

# **The New Covenant**

## **Upper Room Discourse Principles found in the New Testament**

**A study for the College and Career Class of Gulf Coast Baptist Church 11-27-22**

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### **Introduction**

Christ introduced some “new” things to the disciples in the upper room. The time had come to bring in a new way of stewardship of God’s property. Jesus began to introduce these changes to the men with him. The writers of the New Testament continued over the next several decades to unfold the revelation given at the Last Supper. Some of these things include a new way of communication with the Godhead, a new way of looking at the Sabbath, a new relationship of believers with the Godhead, and new man or new creation. Some of these things have been alluded to in the first 7 months of our study. The study of these new things has brought us to the New Testament or New Covenant. This is a “new kind” of covenant, a kind that had never existed before. Christ had a relationship with his followers as a Shepherd to the sheep. The Shepherd was about to be stricken and the sheep scattered. This prophecy in Matthew 26:31 and Mark 14:27 refers to the relationship that Christ had as the Messiah promised to guide Israel (Matt 9:36; John 10:10-11, 15). The Shepherd of the sheep was now going to share his life with the sheep. This was unheard of before and a drastic change.

### **The Institution of the New Testament (Covenant)**

At the Last Supper, Christ used language that each of the synoptics includes. Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20 each include Christ telling the disciples that this cup is the new testament in my blood or a variation of that. He said his blood is out from the new testament in Matthew and Mark and in Luke stated it as Paul did later in 1 Corinthians 11. Christ instituted the covenant and Paul later explains it.

Christ tells the disciples to take his broken body (the unleavened bread) and eat it and blood (the cup) and drink it. Christ takes the bread, gives thanks for it, then breaks it, then gives them instructions on what to do with it. After eating he takes the cup and does the same thing, gives thanks then tells them to drink all of it. The bread symbolized his broken body, and the wine the blood of Christ.

This testament was the new covenant that was going to be made by the death on the cross. This testament or covenant was ratified by His death. Hebrews 9 walks through this process. The blood was shed for the forgiveness (remission) of sins (Matt 26:28).

### **The meaning of the Covenant**

In 1 Corinthians 11:25 Paul is dealing with a group of people who were carnal and were using the table of the Lord’s Supper to fill themselves. Paul asks them if they do not have houses to eat in, why are they filling themselves at this ordinance. He quotes Christ in the upper room.

Paul explains more of this new testament in 2 Corinthians 3. Paul is teaching the Corinthians that they are possessors of something valuable, a letter written on hearts (3:2). This work is done by the Spirit of God. This chapter follows the picture that Paul gives at the end of

chapter 2 of a Triumph In Christ. Believers In Christ are like a victorious army parading through the streets giving off the sweet odor of crushed flowers as they march. The believer has been made a “sweet savour (fragrance) of Christ”. At the beginning of chapter 3 Paul gives the distinction between the testament of death (the law) to Israel and the one to life that the believers now have (3:6-7). The believers are called the ministers of this new covenant. He spends the rest of the chapter drawing a comparison- contrast with how the Israelites received the law and the believer was to be a minister of this new covenant. The chapter ends with a clear description of what happens. As the believer fixes his attention on the glory of God, the Spirit transforms the believer into this image (3:18).

The new covenant is the placing of the life of Christ into the believer by the Spirit. Instead of shepherding the sheep, He allows His quality of life to be placed into the body of the believer. His epistle written on the hearts of the believer.

### **The Old Covenant vs The New**

The writer of Hebrews was facing the problem of New Testament believers seeking to return to the Old Testament (Covenant). They had no understanding of the rest that could be felt in the finished work of Christ. The Old Covenant that God had with Israel was going to be replaced with a new one. That is not the one we are studying now. Verses 9-12 describe a day that had not come yet, at the writing of that letter. Chapter 9 gives a clear representation of the covenant that was in force at that time. Verses 9-15 of chapter 9 speak of a testament that was better, one that was in force at the writing of the letter of Hebrews. This testament was sealed by the blood of Christ.

Eternal redemption, purging of the conscience, eternal inheritance - all things that the believer In Christ has as a current possession - are written about in this letter. Heb 10:19-20 further describe this covenant using the language that he has been using to show the distinctions. Some benefits to this new agreement are bold access, a living and active High Priest, and the “Let us” functions of the Body listed in verses 22-24.

### **Conclusion**

This New Covenant focuses on the quality of life in the believer or what we have called Eternal Life. The Shepherd shared His life with the sheep. It replaces a covenant to Israel that Hebrews calls decaying and waxing old (8:13), a figure (parpable, type 9:9), and not faultless (8:7). Israel will get another covenant during the Millenial Reign of Christ where the law will be written on their hearts and everyone will know the Lord. But the believer has an agreement from the Father and the Son where he has the Son’s quality of life placed in him by the Spirit.