

# PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Letter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

*For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 NKJV)*

Volume 8, Issue 8

August 2010

## Demonized Flesh

Art Nelson

### Introduction

Many of those who attend my teaching classes or read the articles on my website ask the questions, “Why don't we see more of the things that were a part of the Church in the book of Acts in our churches today?” “Where are the miracles?” “Where are the real men of God?” “Where is the voice of the Lord and the powerful moving of the Spirit?” “Where is body life and care for one another?” These are all good questions that I have asked of myself and of the Lord a number of times over the years. In this teaching letter I want to share with you what I believe to be some of the answers that the Lord has given me.

### The New Covenant

I believe that the answer the Lord has given to our current problem of the lack of a true functioning Church with all the attendant activity described in Acts is that “we have too many man-made substitutes.” These have been created by well meaning people who operate according to the natural man; who have strong intellects and reasoning abilities but lack spiritual understanding and discernment. As a result we have an intellectualized and conceptualized “church” that is ignorant of the power of the Holy Spirit and of the provisions of the New Covenant. The power of the Holy Spirit is only revealed in the New Covenant provision of the Lord. Is that power available to us today? Absolutely! But first we must become true New Covenant believers.

Many have substituted the bible for the Holy Spirit saying that Holy Spirit and His gifts are not for today because we have the bible; that the Holy Spirit only came to get the “church” started but now we have the bible to guide us and teach us. Once you replace the Holy Spirit with the bible, then, the natural man can read and study the written word and create doctrines of reasoned intellectual understanding. The natural man can go to seminary; he can teach and preach; he can become a “pastor”; he can have a “ministry”. He can do all of these without being born again—without the Holy Spirit.

So, what does it mean to partake of the New Covenant. We toss the words around all of the time but do we actually know what God means by them? The New Covenant had been promised to us long before Jesus shed His blood as the sacrifice of the New Covenant. The writer of Hebrews quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34 and gives us some of the details of what is included in the New Covenant.

For finding fault with them, He says, "BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH; NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS THE LORD. "FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. "AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. "FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE." When He said, "A new *covenant*," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear. (Hebrews 8:8-13 NASB)

There are a number of elements listed in these verses:

1. The new covenant will not be like the old covenant;
2. The Lord will put His law within us—into our minds;
3. The Lord will write His law on our heart;
4. The Lord will be our God and we will be His people;
5. We will not teach each other to know the Lord;
6. We will know the Lord directly;
7. He will be merciful and forgive our sins and not remember them; and
8. He has made the old covenant obsolete.

Ezekiel speaks of the time when natural Israel who has been cut off from the olive tree will be grafted in again (as spoken of by Paul in Romans 11):

"For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. "You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God. (Ezekiel 36:24-28 NASB)

So, included in the New Covenant is a new heart and a new spirit. This is what we refer to as being “born again”—we receive the Spirit of Christ, without which we are not His (Romans 8:9). He also says that He will put “My Spirit” in us. This is the Holy Spirit—the promise of the Father by which we receive power (Acts 1:4-8). Therefore, the New Covenant encompasses both Calvary and Pentecost. We cannot receive the full benefits of the New Covenant if we are not experientially participating in all of the requirements of the New Covenant.

We have emphasized Calvary and rightly so; but, we have neglected the work of the Holy Spirit, who is an integral part of the New Covenant.

"This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. (Acts 2:32-33 NASB)

in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (Galatians 3:14 NASB)

Part of the blessing of Abraham is that we would receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. Part of the work of Jesus that occurred after Calvary was that He received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit and poured it forth on us at Pentecost. Any ministry or preaching that stops at Calvary is not presenting the fullness of the New Covenant and is doing a dis-service to those to whom they are preaching.

## The Natural Man

The results of not preaching the full New Covenant is that we come to Jesus for forgiveness but don't receive the Holy Spirit for power. Without Him we are unable to put off the old man and walk in the Spirit. Therefore, we, through the natural man, the flesh, put ourselves back under the old covenant and live and preach law—don't do this, don't do that. And, because we are unable to keep the law, we preach an easy grace—God just wants you to try; after all, He knows that you are human and can't be perfect. [*Even though Jesus commands us to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect! (Matthew 5:48)*]

We build churches, ministries, doctrines, seminaries, and missions all based on a mixed covenant that is part old and part new. Our man made substitute is worthless to the purposes of God because we are operating in the flesh.

**"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life. (John 6:63 NASB)**

because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:7-8 NASB)

Our man made efforts and our man made substitutes have produced a people who are ignorant of the provisions and promises of the New Covenant. A person who has “received Jesus in his heart” has not met the New Covenant requirements of repentance, the new birth, and the empowering of the Holy Spirit. Is it any wonder then that none of our churches (at least those in America) have the look and feel of the church in the book of Acts? A man made substitute can never function as the Body of Christ.

## Demonized Flesh

The problem with operating in the flesh is that we have made ourselves an enemy of God and opened ourselves to demonic influence. James gives us the progression:

This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.  
(James 3:15 NASB)

What starts out as earthly and natural eventually becomes demonic. Anyone operating long term in the flesh will come to be demonically influenced. The ultimate example of this is the one the Scriptures call the man of lawlessness. He is the ultimate earthly, natural man operating from the flesh. He becomes fully demonized and functions as the one we call the Antichrist.

As a result of our fleshly, man made substitutes and our operating the churches and the ministries by the flesh, we are seeing more and more demonic activity in the ministry. We end up with people like Todd Bentley, demonically empowered and making a circus of the things of God. We have fleshly “apostles” endorsing the demonic and proclaiming increase and then looking like fools when it falls apart. We have “prophets” who were going to restore Bentley after his adultery but who never address his flesh or demonic shenanigans.

The flesh leads to the demonic. Mixed covenants result in mixed results. It is not revival that we need—we need the New Covenant in our experience. We need the Lord to teach us to know Him, not other men. We need to learn how to walk in the Spirit, not in the flesh. We need to have rivers of living water flowing from our inner most parts not intellectual doctrine from our minds. We need to be built together by the Lord into the Temple that He is building not meeting as a man made church. We need true five fold ministers given by the Lord not appointed by substitutes. We need the life of the Spirit not the deadness of the letter.

We won't have these things until we can preach, teach, and experience the fullness of the New Covenant which includes both Calvary and Pentecost.

© 2003-2010 by Art Nelson and [Lifestream Teaching Ministries](http://www.LifestreamTeaching.com)

Previous issues of Present Truth are on the website: [www.Lifestreamteaching.com](http://www.Lifestreamteaching.com)

For comments or questions contact Art Nelson at this address:

[artnelson@lifestreamteaching.com](mailto:artnelson@lifestreamteaching.com)

You have permission to copy and distribute these materials provided:

1) no changes are made to the content, and, 2) they are not sold.

### **Removal instructions:**

This is a free teaching letter, without cost or obligation.

If you have received this teaching letter in error or if you desire not to receive "Present Truth" teaching letter please reply with "remove" in the subject area.