

One of the things I really want to do in life, is to help people understand and experience, all that Jesus accomplished for us at the cross. Jesus died to bring us a new and overwhelmingly better relationship with God. This is called the New Covenant. He said, “This cup is the New Covenant, in my blood, which is poured out for you”.

Over and over the Bible tells us this New Covenant is much better than the old one. It has much more glory. It does things for us the Old agreement could never do. The Old condemned us for our unrighteousness; the New brings righteousness to us; it pronounces us righteous and then powerfully works within us to make us righteous. **THE NEW COVENANT IS THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION TO HUMAN REBELLION!** Under the New Covenant the Spirit of Christ is poured into our hearts; we are new people.

Hebrews 7:18 “...Because it was weak and ineffective, the former commandment has been set aside, since the Law made nothing perfect, and (now) a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.” The better hope comes through Jesus, himself... Verse 22 “In this way, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant.”

This better covenant is detailed in chapter 8: “I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. They shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”

Yet, even though the Bible says it is much better, and does much better things for us, in reality it seems many people in the church struggle and fail, just as much as those under the Old Covenant of Law. Andrew Murray saw this and gave this reason for it, “With most Christians there is not even the intellectual belief that God means his (New Covenant) promise literally. They are so sure that their views...of the necessity of always sinning are correct that the teaching of God’s word in regard to (the New Covenant) can never enter their mind”.

I want us to experience all the freedom from sin and self, all the joy and the glory of the NC that we can have in this life! That happens first by knowing what the New Covenant promises, then actually believing it as we go through the drama of everyday life.

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The New Covenant is nothing less than God’s full answer to all that is wrong with us; it is God’s answer to all that is sinful, and broken about us. It is God restoring all that we lost at the fall.

The Bible tells us that human beings started out in a better place than we find ourselves now. God created Adam and Eve (in his own image) and put them in a garden called Eden. Everything was beautiful and blessed in that garden. They had free and open fellowship with God and with each other. Nothing was a problem, nothing was dark or troubling, or painful. There was no sin or rebellion. There was no guilt, and no shame. No hatred, no sense that things were not right.

But that all changed when Adam sinned. That changed everything about him, and it changed everything about us, the descendants of Adam. Sin came to all men and we all sinned. We came into this

world estranged from God. We came into this world with a bent towards going our own way, instead of God's way. Something was desperately wrong with our hearts! We were born into the world, flawed, fallen, and broken.

Dick Staub wrote, "Everything is supposed to be different than what it is". There is "the way God intended life to be... and the devastatingly diminished life we live on earth now. We feel alone because we are alienated from God, our self, each other, and the earth itself. Created for intimacy with God and once at ease and fulfilled in God's presence, humans are now filled with dread in God's presence..."

I think we intuitively know something is wrong with us. We intuitively know we were made for something more than we experience in this life. We sense that we were made to be better people than we are. We might not understand that things are the way they are because of Adam's sin, but yet we have experienced the effects of being dead in our trespasses and sins.

\*The New Covenant is all about undoing Adam, and undoing our situation in Adam. It is God's way to release us from the catastrophe of Adam's rebellion and fall. We were alienated from God, hostile to God, indifferent to God; and through Jesus, we are brought near to God, made the friends of God, transformed into people who love God, holy, unblemished and blameless in his presence.

What God offers us in Jesus, is like a total cure for terminal cancer. It goes to the core of our problem with sin. (Jesus died for our sins.) It goes to the core of our estrangement from God, (He reconciled us

to himself in Christ!) It offers a salvation, that fixes, and redeems, and heals us! We were sick and needed to get well! We needed new hearts and that is exactly what God gave us in the NC.

When we talk about the New Covenant we are not talking about some abstract theological concept. We are talking about the answer to the universe! We are talking about the answer to all that is wrong with us and with every human being!

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In Hebrews 8 we are given four core blessings of the New Covenant: First: God has placed in our hearts the desire and the power to live for him. The external laws of God were good but our hearts couldn't keep them. Now God has written his laws in our minds and upon our hearts. We respond, "yes" to God, by his work in us.

Second: God has brought us near to him. God has committed himself to an intimate relationship with us! He said, "I will be your God. And You will be my people". He is ours! We belong to him. We are in his loving care.

Third: We have been given first hand experience of God. "They shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest". We are each one given the gift of personally knowing God.

Fourth: God has said, "I will be merciful regarding their wrong deeds, and I will never again remember their sins." Through the blood of Jesus, God will never remember your sins against you! He relates to us as if we had never sinned.

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\*\*This morning we are going to talk in depth about the first promise of the New Covenant from this passage: the internal desire and

power to live for God. Hebrews 8:10 “I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts.” The new covenant solves the problem of hearts that are prone to sin.

Christ did not come to wallpaper over our sins, but leave us sinners. The New Covenant is a complete salvation. He blots out our sins AND frees us from our bondage to sinning. He gives us a new heart.

In 2 Corinthians 2 Paul said God’s will for us is “written not on tablets of stone but on tablets human hearts”. “You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God”. In the Old Covenant the law was written into stone tablets and the Holy Spirit strove with the people to keep the law, but they constantly rebelled. In the New Covenant the Holy Spirit is writing his laws right into our hearts!

FF Bruce said, “What was needed was a new nature, a heart liberated from its bondage to sin, a heart which not only spontaneously knew and loved the will of God but had the power to do it.” And that is exactly what God does for us!

The changes that have taken place in you, the changes that are taking place in you are from the Holy Spirit moving and stirring in your heart and taking you to new places, new ways of living that please God and free you from the broken, fallen, sinful old person you used to be!

Jesse Johnson said, “Moses had an uphill battle with the Israelites. Comparatively speaking pastors have it easy—our work is done by the Holy Spirit himself.” That is so true! My job is mainly to introduce you to the Holy Spirit and call you to live in the Spirit and

to walk by the Spirit. And you will be transformed into a living letter of Christ, a living expression of Jesus Christ! I can't make you a living letter of Christ, no pastor can do that, no counselor can do that!

Paul said, "There is nothing in us that allows us to claim that we are capable of doing this work. The capacity we have comes from God; it is he who made us capable of serving the new covenant, which consists not of a written law but of the Spirit. The written law brings death, but the Spirit gives life."

New Covenant ministry is not merely telling people to get their act together. It is not merely relaying information or a list of things to do. It is not just giving people a kick in the pants. It is bringing people into direct contact with the Spirit of the living God!

A. B. Simpson said, "He puts in us the nature, the principle, and disposition to obey. He makes His law the law of our being, and we as naturally follow it as a material body falls to the ground by the law of gravitation, or, as an acorn develops into an oak because the law of the oak is in the heart of the acorn. So He puts His will into our heart as the new ...impulse of our nature, and it becomes second nature for us to love it, to will it, and to do it."

F.B Meyer said, "Christianity is not a creed, not a formula, not a ritual, but a life. If it is a life begun by the Holy Spirit, a real life, the germ of the Christ; (His) life planted in our spirits and to rise up in the majesty of Christ's likeness.... A bird's life must always express itself through its song, its nest building and its care for its young.....And if a man is truly enjoying the life of God in his soul, that life must rise up in every word he speaks, in every look of his

eyes, in every movement of his nature. I do not say that he will always be talking about God, but the divine life will express itself in his laughter and in every movement of his life.”

Ezekiel 36:26,27 says “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”

Hebrews 13:21 says, May God himself “equip you in every good thing to do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ”. God IS equipping you to do his will; He IS working in you those very things that please him. You can trust in that! We walk that out but God put it there!

The birth of God inside of us is something incredibly powerful. John said, “No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.” This is not a threat, but a promise! It is a statement of the reality and power of what God has planted inside us!

The continual inspiration and working of God’s Spirit in our heart is the very essence of being a Christian! Paul said, “Walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh”. The Holy Spirit will produce joy and peace and love and goodness in your life. There is no law that can do that! “What the law could not do, God did, in sending his Son, so that the law of God is now fulfilled in us “whose lives are directed by the Spirit”.

Rankin Wilbourne said, “When temptation comes you can say that’s not who I am any more. I am in Christ and Christ is in me.” You can say, “God has written his laws on my heart. I delight to do HIS will!

Paul said to consider yourselves dead to sin but alive to God. You are to think about yourself as someone who has died to sin, and therefore freed from sin, and as a person whose heart is now fully alive to God!

A.B. Simpson said “When your old self comes back, if you listen to it, fear it, believe it, it will have the same influence upon you as if it were not dead; it will control you and destroy you. But if you will ignore it and say: “You are not I, but Satan trying to make me believe that the old self is not dead; I refuse you, I treat you as a demon power outside of me, I detach myself from you”. “You are nothing to me, you have no power over me, I have renounced you, in the name of Jesus I bid you hence,”—lo! the evil thing will disappear, the shadow will vanish,

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Saturate your heart with the glories of the New Covenant. We should know the truths of the NC backwards and forwards, and cling to them by faith even when we don’t feel things are this way, when we are tempted, when we are downcast, when we are discouraged with ourselves. Let’s review them:

First: God has placed in our hearts the desire and the power to live for him. The external laws of God were good but our hearts couldn’t keep them. Now God has written his laws in our minds and upon our hearts. We respond, “yes” to God, by his work in us.

Second: God has brought us near to him. God has committed himself to an intimate relationship with us! He said, “I will be your God. And You will be my people”. He is ours! We belong to him. We are in his loving care.

Three: We have been given first hand experience of God. “They shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest”. We are each one given the gift of personally knowing God.

Four: God has said, “I will be merciful regarding their wrong deeds, and I will never again remember their sins.” Through the blood of Jesus, God will never remember your sins against you! He relates to us as if we had never sinned.

Meditate on these things. Focus on actually believing them for yourself. Live in overflowing gratitude of these unspeakable privileges that Jesus purchased for you by his blood!

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God wants us to respond to his Word this morning. Have you come into these blessings of the New Covenant by repenting of your sins and placing your faith in Jesus to forgive your sins? Are you born of God? Does God’s Spirit live in you? If you are not sure of that, come to him this morning to enter this New Relationship God has for you.

Have you really placed your trust in Jesus as the solution to all that is sinful, broken and rebellious in your heart? Or are you looking to something else to solve life for you?

I urge you to unite yourself to these great promises of the New Covenant, by faith. Attach yourself to Christ, and attach yourself to the “better hope” Jesus died to give you.