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Last week, Mr. Ted Armstrong spoke on a subject which I think he'll be continuing today.

It's a subject that I think we all should have, and since some of you may have heard it, I am going to cover it, however, from a slightly different perspective, as each one of us might, and since most of you have not heard it and was not piped in, even though you will be reading it in edited form in the good news, I think it is time we did take a look at one of the most fundamental questions, which is why we are assembling here and not in a synagogue, and that is why this is called a New Testament church, why we are the church of God.

It does seem that there are individuals who've gotten away from the main fundamental concepts that expound law and clarify the relationships between old and new covenants, and I think we need to have a new look because I think it was Mr. Wayne Cole in Colorado or wherever it was, took a poll of the ministers and asked a question whether how they thought our relationship to the old or the new covenant is, and it seems that the ministry was divided when asked the question. Some of them thought the answer was yes, some of them thought it was no. I personally thought the question was phrased in such a way that it would be difficult to make a decision, but knowing perhaps what the intent of the question was and the rest of the conversation, I would be inclined to agree with those who said no, and that is that Jesus Christ has not yet made the new covenant with the church.

So let's get a new perspective again. I know that when some heard Mr. Ter Armstrong last week, there was a feeling in their minds that it was something new. Mr. Dart and I think Robert Cune also, Dr. Cune pointed up in a brief meeting we had Friday afternoon that it may have been a new emphasis in a point or two, but it is not fundamentally different from what we should have understood all along. It is my presumption that this will not be so fundamental to the congregation here, but on the other hand, perhaps for some who have had concern about concepts that have been circulated, I would like to reconfirm the faith and in other cases to clarify what has either ever been obscure or has become obscure and needlessly.

First of all, there are some fundamental principles laid out in the Bible from the very beginning.

God reveals in the Garden of Eden himself as the Creator, and in dealing on an individual basis with Adam and with Eve, he deals in terms of, let's say, boss and servant or master and laborer, the one who owns the garden and the one who has the privilege of living in it.

God did not draw up a lengthy code of laws when he spoke to Adam. He made it very simple, and of course he assumed that the logical thing would be that there would be succeeding periods of time in which he would be discussing with Adam other things as well. There was a basic concept laid out there, a responsibility in marriage, which is fundamental, a pursuit of the tree that would lead to eternal life and avoidance of one that would lead to death.

Now, more was conversed in beside what is there, certainly an amplification of it, but this is a simple summary, and of course the rest of the Bible in a sense develops some of the meaning of what went on at the beginning. There is certainly a passing reference in Chapter 2 to the Sabbath. It is not given as a law, it is given as an example. Now, I know there are people who are getting away from any example of the Bible and say, well, if you can't prove that it's a command that I shouldn't do it, then I'm going to do it, and this is the new trend in a new generation and some of the old in the Church of God. Now, I think we're going to learn someday how important the examples are and how many

things you can be sentenced to death for in eternal death that are not specific commands. You might be surprised.

There are examples, there are admonitions. There is not a single one of the ten commandments forbidding you to get drunk. There are admonitions.

No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God as the final cutoff point, but it is up to you to evaluate the consumption of alcohol and what you do with it.

Now, use that as a good illustration because you can't find the kind of command that people want to find in order to justify doing what, in fact, Bible examples tell them to think twice about before they do it. The Sabbath is only given as an example of God's conduct. He rested on a certain day of the week, and he hallowed it, and it has left us to discern, as I have said before, we discern then by reading it what we ought to do with hallowed time.

Adam was not commanded anything about it. He only observed it being hallowed by watching what God was doing that day.

I think that's very significant because Mr. Ted Armstrong, in an area devoted to tithing late 1974, I guess it was in the September summary that went out to the ministry, pointed up that God's examples, or if you please, his very whisper, ought to be our command.

But we've gotten away from it, and my children, we no longer seek to follow the example and the life of Christ and of those whom he called to examine the significance of the lives of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles to compare those lives with what is Noah in the law.

There is a tendency to look for the letter of the law and then to try to find a loophole around it if what you want to do is not expressly forbidden.

We move on in time. God dealt, of course, with Noah and made some long-range promises.

Then he calls Abraham and makes a number of covenants with Abraham, of which only one is specifically dated, that in chapter 17, and dated because it is a very significant one.

From that period is the 430 years reckoned to the Exodus, and that was the covenant that was confirmed.

When Abraham fell down before Yahweh, or the eternal, and worshiped in Genesis chapter 17, we have no doubt there that God understood his heart and confirmed that the covenant would be with him and his seed after him. That covenant involved the promise ultimately of eternal inheritance and therefore eternal life. With that, we are familiar.

Now, what happened later, 430 years later, in the first year of the Exodus at Sinai, is a matter now that we should look at. Most people assume that what God made at Sinai was an old covenant. No, God never made an old covenant. He made a covenant. We didn't know it was going to be old until we heard there was going to be a new. In this sense, God never made an old covenant at Sinai. He made a covenant at Sinai with the children of Israel. He made it in such a way that it had parallels with marriage. His role was to do what a husband is to do.

His relationship, we are later told, though not there specifically, is that of a husband.

He later says that, I am married to you, O Israel. Now, that covenant was made with people who promised, as in a marriage agreement, that whatever the eternal said, that will we do.

So they committed themselves to obey him. He would be their God. They would be his people.

In a marriage agreement, a wife is her husband's, and she is to reverence him. A husband is to be the head of the house, as the eternal was the head over Israel. In this sense, it was a marriage agreement on a national scale. It was not clarified in that fashion, because probably the people at the time would hardly have seen it in that light. But there is little doubt when the prophets looked back at it and expounded in their day, they pointed up what the real relationship is.

And then, of course, what we learn is that the church is pictured like a wife, Christ as a husband, but she is pictured in a sense as one who has yet to be married, one who is spoken for. Our word is unfortunate in English when we merely use the initial term engaged.

It is more than that, the Hebrew had a sense of absolute commitment and the first stage of a binding contract, such as Mary and Joseph. They were not merely engaged. They were actually married by the first part of the Jewish ceremony in marriage, which part could be set aside only by a divorce.

Therefore, they were in fact married in point of law, Joseph and Mary. So in this sense, ancient Israel and the eternal or the Lord in the Old Testament were married.

The nation itself was essentially made up of people who were not converted.

It was a contract entered into in which, without any promise of the Spirit of God, God promised certain physical things if they would be willing in their own strength to obey the letter of the law. They were not told about the letter. They were only told to obey the law, but the law was written in the letter. Therefore, the only thing they would be doing is obeying the letter of the law. The letter of the law is the way it is written in the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. There were laws which defined sin. There were laws which told them what to do if they had sinned. This is the covenant at Sinai. It also had penalties on a national scale, curses and blessings. These covenants that God was making from time to time varied then with the kind of people with which he made them. In the case of Abraham, he offered a covenant to a man who was yet eternal. But when Abraham finally came to what we would call conversion and full surrender, when he wasn't thinking around listening to his wife, trying to solve a problem of no son by having Hagar, by the time he was in his 99th year, or as the King James Version says, 99 years old, that's when he fell down and worshiped God when God asked him to be perfect.

That clearly indicates that Christ was asking him at that time, the one who became Christ, to fulfill the law as we are asked to fulfill it, and clearly indicates that he would have supernatural power of the Spirit of God to do it, and he had to be willing to surrender his life and want to. Abraham wasn't converted when he was a child at 16. He doesn't really act very converted when he was 75 and down in Egypt. When you first read about Abraham, you read about a carnal, minded individual who was willing, at this point, at least in life, to obey God.

Insofar as God asked him to obey. When God wasn't around, it was amazing the number of things his mind would come up with. That Sarah was his sister and to protect him that she wouldn't tell the full story. One of those situations we should look at twice, but from the time he was 99, certainly a change in his life occurred. He had faith. The children of Israel much later, of course, didn't have that kind of faith. Now, the covenant of eternal life was promised again to Isaac and promised again to Jacob when each one became converted, and it was confirmed in that line that each should be an heir of the earth as God promised it.

Not only of the land, but ultimately of the whole world, that's the way Paul interpreted it.

The children of Israel were promised only a part of the land.

There is little doubt that if the national people, the children of Israel, had obeyed God, the physical land that would have been their homeland would have extended from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates. I'll let you guess whether the river of Egypt is the Nile or some little dry wadi in the Sinai. But in any case, that would have been the basis for their national inheritance, from which they would have spread out into colonies, in the general directions, of course, in which the children of Israel have gone since. But more than that, there would have been nations all over the earth, as some in Africa, who would have appealed to the family, the throne of David, as they did to Queen Victoria, to establish a protectorate over their lands, to protect them from other countries that were misbehaving. No small part of the British Empire was, in fact, formed by protectorates, kings who sought the protection of great written from other nations. This would have happened such that, if it were all over, the whole world would have been in one way or another within the Commonwealth of Israel, and there would have been one great human family, ultimately protected by the decisions of the throne of David. That's the way God would have intended it to be. That is, if the nation had lived in the letter of the law as it should have perfectly, or been forgiven, where its intent was perfect, or as nearly perfect as possible, but the children of Israel didn't seem to have even that intent very long, much less the deeds, and so God found them sinning at the foot of Sinai before Moses even returned 40 days after he ascended it to receive the tables of stone in which the Ten Commandments were written.

So it is very interesting to see what happened to the children of Israel.

As we move along, God made first one small agreement and then another afterward when they were making mistakes. New questions arose, and the Book of Numbers tells us many other aspects of the law in terms of the Passover and what you should do.

Let's take one simple note of the importance that we have had before, but I think we need to stress it again. The covenant made at Sinai was in two parts. It was an agreement about two matters, one about ten fundamental points of law to be written on tables of stone, and about statutes or judgments in three chapters in a book. Exodus 21, 22, and 23 called the book of the covenant, ratified with blood, which typified the fact that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. But that was only looking forward to blood that should yet be sacrificed because the act of sacrificing the blood in Exodus chapter 24 foretold that something greater than all the animal blood in the world, in fact, would ultimately have to be shed the blood of a human being who was God in the flesh to pay the penalty of sin. That covenant, in other words, was ratified by the token of that shed blood. God ratified different covenants before by the presence of the rainbow in the case of Noah, by circumcision in the case of the covenant with Abraham in the book of Genesis, chapter 17, and now by the shedding of blood which showed that the real way in which any sins committed in the lifetime of the Israelites under the terms of the covenant Sinai could be remitted by blood. Now they could continue to live in the community by the shedding of blood of animals which would be accepted as sufficient for the level of their knowledge and the level of their sin if they did it in ignorance. Now if they did it in knowledge and knew better and purposely murdered somebody else, for instance, then there was no remission of that sin. They were held guilty and condemned to death. There were no prisons as we know them in our society today. Slavery was a solution of the problem of indebtedness when you stole and spent the money and yet had to compensate or pay it back.

Now this covenant is very important because it made an agreement between God who is eternal and the children of Israel who would live from generation to generation.

It was a covenant in other words that bounds succeeding generations of Israel.

Later on, when a whole generation had died, a new generation was there with the exception of Moses and Joshua and Caleb. We have a long series of orations or a series of long orations, probably the people thought of orations were long. Moses speaking east of Jordan, the record of his speech is being recorded in the book of Deuteronomy. We now have here a covenant made, not the covenant at Sinai, but an agreement made not with our fathers, but with us who are alive today. A special covenant revealing other things.

It was based on the covenant at Sinai, but it expounded and there are factors recorded in the book of Deuteronomy never before spoken. In other words, God revealed at Sinai three chapters worth of law, Exodus 21, 22, and 23. There were a few other covenants made or additions afterward, clarifications which the people agreed to. A great deal was added in terms of ceremony and Leviticus and other laws given there as well, clarifications.

But when we come to the book of Deuteronomy, there are whole sections not here to forecovered.

In other words, God was revealing through Moses at the time the book of Deuteronomy was being developed, a covenant relationship, not superseding anything, but in addition to, that would in fact confirm, if they would keep it, their possession of the land in no uncertain terms.

There is a tendency, in other words, to find in the covenants that God made with Israel the need to reconfirm from time to time and to clarify and expound as new situations arise.

Thus there came the need of unity in the land and one place of central worship, not defined, but the necessity was recognized. That came to be a chilo for about 400 years, and later on it was Jerusalem for about 500 years. In other words, you have something different than what Abraham was doing, who could worship under any tree he wanted to or in Sinai wherever they were encamped. But once they came to be settled, there had to be some stability, and that meant there needed to be a central place of worship. Therefore, there are new requirements with respect to the festivals in this connection. There were also blessings and cursings, special national curses that would come, special national blessings.

If they would obey, and of course they agreed to, they listened to Moses. Now Joshua and Moses both told us, both in Joshua and in the book of Deuteronomy, Moses speaking there, that the children of Israel did not have the Spirit of God that would enable them to keep all these laws. They said they would do it, they confirmed it, and when they got into the land after Moses was dead, when the two and a half tribes were going to return across the Jordan to their families, after obliterating the nations of the Canaanites that were west of Jordan, they made an agreement to keep the law, and there Joshua said, look, it isn't in you, I want you to know that that's not what you're going to do. Say it, you will, but you won't do it.

And indeed, of course, that's what happened. The next generation departed, they did not reconfirm it, they got into trouble, and then sought God. Later on in the kings such as Hezekiah and Josiah, the covenant was reconfirmed, that's made very plain in the life of Josiah.

All during the time of those later men Hezekiah and Josiah prophets such as Isaiah were saying, am not I, let's say, if the Lord married unto you the children of Israel, then why have you departed and committed adultery and whoredom? And so God says that he finally has put them away, and he finally put Israel away. You know, you can live with a woman only so long, I'm speaking as a man, you could turn it around, the other way would be equally true, you can only live so long under a roof. And

when two people decide to get a divorce because they're not getting along, they might as well separate.

And since that was God's land and he claimed title to it, either he had to leave the land and lose the title, or Israel had to go. So he finally decided that since they weren't going to return to him, every king in ancient Israel from Jeroboam I down to Hoshia, not a single one, was willing to obey God. That's like saying the wife was not willing to obey her husband from generation to generation, not a single case do we have a king who turned around.

And of course by this time the nation was divided into two parts and God dealt with each one, as one might deal with a wife. And so Israel was put away, they reaped the consequences of breaking the covenant at Sinai. They were no longer married, God put them away.

Is that clear? He put them away and they never returned, not to this day have they as a nation at the highest level or nationally ever returned to the promised land or to the promises.

Now the curses that came on them that pursued them in their captivity are those that come as a result of breaking that law. Now let's notice two aspects of it, because I think we don't always see it clearly. The old covenant was in the sense of marriage agreement. When there is a divorce, this does not mean that as soon as Israel was divorced she was therefore free from the law to go and do whatever she wanted to.

Because the law incorporated in that marriage agreement was something of a higher nature that we need to comprehend. In other words, it expounds what human conduct ought to be.

Now the woman Israel was free to marry whomsoever she wanted to after she was divorced.

She could live with first one nation and another if she wanted to and make agreements with any other God as far as he was concerned, cut them off. But they were reaping whatever the penalty is. I'll use that in the present tense that comes from disobeying God, who in a sense is more than a husband, he's the creator of all law that regulates human relationships with a creator, each other, or with our environment. I think those are the three major categories. So you see when God made the marriage agreement, he was actually having a relationship between himself and them that was unique. That is, he promised that he would not reveal all these things to any others, but he would reveal them only through the wife's example. And then if any other nations chose to come into this relationship, fine.

But they had to come into a relationship with the children of Israel. God in other words did not say, well, look, I'll make a covenant with you. I'll be your God. You'll be my people. And then I'll go to Asia and I'm going to make the same proposal to China. And they're going to be my people. And I'm going to be their God. And I'm going to promise them world rule like I'm promising you. He didn't do any such thing. He said, I'll do it only with you. And if any other nation wants to come in, it will be through you. That is, I'll work through you and your example will be what will bring the other nations to me. I think I'm making it very plain what the issue is.

They were to bear fruit, so to speak, in their personal lives sufficient to influence other nations to bring them into a relationship. And as I said, they would have sought the protection of the children of Israel. If some nation were attacking another in the nation that was being attacked, wanted God's protection, you remember like the Gibeonites did. God said, you can make such an agreement with the other nations if you want to. If they seek your protection and if they seek your God, that's me. This is the way God was wording it to them.

So when they were divorced, God put them out. They no longer had a right to the land. They no longer, in fact, had him as their God. They had their own gods, the gods of other nations.

But in the meantime, they were reaping the penalty that comes from disobedience.

Now, when you look interestingly at the old covenant, as we now call it, that is the book of the covenant, these are just simple statements. There are no blessings and cursings as such in Exodus 21 or 22 and 23. Those are just the simple things that a husband might ask the wife to do at a minimum. But since the children of Israel who entered the land also entered into another covenant later, recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, called the book of the law, and that covenant was a very firm one. That didn't marry Israel to them, to God. That only confirmed the basic principles of the marriage agreement in a national constitution which would regulate many details not here to forespoken. Now, we read about that law that cursed is anyone who does not do all the things written in that law. Now, Paul had something to say about it.

Paul pointed out that there is the need, therefore, of someone who was a curse, that is, who took upon himself the curse, so that the curse that came on those with whom that covenant was made could be forgiven. And because the children of Israel had not kept the book of the law, as it was given, they were all under a curse. And that had nothing to do with the marriage agreement.

So we note that there are two fundamental areas in this that I think we have never focused on.

The original book of the covenant, when set aside, freed Israel, if she wanted to go out and live with some other man, she could. But it did not leave her free to do whatever she wanted to morally, because, in fact, the few laws recorded in that covenant agreement were things we ought to live by. But there was a second agreement made with the wife on a national basis that included everybody, by Moses, east of Jordan, just before they crossed over. And that was an agreement that was not a marriage agreement. That was an agreement that followed the marriage agreement. It was what confirmed and brought blessings or cursings, depending on obedience or disobedience. So even though God put away the children of Israel and they were free to do now whatever they wanted to, as far as he was concerned, he had washed his hand of them and turned his back on them. Yet the words of the covenant of the book of Deuteronomy pursued them and pursues them to this day. I think we have to realize that. There is a book of the law.

Now, Christians would like everything that God ever did, nailed to the cross.

That is so-called Christians in the world. That book of the law regulates the relationship of the children of Israel in the days of Moses and in each succeeding generation.

It was not merely the reconfirmation of a marriage agreement. There was only one marriage, and that united Israel to God once and for all through the lifetime of all generations, until a divorce occurred. And a divorce was allowed, by the way, under the terms of the covenant at Sinai. But the book of Deuteronomy was a separate covenant. That covenant had a curse that anyone who failed to do all the things written in it would be under a curse.

Now, the way people read Galatians is something like this. Well, God then took away the law or the book of the law. He removed the obligation to obey by nailing it to the cross. Now, that is not what it says. It makes very plain that anyone who does not live in accordance who is an Israelite born or of descent, and that is probably the majority of you, is in terms of the individual and the nation under a curse if you don't keep all that is written in it. That's why we have crime in the street. That's why we have diseased and deformed children. That's why we have such national indebtedness in our struggle with other nations around us who are our enemies whom we cannot put to flight, who in fact come

in our midst and steal our greatest secrets. Now, let me tell you something so you'll understand who's to blame. It was not a Gentile and his wife who gave the secrets of our bomb to the Gentiles in the Soviet Union. It was someone of the House of Judah who did.

Our own people by national descent betrayed the national trust. It was not some Italian, not some Japanese or German. I think that is very significant because if God wanted to punish us, the best way would be to bring us down morally within until we see ourselves for what we are, to use our own people to bring about our ultimate destruction at the hands of an enemy.

Now, Christ paid the penalty. He paid the penalty that came on everybody as well as the nation for having broken the Book of the Covenant and for having broken the Book of the Law, which is Deuteronomy. The Book of the Law, therefore, represented in the days of Christ what the nation was expected to do. Even Israel in captivity because whether they left or not, that was an agreement that bound them in terms of their conduct to the world around them.

When Christ died, he died, therefore, for the sins of the Israelites, the House of Judah, and the House of Israel for every violation that had occurred under any of those covenants, as well as died for every sin that the patriarchs committed and any violation that they had been involved in. And he died also to pay the penalty of sin in which Gentiles were living who had no knowledge of law. Now, the difference is that Christ died for the Jew who sinned with the knowledge of the law. He also died for the Gentile who sinned without the knowledge of the law.

The Gentile did not violate the Book of the Law. He never had a book of the law that nationally governed his land. But he died, Christ did, to pay the penalty that the Gentiles incurred for doing the things forbidden of God's nation, which they were doing, which things would have gotten them in trouble just as they got the Israelites in trouble.

In other words, God's law is law, whether it's written in the Book of the Law or not.

It is the way human beings ought to live. Now, the reason these things are written in the Book of the Law is something like this. God said, I want you to do what I tell you and not what the Gentiles, the Canaanites were doing who've been living in the land before. So he said, the Gentiles did all these things, but I want you to do these things. Well, that's the same as saying the Gentiles were doing the opposite of what God was asking Israel to do. And since the Gentiles who had no law in many cases, but not all, have done opposite to what God asks them to do, that is, ask the children of Israel to do, Christ had to pay the penalty of sin for everybody, sin being that word in the Hebrew, which in a sense means to miss the mark, not to do what in fact is required of one. Now we're getting the picture clearer.

There is a Book of the Law that in a sense pursued with curses or gave blessings wherever the children of Israel were in captivity. If we take care of our land, we're going to be blessed.

If we don't take care of our land, we're going to be cursed. Now it doesn't happen suddenly.

It doesn't happen every year.

God may postpone a penalty because he has a work, because there are some people who are seeking to serve him, but the penalty is ultimately going to come on a nation if it doesn't finally repent. So whether the children of Israel were divorced or not, the laws in the Book of the Law, Deuteronomy and any other law for that matter, has pursued the children of Israel throughout their history to this day. Now the children of Israel have not entered in to any other agreement, and when Christ, that is with respect to God, God has not been dealing with them except on an individual basis.

Now when Jesus Christ died, he paid the penalty. Now this is what we read very clearly in the Book of Deuteronomy, that Christ became a curse for us, that we might be redeemed from the curse of the law.

Not that he might get rid of the law so there are no more curses.

People tear it upside down. We have been redeemed from the curse of the law, the law that God made with the ancestors of the dominant population in this country. We're redeemed also from the curses of sin, which have befallen the Gentiles if we are from Gentile background, even if we didn't know that law, because that law in a sense is a spiritual law with various ramifications of a civil nature that really regulate man's behavior with his neighbor.

Christ died because there was law, where there is no law. Whether perceived or not perceived, there is no sin. Where there is no sin, there is no need of death.

Therefore, I'm not going to turn to the House of Judah for the moment. I'm just thinking of the Israelites. When we now reach the children of Israel with the good news of the kingdom of God, what we are saying is this. Look, your ancestors entered into an agreement which they have forgotten and broken. It's written in the Bible. You can read it. When the knowledge comes to you, that you have not lived as an individual in accordance with that law. God, through Christ, forgives you if you accept Jesus Christ as your savior, your master, your high priest, and coming king, as we say at baptism. But that law is still here. Nothing has superseded that law. That law is still visiting its penalty on this nation and the people in it.

Now, what Christ says through Paul in Galatians is this, that God did not deal with the Gentiles who were in darkness and without God and without hope in the world. The Chinese may have Mao, but they don't have any hope of eternal life to the teachings of Mao.

But what God did through Abraham was to reveal the covenants' plural of promise.

There were all kinds of promises, promises of eternal life, promises of physical blessings, of all sorts. The covenants of promise, more than one covenant of promise, pertains to the children of Israel. Now, what we ask you, therefore, is not that you should look at the covenant in Deuteronomy and say, well, look, I want to keep that covenant in the letter of the law.

We ask you, in a sense, to die to the law. That is to have your life forfeited, but to do it through Christ, that you now can live in accordance with the spirit or intent of the law, or as Paul says in Romans, with the newness of life. So let us look in the book of Romans chapter 7 briefly.

When we were in the flesh, Jew or Gentile, the motions of sin, which were by the law, that is defined by the law, you wouldn't have known sin if it hadn't been so defined, worked in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. That is, the law defines sin, which works in our bodies to gender sin, which is death, which leads to death.

Now, prior to this, he says in verse 4, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law, and brethren there has reference essentially, of course, to everybody, but more particularly to the children of Judah or Israel. You are become dead to the law by the body of Christ. Now, people just read that, oh, well, the law is done away, isn't that great? It doesn't say that at all.

It says you're dead. The law is still there. You are become dead to the law. Now, how did you do that? Well, symbolically, you went through baptism, which meant you were willing to die. You have to be willing to pay the penalty. That's what baptism means. Not to hide from the law, where the law has

to pursue you as a violator who is fleeing, but you have to be willing to die to the law. But you do so, you pay the penalty, not by having your throat slit or your head knocked in with a stone.

Either could bring death or hanging or whatever other method men would like to use.

But you do this through the body of Christ. That is, his body was offered in your stead.

Now you're asked to be married to another, and that is to Jesus Christ. Now, I'm not going into that at this moment and only if we have time. To him who was raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. In other words, there is now here to be a marriage relationship. He had already alluded to the husband-wife relationship, which in a sense did picture the old covenant relationship. And most people, of course, were married to whatever they followed in the world. The children of Israel were cut off, and for that matter, that a lot of the children of Judah were too, and have lost their identity. And the Gentiles, of course, all of these are pictured as entering into various marriages that produce nothing but sin.

But now they're asked to marry another that is to Christ.

So we are delivered. Let's pick it up in verse 6. We're delivered from the law. The law is still there, but we're delivered from it. That being dead, wherein we were held, to see the law was there, and we were dead in the sense that there was a claim on our life, and we were as good as dead, physically and certainly spiritually dead, because the penalty had come. And it would be only a matter of when it's to be executed. We should serve now in newness of spirit, so that when you die to the law, it's a two-fold thing. That is the penalty of the past is paid, and once the penalty is paid, you're dead. And if you come to life again, you don't have to serve the oldness of the letter. What you are asked to do by Christ, since the spiritual law is there on which the book of the law was based, the spiritual law is there on which the book of the covenant was based, that spiritual law of God, which defines God's character, that you are asked now to serve and in newness of spirit. That is according to the intent and purpose, not an oldness of the letter. But so that you would know what the laws are, we do look at the letter of the law as we find it in the book of Deuteronomy, or in the book of the covenant, or in any other statement, that is, in the Bible, the Old Testament, which is called the law. When Paul quotes from Genesis to Malachi, he sometimes says, does not the law say? The letter of the law is where you can read the simple letter of the law statements, but then with all the examples together in Old and New Testaments, as we call them, we can perceive what the intent of the letter of the law really is. That is the point. But once you have died to the law, the law no longer has a claim over you, and you really die through Christ.

Now that you come up in newness of life, are you going to live like the Gentiles who broke the law without the knowledge of it? Are you going to live like the Israelites who broke the law with the knowledge of it? Or are you going to live in accordance to the spirit or intent of that law? That is the question you face. Paul does not ask in Galatians that we come under the terms and conditions of the letter of the law that God made either with the children of Israel at Jordan or at Sinai or anywhere else. We are asked not to serve in the oldness of the letter.

We are asked to serve in the intent and spirit and to prepare ourselves for a future covenant to be made.

Now the house of Judah had a slightly different history. The house of Judah was also, in a sense, divorced and put out of the land. Now the reason God tolerated Judah longer is that Judah repented over and over again. They repented in the days of Rehoboam in part. There were some good things in his day. They repented in part in the days of Asa. They repented in part in the days of Abijah before

Asa. In the days of Jehoshaphat, they really got in the trouble later. They certainly seemed to have come back to their senses in the days of Joash. They did come back without any question in the days of Uzziah and Jopham. They got in the trouble in Ahaz's time. They came back in the days of Jehoshaphat, sorry, in the days of Hezekiah, and they went into such terrible sin that God really, he called it quits in the days of Manasseh, even though Manasseh repented, apparently the nation didn't, and Josiah repented and the nation partly did. But they drifted back, and such evil had been committed that in fact God had made up his mind to boot them out anyway.

It was just a question of when he was going to do it. They got into such sins at that time.

So God was very patient, and we should all be patient equally whether we be husbands or wives.

God in a sense divorced Judah, and some Jews have never returned and have lost their identity.

There were, however, a sufficient number that came back that God accepted them back as a nation, because he certainly could forgive them. There's no statement in the law that if a wife leaves a husband after divorce and frequents a lot of men, that he can't take her back. There are only certain conditions in which the husband has looked upon as having been the cause of the fault in the first place and not the wife. Then he couldn't take her back after that she was defiled. The important thing is God did take Judah back, and they reconfirmed the covenant in the days of Zerubbabel.

They reconfirmed it in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. The letter of the law was reconfirmed.

The people were not asked to serve in the newness of the Spirit. Now if some, like David and certain kings, and probably both Ezra and Nehemiah, looked at the Spirit of the law, they certainly were expected to live in accordance with that Spirit if they could perceive it. If God gave them sufficient of his Spirit so they could perceive the Spirit or intent of the law, to that degree they were expected to live in accordance with it. That should be clear. To that degree they were expected to live in accordance with it, but the law was given in a letter form. That's the way it is written in the Hebrew. There was no new covenant. It was a confirmation of the old, and it was made by people who were in fact physical and as a whole carnal mind. That law was the constitution of the Jewish community in the days of Jesus and the apostles. They were regulated by the book of the law, regulated by the book of the covenant, which is the law given at Sinai.

Now in the meantime Nehemiah proposes that there shall be a new covenant, which will be made.

This is Nehemiah chapter 31. Just quickly turn to where it is. You should all be familiar with it, and then we'll get back to the story. In the meantime Nehemiah had said that the days will come when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, verse 31.

Now that covenant that I will make after those days, I'm going to put my law on their inward parts and write it in their hearts and they will be, I will be their God and they will be my people, verse 33. Now without going any further at this moment, Mr. Ted Armstrong will be speaking of it this afternoon. It will be a second installment in the good news, but what we are saying is that a new covenant is yet to be made and has not now been made. But I will comment on that just a little further. Getting back to the house of Judah in the days of the apostles, the Jews who were listening to Christ were all under the terms and conditions or under the law and the sense of its jurisdiction. They were also under the law and the sense of its penalty, whether the book of the law or the covenant. Jesus Christ died to forgive them as he did for everybody else. To that congregation or church of Judah or Israel, however you want to call it, God spoke a message through Christ. The message is the good news and he began by expounding the new covenant. Now in a sense, it has two parts. The first part is this, that God proposes that sins be forgiven through the death of the testator.

The Greek word *theotheke* translated covenant or testament means both. We have two things in English. The Greek has only one word.

There is a difficulty in language here, which in fact, in a sense, is both clarified and obscured by English and clarified and obscured by Greek. The Greek looks upon the whole thing as a unity. The English would look upon it in a different fashion.

That is, Christ proposes and the best summary is found in Matthew 5 with the accompanying chapter 6 and 7. He proposes a new look at the relationship of man to God.

God proposes certain specific things called blessings, blessed are you, blessed are you, and they're all named there. Those are blessings now at a higher level than given in any previous covenant to the children of Israel as a whole. You're not talking about blessings of the flesh, blessings of the land and of the sky. We're talking about eternal blessings, those things which pertain to eternal life and man's relationship to an eternal God for all eternity. We're also told about things we should do. That is, we should look at the law.

He said, you've heard it said you shall not kill, you've heard it said you shall not commit adultery, you've heard it said you shall write a bill of divorce, you've heard it said an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, you've heard it said you shall take an oath, and he goes down the line.

He says, now what you should do in proposing the new covenant? Jesus is saying, I want you to look at the terms and conditions that had been previously laid out in all of the covenants that we have, and I want you to see them in a new light. And if you propose on your part to accept them with the following view that you become perfect as God in heaven is perfect, which is the last verse of Matthew 5, if you propose to look at the Bible and see it in this new light, then all these blessings will come upon you. That's what he's saying.

Now, he didn't enter into any final agreement. He only made the proposals.

But he did say in the meantime, since I am the one perfect heir of Abraham, and everybody else is sinned and is going to die, I am the only one who has of all the children of Abraham the right to inherit the earth. Now, as the heir of Abraham, I'm going to offer all these things, and so everything that Christ himself has a right to claim, he proposes in Matthew 5 as the things that we shall inherit. We shall be filled with righteousness, and inherit eternal life, and see God, and all these things.

And we call the sons of God, inherit the earth, inherit the kingdom of God, whatever terms you wish. Those are all the things God promised to Abraham for his seed, and every seed forfeited it by sin. Abraham, in fact, in a sense forfeited it by sin until he was forgiven, and any seed in the meantime that has been forgiven to whom God does not impute sin can claim it. We must not assume that Abraham suddenly became perfect, but Abraham understood that he could be forgiven, because sin ultimately cuts you off, brings the eternal death penalty.

And because of that, there would be no way to inherit eternal life if you're going to be eternally dead. So there was the need then of having somebody forgive and somebody to pay the penalty, and the one who had no reason to die volunteered to die in our stead. And when he volunteered, he not only paid the penalty, did something else. He said, I will offer all that is mine to any who seek to live in accordance with the life that I live. And he lived without sin. Is that clear? Christ was without sin, and we are asked to live as Christ lived. There's nothing non-Christian in this as there. You know, people have never put it together. Christ was without sin. We are to follow his example. We are told that we should not sin. The Gentiles were asked to come out of a world of sin. That means that Christians are asked to live in accordance with God's law. Not according to the letter of the law, but

according to the intent which is how Christ lived. Now, he says that if I should die, that would then permanently confirm this.

All that I inherit would be permanently confirmed to all those who should seek to do what I have done in terms of living their life if they, one, are willing to repent, to believe me for what I am and what I've said, and be baptized, and have the laying on of hands.

The latter, of course, is a more optional matter. That's what should be done, but doesn't limit you.

That's the imposition placed on the ministry as a whole. In other words, there is a will, so to speak, or a testament, a part of the deotheque in Greek that has already been set in motion.

Here's where the Greek is not as clear, because the Greek uses the same word for covenant, which is yet to be finalized as for testament, which has already been set in motion. Paul deals with this question, and it's correctly translated by the word testament in the book of Hebrews, that Christ could have changed his mind up to the time of his death.

But once he made his will, or testament, and didn't change his mind and died, then there is nothing anybody can do to change it. It is now fixed, and therefore we can have eternal life in accordance with Christ's testament if we have been baptized, having repented, and believed. Then we can inherit what Christ would have inherited, but he died. Now, we can inherit that. In the meantime, of course, Christ was resurrected because he wasn't worthy of death.

The devil just didn't think that one through. Christ was raised from the dead because he wasn't worthy of death. Now, having died, he already paid the penalty, because the penalty is death. It doesn't say that the penalty is staying dead for all eternity. The law is just that you die. Now, of course, if you have no eternal life in you, then there's no possibility of living again. That's why it happens to be eternal for people who will ultimately die the second death. But for Christ who died, he paid the penalty. And Christ rose from the dead again, and since he is God, was in the flesh, and now rose in the Spirit, composed of Spirit, he is put again in charge of all things as he was before, because he did no sin.

But that's another question altogether. So now we note that at least the words of Christ determining what we can do in order to become heirs of Abraham are fixed and irrevocable because Christ died, and he left us with the opportunity to inherit eternal life, which was his inheritance from Abraham. It's why he promised Abraham, and in a sense therefore promised it to himself because he became the seed of Abraham. Well, what do we do? We are told therefore, as Jesus said in Matthew 5, to look at all the covenants of promise, all the laws, everything, and to see them all in a new light. Now, once we pay the penalty as Jews in the church, in the first century, we pay it through Christ, we're no longer asked to live in accordance with the Book of the Law or the Book of the Covenant as it is written in the letter, but in accordance with the laws recorded there in terms of the Spirit or intent.

And so the Jewish Christians looked at the law as Jesus said, and they didn't say, well, if I haven't killed somebody, now I can pretty well do as I please.

They didn't say, well, if I haven't committed adultery, I can still lust. No, they were asked to look at everything in accordance with its intent and purpose and look forward to the ultimate confirmation of an eternal life promised through Christ, a confirmation in the form of a new covenant, which would be made, if you please, at the resurrection. That's another subject.

While citizens in Judea, they would have to be careful of the letter of the law, which was the law of the land, but they already paid the penalty through Christ, they were even in fact to be more careful

to live in accordance with the Spirit or intent of all those laws, looking forward to a time when a new covenant will be made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, one which will promise the Spirit of God and will offer eternal life to all who qualify, which will offer forgiveness for any sin that is committed, one which will say that if you know to do good and do it not, it's sin to you.

That is, if you sin willfully after the knowledge of the truth has come, not sin because of temptation, but sin willfully. There will be no eternal life for you.

In a sense then, what we call the New Testament is, in a broad sense, the terms and conditions of the new covenant as it will be finally proposed. Now in what form or in what wording that will take, that is up to Christ to decide. But as of the present time, whether we be Gentiles who come into a new relationship, Jews who have always had a knowledge of the relationship, Israelites who thought we were Gentiles, Christ has paid the penalty, and if you wish, you may now enter into a new relationship, a working relationship with Christ and God in heaven through repentance, belief, and baptism in the receipt of God's Holy Spirit in which he asks you to live in accordance with the Spirit and the intent of the laws in which if you do so, you will automatically have the physical blessings of the old covenants of promise because they have physical blessings. Now if you live in accordance with the Spirit of it, how much more may the physical blessings be than if you live in accordance only with a letter? Those blessings come anyway in those cursings on Gentiles who know not the law. Therefore, they would come on Christians, the good or the evil, if you live in accordance with them, in accordance with the Spirit and intent. But our relationship is not limited to the mere physical promises. Our relationship is one in which we look forward to a final marriage with Christ, the second stage, if you please, of the marriage ceremony, and in which the children of Israel will enter in and the house of Judah also at that first stage in which they confirm their relationship. And the promises, if you keep the Spirit of the law, are eternal, not merely temporal. It is possible even to have temporal blessings with the letter of the law. Therefore, there are certainly temporal blessings already stated in the law for those who keep it in the Spirit. But there is something else. There are eternal blessings which will be finalized and confirmed by the fact that we are immortal at the resurrection, are the sons of God, and have inherited eternal life. We, in other words, go through a stage when we prepare on the basis of the terms and conditions of the new proposals.

In the millennium, the people will already have had a covenant made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. And that does not exclude the church because we're being grafted in, remember, into the plant Israel, that olive tree that is described in Hebrews, beginning your chapters 10 and 11, not in Hebrews but Romans, in writing about the Hebrews who were broken off and grafted in again the Gentiles who were never a part of it and have been grafted into this tree, which is in a sense the family of Abraham, the family of God.

In the millennium, the covenant will already have been made, but the people will still go through the same process of repentance, belief, baptism, and laying on of hands, receiving God's Spirit, looking forward to that time when they should inherit eternal life.

But the covenant has already been made, and when they have lived that kind of life, it will be confirmed in them when they are made immortal. We live and die before the covenant is finalized and must wait for the resurrection. But the point at issue that Mr.

Ter Armstrong mentioned is and should be very simply understood. The latter of these laws is still here.

There has been no new covenant made. The spirit of the law is also here. We are asked to live in accordance with the spirit or intent, but since the letter of the law is also here and the whole nation,

Israel or Judah, have been breaking it, they are reaping the penalty. In the new covenant, those laws will be seen in terms of the spirit and intent, but the laws that define sin remain the same. Those which define attitudes and intents and purposes and man's ultimate relationship to the Creator, to the environment around us, and to one another.

Most people have never seen what Paul said in the book of Hebrews.

The old covenant is waxing away. He didn't say it was nailed to the cross and already gone, but all those things which are in the letter are now pronounced old. We are asked to live in newness of life, not in oldness of the latter, but it is still there in bringing the penalty and the curses, because no new final covenant has been made. The law was not nailed to the cross, it was sin that caused Christ to be nailed, sin which is defined by the law.

And those covenants are still here. The old covenant is, in a sense, the basis of Jewish law as well as the mandate law of the British in Palestine. It's the basis of law.

And the Jews have not yet perceived the full spirit and intent. Christians don't know why the penalties are coming on them in their cities and in their homes and in their schools and sooner or later on their farms, because the laws given in the days of Moses are reaping from those laws the penalty, the blessings, or the curses. We have died to that law, to all those laws. We've paid the penalty through Christ. We died through the symbol of baptism and through the body of Christ and the reality of things. He paid it in our stead, and we're asked now not to reconfirm the old covenant at Sinai, not to reconfirm the book of the law in the letter, not to reconfirm anything in the letter, but to see those laws in their intent and purpose, which define man's conduct, to live in accordance with the spirit and intent as Christ lived, who was perfect and without sin.

And therefore, anybody who seeks to get around this point or that point must take heed of the statement which was made by Jesus in Matthew 5. He who shall keep the least of these commandments shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven, and he who shall seek to set them aside shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.

Let's take heed to that, because the new drift is to set aside as much as we can, because people want what they call liberty, and they don't know that true liberty comes from living within the law, in accordance with its intent and purpose.