

New Covenant Lifestyle: Lesson 8 – Living Without Mixture

In Lesson 1 of New Covenant Lifestyle we looked at 18 differences between the Old and New Covenants. Having looked at all these differences, along with all the other revelations you have received on Covenants, I hope you are convinced that living in the New Covenant is the only way to go. If this were the case for all Christians, the Church would be a very different entity and this world would be experiencing the impact of a body of people who are about Father's business. Unfortunately, one of the major problems in the Church today is that many Christians still live under the works of the law. Their mental strongholds keep them in bondage to the flesh.

There is a profound passage that addresses this issue and explains why so many believers don't walk in the liberty and blessings of the New Covenant. Write out **Revelation 3:15-16**. _____

Jesus is speaking to the Laodicean church, which in prophecy is seen as the type of today's church. As a teenager I heard this scripture used to try and motivate us to be "hot for Jesus", to love him with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. Regardless of how I tried, I always fell short and according to the preachers was in the category of lukewarm. What they tried to use as motivation just brought condemnation. Interestingly, when questioned about what Jesus meant when he said he would prefer them to be cold, they couldn't explain it. Logically, if being hot means totally sold out and dedicated to Jesus every second of the day, then cold must mean totally separated from and not following Jesus at all. Well, that definitely doesn't make sense. Surely Jesus would prefer someone at least trying to follow him than someone who outright rejects him. Thus, I put that passage "on the shelf" with the request for God to explain it to me. About 30 years later I learned about blood covenant and God was finally able to give me the revelation in this scripture. You see, these verses are about covenant. The works that are cold are the works of the Old Covenant; the works of self effort, of the flesh, of man's performance. The works that are hot are the works of the New Covenant; the works superimposed on us by Holy Spirit as we follow His guidance and live in intimacy with God. Now this scripture passage makes sense. God wants us living either solely in the New Covenant or solely in the Old Covenant. His issue with the Laodiceans was that they were living in a mixture of Old and New Covenants. They had been born again by grace but were now trying to live their Christians lives by a set of rules and performance standards (the law) rather than by the spirit. So, what does Jesus mean when He says "I will spew you out"? Simply that, "I am unable to be your God and make the New Covenant blessings work in your life". Why not, you ask? Because then we would think that our performance had something to do with getting the blessings. It would cause pride to rise in our heart and we would put our behavior down as a method or process or way to get the blessing. Jesus calls this lifestyle lukewarm. This lifestyle is also called 'living in mixture', the mixture of grace and law. Unfortunately, this is the common lifestyle of Christians today. It is also why so few Christians get their prayers answered or see the miracles of God on a daily basis. They have been taught and so they think that if they pray long enough or fast or give their time/money or discipline their lives or read the Word or go on mission trips or do evangelism or make their confessions, (or some combination of these) then God will have to do for them the things they need. In reality, their self performance actually prevents God from working on their behalf. They get disillusioned and frustrated and sometimes even angry at God. That us when the enemy and their conscience heap on the guilt and condemnation, goading them to try and do more for God. What a vicious cycle. Living in the New Covenant

is living free from this cycle of mixture. We get to rest in the completed work of Jesus, simply receiving everything He has done for us; His abundant grace. Our self effort must be eradicated and our only work is to do what Holy Spirit prompts us to do. Living this way is how you walk daily in the abundance of grace and see the supernatural manifest in this earth on a daily basis.

The modern church is not the only group that qualifies as lukewarm. The letter of Paul to the Galatians shows that they had been deceived into embracing mixture and become lukewarm. Accordingly, the letter to the Galatians provides key insights into what being lukewarm looks like and how to avoid living that way. So, let's look at some passages from Galatians.

Paul opens this letter with the declaration of truth that “Father and Jesus have given the Galatians (actually to all Christians) an abundant supply of Grace (divine favor) and Peace (Shalom – nothing missing, nothing broken)” – **Galatians 1:3**. Then, he shares how God is able to do this and what his will for us is. Read **Galatians 1:4** and answer the following:

What did Jesus give himself for? _____.

For what purpose did Jesus give himself? _____.

According to what was Jesus' sacrifice done? _____.

The awesome truth of this verse is that it is God's will that we live free from this present evil world, i.e. the curse that is in this world. He made this possible through Jesus' payment for sin. The New Covenant reality is that the curse has no power in our lives anymore and we get to live in abundant life because of Jesus completed work.

Now read **Galatians 1:6**. Here Paul states the theme of this whole book - don't pervert the true gospel I taught you. Some Jewish Christians had come into the church and taught that the believers needed to be circumcised (see **Galatians 2:3**) in order to be true Christians. In other words, the teaching was they needed to become partakers of the Old Covenant, putting themselves back under the Law and all of its self effort requirements. This teaching was declared erroneous by the Apostles in **Acts 15:19, 24**. It appears the Galatians had believed this teaching and Paul strongly states (**v6, 7**) how mixing Law and Grace (Old Covenant and New Covenant, self effort and Jesus work) was a perversion of the true Gospel. In verses 8 and 9 he declares that anyone who preaches this should be accursed. That is how important it is to avoid mixture. Unfortunately, mixture teaching is the prevalent gospel in today's churches. The normal message is “you are saved by grace (accepting Jesus forgiveness), now here is what you need to do to grow as a Christian”, and you get a list of rules, guidelines and performance requirements, including read your Bible, pray every day, go to church, give your tithe, witness to others, participate in missions, and so on. While these are all good activities, when they are taught as the method for growth they put Christians back under the law (self effort). **2 Peter 1:9** states that if we lack godly character, which means we haven't grown in Jesus, then we have forgotten we are forgiven of our sins; forgotten we are righteous. Our growth and the resulting things we do should flow out of our relationship to and intimacy with Jesus and be done by the leading of Holy Spirit. Doing our daily activities as a love response to Jesus is living in the New Covenant of rest.

In **Galatians 2:3-5** Paul identifies that some Jews wanted to derail the liberty the Galatians had in Jesus by compelling them to be circumcised; put under the requirements of the law (feasts, sacrifices, Sabbath, etc.). Paul gave absolutely no place to this doctrine because it opposed the truth of the gospel and produced mixture. Let's see how Paul taught the Galatians to avoid living in mixture. Read **Galatians 2:16** and answer the following.

What does not justify (make righteous) a man? _____.

What does justify a man? _____.

What must you do to become justified by Jesus faith? _____.

Notice that Paul states this twice in **verse 16**. He knows how important it is that Christians live in the revelation that, it is our believing in what Jesus faith did for us (his faith completed our deliverance from the curse) that makes us righteous. You cannot be made righteous by the works of the law (self effort to please God).

In **Galatians 2:17-19**, Paul is explaining that when we rest in the completed work of Jesus (seeking to be justified by Christ) and make a mistake (“are found sinners” i.e. fail to do the law), that doesn’t make Jesus a minister of sin (v17). No, that is the result of human effort where we “try to build again the things we destroyed” (our self performance to please God, i.e. living by good behavior); where we “make ourselves transgressors” (v18). Putting it simply, people who are born again and yet attempt to fulfill the law by their own performance become transgressors of what Jesus did in making them righteous; they prevent the grace of God from operating on their behalf. That why in verse 19 Paul reiterates that we are “dead to the law”, dead to all its demands for self-effort and. that its only in being dead to the law that we can live in God; live in the fullness of what Jesus did for us at the cross.

In **Galatians 2:20**, “I am crucified” is in the perfect tense in the Greek. From your Greek tense sheet, what does this tense mean? _____.

What does this tense mean in your life today? _____

_____.

What is the reality of how you live today? _____.

How do you live the life of Jesus in your flesh? _____.

What does Jesus faith do for you? _____.

Why did Jesus use his faith give himself to deliver you? _____.

Verse 20 is very clear on the truth, that we live in the New Covenant because of Jesus faith. His life in us is the source of our life in this flesh. Living in the kingdom of God has nothing to do with our performance or self effort, rather it is about resting in our being crucified with Christ, meaning being delivered from the curse because he became the curse for us (**Galatians 3:13**).

This truth leads into verse 21 where Paul again addresses the perversion of the Gospel that the Galatians had embraced – that attempting to establish righteousness by the works of the law (self effort, good behavior, right living, etc.) prevents the grace of God working on our behalf. Self effort frustrates grace; including self or guilt motivated good works. These good works could include reading the Bible, praying, fasting, helping the poor, tithing, missionary work, evangelism, and so on. Christ living in us is all about getting self out of the way and being led by Holy Spirit in the activities of each day. Paul reinforces this in **Galatians 3:1-14**. Read and answer:

What does Paul call those who don’t obey the truth (v1)? _____.

What truth is he talking about (v1)? _____.

How did you receive Holy Spirit (v2)? _____.

What does Paul say foolish thinking is (v3)? _____.

How does Holy Spirit work miracles among us (v5)? _____.

Who are the children of Abraham (v7)? _____.

What happens to those of faith (v9)? _____.

Who are under the curse that is in the earth (v10)? _____.

Can the works of the law justify anyone (v11)? _____.

What does justify us (v11)? _____.

What have you been redeemed from (v13)? _____.

How did Jesus redeem us (v13)? _____.

What two things did redemption in Jesus get us (v14)? _____.

The blessings and life God has made available to us by Holy Spirit in us become ours when we live by faith and not by the law. When we live in the works of the law (performing by our own effort), we prevent the grace of God working for us. We forget the righteousness we have been made and short-circuit the redemption God has provided. Living free from the curse requires us to live free from self effort and simply be led by Holy Spirit.

The remainder of **Galatians 3** and first part of **Galatians 4** tells us that our covenant inheritance is by Jesus' work and not by the law (self effort). Paul explains that the only purpose of the law was to show us that faith in Jesus is the only way to being made righteous (3:24) and to receiving the inheritance that God has provided (3:29).

Now read **Galatians 4:21-31**. Here Paul uses the very clear analogy that Ishmael represents the bondage of the Old Covenant. This bondage is the self effort attempts (works of the flesh) to satisfy the demands of righteousness. These righteous demands are part of every man's inner being and "living a good life" is man's self-effort way of satisfying these demands. Alternatively, Isaac represents the freedom of the New Covenant. The reality is that Jesus has satisfied these demands. Those who receive the gifts of righteousness and grace get to live in freedom and be led by Holy Spirit. Resting in Jesus supply, with no self-effort involved, is true freedom.

What does verse 28 say you are? _____.

What can you expect from children of the flesh (v29)? _____.

What must happen to the works of the law in your life (v30)? _____.

Why is it necessary to cast them out (v30)? _____.

What is the nature of the New Covenant (v31)? _____.

Paul summarizes his injunction to live in the true gospel of grace in Galatians 5:1-6. Read and answer:

What is the liberty that we have been given (v1)? _____.

What puts a person back under bondage (v1)? _____.

What does circumcision (partaking of law keeping) do (v2)? _____.

What prevents the completed work of Jesus from working for us (v4)? _____.

What happens to us when we attempt to be justified by our performance (v4)? _____.

Today we hear the word backsliding or "fallen from grace" (**Galatians 5:4**) applied to Christians who live in the ways of the world. Hopefully, you now understand that falling from grace really means the person is trying to live the Christian life by self-effort and not led by Holy Spirit. Paul is emphatic in showing that falling from grace means "not resting in the completed work of Jesus, but living by one's own decisions and performance". This falling prevents grace working for you and opens you up to the attacks of the curse. How important it is to live in **Galatians 5:1 – Stand fast in the liberty (grace and righteousness) we have in Jesus** – i.e. live without mixture.