

The Letter and the Spirit

2 Cor. 3:1-18

Introduction:

- A. Paul defended apostleship against Judaizing teachers (cf. Ax 15:24; 1 Cor. 9:1; 2 Cor. 12:11-12).
- B. Paul contrasts the nature of two testaments (vv. 6, 14 cf. Rom. 7:6)
- C. Paul does not contrast the letter and spirit of the law.
 - 1. Exact words of any scripture is important. (Gal. 3:16; Heb. 8:8,16).
 - 2. Exact words of Jesus are important. (John 21:21-23).
 - 3. Exact word about baptism, Lord's Supper, "first day of week", etc. important.
- D. Paul shows the importance of the N.T. us by contrasts with the O.T.

Discussion:

- I. New Testament is *New* rather than *Old*. (v. 6,14)**
 - A. New foretold by the old. (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:6-13).
 - B. New, not old, mediated by Christ. (Heb. 9:15).
- II. New Testament was engraved on *hearts* rather than on *stone*. (vs. 3,7).**
 - A. Old associated with *letters* on tables of stone. (Ex. 31:18)
 - B. New associated with *Spirit* on hearts of men. (1 Cor. 2:11,13; Eph. 3:1-4).
- III. New Testament *gives life* rather than *kill*. (v. 6)**
 - A. Old brought the condemnation of sin, without the remission (cf. Heb. 10:4)
 - B. Old could not free one from sin and death. (Rom. 7:7-13; 8:1-3).
 - C. New takes away sin and gives life. (Heb. 9:15)
- IV. New Testament is *more glorious* than *glory* of O.T. (v. 8-11).**
 - A. Old was glorious and served its purpose. (Gal. 3:19-29).
 - B. New is more glorious and better for us. (Heb. 7:22; 8:6).
- V. New Testament was given by *Jesus* rather than *Moses*. (vs. 14-17).**
 - A. Moses only a servant *in* God's house, Jesus is *over* God's house. (Heb. 3:2-6).
 - B. Moses pointed to Jesus as the one to be heard. (Acts 3:22,23).
- VI. New Testament *Remains* rather *Passing Away*. (v. 11-18)**
 - A. Old nailed to the cross. (Col. 2:14-16).
 - B. Old, including 10 commandments, has passed away.
 - 1. Sabbatarians say 10 commands not part of law that passed away. (cf. Rom. 7:7).
 - 2. Sabbatarians say Sabbath from beginning like marriage. (Deut. 5:3, 12-15).
 - 3. Sabbatarians say "ministration" or "administration" changed, but not law itself -- but law itself was written in stone, not administration.
 - C. Old Testament, as law, passed away -- but it still profitable to us. (cf. Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:1-12).
 - 1. Divine history, prophetic evidence, illustrations of principles. (cf. Heb. 11-12:1).
 - 2. English law is profitable for U.S. lawyers, but U.S. law is our standard.

Conclusion:

- A. We must turn from letter (old) to Spirit (new and better) for our religious practices.
- B. We must understand that the two systems cannot be fully followed at the same time. (Gal. 5:4; Heb. 7:12-14).