

The Difference Between Old Covenant and New Covenant Servant

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting God for sufficiency and serving Him through the ministry of the new covenant, which lifts people up and gives them hope.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 3:5

Topics: "Dependence On God", "New Covenant Ministry"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the significant differences between old covenant and new covenant servants in his sermon. He explains that while old covenant servants relied on their knowledge of the law, new covenant servants must experience God's message personally and serve from that experience. Poonen highlights that true ministry comes from God's sufficiency, not our own, and that we are called to distribute God's blessings rather than produce them ourselves. He warns against preaching that leads to condemnation, advocating instead for a message that uplifts and brings hope to others. Ultimately, he encourages reliance on God for strength and resources in ministry.

Transcript

In 2 Corinthians Chapter 3, Paul speaks about a new covenant servant. There is a vast difference between new covenant servants and old covenant servants. In the old covenant, there were a few prophets like Hosea, Isaiah and Ezekiel who had to go through some trials for them to learn God's ways and to obtain His message. But generally speaking, the Old Testament priests did not have to go through any trials in order to have a ministry as priests of God. They only had to study and understand God's laws and explain those laws to the people. They studied and they preached. If all your preaching comes merely as a result of your study, you are an old covenant servant. A new covenant servant does not get his ministry by studying alone. He has to experience the message. Then he speaks out of his experience. He does not say, "Come and hear," but, "Come and see."

In 2 Corinthians 3:5, Paul says, "We are not sufficient for this ministry." He says that we are incapable of producing what is required for this fantastic ministry of the new covenant. But our sufficiency comes from God. A new covenant servant does not depend on anything within himself in order to serve God. He receives his ability entirely from God. God gives it to him and He gives it out - just like the servants in Cana distributed the new wine. Those servants took water to Jesus. He turned it into wine. Then they distributed

it. In the same way the disciples took five loaves and two fish to Jesus. He multiplied them - and they distributed them. We also take our limited resources to the Lord. He anoints them, blesses them and multiplies them; and we pass them on to others. That is how we are to serve. We are called to be in the distribution business, not in the production business - not even the production of sermons. When we speak, we are to minister life to others - not knowledge.

Many Christian workers are discouraged, gloomy and depressed after a few years of serving God; and some even get a nervous breakdown. This is because they tried to serve God with their own sufficiency. We must depend on God to equip us for His service. We need to trust God even for physical health if we are to serve Him. God's promise is, "Those who wait upon the Lord shall exchange their strength. Even young men will faint, but you will mount up with wings like an eagle" (Isa.40:31). Our sufficiency comes from God. Even if you are in financial difficulty, trust this promise: "Our sufficiency is from God." Whatever we need, God is well able to supply.

He has made us servants of the new covenant. In the new covenant, we are not servants of the letter but of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:6). In 2 Corinthians 3:9, two ministries mentioned - a ministry of condemnation and a ministry of righteousness. A ministry of condemnation is one where people feel condemned after listening to the message. You may think your sermon was wonderful, because people felt convicted and condemned. But it was an old covenant ministry. The law condemns people and constantly tells them: "You are not good enough, you were not good enough." A lot of preaching today in so-called revival meetings is just telling people, "You are not good enough. You are bad. You are bad. You are bad." And people sit there feeling condemned. That is not Christian preaching. Christian preaching will lead people to righteousness and to a glorious life; it will not stop with convicting people, but will go on to lift them up, heal them and deliver them by the end of the message. Thus they go away with hope. If your preaching brings people into bondage, you can be sure that you are an old-covenant servant. If your preaching makes people feel condemned, that is old-covenant preaching. If you push people down instead of lifting them up, that is old-covenant preaching. New-covenant preaching lifts people up and gives them hope.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/the-difference-between-old-covenant-and-new-covenant-servant/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net