

ARE YOU

PARKED

IN THE

OLD

COVENANT?

WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE MEET TOGETHER?

ARE WE FOLLOWING THE NEW COVENANT?

DO WE DEFINE OURSELVES BY THE NEW COVENANT?

We may “preach” the new covenant, and believe in it--and do our best to apply it’s principles in our lives--but--are we truly following the example of the new covenant with regard to our operational principles and definitions of ministry?

There may be a sign in front of the church building that says: “New Covenant Church”--but have you ever heard the expression “you can’t judge a book by it’s cover-!?”

But let’s get back to the question at hand:

WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE MEET TOGETHER?

Does it go something like this.....?

We meet every Sunday.

Everyone must attend.

We build a big building--a “sanctuary”--the “house of God”.

We begin with praise and worship.

We make offerings/tithe.

The majority of the people are the “congregation”--non-ministry people.

We receive the ministry of the “pastor/priest”.

We make these offerings to support the pastor and build and support this “house of God”.

Everything in our meetings are preordained.

These rules are followed repetitively--without question or change--as if they are law.

Let’s be honest. We do this--right?

We do these ideas--over and over and over.....right?!
These ideas are BIG in Christianity.

These functions take up a good portion of our time, effort and money.

We work hard to see these things “come off” well each week.

These are very strong functions and to a large degree they define who we are as believers.

DO WE REALIZE THAT THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR ALL THESE FUNCTIONS AND DEFINITIONS COME FROM THE OLD COVENANT?

LET'S UNDERSTAND THE 2 COVENANTS.....

There are 2 covenants in the Bible. 2 “testaments” (the word covenant and testament are synonymous)

The 2 covenants are similar--to a point-!!

STEP 1

In the old covenant there are commandments--laws that serve to expose our sin.

Many of them are very familiar to us--”thou shalt not steal”--”thou shalt not covet”--etc. If we look at these commandment laws, we will see that all of us have fallen short of the perfection these laws require. To “fall short” is to sin.

This sounds familiar--right? (I hope so--it should to every Christian!!)

Why?

Because the new covenant is the same to this point...

Romans 3:23 For **all have sinned**, and come short of the glory of God;

Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the **law** there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the **law** is the knowledge of **sin**.

Most of these same commandment laws are in fact reiterated in the new covenant.....

Romans 13:9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not **steal**, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

The conclusion is the same--we are all sinners and these commandments tell us so.

STEP 2

What can we do about this sin?

Answer: REPENT!

Turn away from sin. Reject sin. Do the best we can to obey these commandments.

“Repent” is in the old covenant and the new....

Ezekiel 14:6 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; **Repent**, and turn *yourselves* from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, **Repent**: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Both covenants tell us to do our best to follow these laws, but, the fact is that we have all failed, and will fail the perfection they ask for.

so.....

STEP 3

What about the sin we have already committed?

Is there a way to be forgiven?

Is there a way to be cleansed?

The Bible says that God demands a payment be made for sin. Something has to be offered--sacrificed--as a payment for sin.

I deserve to die for my sin.

Romans 6:23A For the **wages of sin is** death;.....

But if something will die in my place...!

If someone would lay down their life for me.....!

If innocent blood will be shed on my behalf.....!

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of the flesh *is* in the **blood**: and I have given it to you upon the **altar** to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the **blood that** maketh an atonement for the soul.

I hope as a Christian, you are bursting with the answer to this dilemma of sin--you know the answer--you know **Who** the answer is.....JESUS!

We know as Christians that Jesus is our offering for sin. We know that His blood on the cross cleanses our sin. We know that He died the death we deserve for our sin, so that we can be saved. We know that He is in Heaven, making continual offering, in God's temple, for all sin.

1John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the **blood** of Jesus **Christ** his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given **himself** for us an **offering** and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

This forgiveness attained by faith, by belief that Jesus is Lord...

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
(John 3:16).

“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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”
(Romans 10:9-10).

But what about those folks who lived in the times of the old covenant?

They certainly did not have the blood of Jesus on the cross. They did not have this knowledge that saves.

What did Israel have to do, in the old covenant, to be cleansed of sin.....?

This may not seem like a very important question. Why should we new covenant believers study this subject? After all, it doesn't have much to do with us--right??

Well maybe it has a lot to do with us, with our traditions, with our functions and beliefs!

Let's ask the question again...

What did Israel have to do, in the old covenant, to be cleansed of sin.....?

First they had to build a big building.

The instructions are contained in the books of the law. Build according to God's instructions.

The “house of God”--the “sanctuary”.

They had to physically labor to conquer the land where this temple had to be built and work to maintain this place.

Next, they had to get an animal. Certain specific animals--bullocks and goats and rams--and baby lambs that take away sin. In certain seasons God asked for grain, or fruit or wine or oil. These offerings were brought continually into the temple.

When they got to the temple--the "house of God"--the "sanctuary"--they entered by a gate called "praise". At this gate they had to praise God.

Next there was an inner court of worship. Here they worshipped.

The first steps in the process of their assembly were always praise and worship.

After this they brought the offering into another area, in which was an altar.

On that altar was a priest/pastor. The priest--a member of the tribe of Levi--was the "delegated--designated--anointed--appointed--ordained--set apart--AUTHORITY"--which had the God-given right to do the ministry of the temple.

The other 11 tribes of Israel were often referred to as the "congregation". These were the "non-ministry" tribes. It was their job to conquer the land, raise the herds and manage the lands from which the offering was taken. But they did not do ministry, only the Levites, only the pastors.

How many animals or crops did God ask for as His offering? "Tithe". 1/10th of the specific "clean" animals and designated crops.

Part of the offering went to support the Levitical priests, who had a full-time job carrying on these continual offerings as the sacrificial laws required.

"Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more offering for sin. (Hebrews 10: 8-18)

Now look at these procedures and functions that are spelled out in the sacrificial laws of the old covenant.

Do they look familiar?

Aren't they very similar to the function and operation of the church?

Do we realize that these old covenant practices (which were completely for the purpose of spiritual cleansing) serve to define ministry, authority and function within the church?

Praise and worship.

Offering/tithe

A preordained and repetitive meeting

1 "minister" presiding--a priest/pastor

Most of the people considered the non-ministerial "congregation" (the word congregation is only found in the old testament).

The "sanctuary"--"house of God"--a large building which is built and maintained by the time effort and money of the people.

Maybe you have never realized it, but the Biblical basis for the operational plan of the Christian church comes from the old covenant.

And we treat these ideas as if they are law!

A large majority of Christians believe they have to do these things, over and over each week.

A large majority of Christians accept these definitions of ministry and authority and function.

A large majority of Christians believe they are "sheep"--"congregants"--people who do not serve God directly, but can only contribute to the ministry of others.

ARGUMENT #1

LAW

Some might argue--"these ideas are in the law of the old covenant--so--they must be fulfilled!"

Well, lets' look at it this way. Are we truly fulfilling these laws? We certainly do not sacrifice animals in church! And we see fit to build whatever kind of building we want--and call it the "house of God". Oh, and somewhere, the tithes and offerings of animals and grain was magically transformed into money!

But the big thing we don't seem to realize is that these specific old covenant laws and definitions are clearly changed in the new covenant.

We don't seem very clear on the fact that JESUS FULFILLED THE SACRIFICIAL LAWS!

1. "offering".... "Now where remission of these *is*, *there is no more offering for sin.* "

2. "priesthood/pastor/ministerial authority".....

Hebrews 7:5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the **priesthood**, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the **law**, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

Hebrews 7:11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical **priesthood**, (for under it the people received the **law**,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

Hebrews 7:12 **For the priesthood being changed**, there is made of necessity a change also of the **law**.

The new covenant clearly changes "ministry". In the new covenant, ministry is NOT authority over others. Ministry IS gifts that have been given to every believer, to serve God.

In the new covenant, all the church is a priesthood.....

1Peter 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy **priesthood**, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

1Peter 2:9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal **priesthood**, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

“But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:”
(Mark 10:42-43).

“One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.....

..... And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:
(Ephesians 4: 6,7, 11,12)

Ministry in one person, who “has authority over” others, is a clear, big and specific disobedience to the principles and laws that God gave us in the new covenant.

Just think of the results.

The new covenant says here in Ephesians 4, that ministry is what “edifies the Body”. This means to “build up--**add to**”. So it is ministry (service) that gets people saved.

But if we believe that we do not have ministry! If we act as if only one person is truly “qualified” to do ministry, then the result is that the Gospel is not being spread, and the work of God in the earth, is hindered.

In other words, people go to Hell, because all the people who *could*, are not serving God.

Because we act as if one person is the “Minister”.

3. “the house of God”.....“the temple”

Now **ye are the body of Christ**, and members in particular. (1Corinthians 12:27)

...

1Corinthians 3:17 If any man defile the **temple** of God, him shall God destroy; for the **temple** of God is **holy**, which **temple** ye are.

1Corinthians 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the **temple** of the **Holy** Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

Christian church building is a long tradition.

It is wrong.

If that big building downtown, (with the stained glass windows, or the blue seats and air conditioning and mult-media tv screens or whatever you think a “church” is!) is the “house of God”, then to some degree, you and your house, are NOT!

People are meant to be the house of God in the new covenant. If we could catch on to this idea, we could save ourselves an awful lot of time, effort and most of all, money!

Another big point to consider.....

Since, we as Christians are spending so much of our time, effort and money, repetitively fulfilling these ideas (as if they are law)--**WE ARE NOT USING THE NEW COVENANT FOR OUR OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES.**

Now, please understand. The vast majority of Christian churches do spend a certain amount of the time, effort and money in new covenant practices such as feeding the poor and caring for the homeless and spreading the Gospel. But, it is as if, we are trying to fulfill both covenants, and somehow the old covenant practices are the “must do” principles. When we have these ideas as such a repetitive format, they serve to define our goals and operations and definitions of ministry. It then is virtually impossible to practice the new covenant principles of operation.

I believe every true Christian has the new covenant goals in their heart. But since we define ourselves by these old covenant rules, and expend so much of our time and effort in the old covenant rituals, I believe we are too exhausted to do the new covenant goals. The old covenant definitions and goals are often considered to be the “real ministry.”

ARGUMENT #2

“The new testament points us to these ideas.”

Well, just because the word “pastor” is used in the new testament (once!) does this mean a “pastor” is a Levitical priest?

Why not use the new testament to define “pastor” as well as all the ministry gifts?

Why not look at Jesus’ definitions?

For example, Jesus called a “good pastor” a gate. New covenant pastoral ministry is simply helping others to find their ministry (Read John chapters 9 & 10 carefully). Jesus releases His sheep to find “pasture”--not to have a “pastor” who rules over them!

One of the ways we use the Bible to verify these old covenant principles (or rather to fool ourselves into thinking that they are in the new covenant), is to pull out one word or phrase from the new covenant, and then apply it to our experience of what “church” is.

For example, many people like to quote “forsake not the assembling of yourselves together”. This is in the new testament. but what they are doing is dragging a quote from the new testament, and then believing that it is talking about “going to church”.

How could it be?

The new covenant church was not “assembling” by the rules of the old covenant!

Let’s take a look at an are of scripture int he new covenant that is oftne used to “verify” the old covenant definitions of ministry and authority.....

The “office” in 1timothy chapter 3...

“This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the **office** of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Likewise *must* the deacons *be* grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the **office** of a deacon, being *found* blameless. Even so *must* *their* wives *be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the **office** of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” (1timothy 3:1-15)

Does this one word “office” mean we should believe the new testament is telling us to operate by old testament principles? There are many who believe that they have an “office” of ministry. This means whatever they want it to mean--they are “full-time--paid--professional--ministers”---whatever--!

Guess what--the word “office” is not in the original Greek text!

It was inserted by the King James translators 500 years ago (probably because it fit their experience of ministerial office and authority--an already well-established old covenant experience)

What these verses are actually giving us are simple “common sense” guidelines for having a home meeting of Christians. Notice--it’s all about the home, family and children. These verses are putting the Godly marriage and the raising of children as a priority. They are telling believers that they should not have meetings when their children are young and “unruly”. That believers should not be drunks, or liars or greedy. My guess is that about 75% of Christians could meet these requirements. So, 75% of believers should be operating as bishops (organizers) or deacons (ministers)--and that is what the church should consist of. Leadership groups that organize the ministry of the rest of the people. That is how the new covenant church worked.

Lets summarize...

Here are 4 reasons why the church should not operate by old covenant principles....

1. Israel carried out these functions in order to have their sin forgiven.
2. These functions and definitions are clearly and specifically annulled/changed/redefined in the new covenant.
3. Historically, these “church functions” were originated in the Dark Ages under extraordinary conditions (study the history of the early church--specifically the reforms that were initiated in the 4th century)
4. There is another example to follow. There are new covenant Christian functions and definitions of ministry. Why not study the church in the Bible? Why not use Jesus as our example?

WHAT WOULD A NEW COVENANT CHURCH LOOK LIKE?

LIKE JESUS.

LIKE IMPERFECT PEOPLE, DOING ALL THEY CAN TO IMITATE THE MASTER.

Jesus worked in a small group.

He took instructions from the Father whom He said was His authority. (As Christians we are meant to follow Christ's instructions, who is meant to be our authority)

Jesus had a mission called the Gospel.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the **gospel** to the **poor**; he hath sent me to **heal** the brokenhearted, to preach **deliverance** to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to **set at liberty** them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

(Luke 4:18-19).

This mission consists of 5 parts....

1. The Gospel (Good News) of salvation by faith in the name of Jesus Christ.
2. healing in--Jesus' name
3. deliverance--in Jesus' name
4. These actions directed toward the poor---the broken hearted--etc. We as Christians are meant to focus our attention on reaching out to those in need--the homeless, those in prison....

“For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. (Matthew 25:35-40)

5. “to set at liberty” “Apostolic liberty”.

Jesus made apostles. His operational principle was apostleship. This was also the operational principle of the church in the Bible.

- 5 By whom we have received grace and **apostleship**.....
(Romans 1:5A).

This simply means small groups, making more small groups....

Matthew 18:20 For where **two or three** are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Apostleship means releasing one another to serve God.

Apostleship means operating together as equals. Not exercising authority one over another among ourselves...

“And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.
(Luke 22:25-26, KJV).

This “release” is part of the Gospel and an active part of the functioning of the church.

Imagine a church of equals.

Imagine Christians functioning with one another to serve God actively.

Meeting daily, as often as possible.

Not funding a building which is used once a week for an hour and a half!

Not meeting in a preordained format (as if to fulfill old covenant laws!)

Breaking bread together. Talking with one another. Praying together, for one another and most importantly to seek the will of God.

Asking God to lead--and acting upon His will quickly and constantly.

Seeking to utilize all the gifts of all the people.

Conforming the gifts which are in all--to the Gospel purpose.

“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (Acts 2:42-47)

Using our God-given gifts to serve His will.

This is what the new covenant ministry gifts are.

“Apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher”

These gifts are the functional plan for the new covenant church to work by.

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (Ephesians 4:1-12).

The new covenant ministry gifts are NOT the old covenant titles of authority.

They are NOT the Levitical priesthood of the church--the “office” of ministry.

The new testament says ministry is NOT authority over others within the church...

“But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your **minister**: (Mark 10:42-43).

But what IS ministry?

Where are the ministry gifts?

The ministry gifts are (as the new testament Bible says!) God operating in all of us.

These gifts are meant to operate in different people--to “edify the Body” (the word edify means “to build up”--to spread the Gospel by adding members to Christ’s Body in the earth and build up the existing Body to serve effectively)

These gifts are listed in an order of importance....

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers.... (1 corinthians 12:27-28A)

The church should be 1st (primarily) apostles, 2nd prophets, 3rd teachers.

This is the Bible telling us to spread the Gospel 1st in all we do, but apostolically--small groups being sent out to do the work of the Gospel in the world (remember that mission?!)

There are countless and diverse ways this needs to be done. God is meant to lead us and give us the word on how and where and when.

So we need a way to connect with God and find His will. This is why the 2nd most important gift is the prophetic.....

“secondarily prophets”...

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are God’s connection to give us His instructions on how to further the Gospel. These gifts (which the Bible clearly says are “in all”) are to be used within the meeting of Christians as prayerful words--words which speak (prophecy) God’s gospel directions.

3rd Teacher/pastor

Within the church we should spend some of our time teaching one another (not all our time-!) But teaching must be non-authoritarian. Teaching must be able to come from any believer to any other believer (certainly not from one particular person always-!)

What about money?

Definitely not “tithes”.

Certainly not “offerings”.

Christians do not need to make offerings and we need to get rid of these obsolete old covenant typologies, because there is a far better method of giving in the new covenant.

Spirit-lead giving.

Like all our actions together, giving should be lead by God.

If God gave a small group a mission to carry out, and if they needed money to carryout this mission, they certainly could take up a collection. In the new testament the collecting of money was always for the poor....

“And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. “ (Acts 2:45)

“.....and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.” (Acts 4:35)

1Corinthians 16:1 Now concerning the **collection for the saints**.....

Why?

Because the Gospel is a free gift. Christians have a message to deliver--a concept (Jesus saves!!). This message is spread by people not money! One of the biggest lies in Christianity today (and it has been in Christianity for centuries) is that it “takes money to spread the Gospel”. This is Biblically incorrect. The Bible says it takes people to spread the Gospel. In our day of easy and inexpensive means of communication, the church ought to be in the forefront of exploiting these means to spread the Gospel. We certainly have no reason to be locked up in and tied to funding a Medieval castle.

It takes people to pray for the sick and cast out the devil. One part of the Gospel is caring for the poor and needy and some times that might take money. Collecting for this purpose is part of what the church should do--when God leads-!

The “picture” we are pointing out here is in reality how God works. It is how God sees His Church, and His will for operating. It ought to be our job to do all we can to line up with His will.

The church in the Bible is a description of imperfect people doing their best to imitate Jesus’ perfect example.

Certainly a repetitive ritual and strict rules are NOT open to the will of God. The church in the Bible was open to correction. We need freedom to be wrong some times!

Could we be the new covenant church?

The fact is that we already ARE the new covenant church!

But we are NOT the new covenant church when we are operating through old covenant types and shadows. We are NOT the new covenant church when we use the old covenant to define ourselves, and what ministry is. We are NOT the new covenant church when we exercise authority one over another among ourselves.

The new testament Bible tells us all about imperfect people (hey that's us!) striving to be like Jesus.

And that is what the church should be. People trying to imitate Christ.

Will everything go perfectly?

Certainly not!

If you want a "perfect church" keep on doing the old covenant every Sunday.

Clean and neat.

Preordained.

Everyone knows what everyone else will do.

We know who can talk, and who has to keep quiet.

We know how to sit down together--stand up together--raise our hands together at the right times. We know how to sit quietly and open our Bibles.

We know how to listen--but certainly not talk!

We know how to file in and file out.

We know the best parking space.....and that is exactly where the church is....

PARKED IN THE OLD COVENANT.

It doesn't have to be this way.

Quit **GOING** to church.

Start **BEING** the church.

