AMBASSADOR COLLEGE **Bible** LESSON 19

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

The New Covenant and Testament

WHY has there been so much misunderstanding of God's *covenants?*

Many people have assumed that God's law and His covenants have nothing whatever to do with Jesus Christ and New Testament Christianity!

No wonder so many can't understand *why* God promised to make a New Covenant; with whom the New Covenant will be made; and what terms and conditions will regulate it!

You need to know the answers to these vital questions so that God will make the NEW COVENANT WITH *YOU!* Unless He does, you won't be able to receive the PROMISES contained in THE NEW TESTAMENT—the *will* of Jesus Christ!

We Need Help!

Remember, the Israelites were given every incentive to live by the royal law of love for almost one thousand years. But they failed miserably.

We are human beings just as were the people of Old Covenant times. *We* also will fail miserably if we place our confidence in *our own* human power to obey God's law. History *thunders* its warning at us! There is an important *reason* why we fail to obey.

Let us understand it!

God is fashioning and molding man by causing him to learn by his own experiences, and the experiences of others. God has made man a free moral agent in order that man may rightly choose to follow the great royal law of love so he can be supremely happy.

But man does not have the *power*, of himself, to follow this law even though he may finally choose to do so.

Here is where *God* comes in.

Only one who has a *Godly* nature and *Godly* power can live in perfect obedience to the supreme law that God has ordained! We do not have a Godly nature now. But God promises to make possible the *power* to achieve all we *really* long for and desire—the things which come *only* through living in harmony with His law, *IF* we will only realize our *own* weakness —*our own* inability to obey the royal law of love and surrender our own *selfish* desires to Him.

Then He will complete His creation of us by placing within us His Holy Spirit of power—of universal and unfailing love for everything and everyone!

When we surrender to God and receive His power within us to live completely in harmony with His great law, all of our unvoiced, scarcely recognized longings and desires will be abundantly fulfilled and we will be supremely happy —*forever!!*

This glorious future *can* be yours!!

Christ's Warning

What did Christ warn about depending upon *our own* ability?

Jesus Christ explained how we might have eternal life. He said: "If thou wilt enter into life *keep* the commandments" (Mat. 19:17). But in the previous lesson we have seen that for one thousand years of human history man has *proven he cannot* keep the *commandments.* Did Christ, the living Son of God, by His own next words verify the fact that this is *impossible* for *man, of himself,* to do? Note what He said:

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God" (Mat. 19:24).

An *impossibility!* Even Christ's own disciples, when they heard these words, were "*exceedingly amazed,*" and asked, "Who then *can* be saved?" (Verse 25.)

Christ then revealed *the only way* by which

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it *can* be done: "With *men* this is *impossible;* but with *God* all things are possible"! (Verse 26.) With God's *Spirit*—God's *nature*—placed within us it can be done!!

Pay diligent heed to the words you are reading here! Your eternal life depends on how you understand and *act* on them.

What mortal men—you and I—need for salvation is a *miracle,* a *new* nature, the beginnings of which must be placed within us *now* by a miracle of God!

We Need Our Creator's Aid

God is the Supreme Creator (Gen. 1:1; John 1:1-3). He has created all things, both living animals and birds. But He has made no *Covenant* with them by which they may become anything higher. They *are* lowly and will *remain* lowly.

God has given them no marvelous hands or creative brain by which they can plan and design things in a fashion after the things which God plans and constructs. God's other creations resemble Him in no respect.

But God has made *man* ENTIRELY DIFFERENT!

God said, in making His *plans* for molding man into His highest creation, "Let us make *man* in *our* image" (Gen. 1:26). God did *not* say He planned this for any other of His vast number of creations. God has planned to MOLD ONLY MAN INTO HIS LIKENESS!! And God took of the dust of the ground and fashioned man into the *external* form—the *external* dimensions and likeness—of God, as we learned in previous lessons.

But God did *not,* at that time, place *within* man a *divine nature* whereby we would also resemble God *inwardly.* We are *not yet* composed of the divine nature.

Adam had a fleshly, *carnal* mortal *nature* within him—and like begets like. That's the kind of nature you have in you. For *Adam* is the father of fleshly mankind. So man now resembles God externally in form, but does not resemble God *inwardly.*

God has fashioned man, *unlike* sticks and stones, birds and beasts, with *inherent capabilities* for *marvelous* achievements. He has equipped man with marvelous *hands* that can fashion things, given to man a *tongue and language* by which man can communicate the most intricate of ideas to his fellow man, and above all, given to man a *brain* capable of approaching, in a degree at this time, the very creative powers of God. And God now offers man a Covenant promising that he can be created in God's very own image *inwardly* also!

Our *potentialities* are so great we can then become even of the family of God—for we can then be born into the ruling Kingdom of God! These are the plain teachings of *your* Bible! How *wonderful!*

God inspired Isaiah to say, "O Lord, thou art our *Father* [the One who can *beget* us]; we are the *clay,* and Thou our *potter;* we are the works of Thy hand" (Isa. 64:8). We are made of the *earth* and God is *fashioning* us to be like Him. "The first man Adam was made a living *soul*" [*psuche* or *nephesh—flesh*]—breathing flesh—subject to eternal death. But "the *last* Adam [*Christ*—who, like the *first* Adam, was the *first* of His kind—the Father's *new* kind of *begotten* and born Spiritual creations] was made a quickening *spirit,*" having eternal life and the very nature of God at His resurrection. You, too, can be one of these new creations *if* you choose (I Cor. 15:45; Eph. 4:22-24).

Now, having realized how utterly incapable we are to achieve, of ourselves, the high goal that God has set for us, let us now examine the true glories the New Covenant holds out to us. And let us examine the steps we must *now* take in order to receive help through the Holy Spirit of God so that we may *stand ready* to enter into this New Covenant when it is offered in the time just ahead!

Now we are ready for the Lesson.

LESSON 19

The New Covenant Marriage Yet Future

1. Did Christ, the God of the "Old Testament," promise that He would make a *new* covenant—*a new marriage agreement*—with Israel and Judah even before Old-Covenant Israel had gone into captivity for disobeying the Law? Jer. 31:31. Does Heb. 8:8 also verify this?

COMMENT: Note that the event was STILL FUTURE when Paul wrote the book of Hebrews.

2. Does the reason that a New Covenant must be made lie in the fact that there was a *fault* in the Old Covenant? Heb. 8:7.

3. What was this fault—was it in the Law? Psa. 19:7. See also Rom. 7:12. If the fault was *not* in the Law, which was "perfect," nor with God, who kept His part, the fault must have been with "them," the *people*, must it not? Heb. 8:8, first five words.

COMMENT: The law was *perfect*. But the PEOPLE were *weak*. *Spiritually* weak. They did not *keep their part of the Old Covenant marriage agreement*.

4. But under the *New* Covenant, what does God propose to do? Heb. 8:10 and Jer. 31:33. Is this promised *New* Covenant to be a *better* marriage covenant than the Old Covenant? See comment.

COMMENT: Under the old marriage covenant, God wrote His laws on two tables of *stone*. The people could *see* the law with their *eyes*, but the *law* was *not within their hearts and minds*. The law was *not a part* of them. But under the terms of the new covenant the Lord promises that He will make a marriage agreement only with those who have allowed Him to place the loving principles of God's *nature* within their *hearts* and minds, so they *can* keep the law.

Remember, for it is tremendously important!! He will marry His "bride"—the collective members of the body of *His* church—only when she has proven herself worthy by obedience to His law.

The Old Covenant Israelites had no promise of receiving the Holy Spirit which could write God's law in their hearts and minds. The New Covenant agreement into which we shall enter will *correct* the fault of the Old Covenant by making it possible for us to obey God's law in its spiritual intent. Then we can receive the eternal promises made to Abraham by means of God's Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, according to the Testament or will of Christ, gives us a *new* nature—the nature of God!

No longer need man be *weak*, as he was under the Old Covenant, so that he cannot fulfill his part of the Old Covenant and receive God's promises. This time man *will be able* to fulfill *his part* and receive the promises of the *New* Covenant!

5. Who is the *messenger* who came to herald the coming of the promised New Covenant for those who would avail themselves of it? Mal. 3:1. Is this messenger "the Lord"—*Christ?* Mark 1:1, 2.

6. Is the message of this New Covenant a part of the *gospel message*—the good news—Christ preached? Mark 1:1, 14, 15. Is repentance and belief in the Gospel to be a part of what modern Israelites must do in order to enter into this New Covenant which Christ will propose? Verse 15. Does Mat. 15:24 also verify the fact that Christ was sent only to the "lost"—the *scattered*—"sheep" or people of *Israel* to herald the Good News of the soon coming New Covenant proposal? But did Christ *later* instruct His *disciples* to preach the Gospel—which contains the message of the *New* Covenant—to *all the world?* Luke 9:2; Mat. 24:14.

7. Do Gentiles have any hope now of ever being partakers of this promised New Covenant, or are they *strangers* to the Covenants of *promise*—the promises contained in the covenants made with Abraham and those promises which will be contained in the New Covenant? Eph. 2:11, 12. But in what way may a Gentile—one having no blood relationship to Abraham—come into the New Covenant relationship? Verse 13 and Gal. 3:29; Rom. 11:17.

COMMENT: Remember, in past Lessons we found how a Gentile may come into the New Covenant relationship: "*IF* you are Christ's you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" in this New Covenant. Gal. 3:29. The New Covenant is, in this way, open to *all* peoples of the world. Note this New Covenant is *conditional—"if."* Both Israelites and Gentiles must earnestly desire to be able to live by the law and must *surrender themselves* to God.

According to the terms of the New Marriage Covenant, we must first be tested and proved to see whether we will keep God's law. The Old Covenant, remember, was made with Israel *before* she was fully tried and tested. The new marriage covenant will not be made until *after* we have been tried and tested and are "born again." Then we will be members of the *spiritual* Kingdom of God—Israel according to the *spirit*, and not just Israel according to the flesh.

The New Covenant will be a *better* covenant than the Old Covenant was. The *Old* Covenant was *national—to one nation only*—to Israel. It gave *only temporary material earthly blessings*. It gave *no promise of the Holy Spirit and eternal life*.

The *Testament* or *Will* of Christ, on the other hand, is openly extended to *all nations* and is finally to be culminated in a New Covenant. It *promises eternal inheritance of the earth, sonship in the ruling spiritual Kingdom of God* and, naturally, the *Holy Spirit* of eternal life with which to make these promises possible. The New Covenant, *unlike* the Old Covenant, is actually *preceded* by a *will*—that is, a *testament*.

For Christ, being the *particular* seed of Abraham, was able to live perfectly without any infraction of the law. He will possess the earth. By means of His *death* for our transgressions of the law He has *willed* to those who are desirous of entering into the *New* Covenant, the *promises* made to Abraham—that is, the promises of being in the Kingdom of God upon

this earth, and of having eternal life (Heb. 9:15-17).

To be *correct*, the first part of the Bible should *not* be titled "The Old *Testament*." For the question of the death of either party to that Covenant did *not* enter into the agreement as it would had it been a *will*—a *testament*. The Old Covenant was simply an *agreement*—"You do this and I'll do that."

The remaining part of the Bible would then naturally bear the title, "*the new covenant*"—the *new agreement*—for it reveals fully the *New Covenant* which God offers to the present-day blood descendants of Old Israel, and which He has extended to *all* people of the earth.

Also, this latter part of the Bible could bear within its title the word "*Testament*," for "if we are Christ's, we are [considered as] Abraham's seed and [by Christ's *death*] heirs of the promises" to be confirmed by the New Covenant.

So—*properly* the title of the second part of the Bible should be, "THE NEW COVENANT AND TESTAMENT." The Greek, in which this latter part of the Bible was originally written, uses the Greek title "Diatheke" which is translated *interchangeably* as "*covenant*" *and* "*testament*."

8. *When* does God say this New Covenant was *confirmed?* Dan. 9:27. Was it the Messiah who did this? Verse 26. (Notice that by Christ's supreme sacrifice of Himself He did away with the necessity of animal sacrifices and oblations.) And does I Cor. 1:7-8 tell us the Messiah—Christ—is coming to *establish* this promised New Covenant at His second coming?

COMMENT: A "day" in the prophecy of Daniel 9:27 represents a year. Christ ministered three and a half years—*one half* of this prophetical *week*. Then He sacrificed His blood for the "many" people of the world so that they need not die. *A tremendous sacrifice*. He thus "*made firm*" the New Covenant at that time by *saving people* so they need not die eternally for their sins. Thus He made it *possible* for them to receive the Holy Spirit by which they may be born again as spirit beings and enter into the New Covenant relationship.

Immediately after Christ's second coming, He will take the remaining three and one-half years to *establish* the New Covenant by actually *covenanting* with those who were saved by His blood because of His first three-and-one-half-years' ministry.

The word "confirm" means to "make firm" *or* "establish." All who are born again as spirit beings will, at Christ's second coming, be officially invited to enter into the New Covenant marriage relationship with Christ as their husband. This is the way Christ will *establish* the New Covenant.

We must be ready! This must be our *goal!* What a priceless privilege!

Do not underestimate this event—there is *nothing* greater!

9. Christ, remember, is the sacrificial *Lamb* of God. Does Rev. 19:7, 9 describe this glorious marriage event in which we who are ready will become the bride, at His second coming? Read also II Cor. 11:2.

Christ to RE-MARRY His Wife!

Some may ask, "How can Jesus Christ marry the New Testament church which is composed of both Israelites and Gentiles, if He was already married to ancient Israel under the Old Covenant?"

The fact is Jesus Christ is no longer bound by marriage to ancient Israel! That marriage contract has been dissolved! Notice how.

1. After ancient Israel had disobeyed God's law, followed the customs of the heathen—serving other gods—did the Lord plead with them to return from their adulterous ways? Jer. 3:14.

COMMENT: When ancient Israel broke God's marriage covenant, they were actually committing spiritual adultery. They put the customs of heathen peoples and the worship of idols ahead of the worship of God Who was their Husband.

Because God is HOLY He does not "co-exist" with sin! Therefore He was forced to separate His "wife"—ancient Israel—from Himself. (Isa. 50:1.)

2. Was it the sins of ancient Israel that separated them from God? Jer. 3:6, 8; Isa. 50:1 and Isa. 59:1-2.

COMMENT: Even though Israel had committed adultery, God was, however, not free to marry again! Adultery is not a cause for divorce and remarriage! (See our free booklet, "Divorce and Remarriage.") That's why the Eternal said, "I AM MARRIED UNTO YOU" (Jer. 3:14).

The LORD—Jesus Christ of the New Testament—was still bound by His part of the conditions of the marriage contract.

These conditions were, however, limited by *death!* Only the death of one of the partners of a marriage covenant can sever the marriage relationship—marriage is binding until death!

Jesus Christ's death on the stake at Golgotha freed Him from His first marriage contract to ancient Israel. Now he is free to marry a repentant, forgiven, sin-free "spiritual Israel"—the New Testament Church—when He returns!

3. Who is it Jesus will marry when He returns? Rev.19:7. Notice the words "his wife."

COMMENT: When Jesus returns He promises to make a NEW COVENANT—A NEW MARRIAGE AGREEMENT. That new marriage contract will be made with "spiritual" Israel — converted Israelites and Gentiles—now born of the Spirit.

This time the wife will remain faithful. Why?

Because she will have received God's HOLY SPIRIT and, at the resurrection, will have been born as a perfect spiritual nation—into the Kingdom of God. God's spirit enables us to keep His laws which are still the terms and conditions of the marriage agreement—the New Covenant—He will make with us!

Christ Came That We May KEEP the Law

Some believe Christ came to "do away with the law." Just what *was* the *purpose* of Christ's coming, anyway?

How ignorant the vast majority are of the *most vital* of all the facts they should know. Those who have set themselves up as ministers have not taught the people the truth, nor do they themselves know it.

Learn here the truth from your Bible!

1. Did Christ come to "do away with the law"—to "nail the law to the cross"? What did Christ, *Himself*, say? *He* should know *why* He came. What are *His* words? Mat. 5:17. Do verses 18 and 19 also show He did *not* come to destroy the law? On what two great things does Christ say "hang *all* the law"? Mat. 22:40, 37, 38, 39.

COMMENT: The great royal law of love has always existed. It, with its ten points, the ten commandments, was in effect in the Garden of Eden. The law stands fast *forever*. Love of God as revealed by His law will never become obsolete (Psa. 111:7, 8). People have been unable to bring themselves into harmony with this highest of all laws!! Christ here *repeats* twice for *emphasis* that He did *not* come to destroy—to do away with—the law.

2. On the other hand, what *did* Christ say He came to *do?* Mat. 5:17, last eight words. What did Christ *mean* by these words, "I COME . . . TO FULFILL"? See comment.

COMMENT: Christ was the first-begotten of many brethren. He was a mortal human being, just as you and I, but He was *begotten* of the Holy Spirit of God at his *physical* conception whereas with you and me, conception by the Holy Spirit comes *later* in life—after we have sinned.

Christ "FULFILLED the law" PERFECTLY. Most certainly in Christ's "fulfilling" of the Law He did not annul the Law. He *demonstrated* the *power* of the Holy Spirit of God, *if* placed within man, to be *able* to fulfill—keep—the law. For with God *all* things are possible (Mat. 19:26).

Christ came to pay with His own life the penalty of *eternal* death for all of us. He makes it possible that *we* may receive the Holy Spirit of *life* whereby we can *fulfill the law* also!

With the advent of the *New* Covenant promise of the Holy Spirit *with which* to keep the Law, God can *now magnify—enlarge*—His commandments from the keeping of the *law in* the letter, as commanded under the *Old* Covenant, to the original intent that God desired from the beginning in the Garden of Eden.

God can *now* require the keeping of the law in the *spirit*—in its *spiritual* intent. This is a *far more difficult task!!* But man can have more *power*—the power of the Holy Spirit—to accomplish this feat *if* he will surrender to God!

Christ came to *magnify* the law. This is *why* He said, "Ye have heard that it was said by them in old time [by God's law-givers under the *Old* Covenant], thou shalt not *commit* adultery [*physically*]: but I say unto you, that whosoever *looketh* after a woman to lust after her [*mentally*] *hath* [*already*] *committed* adultery" (Mat. 5:27, 28). *Now* it is counted a sin if one even lets the *thought* of adultery enter the mind. Or dwell on sins of any other kind.

Christ, by paying with His life for the sins of all mankind so that we need not die an eternal death for them, has made it possible that *all* may enter into the *New* Covenant relationship with Him. These two ways, then, are how Christ came to "fulfill the Law"—*He*, Himself, fulfilled it by obeying it, and has made it possible for "whomsoever will" to fulfill—obey—it!

Preparation We Must Make as Prospective Bride

1. What *purpose* has the Old Covenant period served?

COMMENT: It has been necessary for God *to make man realize*, through centuries of experience, the ageless fact that true happiness comes only by living in accordance with the great eternal law of love. And make man realize that he, of himself, is utterly incapable of doing so through his own means.

The *Old* Covenant has done just this! For the Israelites, down through the centuries, have been known as the nation of God. Yet all know that Israel could never keep His law. Thus Israel has become an example to the people of the world that all mankind, of themselves, cannot keep God's law either.

And then—just at this point—God has sent His *only begotten* Son to this unhappy and sorrow-ridden world with the joyful news—the "Good News"—of the arrival of a *New* Covenant. A covenant whereby one may be "*begotten* again, *grow* again and, at Christ's coming, be *born again*" a *new* creation (II Cor. 5:17), having *another* nature—the loving Spirit of God.

2. Each of us must receive the *Holy Spirit* which will set in motion the *changes* which must occur within us before we can be "born again" with the spirit body and *holy* spiritual *nature* we must have in order that Christ can

establish His new marriage covenant with us. What are the *terms* of Christ's testament or will whereby we may *receive* the Holy Spirit necessary to cause these changes? What does Christ say *you* must do now in order to receive the Holy Spirit? Acts 2:38. Are not three things necessary?

COMMENT: Here you have the very essence of the things you must do now to prepare yourself to be a member of the Church which Christ will marry at His coming. Three things are necessary for *you* to do now *in order to receive the promised Holy Spirit.* YOU MUST REPENT, BELIEVE, AND BE BAPTIZED. What does this mean? Let's understand:

FIRST: You must "REPENT"—be *sorry* for your old ways, and *surrender yourself,* as far as it is humanly *possible* to the *loving rule* of God —for God will save *no one* He cannot rule.

Christ *purchases* true Christians with His blood which He shed on the cross for their sins so that they need not die an eternal death for sin (Acts 2:38). That is, *Christ purchases those who are willing to prepare now to enter into the New Covenant with Him* at His coming, and He has promised now to place the Holy Spirit within them.

Those who agree to enter into the New Covenant with Christ thereby will agree to become Christ's *purchased servants*—they agree to do His will. And, as "*servants of Christ,* doing the will of God," you will be doing His will this time—*un*like those under the Old Covenant—"from the *heart*" (Eph. 6:6). For God will have, under the terms of the New Covenant, inscribed His law "in the fleshly table of your heart" (Jer. 31:33 and Ezek. 11:19), by the *indwelling* of His Holy Spirit within you!

SECOND: You must BELIEVE—believe that the Holy Spirit of *power* promised by the terms of Christ's Will can *completely* crush out your old carnal nature and *change* you. And *believe* that Christ is your Savior, and your present high priest, and coming Ruler.

Christ, by paying with His life for the sins of all mankind so that we need not die an eternal death for them, has made it possible that *all* may enter into *eternal* life. No wonder it is that when we look at the *failure* of those people to keep the law under the Old Covenant, we realize that *we* need a Savior—Christ—to pay for our sins. We realize the Old Covenant "Law has been our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Gal. 3:24). And that it is only right and proper that we acknowledge Him who has redeemed us as our coming Ruler and King and *Husband!*

THIRD: You must BE BAPTIZED.

Be sure to write for the free booklet, "All About Water Baptism."

So—*to summarize*—you must: (1) repent, (2) believe, (3) be baptized.

After you have done this, what does *God* promise to do, according to the terms of Christ's Will or Testament? ". . . and you *shall* receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"!! (Acts 2:38). This is what God *promises* to do as His part.

There it is!

This is the spirit of *power* that came upon the apostles just after Christ's death (Acts 2:4). *This* is the prior requirement for entering into the new covenant relationship with Christ at our resurrection. How glorious that God has promised us a way of liberation from all our *unhappy* ways!! Then, at Christ's soon coming, we may inherit all the other marvelous things that the New Covenant promises—eternal life, the Kingdom, and the earth forever. The Holy Spirit gives us the *power* to have all these blessings!

The Decision Is Yours

If you intend to enter into the New Covenant marriage agreement with Christ, you should begin PREPARATION NOW! Later may be *too late.* But the decision is *yours* to make. God will not force you. He leaves you free to choose. Notice:

1. When God offered the Old Covenant to ancient Israel, did He coerce them into entering this covenant with Him, or did He allow them to *voluntarily decide* whether they would enter into it? Ex. 19:3, 5-8. Notice the word "*if*" in verse 5.

COMMENT: The word "*if*" shows that God did *not* force the people of ancient Israel to enter into the Old Covenant with Him.

2. Did God coerce the *next* generation of Israelites, forty years later, to enter this same Covenant with Him, or did He allow them to *choose* whether or not they would do so? Deut. 30:19. Note the words, "*choose* life."

COMMENT: Christ will not force anyone into entering a covenant with Him. Nor will He force you into a decision to *start preparing* to enter a covenant with Him.

Why? God is creating beings with abilities like His own—beings with *minds* like His own —beings who can *choose*—beings who are FREE MORAL AGENTS, and who are not mere automatons like the rest of His creation, such as the plants and animals.

Christ never did *force* anyone to covenant with Him, and He never will! For He is forming beings who must *voluntarily* choose *correctly!* They will become God's *supreme* creation!

He will *advise* though — He says, "choose *life.*" *You* also are a free moral agent just as were the former generations to which the other covenant—the Old Covenant—was offered. What will be *your* choice?

The *New* Covenant promises life—*eternal* life —and as the collective bride of Christ a close

relationship with Him. And all the other blessings that will attend this high calling.

What are you going to do *now* about the New Covenant which is to be offered you when Christ comes? If you *choose not* to prepare yourself now for entry into this Covenant by refusing to allow God to place His *Holy Spirit* within you—the Spirit of eternal life—you will *not* be transformed, at Christ's soon coming, into a spirit being—the form you *must* be in to be able to covenant with Him.

God will not make a marriage covenant with a lower — human — form of life. In order to attend the wedding supper of the Lamb, you must be "born again"—a spirit being—just as God is!

Persistent refusal to submit will lead to eternal death.

The time is NOW *at hand* for *you* to make a decision. THINK DEEPLY on this matter as you meditate on this lesson and the lessons just ahead. These will give God's revealed instruction on *how* you can finally enter into the New Covenant, *husband-wife* relationship with the living Jesus Christ, your Redeemer.

Where to Receive the Spirit?

The evidence is now crystal clear that in order to *inherit* eternal life you must also stand ready to enter into this New Covenant relationship with Christ. That's the only way to be born again of the life-giving Holy Spirit of God, and inherit all the other things you *really* desire.

But to whom should you turn for aid and guidance in preparing yourself now so you will prove *worthy* of entering into the New Covenant marriage relationship with Christ at His now imminent return? Does God have a SPECIAL GROUP on earth today to whom you should seek? Or do you suppose you can qualify to enter into the New Covenant relationship with Christ through attending just any church?

Does God leave you in the dark on this most vital of all things? Or does He clearly point out to you the fact that He does have a Church, and show you how you can *identify* it from among the welter of so-called "churches" of today?

Which church—that is the question of all-encompassing importance! The Bible plainly gives the answer to this question, too. Let's understand what it says.

1. Long before Moses and Mount Sinai, did God have a *priest* upon the earth who *represented Him*, and carried out His work? Gen. 14:18, 19. Also review in Lesson 7, on pages 3 and 4, questions 5 thru 13.

2. Later, did God call Moses *as a servant* to *serve* Him? Ex. 3:11, 12. Did God have *Moses* deliver the terms of the Old Covenant to the people at Mount Sinai? Ex. 19:3-8, 21:1, 24:3.

3. Was it not *another mortal flesh-and-blood human being*—Jesus Christ (Heb. 2:9, 14)—who came to announce, for God, the terms of the *New* Covenant to the people of His time, and to the world? Mal. 3:1, Mark 1:14.

COMMENT: God uses *human beings* to represent Him in His religious dealings with human beings upon the earth. After God personally gave the ten commandments to the people at Mount Sinai, it was a *human being*, Moses, who gave the terms of the Old Covenant to the people for God. Then God used Christ, in His *human* form, to announce the conditions of the New Covenant. And *today* God uses certain human beings to represent Him in his dealings with man.

The Gospel is the message about the *Kingdom* of God. A *kingdom* is constituted of four things: territory, ruler, laws and *citizens*. The gospel message *must, therefore*, include the *New Covenant message* whereby "born again" people may covenant with Christ to rule with Him in a husband-wife relationship as *citizens* in the future spirit-governed Kingdom of God.

The Father has planned from the very foundation—the very beginning—of the world, how these four things which will constitute His Kingdom must be brought into being! (Mat. 25:34.)

4. Christ, Himself, was here on this earth but a short time. Is it true that Christ FOUNDED A CHURCH TO CARRY THE MESSAGE OF THIS NEW COVENANT ON DOWN TO PEOPLE THROUGH ALL THE AGES, so they could now receive the Holy Spirit and thus be prepared to enter the Kingdom at His soon coming? Mat. 16:18.

5. Was this Church to be composed of many *different* denominations? Or was it to be but ONE CHURCH? Same verse. Was this *true* church to have the "keys" to the Kingdom—the means of obtaining *entrance* into the Kingdom? Verse 19.

COMMENT: One of *the most important keys* is to know that there *is to be* a New Covenant, know *how* to enter into it, and know how to *keep your part* of it so that God may forever fulfill His part. The church *you* need to be in is the only one that has this key!

6. After the New Covenant was made known, when did the *promised* Holy Spirit first enter into those who knew how to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit? Acts 1:4, 5; 2:1-4. By the entrance of the Holy Spirit into these people, were they thus PUT WITHIN GOD'S CHURCH—the Church of God? I Cor. 12:13.

COMMENT: These members, by surrendering their wills to God, and by having God's Spirit placed within them, became the *members* of His spiritual body. They became the members of His body just like the members of your body—your eyes, arms, legs—are members of your body and subject to your will. Here is the origin

of the first true *spiritual Church of God on the earth.*

7. Do not the following references show that God's *true* Church should bear the name "CHURCH OF GOD"? Read and write out each of these vital *proofs:* Acts 20:28; I Cor. 1:2; 10:32; 11:22; and 15:9; II Cor. 1:1; I Thes. 2:14; II Thes. 1:4; I Tim. 3:5 and Gal. 1:13.

8. Down through the ages, since Christ's time, has there been a very small group who have continued as the executors and administrators of things concerning God's New Covenant and will? Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18. Rev. 3:1, 7, 8.

COMMENT: These seven *actual* Churches mentioned here existed in the time of the apostles. But each also represents a *type* of the true Church of God in its *successive stages* on down from the time of Christ. These are traceable through history.

(Be sure to write for your free copy of the important booklet, "A True History of the True Church.")

Today, God is working through the PHILADELPHIA ERA of His true church. Note that the Philadelphia Church has *not denied* God's name (Rev. 3:8).

The Radio Church of God is the Philadelphia Era of *God's* Church—we are called by *His* name, "Church of *God.*" *We* have *not* DENIED His name.

The Radio Church of God

1. Is the Headquarters of God's *true* Church of today to be found in Hawaii, Italy, Germany, Africa? *Or* is it to be found in an *Israelite* nation? Mat. 15:24.

COMMENT: Christ was sent to Israel. As the Jews have temporarily refused to receive Christ, God is now working through the wealthiest and strongest of the other ten Israelite nations—America and the British Commonwealth nations. Our *prosperity* can put God's final message out with *power.*

For further proof that *our* work of God is the *one and only work* that is obedient to God and that it is carrying out His mission, review quickly the following: In Lesson 7, review sections titled *God's Commission to His Church, Christ Has Work to Do, Melchisedec Ministry Reappears!,* and *Tithe to Which Church?*

Be *sure* to *review* these. For *salvation* can come *only* through *God's* Church—the church *His* Spirit is in!!

As the terms of the New Covenant are now part of the Savior's Testament—His *Will*—the *true* Church of God today is the *executor* or *administrator* of this will by which one may obtain the Holy Spirit of entrance into God's Kingdom.

Christ founded His Church for this purpose.

The very fact that we know *why* this Will was made — its *true* intent and purpose — together with proof we are the *true* Church formed for executing this Will, makes *us* its executors! We are the ones who possess the "keys" today.

God's true Church is not the shouting, senseless "pentecostal-type" of church. God's Spirit is "the Spirit of a sound mind," in a sound church which has the keys of the Kingdom. Write for the free booklet, "The Tongues Question."

2. There is a *special* Spirit in God's Church —the *Holy* Spirit of God. For by *His* Spirit we are baptized into *His* Church. But does Paul *warn* you about receiving a *different* spirit? II Cor. 11:4.

COMMENT: This *different* spirit is the spirit of *anti*-Christ (I John 2:18). It is *against* Christ. It *splits* groups into *denominations.* It is *not* the *uniting* Holy Spirit of God.

Do *not* make the fatal mistake of attempting to *covenant* with God through the *wrong* church. If you do, the apostle John here warns, you will receive the *wrong spirit.* You will be led into *not* keeping the commands as revealed in God's word, the Bible.

3. Are other warnings given against attempting to covenant with God through false churches? Mark 13:6.

COMMENT: *Many*—not the few, but *many*—will come in Christ's name, thus *falsely* classifying themselves as *Christ*ians, and will thus *deceive* the *many.*

Remember that after you are begotten, you must *grow.* IF you choose the *wrong* church through which to covenant with God, you will be fed the *wrong* spiritual food. You will then *die spiritually* if you are fed this wrong spiritual food—it is poisonous!

And then you cannot be born again at Christ's soon coming!

Finally, keep always in mind that God's final *warning* message *to all the earth* must be carried by *radio.* That is the only human force *powerful* enough—worldwide—to do it! That's why this Work is called THE RADIO CHURCH OF GOD.

Other churches have *wrongly appropriated* God's *true* Church name "Church of God," just as they have *wrongly appropriated* Christ's name—*Christ*ian.

So—this Work is the **Radio Church of God,** *with World Headquarters address,* **Post Office Box 111, Pasadena, California 91109.**

There is *no* other *Radio* Church of God.

Consider these facts as you learn more, in the lessons just ahead, about entering into the New Covenant with Jesus Christ at His second coming!

Remember, the decision to enter into God's covenant *is up to you!*

The AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
Bible Correspondence Course

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG
Publisher and Editor

DR. C. PAUL MEREDITH
Director

THE MAN WHO *COULDN'T AFFORD* TO TITHE

Statistics show and businessmen admit that it is virtually impossible for HONEST men to succeed in business. Especially in these increasingly foreboding days. But do YOU have to be dishonest, cheat and lie, to be able to adequately provide for your family?--you who are learning more and more about God and His ways each day?

Here is the PLAIN TRUTH about financial security for YOU, written in human experience as observed for over 30 years by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong.

It was late in 1933--the very depth of the great depression. Ed Smith was a well driller by profession, but nobody seemed able to afford to have wells drilled.

Ed and his wife, Emma, attended services I was then holding in a one-room country schoolhouse twelve miles west of Eugene, Oregon. Ed made no profession of Christianity until later. But he attended services, and went up and down the countryside discussing Bible doctrines with his professing Christian neighbors.

"You've got to pay tithes and obey God," he insisted. "The Bible says so. It's plain!"

One of his neighbors became irritated.

"Look here, Ed," the neighbor exploded, "why do you come around here trying to talk me into these things, when you don't obey the Bible and pay tithes yourself?"

"Because," came Ed's quick and ready answer, "I don't profess to be a Christian, and you do. Besides," he added, "I can't afford to tithe, anyway."

Thousands Like Him

There are thousands who, like Ed Smith, reason in their own minds that they can't afford to tithe, even though, like Ed Smith, they realize the Bible commands it.

I heard about the above conversation, and preached a sermon on the question of whether the unconverted should obey the Ten Commandments and pay tithes, or whether as Ed has reasoned, these things were only for Christians. I pointed out that God's law was put in motion for man's good,--it is THE WAY of life that brings peace, happiness, prosperity, the full, abundant, interesting life; success, joy, here and now, as well as eternal life through Christ for the saved.

I showed that it PAYS, and is the only sensible way of life, entirely apart from the matter of salvation--and that, even if one is finally lost, he who sins little shall be punished with few stripes. I pointed out God's promises to prosper the tithe-payer,

and that this is a definite LAW God has set in motion, which operates inexorably and automatically on the just and the unjust alike.

Ed began to obey the Bible. At the very next service--we were holding services at this little schoolhouse three times a week, and three other nights a week in a hall in downtown Eugene at the time--Mrs. Smith smilingly handed me a one dollar bill.

"That's Ed's first tithe," she said triumphantly. "We are now down to $10, and Ed decided to start tithing with what we have on hand."

The very next service she came to me with another happy smile.

"Here's a five dollar bill," she said. "The very next day after Ed gave God's work a tenth of all he had, a customer who had owed him $50 for a year came and paid up. So here's the tithe of that $50. After paying the total $6 tithe, we now have $54 on hand instead of the $10 we had the other day."

It was beginning to pay! But only beginning! By the next service, as I remember it, Ed had received his first order in one or two years to drill a new well, for which he received cash payment. Before he finished that job, another was contracted. Soon he had three or four jobs coming in at once, and was forced to begin employing men to work for him.

Ed Smith was only one of many I have known who learned by experience that one cannot afford not to pay God the tithe that BELONGS to God! I remember Ed Smith did encounter some troubles of a different nature later, and his wife and son were sent to the state tuberculosis hospital, and he finally broke down in real repentance, accepting Jesus Christ as Saviour. He came to me, according to the command of James 5:14, and both his wife and son were completely healed and returned home.

This is a true story, and the name is not fictitious. Ed Smith died several years ago, but I'm happy to remember these incidents in his life in the hope they may start many others on the right and profitable, as well as the Christian way of life.

Why did God ordain tithing? Was it to place increased burden and taxation upon us? Let us not misunderstand God's love and wisdom!

It isn't that God really needs your first tenth. He could have established some different system for carrying on His work. But to have done so would have robbed us of the blessing that flows back to us if we are faithful in tithes and offerings!

The tither is invariably a prosperous man. I do not mean wealthy--but one whose actual needs are always supplied. Tithers, if faithful and obedient to the Eternal, are not often found in want. "Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to YOUR account" (Phil. 4:17).

God promises His children shall always have something to give (Deut. 16:16,17). It is only when they withhold and misappropriate the tithe and offerings that He fails to prosper them. For through John He tells us "I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health" (III John 2).

"Honor the Eternal with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine" (Prov. 3:9). Try it! "Prove me now herewith," challenges the Eternal to us, in a prophecy for our day (Mal. 3:10), "if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it"--finan-

cial blessings! Are you behind financially? In debt? Your unfaithfulness in tithing and offerings may be the reason!

Concrete Experiences

John D. Rockefeller, it is said, accepted at eight years of age God's challenge to prosper the individual who pays God His tenth. Did he prosper? He certainly did!

Mr. Colgate, the great soap manufacturer, left home when a very small boy. He soon met a prosperous old sea captain. He asked the boy what he could do, and the boy replied he knew only how to make soap and candles.

"Yield yourself to God," advised the old sea captain, "and pay Him a tenth of your income. Some day there is going to be a man at the head of the great soap industries in New York, and there is no reason why you should not be the man." The boy took the advice, got a job, earned a dollar and paid a dime.

Very soon he earned two dollars and paid twenty cents. Soon he got a job in a soap factory and he continued to pay a tenth and to prosper. He rose from the common laborer to foreman. Later to manager, and then to president of the company, and finally he owned the entire establishment. As he continued to prosper, Colgate paid two tenths. He prospered still more and paid three tenths. Still he prospered, and he paid four. His prosperity kept increasing and he decided to give HALF of all his income. And still he prospered!

I know a man who started a small grocery business in a small city in the state of Oregon. This was during the great depression. He had practically no capital, had the poorest location in town, and refused to sell tobacco. Others said he could never succeed. Thus handicapped, starting in the beginning of the worst depression the world ever knew, not many would have dared pay a whole tenth.

This man decided he would be a faithful steward, take God into partnership, and trust the Lord with his business. He prospered from the start and was the only grocer in his town who weathered the storm of depression successfully.

When God receives His portion of all your income, God becomes your partner, sharing in your profits. He causes His partners to prosper, and if you are in debt, take God into partnership first, and watch Him prosper you until finally you are out of debt! Remember the debt you owe God comes FIRST.

Tithing While in Debt

Yet so many say: "I don't think it would be right for me to tithe while I'm in debt." Yes, it is right, and not to tithe is WRONG. "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." God's Word tells us what is RIGHT, and God tells us to pay His work the firstfruits of all our income. Regarding our material and financial needs, even debts, God says "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt.6:33).

The tithe is the debt that you owe God. This debt is FIRST in time and principle. Pay your debts to God, make Him your PARTNER in your finances, and receive His blessing in temporal affairs. This will enable you to pay your debts, or to get a job, or to have your needs supplied more quickly than if you evade His debt.

Remember your ALL belongs to Him, not to you (Deut. 10:14). You are in the

position of steward handling that which belongs to another. God is your silent partner, and the first tenth, in addition to offerings, is His share. The rest He gives freely to you. But if you appropriate for yourself His share, you are stealing, and ROBBING GOD (Mal. 3:8). Would you pay your debts with money another man had left in your trust? If a man working in a bank does that, we call it embezzlement!

The only sure way to know you have God as partner and that He is taking care of your interests is to obey Him in tithing. Think what happened in San Francisco in 1906. People who did not have God as their Partner had no divine protection when terrible earthquakes struck.

Your Glorious Opportunity

God has graciously blessed you as you have yielded to Him according to the light He has revealed to you, from His Word! While you have the light, WALK in it, lest darkness come upon you! (John 12:35, 36). Grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord" (II Pet. 3:18). See also Romans 11:22.

If every professing Christian would accept this plain instruction from God, honoring HIM instead of themselves with their substance, this work of the Eternal would go forth with such mighty power that the world would be shaken to its foundations!

Seek ye FIRST the Kingdom, and your material needs shall be ADDED. Try it! Take God at His Word! PROVE HIM! (Mal. 3:10). See how you begin to prosper! Be a faithful steward; make God your PARTNER! Receive His BLESSING! God's work is waiting upon YOU!

IMPORTANT!

FILE this letter just following LESSON 19. REVIEW it now and then. It is vital to keep this information constantly in mind.