

Handling Aright the Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15)

One of the most widespread errors regarding the Bible is the failure to properly distinguish between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant, leaving many people confused as to what authority to accept as governing Christian service and worship. The New Testament of Jesus Christ is abundantly clear on this matter. The law of Moses served as a “...*tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor (Gal. 3:24-25).*” Paul, by inspiration, continued, “*But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter (Rom. 7:6).*” The turning point in history wherein the law of Moses was fulfilled (Mat. 5:17-18) was the death of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:16-17). Until Jesus died on the cross the law of Moses was the indisputable authority in service and worship, every “jot” and “tittle” of which was to be obeyed, until it’s fulfillment in the death of Christ. Regarding the death of Jesus Colossians 2:14 affirms, “...*having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*” This must forever settle the issue for all who believe Jesus (Jn. 8:24), and that He is “...*the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (Heb. 5:9).*” Moses, himself, prophesied that his authority would be superseded (Deut. 18:15, 18-19) and Peter confirms that this was accomplished in Christ (Acts 3:19-24). Yet, the Old Covenant remains important as an instructor and advisor pointing the world to Jesus, and that from the patience and comfort revealed therein, we may have hope (Rom. 15:4).

Among the many errors perpetuated by failure to accept the exclusive, binding authority of the New Testament of Christ would be the belief in a separate, modern, priesthood within the church. This grievous error is corrected by Peter, who declares that the entire church of Christ is a “*royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9).*” Second, would be the equating of the Old Covenant tabernacle and/or temple to the church building, using terminology such as altar and sanctuary to refer to parts of the building, thus leading to the further error of considering the church to be the building rather than the Christians assembled there. Third, also without New Testament authority which authorizes only that we sing, making melody in the heart (Eph. 5:15-21; Col. 3:16-17), is the attempt to justify the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship by appealing to the Old Testament. It strikes one as odd that those who appeal to Old Covenant authority do so very selectively, ignoring James 2:10 and oblivious to Galatians 2:21; 3:10-11; 5:1-4, which mandate that what the Old Covenant authorized in terms of worship and service it binds as a whole, never in part, upon its adherents. Failure to accept the New Testament authority of Christ as exclusive and binding has in no small way contributed to the muddle and confusion in many religious circles of today.

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