



Spot On

Restoring the Hebraic foundational emphasis
on the processes of how you live your life:

- the responsive actions our Lord commands all His followers*
- their responsibility to deferentially obey by grace the One they love*

Spot 15. In Both Testaments, Love-Grouped Obedient Trust Confronts Sin

All too many people who consider themselves “Christian” live as though God closed a door on the Hebrew Scriptures (the Older Testament) and then opened another one in the Apostolic Scriptures (the Newer Testament). Your own Bible, no matter what version you use, most likely has a page inserted that separates the two volumes as if “that was then” and “this is now”. Yet ALL of Scripture emanates from Him, and is therefore essential to us as Christ’s own.

The entire Bible is a *continuum* — one amazing and unified account of God’s loving Sovereignty and divine justice and holy grace enacted through His Only Son, Jesus. The only righteous response which Abraham’s spiritual descendants could have was *obedient trust* — *leading to action* which emanated from *loving God* (Joshua 22:5; James 2:17-26). And the only righteous response from we who stand on the firm foundation of loving and trusting Jesus as Lord of our lives is *obedient trust – leading to action* that comes from a heart of *grateful love* (John 14:21; 1John 5:3).

This is what verifies that a person belongs to our Lord Jesus and is on the path to their salvation: **Grateful love producing obedient trust leading to responsive action.**



Whether intentionally or not, you’ve most likely been taught to regard the Older Testament as God’s interaction with the Jewish people, while the Newer Testament is what Christians should really pay attention to. After all, if you aren’t “Jewish”, then that “failed experiment” by God to set apart a people as His own can be readily ignored or even discounted. And all those “laws” aren’t for believers today, are they? The sermons you’ve heard and the Bible studies you’ve participated in may not put it that bluntly. But isn’t that how it comes across when so many Christians are illiterate about God’s justice and grace and holiness and love — and about what righteous living looks like *that has merit in Father’s eyes* — as they are so carefully illustrated in the Older Testament?

Check out how often in the Newer Testament that references to “Scripture” are used. These references denote the truths and commands and prophecies in the

Older Testament, the only Bible the earliest followers of Jesus knew and observed. For example, Paul urged his protege Timothy to continue in the path he had followed since early childhood, his practice of knowing that *all of Scripture* — meaning the *Hebrew Bible* — is breathed out by God with a specific purpose: to thoroughly equip His Son's followers through *teaching us, rebuking us, correcting us and instructing us in living righteously* (2Timothy 3:16,17).

- So why should we today be any less pursuant of the very truths in the Older Testament which were commended as a way of life to the earliest followers of Jesus?
- What essentials from the Hebrew text are we missing in our own walk that could keep us from offending the God we say we love and serve, and enlighten us to living in ways that please Him?

It might surprise you that someone who follows our Lord with a willingness to confront sin in another follower so they might be restored through repentance and restitution if necessary is a key *relational responsibility* that finds precedence in the Older Testament, specifically in Leviticus 5:3-6. In this passage, an individual becomes unclean unintentionally or makes an oath to do something but forgets to follow through. In either situation, the perpetrator “learns of it”, and knows that in God's sight he's guilty of sin. And how does the wrongdoer most likely “learn of it” that he's sinned? By a faithful friend who confronts him out of love so he can then confess the specific nature of his sin and bring an offering for atonement.

We who are Christ's own through His indwelling Spirit might find ourselves choosing not to respond to the Spirit's nudge to repent when we've sinned. But a true brother or sister in Jesus may be sent by Him to confront our sin and encourage us to repent and be restored to the way our Lord would have us live. Because Christ is our atonement, by His substitutionary death we are forgiven and cleansed from the unrighteousness we soiled ourselves with. We can then access the power of the Spirit to walk the way that brings our Father praise.

What To Take Away From This Discussion:

Both Testaments leave no doubt about what is considered sinful from God's perspective, and what's pleasing to Him as righteous. But many people cringe when it comes to confronting someone who calls himself a Christian but is engaging in ongoing sin, whether through actions or words or attitudes. All too many Christians think that confronting a sinning brother or sister is being “judgmental” rather than a Christlike response of loving him or her enough to put up a stop sign so they might repent. (See 2Timothy 4:2; Luke 17:3.)

Do you see how the Spirit would use YOU to come alongside a brother or sister as a divine, Spirit-prompted messenger when that person is sinning? That's the essence of Matthew 18:15 — being the friend who loves him or her in Christ enough to bring a correction or rebuke so they might repent and be restored in fellowship with their Lord as He cleanses them (1John 1:9). And that's *putting into action* love-grounded, obedient trust.