there is “a disannulling” of the old covenant — “of the commandment going before,” because of its weakness. This does not refer to its weakness for the time that it was given, but its weakness in relation to the new.

Hebrews 8:13 says, “In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.” From my own personal thinking, in my own mind I do not think we do an injustice to say that the old covenant is done away, and the new is ushered in. Now, to make a difference between the ceremonial law and the moral law the moral law (as I understand it) is restated and re-emphasized in the New Testament. There is nothing lost by saying that the Old is done away and we are living under the New. This is because, as I said before, the New Testament builds squarely on the Old Testament. God’s principles in the Old are “expanded.”

Perhaps I should illustrate or clarify that the moral law we think of as God’s eternal principles that were given even before the ceremonial law was instituted. In that sense, those eternal principles of God are still in effect. They always have been and always will be. If we think

of the ceremonial law as the sacrifices, the ceremonies, the rituals of the Old Testament, yes we would say that is done away. Matthew 5:17–20 gives Jesus words, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. (18) For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. (19) Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (20) For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” This gives the truth that obedience to the external code is no longer sufficient.

Again, in Luke 16:16 we have another, similar thought. Jesus addressed the Pharisees of whom it says in verse 14, “heard all these things: and they derided him.” In verse 15, 16 we read, “And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is

highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. (16) The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.” We have another reference in Romans 10:4–8. I think these references are clearly outlining for us that we are living under the New Testament, and that the New Testament is a heart religion. There is a new motivation that comes from the heart. “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (5) For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. (6) But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) (7) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) (8) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach.” Someone has said that in the Old Testament the emphasis was on “doing and live.” Paul says here in verse 5, “ the man which doeth those things shall live by them.” In the New Testament the emphasis is on

“live and do.” To be a child of God means that being a sanctified, holy person must precede doing, and living a life of practical holiness. Therefore, we notice the difference.

2) *Since we are children of the New Testament, I firmly believe that our life and practice must be based upon the New Testament.* I get a little uneasy sometimes when we may come to a point of doctrine and we need to go to the Old Testament as the only reference to emphasize our point. I am not saying it is wrong to go to the Old Testament, but I think we should always be able to back it up from the New. Is there any practice or point of our “theology” that we would say is based only on the Old? I could not think of any. There is one of that I think of at times when we are speaking on the issue of dress on the point of sex distinction. We often go to the verse in Deuteronomy 22:5, which is a very clear one on that principle, but is there none in the new? Well, I think there is. The teaching in the New Testament in relation to the effeminate man [1 Corinthians 6:9] certainly underscores that eternal principle of God. That is an illustration of what I mean that we should always be able to underscore our thinking, our practice, and our

way of life from the New Testament if we are truly New Testament Christians.

III) *The New Testament is superior to the Old and is God's final authority to man.* This is simply what we have been saying all along. Why is the New Testament superior to the Old?

1) *It is superior because it brings life.* We have several interesting Scriptures in relation to that point. Turn with me to Romans 8:1, 2, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

(2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The New Testament brings life because the New Testament is the Book of Jesus. In John 6:63 Jesus says, "the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." In Romans 7:4-6 notice this, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. (5) For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. (6) But now we are delivered from the law, that

being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." I am thankful to be living under the New Testament. I am thankful for the life of the power of the Spirit that we enjoy in the New Testament age. I said the New Testament is the book of Jesus because in Luke 22:20 Jesus says, "This . . . is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." We are living under the New Testament. It is God's final covenant with us. It is God's final Word and authority for the Christian.

2 Corinthians 3 also applies to our subject. It does not dim at all our appreciation for the Old Testament, but it does tell us that the New Testament is superior because it brings life. In 2 Corinthians 3:2-11 Paul says, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: (3) Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. (4) And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: (5) Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

(6) Who also hath made us

able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (7) But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: (8) How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? (9) For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. (10) For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. (11) For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.”

That Scripture gives us a proper relationship between the Old and the New. The Old Testament was glorious but the New Testament is more glorious. Praise God we are living in this time. 2) *The New Testament is superior because (to my understanding at least) there is a clearer and more straightforward message in the New Testament.* I do not know how you find it, maybe you are more a student of the Old than I am, but, I always have a problem in the Old

Testament. That problem is who was being addressed in the Old Testament and what time period is it speaking about? I am aware that we can always make applications from the Old for our day today, and that is what we do. However, we are always aware that much of the Old Testament was addressed to the children of Israel. Some of it applied to their day and some of it applied to a future day, and some of it applies yet to a future day beyond our day. Therefore, there is always this (I guess I am revealing myself) sense of uncertainty or at least this question that must be answered — “Who is this addressed to?”

Now, I am comparing the Old with the New. In the New Testament we do not have that problem because the New Testament is addressed to New Testament saints. We can take what is in the New Testament at face value. I hope you understand I am making a comparison here. We can take the Old Testament at face value many times and make applications. I cannot give an illustration off hand, but that is a personal testimony of the way I find it. I am more comfortable in the New Testament because I can say as I read in the New Testament “That means me and that is what is I

must do. That is what applies to my day. That is up-to-date — a message from God.

2 Corinthians 3:12–15 says, “Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech.” (That is what I was trying to say). “And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: (14) But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. (15) But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.” That vail (not primarily the veil that I was speaking of) is speaking about the Jewish people who have not recognized their Saviour, and they have that blindness in their heart. We can also make an application to what I was speaking about of the difference between the Old and the New.

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (18) But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:17, 18). I must admit, and we understand, that

there are many things in the New Testament as well, that are hard for us to understand and need to be revealed to us by the Spirit of the Lord. However, I am saying that I think there is a clearer and more straightforward manor in the New Testament. For instance 1 John 5:13 says, “These things have I written unto you . . . that ye may know that ye have eternal life.” That is very simple language. That is language that I can grasp and understand from my own experience.

3) *The New Testament is superior because there is a higher ethical standard.* We could turn to Matthew 5 again. I will not do that. We know the change which Jesus revealed there when He said, “It hath been said . . . but I say unto you.” “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment” (Matthew 5:21). There are various illustrations of that. Jesus said, “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: (28) But I say unto you, That . . . the thought is sin” (Matthew 5:27, 28), and so on. There is a higher ethical standard.

As New Testament Christians we are more responsible before God because of an increased

enlightenment, increased understanding and a higher standard instituted in the New Testament. The Old Testament was “Eye for eye, tooth for tooth” (Exodus 21:24; Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 19:21). Jesus said, “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you” (Matthew 5:44). “heap coals of fire on his head” (Romans 12:20). “Go the second mile” (Matthew 5:41). It is all plain clear instructions for the New Testament Christian.

Therefore, in summary, we definitely profit from the Old Testament in many ways. We would be severely limited, and handicapped in our understanding without it. The New Testament, and our Lord Jesus Christ is the final authority for us today. Therefore, if there is a difference between the Old Testament and the New, we automatically follow the New. That is only in the ceremonies and that type of thing that I already illustrated.

In closing, I would like to turn to Hebrews 12, where it graphically illustrates for us the difference between the Old Testament and the New and the challenge for us today. Remember the contrast that it is giving. “For ye are

not come unto the mount that might be touched . . . [or] the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more . . . But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels . . . And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel” (Hebrews 12:18, 19, 21, 24). The challenge for us in verse 25 is, “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.”

We have the living message from the living Lord. It is not simply an historical record of what was done in the past and what was written down. It is the living voice of God today. The challenge is to hear His voice and harden not our hearts, and to obey and understand and go on to fuller revelation of God. May the Lord bless us as we continue to study His Word, and appreciate it, both the Old Testament and the New.

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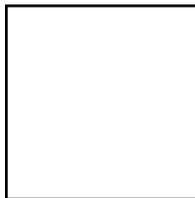
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