

# New Covenant - the Gifts of the Spirit -Part 1

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen explores the New Covenant's emphasis on inner life and holiness, contrasting it with the Old Covenant and highlighting the importance of genuine ministry rooted in personal transformation.*

**Duration:** 10:36

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:1

**Topics:** "New Covenant", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the significance of the New Covenant as highlighted in the book of Matthew, particularly focusing on the Sermon on the Mount in chapters 5, 6, and 7. It emphasizes the shift from external to internal aspects of life, portraying holiness as a path to health and freedom rather than a burden. The message challenges Christians to embrace a New Covenant ministry where their words and actions flow naturally from a transformed life, contrasting it with prevalent Old Covenant preaching that lacks depth and understanding of true holiness.

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## Transcript

So we've come to study number nine in the New Covenant. And we've been looking at how the New Covenant is introduced in the opening chapters of Matthew in many, many ways. We saw that Jesus placed the emphasis on the inner life.

Matthew 5, 6, and 7 is, we can say, the New Covenant equivalent of the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament. The Israelites were proud of the Ten Commandments. They held it up as the law.

But I don't find Christians so excited about the Sermon on the Mount. That's one indication of how the devil has blinded Christians to think that this was a burden that God was placing on people. We can say that Matthew 5, 6, and 7 is a description of a healthy life.

You know, a doctor gave a description of a healthy person whose eyes and hands and legs and ears, everything is healthy. That's the Sermon on the Mount. And you've got to be foolish to think that health is a burden.

Sickness is a burden. Sin is a burden. Holiness is never a burden.

And if the devil has succeeded in making a lot of Christians think that holiness is a burden, that's why they're afraid of it. They'd rather go to a church where sin is tolerated. It's like getting admitted in a hospital

which keeps you sick.

Can you imagine anything more crazy than that? And avoiding a hospital that guarantees perfect health. This is the situation of Christendom. We can say that's madness, but that's the madness.

The devil has put upon a lot of Christians. So, we looked at Matthew 5, 6, and 7 as the inner life. Everything which was external in the Old Testament is inward.

You had an external temple there, here the temple is inside. The sacrifices are external, now it's inside. It was external sin that was important in the Old Testament series.

Now it's inward, hidden sin that's serious. So, once we understand that, and also that our ministry must come out of our life. You see, in the Old Testament, Samuel could start prophesying when, I don't know when he started prophesying, 10 years old? How many says a 10-year-old knows that the Spirit of God is upon him? It says that Jeremiah was a very young man when he started prophesying.

But in the New Testament, when the Son of God came, he couldn't start prophesying when he was 10. He knew the Bible when he was 12, but he wasn't ready to prophesy. He had to spend 30 years.

What for? If Samuel could prophesy when he was 10, and Jeremiah could prophesy when he was 20, why did Jesus have to wait until he was 30? Because he was introducing the New Covenant. And in the New Covenant, everything we speak must come out of our life. How many hours did Jesus take to prepare the Sermon on the Mount? 30 years.

Every sermon Jesus preached, he took 30 years to prepare. That is New Covenant ministry. It's not something you sit down and study books and listen to tapes and prepare a message.

This is how 99.9% of preachers preach today. But in Jesus' case, everything he spoke came out of his life. And that is New Covenant ministry.

You know, rivers of living water. You don't pump a river. It just flows.

That's how Jesus' ministry was. And when you really enter into New Covenant ministry, if you have a life to back it up, it flows. When a person doesn't have a life to back it up, then he's got to sit down and say something that will amuse people, or interest people, or something that will tickle their ears, so that he can collect money from them.

Most of what I hear today in Christendom is Old Covenant ministry. Preaching Old Covenant truths. And they get their verses from the Old Testament, because the vast majority of today's preachers, I'd say more than 95% of them, don't have a clue.

They don't have a clue about what New Covenant is. If they did, they'd be preaching holiness. They'd be preaching freedom from anger, and lust, and freedom from the love of money, and freedom from seeking the honor of men.

And many, many other things that Jesus spoke in the Sermon on the Mount. But you hardly ever hear a message on that. I think even if you hear 5% of preachers preach that, you'd be lucky.

I think it's about 1%. So, I'm just trying to stress how the devil has succeeded so much. Imagine if the devil succeeds in blinding 99% of God's army, and only 1% have got their eyes open.

Imagine what a burden it is for that 1% to carry on a battle, because the other 99% don't have a clue what they're supposed to fight. So, now we come to Chapter 8. In Chapter 8, 9, and 10, and so on, we see ministry. Now Jesus is exercising a ministry.

And for that, He was anointed, and had the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit. And that is how God endorsed Jesus' ministry. Now, when Jesus told us to follow Him, He didn't tell us to follow Him in His ministry.

It's important to know that. When He said, follow Me, He said, take up the cross and follow Me, He wasn't talking about doing all the things that He did in His ministry, but doing all the things that He did in His life. When He said in John 14, 12, the works that I do shall you do also, He's talking about His life and not His ministry.

He said in John 14, 12, that every single person who believes in Him, every person who believes in Him, can do the works that He did. What does that mean? Does that mean every believer is gonna walk on water? Have you seen one person walk on water? Does it mean that every believer is gonna feed the 5,000 with 5 loaves of fish? Have you seen even one believer do it? We shouldn't be unrealistic and get a skip over these verses without understanding what they mean. It means that we will do the works that Jesus did in His life, works of obedience, works of denying His own will, works of doing the will of the Father 100%.

Then we say, why can't we follow Him in His ministry? Because Jesus was the total body of Christ, the first body of Christ. Whereas each of us are only one member in that body of Christ. Can a little finger do what the whole body does? No.

A little finger can't see, it can't hear, it can't talk, it can't do what the liver does, it can't do what the heart does, it can't do what the stomach does. There are a thousand things this little finger can't do, but it is a member of the body. So it's a crazy thing when preachers tell you, you can do everything that Jesus did.

It's like telling the little finger, you can see, you can hear, you can digest food. The stupidity of thousands of believers to believe that. It's because they don't read the Bible.

We're living in a time of tremendous spiritual ignorance. Because people know more about the movies than they know about the Bible. They know more about television than the Bible.

But let me instruct you. Jesus was the total body of Christ. You could look at Jesus, He was the body of Christ.

Today, you cannot look at any human being and say, there is the body of Christ. Even the apostle Paul, with all his gifts, was one person in the body of Christ. Do you think Paul could teach anybody how to bring up children? Tell me.

Have you ever noticed why in the Bible Paul says, only one sentence on bringing up children, fathers bring up your children in the instruction and discipline of the Lord. Why does he say only that? Because he knew his boundaries. Do you think Paul could teach husbands how to live in an understanding way with their wives? No.

He knew his boundaries. Other members of the body of Christ have to do that, which Paul could not do, because Paul was not a married man. So Paul had his limitations too.

There were a number of things he did. So what I'm trying to say is, no human being in the history of the church in 2,000 years has been anything more than one member of the body of Christ. So, we can do only a small part of what Jesus did in his ministry.

But this little finger can have the same life that flows all over this body. The same blood, the same life, the same power, that it can have. And so that's why the church is called the body of Christ.

You can have the same life and power in your life that Jesus had, but when it comes to ministry, you can have only that particular ministry that God has called you to. And every member in the body of Christ has a ministry.

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