

The New Testament Covenant And Our Responsibility

We are born again and see the kingdom of God when, we accept our salvation by faith. Sometimes we may overlook that we are now partakers of the new covenant bought by the blood of Jesus Christ. This is like buying a house. When one purchases that house, a contract is signed by both parties. It takes action from both parties for that contract to be fulfilled. The contract can be made null and void by lack of inaction on either party. As new Christians, by the blood of Jesus Christ, we signed the covenant offered by God by the confession we made with our lips. We now have responsibilities in our fulfillment of the covenant. For Christ himself gives us a robe of righteousness to wear and He expects us to keep it clean and not drag it in the gutter of the world.

What is a covenant? How do we enter into the covenant? Where do we find the terms of the covenant laid out? What are our responsibilities to fulfill the covenant as born again Christians? What is the Church's (the body of Christ made up of believers assembled together) responsibilities in the fulfillment of the New Covenant that Christ made with His blood? What are the penalties if we do not complete our part of the covenant? I will cover in this study the basic scriptures that we need to fulfill our part of the covenant as Christians. If we don't apply the basics or we don't lay the foundation correctly (this is in anything we set out to do) we can fail, get frustrated, be misled, or even quit our walk with God. Then we could become disqualified.

What is a covenant? We hear the word covenant used in the Old and New Testament. When Adam sinned and turned the authority of this world over to Satan, God lost his authority to rule the earth through Adam. Since that time, God has been a covenant maker with man. Jesus Christ, a man born of woman, defeated Satan and death with His resurrection from death on the third day. By the blood of Jesus Christ and the name of Jesus Christ man now has authority over the earth, under the earth and in heaven. We must enter into the covenant of the New Testament by the blood of Jesus Christ to use that authority. **It is our choice to enter into the new covenant, but when we do it is our responsibility to comply with the terms of that covenant.** Let us look at the definition of covenant in detail. Webster's dictionary definition of covenant is 1) a binding and solemn agreement made by two or more individuals, parties, etc. to do or keep from doing a specified thing; compact. Vine's dictionary states the definition as follows: **English Word:** Covenant (Noun and Verb) **Usage Number:** A-1, **Part of Speech:**

Noun, **Strong's Number:** 1242, **Greek Word:** diatheke. {dee-ath-ay'-kay} **Usage Notes:** primarily signifies "a disposition of property by will or otherwise." In its use in the Septuagint, it is the rendering of a Hebrew word meaning a "covenant" or agreement (from a verb signifying "to cut or divide," in allusion to a sacrificial custom in connection with "covenant-making," e.g., Gen. 15:10, "divided" Jer. 34:18, 19). In contradistinction to the English word "covenant" (lit., "a coming together"), which signifies a mutual undertaking between two parties or more, each binding himself to fulfill obligations, it does not in itself contain the idea of joint obligation, it mostly signifies an obligation undertaken by a single person. The Greek Word diatheke has its root in another **Greek Word--Strong's Greek Number 1303:** diatithemai {dee-at-ith'-em-ahee} 1) to arrange, dispose of, one's own affairs 1a) of something that belongs to one 1b) to dispose of by will, make a testament 2) to make a covenant, enter into a covenant, with one.

By looking at this part of the statement above "it does not in itself contain the idea of joint obligation, it mostly signifies an obligation undertaken by a single person" one would be tempted to say God made the covenant and I have no obligations, but do not be misled in that belief. Yes, God made a covenant with Abram in Genesis 15:18 after Abram believed what God said and Abram asked for a sign. God gave the sign and then made the covenant. **Genesis 15:4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18.** *4 Then the LORD said to him, "No, your servant will not be your heir, for you will have a son of your own to inherit everything I am giving you."! "6 And Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD declared him righteous because of his faith. 8 But Abram replied, "O Sovereign LORD, how can I be sure that you will give it to me?" 9 Then the LORD told him, "Bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 10 Abram took all these and killed them. He cut each one down the middle and laid the halves side by side. He did not, however, divide the birds in half. 17 As the sun went down and it became dark, Abram saw a smoking firepot and a flaming torch pass between the halves of the carcasses. 18 So the LORD made a covenant with Abram that day and said, *****.* (NLT) There was a response on the part of Abram before God made the covenant. God keep His part of the covenant and brought the children out of Egypt and extended the covenant with the children of Israel with the law handed down by Moses which they agreed to obey. But the children of Israel refused to uphold the terms of the covenant and look at the results. **Jeremiah 34:18-22** *18 Because you have refused the terms of our covenant, I will cut you apart just as you cut apart the calf when you walked between its halves to solemnize your vows. 19 Yes, I will cut you apart, whether you are officials of Judah or Jerusalem, court officials, priests, or common people-*

-for you have broken your oath.²⁰ I will give you to your enemies, and they will kill you. Your bodies will be food for the vultures and wild animals.²¹ I will hand over King Zedekiah of Judah and his officials to the army of the king of Babylon. And though Babylon's king has left this city for a while, ²² I will call the Babylonian armies back again. They will fight against this city and will capture and burn it. I will see to it that all the towns of Judah are destroyed and left completely empty." (NLT)

God made the covenant. The children of Israel agreed to the covenant but they disobeyed. As always in the Word of God the pattern is set in the Old Testament and carried into the New Testament.

God's new covenant of the New Testament was made with the sacrificed blood of Jesus Christ on the cross. **Hebrews 9:11-12** ¹¹ *So Christ has now become the High Priest over all the good things that have come. He has entered that great, perfect sanctuary in heaven, not made by human hands and not part of this created world.¹² Once for all time he took blood into that Most Holy Place, but not the blood of goats and calves. He took his own blood, and with it he secured our salvation forever. (NLT)* By the blood of Jesus the old covenant was canceled and God's laws are now written in our mind and heart. God himself found fault with the old covenant and made the new covenant. **Hebrews 8:6-10** ⁶ *But our High Priest has been given a ministry that is far superior to the ministry of those who serve under the old laws, for he is the one who guarantees for us a better covenant with God, based on better promises.⁷ If the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need for a second covenant to replace it.⁸ But God himself found fault with the old one when he said: "The day will come, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah.⁹ This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and led them out of the land of Egypt. They did not remain faithful to my covenant, so I turned my back on them, says the Lord.¹⁰ But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their minds so they will understand them, and I will write them on their hearts so they will obey them. I will be their God, and they will be my people. (NLT)* God is the covenant maker and giver.

How do we enter into the covenant? That answer is in **Romans 10:8-10.** ⁸ *But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; ⁹ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.¹⁰ For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (KJV)* By faith we are born

again by the words confessed and can now see the kingdom of God. **John 3:3** ³ *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* (KJV)

Where do we find the terms of the covenant? When we accept the covenant we agree the conditions of the covenant. Many of the conditions of the covenant were spoken by Jesus in the four gospels. These commands of Jesus are to be obeyed and not disregarded. The commands apply to the Believers individually and to the Church (the Body) corporately. Jesus set the pattern when He went to John to be baptized and said to John: **Matthew 3:14-15** ¹⁴ *But John didn't want to baptize him. "I am the one who needs to be baptized by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?"* ¹⁵ *But Jesus said, "It must be done, because we must do everything that is right."* So then John baptized him. (NLT) Jesus knew the Law of Moses and of the Prophets and He knew that He must obey all that was written to fulfill the law. There were no shortcuts for Him and there are none for us. We must follow **John 3:5** ⁵ *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* (KJV) and **Matthew 18: 3** ³ *And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.* (KJV) When we are converted (born again), water baptized, baptized by the Holy Ghost, and become as little children, we can see and enter into the kingdom of God. These are not options, but the commands are spoken by Jesus Christ.

What are the born again Christians responsibilities to fulfill the covenant? When Jesus was tempted by the Devil, He defeated the Devil by the Word of God, (by the power of the word spoken). We must also follow His example and speak the Word to fulfill these covenant requirements. **Matthew 4:4, 7, 10** ⁴ *But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* ⁷ *Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* ¹⁰ *Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* (KJV) Jesus gave us the authority to use His name, because He is the head and we are His body. He also gave us the keys to the kingdom, so we have authority to loosen and bind in heaven, on earth and under the earth. We are to use these keys by faith and in the name of Jesus to keep the Devil under foot. He was defeated at the cross. **Matthew 16:18-19** ¹⁸ *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* ¹⁹ *And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in*

heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (KJV)

Matthew 18: 18-20 ***18** Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**19** Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.**20** For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (KJV)*

Jesus gave us the power and authority. We are not weak and we lack nothing, if we comply with the terms of the covenant. To be in compliance with the New Covenant, we must follow these scriptures. There are no shortcuts in serving our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Matthew 6:31-33** ***31** Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?**32** (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.**33** But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (KJV)*

Romans 12:1-2 ***1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.**2** And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (KJV)*

The neglecting of obeying these two scriptures can and does lead to many problems in the life of a Christian. The Holy Spirit has shown me that Romans 12:2 has a tie in scripture in most every epistle and in many Old Testament scriptures. It is very important that we put away our sinful nature and draw near to God. **James 4:7-8** ***7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**8** Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. (KJV)*

Our last responsibility is to mature as a Christian. The writer of Hebrews exhorted Christians to do so when he spoke about a call to spiritual growth. **Hebrews 5:11-14** ***11** There is so much more we would like to say about this. But you don't seem to listen, so it's hard to make you understand.**12** You have been Christians a long time now, and you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things a beginner must learn about the Scriptures. You are like babies who drink only milk and cannot eat solid food.**13** And a person who is living on milk isn't very far along in the Christian life and doesn't know much about doing what is right.**14** Solid food is for those who are mature, who have trained themselves to recognize the difference between right and wrong and then do what is right. (NLT)*

Hebrews 6:1-4 ***1** So let us stop going over the basics of Christianity again and again. Let us go on instead and become mature in our*

understanding. Surely we don't need to start all over again with the importance of turning away from evil deeds and placing our faith in God.² You don't need further instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ And so, God willing, we will move forward to further understanding. (NLT)

What is the Church's (the body of Christ made up of believers assembled together) responsibility in the fulfilling the New Covenant that Christ made with His blood? The Church has the same responsibilities corporately as individual Christians. But the Church as a whole is required to do what Jesus did and they will do even greater things than Jesus did. **Matthew 5:23-24 ²³** *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.²⁴ And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. (KJV) **John 14:12 ¹²** *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. (KJV)* Jesus set the pattern by example and gave the commands on how to be a Christian. A Christian must apply oneself to be a servant in the kingdom of God. A Christian must seek God in his prayer closet to develop a close and loving relationship with God. A Christian must be in the truth (obeying) of the Word of God. The Church is only as mature as the Christians in attendance and the leadership.*

What are the penalties if we do not complete our part of the covenant? The scripture that speaks the loudest to me and instills the fear of the Lord and His judgments is –

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 ⁷ *And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,⁸ In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:⁹ Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; (KJV)* In verse 8 Paul speaks of two groups of people. Those that do not know God are the unsaved. And those that will not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ, the born again Christians in unrepented sin. In Hebrews the writer gives us a clear warning about disobedience and the results. **Hebrews 10:25-31 ²⁵** *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.²⁶ For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,*

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (KJV) Peter warns we are a slave to whatever controls us and that we will suffer the consequences. **2 Peter 2:19-22** 19 **** For you are a slave to whatever controls you. 20 And when people escape from the wicked ways of the world by learning about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up with sin and become its slave again, they are worse off than before. 21 It would be better if they had never known the right way to live than to know it and then reject the holy commandments that were given to them. 22 They make these proverbs come true: "A dog returns to its vomit", and "A washed pig returns to the mud." (NLT) The angel of Jesus Christ warned those of the church of Sardis who have not defiled their garments to be overcomers and he would not blot out their names out of the book of life. **Revelation 3:5** 5 *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.* (KJV)

I have only touched on the very basics of the covenant of the New Testament. The whole New Testament is the complete covenant. If we do not know the basic scriptures and apply them in our Christian walk with Jesus, we can never become the mature Christians that Jesus commands us to be. God is a God of love and truth, but the Word of God is a double edged sword. One edge is the love and truth of God with grace and mercy. The other edge of the sword is about rebuking, chastening and judgments. **Revelation 3:19** 19 *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.* (KJV) To be balanced Christians we must be fully informed about God and His covenant. We must be in His Word, in prayer seeking Him, growing in maturity daily by obeying the Word and seeking all that God has to offer us. Then we may live heaven on earth and experience in this world, the things of the world to come. Amen

Psalms 25:10 10 *The LORD leads with unfailing love and faithfulness all those who keep his covenant and obey his decrees.* (NLT) **Psalms 50:5** 5 *"Bring my faithful people to me-- those who made a covenant with me by giving sacrifices."* (NLT) **Psalms 89:30-34** 30 *But if his sons forsake my law and fail to walk in my ways,* 31 *if they do not obey my decrees and fail to keep my commands,* 32 *then I*

*will punish their sin with the rod, and their disobedience with beating. **33** But I will never stop loving him, nor let my promise to him fail. **34** No, I will not break my covenant; I will not take back a single word I said. (NLT)*

Holy Spirit Guided Ministry
John A. Kropf
A Prophet of Jesus Christ
8476 Pine Ridge Lane
Rogers, AR 72756
479-531-1903
mej2way@cox.net
www.holyspiritguidedministry.com