

NEW COVENANT OR OLD?

Transcript of a clip from the talk A HEART CLEANSED BY FAITH by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

You know that the primary truth that you grabbed hold of when you became a Christian was "repentance for the forgiveness of my sins" and that's the Old Covenant. If you say to me, "Now Pastor, that's what's preached throughout the churches in America. Now that isn't the Old Covenant. Why do you say it's the Old Covenant", I'll tell you why, because you still, six months or two years after you're born again, you still cry the original cry of frustration that was expressed not by a Christian but by a Jew trying to live under the law and up to the law, Paul himself. You still cry out his cry in Romans 7:15, "I don't understand my own actions because I do not do what I want but I do the very thing I hate", and for many of us who are born of God, that's still the cry of frustration, the cry of frustration that every Jew cried under the Old Covenant.

And maybe you say, "That's insane". It's insane. That's right what you say but it's insane. That's where I started. That's where I started, that's why I first felt guilt because I couldn't do what I knew I should do. That's when I first sought Jesus as my Savior because I was unable to deal with this power of evil within me. Do you mean I am back where I started?"

Well, actually you know you're not. You know you're not back where you started. You know that you have experienced God's gracious acceptance of you because of Jesus. You know that you have sensed a relief from guilt and you know that you've experienced forgiveness of sins. Moreover, even though you often resist God's Spirit in your life yet you know too that at times you're able to obey His Spirit and you know that there is at times within you a sense of Jesus' Spirit urging you to obey God and to love Him and to want to serve Him.

So you know you're not in the position you used to be in. You know you're aware of God in a way that you weren't before you first gave your life to Jesus or received His Spirit and yet loved ones you know fine well that there is also coming up from deep deep down inside you, a fountain of filth and dirt and sarcasm and anger and bad temper that you are not able to control.

It's as if your spirit is alive to God and you're regenerate and your spirit is born again. It's as if even your conscience is alive to God and knows what it ought to do. It's as if even your will wants to do it and your conscience tries to constrain your will to do what you know you should but there's this stream of evil that comes up from deep deep down inside you, a stream that opposes both your conscience and your will and feeds your will such a powerful stream of filth that the will finds itself unable at times to hold it in and even when it does hold it in, it holds it in by dint of powerful repression and great strain in your own life but often it's not able to hold it in and against your conscience, the will has to let that stream forth and you lose your temper or you're sarcastic with somebody or you tell a lie to somebody or you're absolutely dishonest to somebody or you give a wrong impression to somebody else or you get proud of something you've done and you know that there's something inside you that is not Jesus.

Loved ones the truth is that stuff comes from your heart and your heart is still as unclean as it was when you were first born of God, that's what's wrong. Your spirit is alive to God, even your mind and your will and your conscience, but your heart, the deepest part of you, the place where you really live, your own deepest self, is still as unclean as it was when you first heard of Jesus, and that's the problem. The heart needs to be cleansed.