

THE NEW TESTAMENT IS OUR PATTERN **(Romans 6:17)**

I. God has always given His people a pattern.

- A. The God we serve is a God of order (1 Corinthians 14:33).
- B. He always has been and always will be (Hebrews 13:8).
- C. God had a pattern for worshiping Him in the Patriarchal Age.
- D. God had a pattern for Noah to build the ark.
 - 1. Genesis 6:14-16.
 - 2. Notice how exact it was.
 - 3. Noah did exactly what God commanded him to do (Genesis 6:22).
- E. When you read Exodus 25-27, you see that God gave Moses an exact pattern for building the ark of the covenant, the altar, table of shewbread, the lampstand, and the tabernacle.
 - 1. Notice Exodus 25:40.
 - 2. Also, Exodus 27:8.
 - 3. Look also at what the Holy Spirit inspired the writer of Hebrews to pen (Hebrews 8:5).
 - 4. Now notice Exodus 40:16.
- F. If you want more of a pattern, you can go to 1 Kings and read the details about the temple that Solomon built according the plan God gave.
- G. What we can see from this is that God is one Who believes in and has given a pattern.
 - 1. Notice what is said about that Old Covenant by the writer of Hebrews (Hebrews 8:6-7).
 - 2. Do we not believe that God would leave us who are under a better covenant without a pattern?
 - 3. Paul told the Romans that they had obeyed a pattern, which is the meaning of the word "form" in Romans 6:17.
 - 4. In fact, the word "pattern" in Hebrews 8:5 is the same Greek word as "form" in Romans. 6:17.
- H. Just as God gave Noah, Moses, and Solomon patterns to follow, and even the whole Mosaic Law was a pattern the Jews had to follow, God has given us a pattern.
- I. It is a pattern for building a life and it is a pattern for the church to follow.
- J. Just as Noah, Moses, and Solomon were obligated to follow the patterns given them, we are obligated to follow the pattern given to us.

II. This idea has been attacked by man.

- A. God, who made us and knows us best, has the right to govern us, thus we use the word sovereign when speaking about the rule of God.
- B. The divine rule book used to govern us, outlining the expectations and demands of the ruler is now the New Testament.
 - 1. The Old Testament has been taken away (Colossians 2:13-14).
 - 2. Any other book that man devises is not adequate because it has not been given by the One who has the right to rule.

- C. Because of this, the New Testament is our pattern.
- D. Sadly though, this idea of the necessity of a pattern or the New Testament as a pattern has been and is being attacked.
 - 1. One of our own brethren wrote: "The problem with a restoration theology is it rests on the premise that the mission of the church is to set up a true church in which all the details of church life are exactly like they were in a first century world. It functions on the assumption that there is a blueprint, or pattern in the New Testament that the church is to reduplicate in each succeeding generation. Such theology makes the church's mission egocentric an past-oriented rather than outward looking and future oriented."
 - 2. A writer who is part of the Christian Church wrote something similar when critiquing a book written by a gospel preacher: "Throughout the book the assumption is made that the New Testament is the vehicle or container of a pattern of church specifications...From the foregoing survey of the experience of Disciples of Christ and the churches of Christ, we may conclude that the more specifically the restoration plea has been defined in terms of governmental, organizational, and ritualistic pattern of behavior, the less success it has had as an effective and cohesive force in the Christian world."
 - 3. Another one of our erring brethren stated this in a sermon: "Are we really looking for a pattern? We have taken Acts and tried to make it a prison. Acts was not meant to be a pattern. I reject pattern theology. The Scripture is not a book of case law to be cited like a bunch of proof texts. The way to teach people about the Bible is not to quote a series of steps to salvation. I am not looking for a pattern. I am looking for a Person."
- E. We could go for days, in fact I read parts of an article that was extremely long, full of footnotes and endnotes, telling us that there is no such thing as a pattern in the New Testament.
 - 1. The only time the writer of the article, at least in the parts I read, addressed the use of the word translated "pattern" or "form" was its use in Hebrews 8:5 and that was to tell us that we are wrong for using that verse to teach a pattern that is to be followed.

III. **The New Testament presents itself as a pattern.**

- A. The very fact that it is a New Testament shows it is to be a pattern.
- B. Matthew 26:28.
 - 1. Now notice Hebrews 9:15.
 - 2. Galatians 3:15.
 - 3. Are wills, or testaments, not to be taken seriously?
 - 4. Can one arbitrarily decide how to follow someone's last will and testament?
 - 5. We know that is impermissible by man's law.
 - 6. Lawsuits galore have been filed over the mishandling of someone's will.

7. Once the will has come into effect, it cannot be changed or altered by anyone.
 8. It is not to be disregarded in its contents being carried, but its conditions are to be met.
- C. Not only that, many passages declare to us that the New Testament is designed to be our pattern.
1. 2 John 9.
 2. 1 Corinthians 4:6.
 3. Galatians 1:6-9.
 4. Revelation 22:18-19.
 5. Romans 6:17.
- D. God expects us to live according to and in harmony with this divine pattern.
1. Matthew 28:20.
 2. Ephesians 5:11.
 3. 2 John 10.