

How the New Covenant Works

by Robert B. Thompson

The New Covenant is a superior way of living that addresses the heart of man and provides a new way of living that is pleasing to God.

Duration: 1:18:00

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 3:2

Topics: "New Covenant", "Church Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of God's role in drawing people to Him. While believers are commanded to preach the gospel to all, it is ultimately God who knows who belongs in the church and calls them to be part of it. The purpose of the ministries of the body is to build the church and help believers grow in the likeness of Christ. The speaker also highlights the need for believers to bear witness to the world and be ready for the Lord's return. The sermon references Matthew 25 and Hebrews 8, emphasizing the surpassing glory of the New Covenant and the transformation it brings.

Transcript

As we come to you, it is with profound praise and thanksgiving. And we can see, Lord, from the reports that are coming in to us, that this year that we're entering seems to be a time of great testing. And so many are ill, so many have died unexpectedly, people in their thirties just go to sleep and don't get up the next day.

What a complete surprise to everyone. And Lord, it's remarkable, so we know that something unusual is taking place. So, since you seem fit to allow us to keep on living into this year, when so many have already been taken, that we know you have a reason, and so help us, Lord, to serve our generation by the will of God.

And I pray, Lord, you will bless each family represented here with health and strength and wisdom. And help us all, Lord, to get a good grip on you, not to be bemused by our culture, but to follow straight after the Lamb. Help us, Jesus.

And we know you will help us tonight. In Jesus' name, amen. Now, my mind is kind of on the beginning since I've been going back.

Just let me say briefly that I haven't gone into this too much, but in 1948, after I received the baptism of the Spirit, I had been saved since 1944, so I had only been a Christian for four years, and I received the baptism in 1948, and I was in San Diego, actually, in a little Bible institute that's now defunct. It was the Assembly of God, and they moved all our records up to the big school in Costa Mesa, and that's where Audrey and my records are, is in the Assembly of God school in Costa Mesa. So, all of a sudden, I could feel I knew evangelical doctrine quite well.

I had a good send-off with the Navigators. I had been given a Scofield Bible. I had been taught grace.

I had been taught the rapture. I had been taught the four steps of salvation, and I understood pretty well about the blood atonement, and I knew at that time, and this is instructive for all of us, because there's people today saying, oh, there's going to be no great revival no more. It's all going to be apostasy from now until the end.

That's being taught by more than one person today who are opposing the things like Toronto and that. They come out in opposition and say, no, there's going to be no revival. Let me tell you something.

That's what I was taught in Bible school in 1948, but in 1950, the charismatic move swept the world, bringing tongues to the historic churches. There's been since that time a tremendous revival in Nagaland, in Indonesia, and in other places. Billy Graham started in 1948 in Los Angeles.

Oh, no, and we're all falling away. So, nonsense. We've come to the time of the good wine, and while there will be great trouble according to the Scripture, there will also be unprecedented revival.

And revivals, as far as I know, bring three things. True revivals of God bring repentance, which we see today. They bring worldwide evangelism, which we see today.

And they also bring an increase in doctrinal understanding. And that third part is probably the most difficult for the churches to accept. There's something about doctrine that we get froze on it, and we feel no one could possibly know anything we don't know, and if there's something we haven't heard of, it's got to be the devil.

So, these three things, repentance, move forward in the understanding of the Word, not extra-biblical revelation, but the understanding of the Word, and in worldwide evangelism, these three things, I think, since the Protestant Reformation, have characterized major moves of God, and we see that today. And it hasn't stopped, and it isn't going to stop. And God is unfolding His Word today.

Well, in 1948, I, being knowledgeable of evangelical teaching, which has not changed to the present day, whatever, but still go to heaven by grace, the Lord began, it was like someone was standing at my right hand and opening the Scripture to me. And of course, I was nervous about this, and I was checking it against the Word, but it continued. And I, it threw me into a kind of a mental spin, but I stayed with it, and finally made up my mind, well, you know, who was it Shakespeare said, to thine own self be true, and if, you've got to be true to yourself, if you're not, you're nowhere.

And I thought, I don't know whether this is right or wrong, but it seems like it's God, and I'm going to go that way. And so I have since that time, 50 years. And it has, I was, I taught a lot, and preached a lot, and people would say, Brother Thompson has a good spirit, but we can't understand what he's talking about.

So that was the reception. So, it wasn't until, about 10 years before, that would be 35 years ago, before coming here, Brother Cloud of the Fremont First Assembly, asked me to teach a deeper life class. And, when I began to see, and that was a large church, a very large church, when I began to see, the, the pillars of that church, come down to my class, I began to think, this must be God.

This must certainly be God. And, before I left Fremont, the, some elders came up from Santa Cruz, and, which is the headquarters for the Northern California Nevada District of the Assemblies of God, and they said, we've been watching the students in your class, over the past seven or eight years, and they said, your class is larger than the average Assembly of God in the United States, and we would like to ordain you. And so, those sort of things, build up a person's confidence.

so I've been going to this day, and of course writing a good deal. But, what I want to teach on tonight is, is one of the, it's on the New Covenant. And it's one of the original concepts, that the Lord, I feel it's the Lord, you can always judge, open to my mind, is on the New Covenant.

And it's found, it's found in the 8th chapter of Hebrews, starting with the, I'm going to start tonight, I think with the 7th verse. But anyway, I have never heard it preached. The New Covenant.

The Christian Covenant. I have never heard it preached. Anywhere.

I'm sure it has been in many places. I just never have heard it. Maybe you have.

And that to me is astounding. That the very Christian Covenant. Now what do we preach? We preach what is termed, the four steps of salvation.

All men are sinners. All have come short of the glory of God. We cannot save ourselves by our own works.

Christ died for our sins. If we receive Christ, we will go to heaven. Well, that's not the New Covenant.

That is, what I may say, a religious, a religion, a religious device, that we have constructed, maybe to simplify things, but if you'll notice, there is no passage of Scripture that runs like this. You take a verse here. You take a verse here.

Out of context. You take a verse here. You take a verse here.

And you underline them in your personal worker's New Testament. And after you do one, it says, now go to over here. You jump over to something.

Now that you have done this, now you jump over to another place. And when you are all finished, it says, now you are a Christian and you can lead others to Christ. Well, cool.

I'm sure numerous people have been genuinely converted. But you see, we're in a day when the wheat and the tares are coming to maturity. And as it says in Zechariah 4, and followed up by the expansion of that in Revelation 11, God's ready now to bring His temple to completion.

And as it says in Zechariah 4, it will be not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit. So, God's going to bypass religion. Good will keep coming from it until finally the ten horns burn Babylon with fire.

But that's not yet. But in the meantime, God is speaking to whoever has ears to hear what His Word is all about. The purpose being so that they can grow up and be strong to bear a solid witness in our day and to

be ready when the Lord returns.

So, it is a time of growth and of stretching. And it's very important. Now, there's about 40 major concepts or so that will be included in my memoirs.

And of course, they're in all my books and which you all have access to on the Internet free of charge. But nonetheless, they have to be explained again and again and again. And I'm very anxious that the young people... And Brian was working on that before he left for a better world.

So, I want you to pay attention and learn. It's a time of learning. But it also will work in conjunction with what the Holy Spirit is doing in your life at the same time.

It's not up here in an academic vacuum. As you learn, the Holy Spirit will apply it and so on. So, we're in Hebrews 8 now starting with verse 6 which is probably up on the screen by now.

Hebrews 8.6. And I want you to notice first of all that this is the Christian covenant. Some are saying since Hebrews is so full of works, it must be written to Jews and not to Gentiles. This is the day we're in.

We're ready to tear up the Bible in pieces and gainsay it so we can keep our little religious formula. Hebrews is part of the New Testament canon. It's the inspired word of God verbally.

Plenary-verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. The Bible school term. So, in Hebrews 8.6 we find what the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs that is referring to the law of Moses as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one and is founded on better promises.

So, we are smack dab in the Christian covenant. Right? Capiisce? Okay, this is not something to the Jews. This is the new covenant.

There's only two covenants we're dealing with. There have been others. You didn't know Abrahamic and so on.

But we're dealing with the law of Moses versus the Christian covenant. Okay? Alright. For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant that is the law of Moses no place would have been sought for another.

Make sense? Okay. And by the way, this is a quotation from Jeremiah chapter 31 verses 31 through 34. This is quoted directly from the book of Jeremiah.

Okay? Now, I want you to notice carefully so that you can see the botchment if that's a word we've gotten ourselves into. If there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant the law of Moses no place would have been sought for another. Now, we see from that that the new covenant is intended to be it does something that the first covenant was ineffectual concerning.

Okay? Does that make sense? Alright. That's the purpose of the new covenant. Alright, now.

But God, notice, found fault with the law of Moses. How many see that? You've got to watch me. I want you to think.

Think. Now, follow me. No, it doesn't say that.

And it's important that it doesn't say that. What does it say? He found fault with them. Now, that's important to understand because there's nothing whatever wrong with the law of Moses.

It's perfect. The problem is it does not address our carnal nature. It tells us put yourself up by your bootstraps.

Do it. Do this, you know. Don't covet.

Don't commit adultery. Don't lie. Make God the center of your life, etc.

Okay. But it doesn't give us the grace to do it. So God says it's imperfect.

Well, Galatians 3 the third chapter tells why God why God instituted it knowing it wouldn't work. Do you remember why in Galatians 3? Keep sin in check. It wasn't the covenant God ever had in mind.

Why? According to Galatians 3. The seed hadn't come to whom the promise was made. And that seed is who? And those who are part of Him whether or not they are Jews or Gentiles by race we in whoever we are who are in Christ whether we are Jewish or Gentile by race are the one seed of Abraham singular. That's very important.

That's another thing that that current teaching does not address clearly and they've got a Gentile church and there's no such thing as a Gentile church. There's only the seed of Abraham. That's all there is.

That's found where spiritually? Galatians 3. And it's also found in the second chapter of Ephesians. There's one new man. Jews and Gentiles pulled together by the cross.

It's also found in Romans 11. There's one olive tree. God isn't working with two olive trees.

There's one olive tree and we were grafted into it which makes us Israel. The seed of Abraham is Israel. Whether Jew or Gentile by race is immaterial.

It is Israel. It is the seed of Abraham. It's what Paul calls in the sixth chapter of Galatians true Israel.

Now peace be upon true Israel whose circumcision is of the heart. And you want to remember true Israel is by election. It's by promise.

You know what's actually happened is and now are you see if you were right up here under my nose I could watch your eyes. I can't even see grace. I don't know whether as you're missing I can get swift and you won't be able to track me whatever.

See these things all hang together. I mean the one seed hangs together. And the fact that Israel is a chosen nation and then we come to another problem is if there's chosen how then can it be said that God is willing that all come to repentance and all be saved.

How do you reconcile those two things? Do you know? You're sitting back there almost out of the camp. Come on guys. This is what you've got to know.

People are going to raise this when you begin to repeat what I say. Because they do not understand there's such a thing as saved nations that are not part of Israel. And what we've done in evangelical teaching is we've lumped the two together and that's why we get into these contradictions.

God is willing that every member of the saved nations be saved. Everyone is wide open. Whoever will.

But when you come to Israel which is the church the Jews under the where the church under the Old Testament the word means called out. That means called out. That doesn't mean it's up for democratic grabs.

But people can't understand that. Listen, God has every right to take a first fruit for mankind and make them a priesthood. He has every right to do that.

And you know what that's based on? Guys, this will be on the tape. So you can get the tape. If you can't afford it, we'll give it to you.

Okay? It's important that you get it. Because when I get in gear sometimes I forget people don't have all these antecedent understandings. Alright, now listen.

Carefully. God killed all the firstborn of Egypt. Do you remember that? Ever since then the firstborn has been holy to the Lord.

And the firstborn of a Jew had to be redeemed with money. The firstborn of an animal had to either be given to the priest or killed. See? God said I slew their firstborn.

From now on the firstborn is holy to the Lord. Whatever opens the womb is holy to the Lord. So God has made the church of firstfruits.

That's in the first chapter of James. We're of firstfruits of mankind. We are not the only ones who are saved.

Okay? That's a great misunderstanding in evangelical teaching that salvation and participation in the church they're the same during the church age somewhat. But in the ages to come there'll be multitudes of people who are saved into the new world. Sheep nations, for example.

Who are not part of Israel. Israel is a holy nation. And true Israel which is always by promise Romans, the ninth chapter Israel is always by promise never by natural birth.

Remember Isaac gave birth to Jacob and Esau. They both were the bloodline of Abraham through Isaac. But God said He hated Esau and loved Jacob showing that Israel is by promise and not by the natural birth.

It's by the prophetic promise. And that anointing rested on the Jews before Jesus came. Okay? The olive tree was with them when Jesus came.

He's the olive tree. Some of the Jews were broken off because of unbelief. A remnant of Jews continued in the olive tree.

Okay? And then a remnant of Gentiles was brought into that and that olive tree is Israel. That's the seed. And that's by predestination from the beginning of the world.

Okay? That's not the saved nations. So when they're saying God is willing that everybody be saved Right. That's what the scripture says and the scripture is always true.

And there's no contradiction as you realize that the purpose of the church age has not been the salvation of mankind. That's not the purpose of the church age. We preach the gospel to every creature so that God can take out of those people a church.

You remember what Jesus said? You did not choose me. John 15. See? No man can come unto me except the Father draw him.

So we've been commanded to preach the gospel to every creature. But God knows who belongs in the church and He calls them out to be in His church and to be taught by the ministries of the body because that's the purpose of the ministries of the body is to build the church to the stature and the fullness of Christ. In the meanwhile, we bear witness to the world to the sheep nations and if they help us they'll be saved into the kingdom on the basis of their helping us.

That's Matthew 25. So you see it all kind of hangs together. This is on the tape.

I suggest I covered a lot already so get the tape. Listen to it. Review it.

When it clicks like Lloyd told me last week he said it finally came together and this is my experience with people although they used to say it took seven years to understand Brother Thompson but I'm clearer now. But it still is new and it takes a while but when it comes together the whole Bible will make sense. It will all make sense and you won't see these constant seeming inconsistencies in it like between grace and works and predestination and free will.

They don't exist. When you get the whole picture it's a perfect seamless robe of Christ. There's no contradiction or seeming inconsistencies in it which of course there couldn't be if that's the inspired word of God and that's what it is.

Now the rules we follow are if it's here it's right if it isn't it's wrong. We just don't pick a verse here and a verse there and everything and put them in a special Bible. That's kind of a background for the new covenant.

God found fault with the people. Now what do you suppose was wrong with the people? Now this is critical to your understanding of the new covenant. What is wrong with the people? What was wrong with them, Larry? There was nothing in them that actually was able to overcome the things that they were falling to in temptation.

Yes, that's true. And you can say it simply God does not want people to sin. How many believe that? Okay, the purpose of the law was to keep people from sinning.

Sinning. Okay? That's the purpose. That's what it says in Galatians 3. It was added to hold sin in check.

Alright, now when it says God was not satisfied with them what does that mean? They were sinning. As simple as that. They were sinning.

Now here's why it's critical to your thinking and runs 180 degrees contrary to the typical preaching of grace. You ready for this? Because this is where you will be challenged. This is where the reproach is.

It used to be on tongues. It isn't on tongues anymore. That's been accepted.

The reproach now is on godly living. That's where people say ah, that's worse and everything. Like they said in tongues ah, that's the devil.

Okay, the reproach has moved from tongues. It's on godly living now and that's going to shake up the whole evangelical world and threaten their security. Because they've always figured well, I've been saved by grace and only Christ is worthy and even if I sin... Alright, now look at the logic.

Don't let your minds wander. Look at the logic. If the problem, if God was not pleased because under the law of Moses people continued to sin and He gave a new covenant to correct that then what must be true of the new covenant if it's superior? Exactly.

Exactly. Alright, what we're saying is that God was not pleased with the law of Moses because people continued to sin. And God's goal for man from the time He created him in Genesis 1 and said He was to be in the image of God has never changed.

God's goal for man never changes from covenant to covenant. All that changes is the two things change. One, the demands He makes on people keep getting more severe.

Secondly, He provides more help which we call grace. But the goal is do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God and never changes. But, what changes is what, Betsy? Two things.

Remember? Martha? Grace? Come on, get it going. This is a college course. Alright.

What changes is one, the demands that are made on us. See, the demands under the new covenant are far greater than under the law of Moses. See, no one was ever asked to present his body a living sacrifice under the law of Moses.

The demands are greater and what else is greater? What God has given us to meet the demands. Namely, the body and blood of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the born again experience, the gifts and ministries, everything God has given us. Okay, what never changes? Martha? What God is requiring.

Hmm? What God never changes. What changes from covenant to covenant. What is it that never changes? See, people aren't used to thinking in church.

I was teaching integral calculus in the beginning, I say. We're not used to that and you have to because we are going into information. See? Alright, now let's go through that again.

What never changes? The goal. The goal of God is creating us in His image so that we will not sin. Exactly.

Exactly. The goal is to create people in God's image. That they'll do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

That's God's goal. It never changes. What two things do change? The demands He makes on us increase.

They're more severe. The demands on us under the new covenant are far more severe than under the old. They were never told under the old to put to death their carnal nature.

Crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof. And what is the 2 Corinthians 7 and 1? I was teaching that about hours ago. Cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit perfecting

holiness in the fear of God.

They didn't have that in the old covenant. The demands are greater. But what else is greater? The help from God.

We have Jesus Christ. They didn't have Jesus Christ. But what never changes? The goal.

His goal. What He wants from man never changes. See, the current evangelical teaching has changed the goal.

They have changed the goal. Alright, now. Now, track this carefully.

If the problem with the first law of Moses was that the people didn't stop sinning, what then is true of the new covenant? I'm looking at my friends. Logically. Grace.

You have a logical mind. What must be true of the new covenant? That people shouldn't stop sinning. Exactly.

That's all. I'm not telling you some... I'm just giving you simple stuff. A plus B plus C equals D. That's all we're doing here.

So don't read... Repeat her answer. Well, her answer was that under the new covenant we will be able to stop sinning. Alright, now look what has happened.

Look what has happened. What is the teaching? What is evangelical teaching? We are evangelicals here, so we're not fighting anybody. What is the evangelical teaching concerning salvation? You can only stop sinning when you die.

Yes, which is entirely incorrect because sin began in heaven. Alright. God doesn't see our sin because Christ has covered it.

Exactly. What is taught today is that no one can keep God's commandments and He's only given them to us to drive us to Christ so that we'll be saved by grace. Completely subverted and destroyed and corrupted God's plan.

So the new covenant, instead of being the means of overcoming sin, has become an alternative. We don't have to overcome sin because Christ overcame it for us and being identified with Him or believing in Him, His righteousness is imputed to us. Therefore, it's a better covenant because we're without guilt and God will take us to heaven.

Now, that's what's preached. That completely destructive of God's intention under the new covenant. Now, you can take verses here and there and prove that, but you can't preach an expository sermon from a chapter of the Bible and prove it because it's wrong.

God does not give us commandments to frustrate us. He gives us commandments because He wants them kept. And He has given us access beyond the veil.

We can go straight to the mercy seat of God in heaven and get help for any sin that is causing us problems. No matter what it is, there is power in Christ that was not available under the old covenant because under the new covenant we have a broad base of the atonement that was made on the cross by

which the sins of the whole world were forgiven according to 1 John 2 who died not only for our sins but for the sins of the whole world. So, God has made an end of the guilt on the cross.

So, we're not dealing with guilt. That's taken care of. What we're dealing with now is victory over sin.

And heretofore, that was regarded as impossible. There were several doctrines on it. We can get rid of sin root and branch with some sudden experience which doesn't work.

Or we're to reckon ourselves dead which means somehow it doesn't matter what we do. Or Jesus did it all and by identification with Him everything except what God wants which is people who are living a righteous, holy, obedient life to God. And that is not a few super saints or a nice thing.

That is the essence of the new covenant. The essence of it. And anything short of that short of iron righteousness short of fiery holiness short of stern obedience to the Father is not accepted in God's Israel.

We don't even understand holiness. You know, holiness went out with early Pentecost because it was mostly superficial no lipstick, long dresses, buns mostly affected the women. I don't recall any holiness teaching for men.

But, you know, there are some things let me give you and I was struck with this when I was doing my devotional reading back in Leviticus and I was struck with this it was discussing the Nazarite who took a vow to be holy and it says this about the Nazarite this struck me I mean, it winked out at me he said, if a Nazarite sins by going near a dead body I looked at that and then I found it again and then a couple of chapters later it was talking about the priesthood and not the Nazarite and it says, if he sins by going near a dead body now, the reason that struck me is because I'm used to thinking in terms of righteousness and see, righteousness and holiness are not the same thing righteousness has to do with our interaction with people holiness has to do with our closeness to God so, the sin of going near a dead body was what kind of sin? was it righteousness or holiness? holiness and we don't even understand that because the pendulum has swung too far from early Pentecost you know, everybody said we don't have to do that we can wear lipstick we can wear makeup we can dress how we want we can go on the beach we can prance around in a bikini those things don't have to do with righteousness but they have to do with holiness and God counts them as sin not because we have interacted incorrectly with people by stealing or committing adultery or thievery but because we have gone near that which is dead spiritually and let me give you an example I kind of raised the roof a year or two ago about the Titanic and several of the kids the best kids in our church went because nobody told them it was wrong so they were not willfully disobeying anyone they went but when I heard it I thought, wait a minute wait a minute, wait a minute ok so I began to review what was in that film and I asked some of the kids about it and come to find out there were things in there that were sexually not what one would call Christian is that true? ok so people would think but you know that's the way the world is and it's a historical fact and there's something to learn from it and it's not unrighteous we haven't done anything unrighteous we didn't steal the tickets no, we didn't push anybody aside we didn't hurt anybody so what's the problem? now you tell me what is the problem? holiness and see, God calls a breach of holiness sin just as he does a breach of righteousness now you might say but how can I know?

I'll give you a thing so simple that you could fall off a log just say to yourself would Jesus do this? would Jesus be watching this? would Jesus be listening to this? can you picture Jesus and the holy angels in heaven doing this or listening to this? and if you can't there's a good bet it's not holy because we have an instinct for what is holy you know, we just kinda know imagine the Lord Jesus Christ smoking cigarettes

just picture it imagine him chewing boulders and spitting on the floor can you picture can you picture Jesus doing this? it's not unrighteous of course now they found out that it's bad news for your health chewing tobacco is and pipe smoking cigar smoking and everything else they know now that it's bad for your health this has been researched but we didn't know that then

so as many in fact Charles Spurgeon used to smoke cigars but you see we're moving closer to the Lord and we know that Jesus can you imagine God the Father God the Father God Almighty smoking a cigar why not? aren't we being made in his image? then we know instinctively that there's something wrong and what is wrong is in the area of holiness not righteousness holiness they say well it doesn't matter how a Christian looks you know, because everything God made our body and it's beautiful etc. and so on everybody should see it which some have advanced but you have to ask yourself you have to picture yourself before the throne of God I'm supposed to live before the throne of God? yes Gordon Ephesians 2 and Colossians 3 you have already been raised in Christ to the right hand of God and God

says this be holy because I am holy and he said without holiness no man shall see the Lord well you say if that isn't the biggest drag I ever heard it's enough to make me quit being a Christian listen holiness is fun it's fun and when you get a passion for holiness it's something that grows within you and you just want to be closer to God closer to God and it's just something that throws you inside oh to be in his fire oh to be dwelling and this is a case of oh gee I can't do that because it's not holy it's almost a lust you know blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness and the same is true of holiness and so don't think it's something unpleasant when you get a hold of it boy it gets addictive I kid you not and it's a joy there's more joy in the holy presence of God

than there is any place else in the world oh yes I'm not laying a trip on you I'm inviting you into something that boggles the mind it's so marvelous yes for me it's a feeling of purity it is purity it's spiritual purity and that's why it says blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God see God if you picture our relationship to God is concentric circles and the nearest circle is the holy see there are levels of holiness like in the tabernacle is a holy place and the most holy place priests were more holy than the Levites and the Levites were more holy than the people and all the people were more holy than the rest of the world there's levels of holiness and when you get a hunger for it you want to get closer that they may be with me where I am that isn't in heaven he wasn't

talking about heaven he's talking about in the presence of God close to the Father dwelling in his oh Lord I love it more, more, more, more holiness that's where the joy is in Christianity that's where the joy is when you get out in these far circles it's not so much fun because you're kind of torn by the world but when you get in those inner circles boy it's fun man so good you can eat it fiery holiness which will always result in righteous behavior toward people the two kind of run together but holiness has to do with the absence of unclean spirits when you come into God's presence he wants you holy because you belong to him and Christ is Christ holy? he wants you part of him I'm not coming short in anything Sandy can we sort of view it as holiness being the vertical and righteousness

the far knowledge sure, why not some things overlap for example lying is an unholy spirit but it's also in the area of righteousness so you might find that sometimes is this holiness or righteousness and they kind of come together but some things like the tabernacle see the tabernacle was not righteous you wouldn't say about the tabernacle that it was righteous but the tabernacle was holy so there's in some ways you can polarize them but in other ways they kind of overlap okay so now we find a covenant that God says I was not pleased with those people why? they kept on lying they kept on committing adultery they kept on

stealing they kept on coveting God said it didn't work so I'm going to give you a better covenant and this covenant is going to enable you to quit lying quit stealing quit

committing adultery quit gossiping and backbiting and being malicious defying God rebelling against God practicing witchcraft this covenant and it's got so much power in it it's going to make you a new creation in which all things are of God 2 Corinthians 5 17 and 18 if any man be in Christ that doesn't mean he's taken the four steps of salvation it means he's in Christ if any man be in Christ there is a new creation all things have passed away behold all things have become new all things like in the soap all things have become new and then in verse 18 and all things are of God are you up for it? it's the word and the only thing that stands between you and me and the perfect fulfillment and the word in our life is our faith the power is there you want to be holy because he is holy the

power is there you want to be righteous because he is righteous the power is there you want to be a new creation the power is there it's up to you the power is there God wants it it's whether you believe it or not and if you consider your evil nature you say God couldn't do that for me he may do that for someone he may do that for Pastor Thompson he may do that for Sister Thompson he may do that for Judge Smitter but me well it's your unbelief because Pastor Thompson got a very rough start in life I'll tell you if he can do it for me he can do it for you well I'm here to tell you that is the gospel truth that he can do it for you I'm pressing on hallelujah when I stumble I get up and go on and that's what we have to do because none of us are perfect but you have to get up confess your

sins and travel on I'm determined to make it and I hope you are too but now look what God says the time is coming declares the Lord when I will make a new covenant now notice with the house of Israel it doesn't say anything about making the new covenant with the Gentiles there is no such thing as a Gentile church when Gentiles are called out by God they are brought into the one olive tree they are brought into Christ and made a part of true Israel the covenant can only be made with Israel with the house of Israel and the house of Judah no place else and we are made part of Israel through what? through our relationship with Christ when we become part of Christ we become part of Israel the one true Israel of God it doesn't matter whether we are Jewish by race or Gentile by race and Paul

says this in the concluding verses of the third chapter of Galatians alright now now notice the nature of the covenant this is the covenant that enables you to do what? stop sinning that doesn't cover your sins that doesn't make it so God can't see your sinning and all these mythological things that we've conjured up to evade the laws of righteousness and that's what they are for to protect us so we can keep on sinning it will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt you see how it's geared toward Jews? you see? your forefathers weren't led out of Egypt listen we are the country cousins we Gentiles Miriam here is the heir of God the children's bread is for her Gentile church all the nonsense the stuff that goes on is

enough to make a horse laugh alright because they did not remain faithful to my covenant and I turned away from them and they backslid big time I mean man when Judah and Israel end up fighting each other they fought each other for hundreds of years Israel that at one time was one people coming out of Egypt they ended up fighting each other why? because Solomon got his the easy way David won the kingdom the hard way Solomon got it the easy way worshiped false gods and as a result Israel was split into two kingdoms that's what happens when you get stuff the easy way can't keep it you can't keep anything until you get it twice you get it the easy way you can't hold it sometimes you don't get a chance to well anyway alright this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that

time declares the Lord see that's because this is written in Jeremiah chapter 31 verses 31 through 34 I will now notice the nature of the covenant we would expect it to say I will forgive their sins period because that's how Christianity is preached God's forgiveness you read it on anybody's bumper it says Christians are not perfect but forgiven and that's what we would expect to find this is the covenant that I've made with them I couldn't lick them so I decided to join them that's what we would expect but lo and behold we find something that is totally alien to our understanding we don't even know what it means alright it says this is the covenant I will make with them I will put my laws in their minds now when I first read that as a young Christian I thought it meant to memorize

scripture and I memorized it like 60 but that isn't what it means God does it if you follow the Holy Spirit God begins to put his law now this is not the Ten Commandments this is the eternal moral law of God the Ten Commandments were an abridged the law of Moses was an abridged covenantal form of the eternal moral law of God the eternal moral law of God is not temporary like the law of Moses it is what God is it comes from eternity and goes to eternity it never never changes and that's the law that is put into our hearts into our mind we're all in the mind now and it's put in your mind so you can understand it we have a brain you know the purpose of our brain? it is not to plan our own way the reason God gave us a brain is so we can understand the Lord and his ways that's why he gave us a

brain that's why it says at the end of what is it?

Ecclesiastes fear God and keep his commandments this is the whole duty of man well say we're learning all about computer chips well fine that's part of our culture but if you go through life and you don't learn the ways of God you've wasted your life because 100 years from now computer chips will look like the horse and buggy you look now sure you spent your life on that which is transitory but the knowledge of the Holy is eternal someday this will all pass away and we'll have information that the scientists will never find out because all this wisdom is hidden in Christ he knows all about computers and all this other stuff he knows how to defeat gravity he knows how to control time and light we're having to scratch those things alright now here we go but and write them on their hearts

now the reason that it's written in our hearts is so we will be more so we will find joy within in doing it if you don't find joy in the Lord you're not going to last you've got to Christ endured the cross because of the joy that was set before him and if you don't find joy in Jesus I suggest that you pray for it because this Christianity is the most joyous experience there is with all of its challenges it's the way of the transgressor that is hard the way of the transgressor is hard we go through hard times but there's always mercies there's always relief, respite when we're with Jesus and all of our pains are gone somewhere whereas the world is out there suffering and accomplishing nothing no we've got it we've got the right way and so it's important to find joy in it because if you

don't you won't last it could be too psychologically painful pretty soon you'll be looking for an alternative so you can have some fun have fun in Jesus that's why he puts it in our heart you remember the psalm I delight to do thy will O God yea thy law is within my heart I delight to do thy will O God yea thy law is within my heart so he puts it in your mind so you can understand what's going on he puts it in your heart so you rejoice to do it now God does this but in order for this to happen see this is what you call making a new creation and it doesn't happen all at once it happens a little bit at a time now the way it works is this as you see we have now Christ is the word of God or the law of God made flesh and when he gives us his body and blood he is giving us of the law of God he

is giving us of the word of God not the word that we read but the word that we become inside and that's the new covenant the new covenant is you and me becoming the word of God and that's not a figure of speech that means just that Christ is the word made flesh he begins in the word and was made flesh we begin as the flesh and now we're being made the word and that's the new covenant in our minds so that we can comprehend what's going on and serve God and in our hearts so that it becomes what we are a living epistle where's that from? you need to know that you need to know another chapter that describes the new covenant you know what it is? 2 Corinthians the third chapter that's where you'll find the expression living epistles living epistles now how does it work? very simple when you set

out to serve the Lord and you escape from religion somehow you know all the special clothes and the scarves and the chalices and all the other things that we've made up out of something that's supposed to be a daily interaction with a man and so when we get the hang of that and begin to look to Jesus every morning when we wake up then for that day now listen carefully because this is how the new covenant works for that day he sends you a problem it may be in the area of your love for the world oh I want to be in the world if I can't go see all the new movies I don't even want to play forget it ok it may be in that area you may maybe Titanic will come up again and you say oh I'd love to see that again oh I'd love to see that again whatever it is it's a problem it can be in the area of the

lust of the flesh I want to do this it feels so good I know I should you know God will forgive me if I do it you know how that goes it may be in the area of self will I know what God wants me to do but I don't want to do it I just don't want to do that and I don't see any purpose in it right we're not talking now about the lust of the flesh we're not talking about worldliness we're talking about the challenge to your will God may say to you I want you to prepare to be a missionary for example that's not my idea of where it is I want to get married and I want to settle down and I want to be happy and I want to have a nice home and two cars and when I get all that then I want to serve God well people do think like this and God says that isn't for you I want you down along the Amazon where

the fleas abound oh no Lord you know I have to have nice things and I can't go where it's dirty and those people yup that's for you that's a question of will you know the funny thing is if you say okay Lord I'll do whatever you say get down there and you'll be so happy you won't ever want to come home there's no disappointment in Jesus you may think you know what will make you happy but Jesus knows what will make you happy and believe me I can say after 54 years or however long it's been he does make you happy yeah he knows what he's doing believe it or not the man knows what he's doing and his intentions are good so one of these three areas or a combination of them will be presented to you each day now ordinarily there are things that if we do our homework and pray and use what

self-control we have and are attending church and reading our Bible no sweat but you see by doing what the Lord wanted instead of what your flesh wanted something dies in you that day and a part of God's law is written in your heart and your mind now if on the other hand you gave in to your fleshly nature nothing happens you just remain Adam there's no new creation nothing changes the new covenant is not operating okay now we go along like that for years kind of dull but each day there's a problem each day we carry our cross after Jesus each day we do as we will the best we can understand it and then we may come to a major crisis in our life and we may hit one or two of these in our whole life like God wasn't wasn't offering up Isaac every Sunday morning at 11 o'clock that only happened

once in his life he had other tests you know he was tested with having to wait a quarter of a century for a child and no doubt there were other things that plagued him like worrying about Lot but there came the big

one and for every one of us if we're going to ride in Joel's army we're going to return with Christ it's going to become the big one because that one that's like the evangelist was telling us Sunday that's when he takes the chisel and knocks off most of what's left not a horse not what's in the image of Christ but when that comes when that comes to you remember what I'm telling you hang in there don't quit hang in there you can't see the future you can't see what it's like but God is doing something very special and you're very fortunate and blessed that God has chosen you for

that because that's the time when God you've done so well that God comes down and says this one's going to make it I'm going to crack this diamond he's not going to do this if you're a flipper always hanging on the edge and not sure whether you're safe from day to day you can forget about what I'm talking about I'm talking about people that are going somewhere with God and God says okay it looks to me like this is going to be a jewel for my crown here and he comes down there and he gets ready to crack that thing and when it does you remember what I said don't quit the only mistake you can make is to quit and try to get out of your prison that's the only mistake you can make I can't stand this one more minute don't do that that's immature that's baby poo you're preparing to be a king a

ruler of nations part of the royal priesthood and you're going to return with Jesus and set up his will in the earth that's the kingdom message and this is not for babies that are still crying me mommy me mommy me mommy I need my diapers changed it's not for that that's the average Christian it's for people that are going somewhere with God and you hang in there and God will crack you and when you come out of there like Jacob came out of there and met his brother you will be changed radically you will be changed radically now that is how the new covenant operates that is how God prepares people who love mercy do justly and walk humbly with God but more than that but more than that they are able to impart this to others see it's not enough just to get you squared away God wants you to be a

source a witness an image that people can follow because you see people feel that strength in you you can talk theology all you want to but people won't pick up strength from that you can tell them all about what you know about religion they won't pick up strength from that you have to go through it when you do there is something in your personality that will touch other people and they feel I can make that and they may not realize it at the time but it will come back later and they say whoa I didn't think I could do it but I made it today and that's how the new covenant operates it's a covenant of transformation let's take a look we are almost through here let's take a look now at second Corinthians the third chapter is there any question about what I've said so far don't forget it's on

tape you can review it and review it and all of a sudden it will click and you'll say I see it and then you'll wonder where you've been all your life say now the whole Bible makes sense I don't have to pick and choose my favorite verses they're all your favorite verses let's take a look at second Corinthians the third chapter and here we go are we beginning to commend ourselves again or do we need like some people letters of recommendation to you or from you you yourselves are our letter written in our hearts that's because you love the people and you cannot minister unless you love the people you become sounding brass known and read by everybody people can read God's will in your life see how much more glorious this is than just being saved quote alright 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 not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God not that we are confident in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves but our confidence comes from God he has made us confident as ministers of the new covenant you notice how forgiveness is not even mentioned so

it's not the prime thrust of the new covenant now it is mentioned in Hebrews the eighth chapter where we were but it's way down after he gets through all what the covenant really is he says in their sins and iniquities I will remember no more that's just a also ran forgiveness is not the centerpiece of the new covenant the centerpiece of the new covenant is what

transformation change a new creation not the same old thing forgiven no new covenant they were forgiven under the old covenant with the blood of animals the new covenant takes away sin that's the difference alright here we go ministers of the new covenant not of the letter but of the spirit now I want you to notice this not of the letter but of the spirit for the letter kills but the spirit gives life now because we are religious people often make a religion out of certain statements in the new testament one of the prominent ones has to do with marriage and divorce because Jesus said that once you're divorced you can never remarry and there's ministers that hang heavy on that thing regardless of the equity regardless of the fact that one of the two people was just about totally wrong you

know some guy punches his wife and knocks her through the glass patio door and he says well you can't divorce me you know and if you do you can never remarry and they don't take into consideration the children who's being involved or anything you know what they're doing they're trying to make the old testament the new testament a testament of the letter that's what they're doing and it may not be that it may be something else that they find they pass it on make it of the letter it's not a testament of the letter now I'm not saying you can run wild and do whatever you want to I'm not saying that I'm saying that God now I've run into this marriage and divorce things on occasion and what I do is I say alright I listen usually to someone that's already divorced and wants to get remarried it's

usually I say look and they found somebody that's just right okay wait six months just wait six months just cool your jets and wait six months give the elders of the church a chance to look you over and to pray and get the mind of the Lord because if you say under no condition like to a woman can you ever remarry then how about her kids? that means she works and they go to a babysitter so you've got to take everything into consideration and try to get the mind of the Lord in other words the New Testament is not a testament of the letter but of the spirit of God not the spirit in the sense of the intent like they say well the spirit of the law meaning the intent of the law I'm not talking about that I'm talking about the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit applies the New Covenant because

otherwise you get into terrible injustices with people trying to stretch them out on a procrustean bed of the letter of the New Testament I ran into a classic in that in Iceland the pastor said these people are more they're harder than God and it was the truth now if the ministry that brought death which was engraved in letters on stone came with glory so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory fading though it was will not the ministry of the spirit see the New Covenant is not of the letter you don't memorize the New Testament and try to do it in your own strength otherwise every time you get hit you'll have to turn your face and let somebody hit you on the other side somebody comes and sues you for your car you get in your house also isn't

that what it says well that gets kind of radical so you better pray you can only follow the New Testament by praying and finding out how it's to be applied I'm not talking about looseness or anything I'm talking about you have to know when you give your house and when you don't otherwise you get into religious fanaticism there's a time to turn the other cheek there's a time to run like mad I'm not saying there's a time to exercise your kickboxing if the ministry that condemns men is glorious how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness you see it brings actual workable righteousness for what was glorious

had no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory that is of the new covenant and if what was fading away came with glory that is the law of Moses how much

greater is the glory of that which lasts therefore since we have such a hope we are very bold we are not like Moses who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away but their minds were made dull for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read it has not been removed because only in Christ is it taken away even to this day when Moses is read a veil covers their hearts but whenever anyone turns to the Lord the veil is taken away now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom and we who with unfailed faces all reflect the Lord's glory now notice this 18th verse is a real crucial verse 2 Corinthians 3 3 Corinthians 3 as regards the new covenant it is really central and it sums

up things in a wonderful way and it is a good verse to memorize 2 Corinthians 3 is a good verse to memorize it is really the heart of the new covenant we who with unfailed faces all reflect the Lord's glory are being transformed and I think that word is meta it is what we mean We get the word term metamorphosis from, that morpheo means form and meta means change.

It's a change in form.

We are being changed, changed, changed. Every time we see God, wherever we see Him, in the Word, in the ministry, in other people, in a vision, wherever we see God, we are changed, just as Moses' face was changed, into His likeness, with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. Now, that is the heart of the new covenant.

It's a covenant of transformation. And the end of it, according to Hebrews 8, is that they don't need to be taught anymore, for they all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest. And that's why there's no temple in the New Jerusalem.

Because the New Jerusalem is the glorified church, and all the people have been through the process of the new covenant, have been transformed, so that they are able to come into the presence of God, and see His face. That's where we're going. And the scheme is this.

If you picture the body of Christ, as a man totally bound, like Lazarus, bound hand and foot, so that it cannot move, and what is happening today, is God is enabling the body to get loose one hand, so it can begin to wiggle a little. One hand is getting free. The whole body is bound, but one hand is getting free.

The next thing you know, that hand will be able to get around and get another hand free. And when it does, it will begin to work on the rest of the body. Now this is what I think God's plan is.

Is to get out of the firstfruits, of firstfruits of the firstfruits. Just like Aaron was of firstfruits of the other priests, who were in turn of firstfruits of the Levites, who in turn were of firstfruits of Israel, who in turn were of firstfruits of the world. Now that's the way God works.

Now Christ is the first of the first of the first of the firstfruits. But you see how He worked? You see how He had three on the Mount of Transfiguration? And then He had the twelve, and then He had the seventy? See that's the way He works. He just picks out people and He brings them up into places closer to Himself.

I imagine the other nine were burned when they found out that just three of them saw Moses and Elijah on the Mount. How would you have felt if you weren't one of the three? Say, we followed them all these years, and we sweat, and we walked up and down the hills and everything, and had to pick heads of wheat off to survive, and they get to go up and see Moses and Elijah. How come I didn't get up there? You've got to get used to that in the kingdom.

He chooses who He will. And if He chooses you to ride in the front chariot? Cool. If you sweep up behind the horses in the royal parade? Cool.

You'll never be happy and fulfilled until you're exactly where God wants you. So at this time God is coming to His church, and to whoever will hear Him, He'll say, Go for it. Go for the best and the highest.

Don't compare yourself with the rest of Christianity. Don't waste your time on commentaries. I'm doing something new.

It isn't written down anywhere. Go for it. Go for it.

Give your best to God. Go for it. And God will use you to untie the rest of the body, and then He'll use the rest of the body to untie the world.

That's the way it's going. Shall we stand? Now this is on tape. If you can't afford it, just tell whoever's over there, Tony.

Thompson said I get one free because I'm one of his precious young people that he's all racked up about. And he wants me to learn this stuff. Not look at him like he came from Mars every Sunday morning.

Lord, we look unto You and we bless Your holy name. We give thanks unto You, Lord. Blessed be Your name.

Blessed be Your holy name. You are the God of heaven on earth. While we're praising Him, tell Him you want to go on.

Tell Him you want to go on for His best. Let Him know about it. Assert yourself.

Go for it. Go for the summit. Go for it.

Don't let anything stop you. Go for it. Go for it.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. It's our one chance in eternity to show God our determination.

Go for it. Don't stop for anything. Hallelujah.

The summit is in sight, people. The summit is in sight. Go for it.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. The fullness of God.

The full stature of Christ. Hallelujah. It's there for the taking.

It's there for the taking. If you'll take it. Hallelujah.

Blessed be Your name, Lord. Blessed be Your name, Lord. Oh, hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Oh, God. Put an end to sin once and for all, forever.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Oh, praise the Lord.

Oh, hallelujah. Oh, yes, Lord. Oh, yes, Lord.

Father, we praise Your name. God, You have put in our hearts. I know it's a gift of God.

I know that, Lord. To want more righteousness, more holiness, more obedience to God. You put that in us, Lord.

I know it's a gift. I know that, Lord. Oh, God, help us to preserve that.

And to respond to it. Because if we ever lost it, Lord, we'd be kicking ourselves for eternity. Oh, God, how would we live if we knew we had a chance to do God's best and got sidetracked.

Somebody took it from us, Lord. Don't let it happen to us, Lord. Keep us on the burning highway, Lord.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Until we stand in the presence of Jesus.

Hallelujah. Thank You, Lord. Thank You, Lord.

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