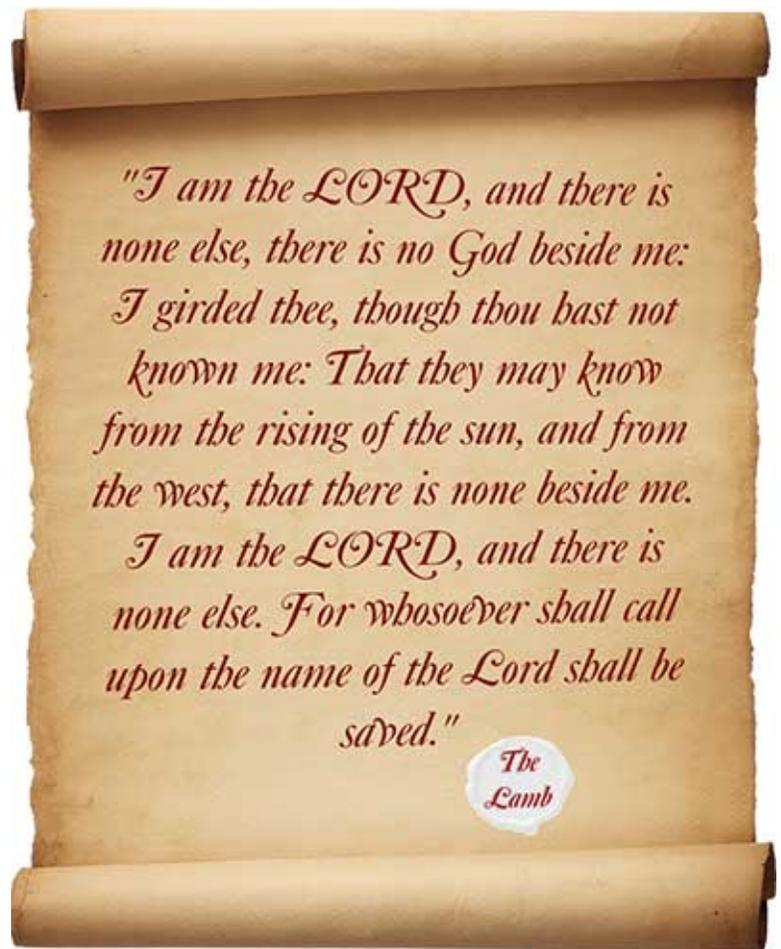


"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the Blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Hebrews 12:22-24 KJV

At the beginning of every new year we are imbued with the sense of a clean slate; the turning of a page; a clean canvas upon which to start. We breathe a sigh as the old year closes upon sadness, mistakes, and pain. We purpose to avoid the old mistakes, but for all our zeal, we find ourselves at the end of each year once again purposing to quit bad habits. The best times have vanished, never to be enjoyed again. Our first love, child, home, car, and the list continues. Year after year our best efforts seem thwarted. Positive outlooks and attitudes turn into absolute catastrophes and disasters! However, the one thing, that never changes is our sinful humanity. We still remain subject to the same lusts, mortality, and imperfections. We discover for all our "trying" *"in [our] flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with [us]; but how to perform that which is good [we] find not."* The curse of sin and death is in our genes and for all our vain struggling cannot be defeated outside of faith in Christ. The Mosaic Law, the Ten Commandments, the first Covenant, did nothing but illuminate the problem. *"For I was alive without the Law once (unaware of sin): but when the Commandment came, sin revived...and the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it (the Law) slew me (wages of sin is death)."* The Law left no doubt man could ever measure up to a Holy God! Paul explains, *"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin."* The Law merely confirmed, *"There is none righteous: No, not one!"* But, the most beautiful phrase in the Bible turns the spotlight of Hope upon the writhing mass of sin's humanity: *"For God so loved the world!"* It explains God's impetus for establishing a *"New Covenant. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things (God and His Word), in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the Hope set before us."* The Law only shows man's absolute inability! The *"New Covenant"* is God's promise to Himself to save any who repent and call!



To wicked man's accursed race,
God's covenant extends His grace,
So if they bow and humbly call,
He'll save their soul from Adam's fall. ~CGP

Every event of eternal life with God will be an endless succession of “firsts.” Each will surpass the one gone before in an eternal symphonic crescendo of bliss! Jesus, the Mediator of the “*New Covenant*” forever erases the Curse for every man that humbly calls from his distress, “*Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!*” You can keep trying to turn over a “new leaf” in the pile of life’s fallen leaves, or you can call on the Lord to graft you into the “*Tree of Life*,” and all your leaves will be new! To those who humbly admit to God their own efforts are vain and plead for God to save them, God extends the grace of the “*New Covenant*” that will forever “*make all things new.*”

"Therefore if any man be in Christ (by faith believing AND obeying), he is a New Creature: old things are passed away; behold, ALL things are become NEW." 2 Corinthians 5:17 KJV

C. G. Palmer