



Shelby Christian Church

CORE 52: GETTING RIGHT WITH GOD - NEW COVENANT

JEREMIAH 31:33-34, MATTHEW 3:11-16, LUKE 4:16-23, 22:20, 1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20,
HEBREWS 9:14-15 * 10/19/2025

MAIN POINT

The New Covenant

INTRODUCTION

**Do you keep the law of God? How do you keep it? How do you fail to keep it?
What does faith have to do with God's law?**

**Why do you think Israel failed to keep the Old Covenant? Do you think that they
were morally worse or better than us? Why?**

**What do you imagine you would feel if you were still living under the old
covenant? Why?**

Israel doesn't come across as very smart in the Old Testament. They see the miracles in Egypt, but they refuse to go into the Promised Land. God drowns Pharaoh's army, but they are afraid of the people of Canaan. God gives them manna to eat, and they complain that they want the onions and garlic of Egypt. Over and over, they refuse to trust in the Lord God, and as a result of their lack of trust, they break the commandments God gives them.

UNDERSTANDING

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JEREMIAH 31:33-34

What is God promising in this passage?

**What does it mean that God will put His law "in their minds and write it on
their hearts"?**

**What does "all will know me" imply about the personal relationship God
desires with His people?**

**How does God's promise "to forgive sins and remember them no more," relate
to our experience of grace?**

God promises a new covenant with His people, one that is written on their hearts and minds rather than on tablets of stone. In this covenant, all will know God personally, from the least to the greatest, and He will forgive their sins completely, remembering them no more. This emphasizes a deep, internal relationship with God, marked by intimate knowledge, obedience from the heart, and the assurance of forgiveness.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 3:11-16

What does John the Baptist say about his own baptism and the one to come?

How does John describe Jesus compared to himself?

What is the difference between baptism with water and baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire?

What does Jesus' baptism teach about humility and identification with humanity?

How does this event affirm Jesus' role in God's covenant plan?

John the Baptist explains that his baptism with water is for repentance, but someone far greater—Jesus—will come to baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. When Jesus comes to the Jordan, He is baptized by John, not for repentance, but to fulfill all righteousness, identifying with humanity and inaugurating His public ministry. This passage emphasizes Jesus' superiority, the coming empowerment of the Holy Spirit, and the importance of obedience and humility.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 4:16-23

Why does Jesus read from Isaiah 61, and what is its significance?

What does “the Spirit of the Lord is on me” reveal about Jesus' authority and mission?

How does Jesus' statement in verse 21 fulfill prophecy?

Why might the people have been surprised or skeptical about Jesus claiming this for Himself?

What examples or indicators of Jesus' work in establishing a new covenant do you see in the Matthew and Luke passages?

Jesus goes to the synagogue in Nazareth on the Sabbath, reads from Isaiah 61, and announces that He is the fulfillment of this prophecy. He declares His mission: to bring good news to the poor, freedom to the oppressed, sight to the blind, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. This passage emphasizes Jesus' authority, the coming of God's kingdom, and the beginning of His public ministry, while also revealing that His message challenges expectations and calls for faith.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 22:20

What is the significance of calling it the “new covenant”?

How does this relate to Old Testament covenants (like the one with Israel)?

Why does Jesus use the imagery of His blood being poured out?

How does the new covenant affect our relationship with God?

During the Last Supper, Jesus takes the cup and declares it represents the new covenant in His blood, poured out for His followers. This signifies that His impending death will establish a new relationship between God and humanity, one based on forgiveness, grace, and redemption rather than the old covenant of the Law.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20

Why does Paul describe the body as a “temple of the Holy Spirit”?

How does being “bought at a price” connect to Christ’s sacrifice?

What does it mean to “honor God with your body”?

How does this teaching relate to personal holiness and ethical living?

How does recognizing the Spirit’s presence in us change the way we think about our actions and habits?

Paul reminds believers that their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who lives within them. Since they were bought at a price through Christ’s sacrifice, they do not belong to themselves. Therefore, believers are called to honor God with their bodies, living in a way that reflects holiness, obedience, and stewardship of the life God has entrusted to them.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ HEBREWS 9:14-15

How does Christ’s sacrifice differ from the sacrifices under the first covenant?

What does it mean that Christ cleanses our consciences, not just our outward actions?

Why is Christ called the mediator of the new covenant?

How does His death act as a “ransom” for sins?

What does this passage teach about the purpose and effect of the new covenant?

The passage emphasizes that Christ’s sacrifice is superior to the old covenant sacrifices. Through His blood, offered once for all, Jesus cleanses our consciences from sin, enabling us to serve the living God. He is the mediator of the new covenant, providing believers with the promised eternal inheritance and setting them free from sins committed under the first covenant.

APPLICATION

Share a time in your life when you were in the deepest despair you have experienced. (If anyone is there now, have the group stop and pray for them). During that time, what gave you the greatest hope or strength to get through it?

Share your experience of the Spirit comforting you internally. Share your experience of him changing your desires and dreams?

If you were to share the advantages of being a Christian with a neighbor or colleague, what would you list? How would you brag about Jesus or the Spirit?

What was your understanding of the new covenant before this week's discussion?

PRAYER

COMMENTARY

Jeremiah 31:33-34

Jeremiah 31 is part of God’s promise of restoration to Israel after the Babylonian exile. The chapter contrasts the old covenant, which relied on external adherence to the Law, with the new covenant, which emphasizes an internal, personal relationship with God. This passage points forward to the ultimate fulfillment in Christ.

Unlike the Mosaic Law, which was external, God promises that His commands will become internalized, guiding thought and action naturally. This signifies transformation from the inside out, producing obedience as a response of love, not obligation.

“All will know me” indicates a personal relationship with God, accessible to every individual, not limited to leaders or teachers. Knowledge here is relational, experiential, and transformative, not merely intellectual.

God promises to forgive sins fully and “remember them no more,” highlighting the grace and mercy of the new covenant. This is foundational for the believer’s assurance and freedom from guilt.

The new covenant is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus (Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8:6–13), who enables believers to have God’s law written on their hearts through the Holy Spirit. Faith in Christ allows all believers to know God personally and experience forgiveness and restoration.

Matthew 3:11-16

Matthew 3:11–16 describes John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus, highlighting the distinction between baptism for repentance and baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire, and culminating in Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River. This passage emphasizes Jesus’ superiority, the coming work of the Spirit, and the example of humility and obedience.

Verses 11–12 – John’s Baptism vs. Jesus’ Baptism - John’s role: He baptizes with water for repentance, calling people to turn from sin. Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire, indicating empowerment, purification, and judgment. Contrast: John emphasizes that he is subordinate to Jesus (“whose sandals I am not worthy to carry”), showing humility and pointing to Christ’s supremacy. Imagery of fire: Represents judgment and refining, showing that Jesus’ ministry will purify and transform lives.

True transformation comes through Christ, not human effort, baptism points to inward renewal by the Spirit.

Verses 13–15 – Jesus’ Baptism- Jesus approaches John: Despite being sinless, Jesus submits to baptism. To “fulfill all righteousness,” demonstrating obedience to God’s plan and identifying with humanity. Jesus models obedience and humility, showing that even the Son of God honors God’s appointed ways.

Jesus’ baptism foreshadows His identification with human sin and need for redemption, while setting an example for believers in humility and obedience.

Verse 16 – Heaven Opened and Spirit Descends - Divine affirmation: The Spirit of God descends like a dove, and a voice from heaven declares, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” Trinitarian presence: God the Father speaks, the Spirit descends, and the Son is baptized, showing the unity of the Trinity. Significance: God publicly affirms Jesus’ identity and mission, inaugurating His ministry.

Jesus’ baptism reveals divine approval and empowerment, marking the beginning of His public ministry and mission.

Luke 4:16-23

Jesus begins His public ministry by reading from Isaiah 61 in the synagogue at Nazareth, applying the prophecy to Himself, and declaring His mission. This passage highlights His authority, purpose, and the inauguration of God's kingdom.

Verses 16–20 – Jesus Reads in the Synagogue - Sabbath practice: Jesus attends the synagogue as was customary, demonstrating His observance of Jewish law and devotion. Scripture reading: He reads Isaiah 61:1–2, which proclaims freedom, healing, and God's favor. Application to Himself: Jesus asserts that this prophecy is fulfilled in Him, claiming His divine mission.

Jesus' public reading and declaration assert His authority and identify Him as the Messiah, marking a turning point in His ministry.

Verses 21–23 – Declaration of Mission - Fulfillment of prophecy: Jesus affirms that the Scripture He read is fulfilled today, establishing that God's promises are realized in Him. People's reaction: The congregation marvels at His words, but skepticism arises because they know Him as Joseph's son. Jesus' mission includes: Proclaiming good news to the poor, Freedom for the oppressed, Healing for the broken and blind, and Proclaiming the year of the Lord's favor.

Jesus emphasizes both spiritual and social restoration, showing that His ministry addresses the whole person—body, mind, and spirit.

Luke 22:20

This verse occurs during the Last Supper, just before Jesus' arrest and crucifixion. Jesus uses the familiar Jewish Passover meal to introduce the new covenant, connecting His sacrificial death to God's promise of redemption. The "cup" symbolizes the covenant relationship between God and His people, now sealed through Christ's blood.

The "new covenant" refers to the fulfillment of God's promise of forgiveness, restoration, and eternal relationship with His people (cf. Jeremiah 31:31–34). Unlike the old covenant based on the Law, this covenant is established through Jesus' sacrifice, offering grace and direct access to God.

Blood as Sacrifice - Jesus' blood being "poured out" foreshadows His death on the cross. Blood in the Old Testament often signifies life, atonement, and purification (Leviticus 17:11). Through His blood, believers are redeemed, forgiven, and reconciled to God.

Personal and Communal Implication- Jesus says, "for you," emphasizing that this covenant is personal, applying to each believer. It also establishes the community of believers who share in this covenant through faith.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Paul addresses the Corinthians regarding sexual immorality and the proper use of the body, emphasizing that believers' bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. This passage underscores personal holiness, stewardship, and God-centered living.

Verse 19 – The Body as God's Temple the Holy Spirit dwells within all believers, making the body sacred. Implication: Our physical life is not merely personal or autonomous; it is a space where God resides. Contrast to pagan thought: In Corinth, many worshiped idols and treated the body as separate from spiritual life. Paul corrects this by linking spiritual holiness to bodily conduct.

Recognizing the Spirit's indwelling calls for respect, purity, and conscious choices about how we use our bodies.

Verse 20 – Bought at a Price Refers to Christ's sacrificial death on the cross. Believers are redeemed, not self-owned.

Holiness and obedience extend to physical behavior, not just spiritual devotion. Practical scope: Includes sexual purity, care for health, and using one's physical abilities for God's purposes.

Redemption is comprehensive—it transforms our bodies, actions, and attitudes, not just our spiritual status.

Hebrews 9:14-15

Hebrews 9:14–15 highlights the superiority of Christ's sacrifice over the Old Testament sacrificial system and explains His role as the mediator of the new covenant. The passage emphasizes cleansing, service to God, and the promise of eternal inheritance.

Verse 14 – Christ's Blood Cleanses Conscience - "How much more...": The author contrasts Christ's sacrifice with the temporary, imperfect sacrifices under the Law. Christ offered Himself unblemished: Jesus is sinless and offered as a perfect sacrifice, once for all. Cleansing our conscience: Unlike animal sacrifices that addressed outward rituals, Christ's sacrifice purifies the inner conscience, freeing believers from guilt and fear of judgment. Purpose: This inner cleansing enables believers to serve God fully and sincerely.

True holiness and service come from internal transformation, not mere external observance.

Verse 15 – Christ as Mediator of the New Covenant - Jesus bridges the gap between God and humanity, establishing a covenant based on grace, not law. Promised eternal inheritance: Believers receive eternal life as part of the covenant, highlighting God's ultimate reward and purpose. Ransom for sins: Christ's death redeems believers, setting them free from sins committed under the first covenant, fulfilling the Law's requirements and offering a permanent solution to sin.

Christ's role as mediator ensures access to God and guarantees the fulfillment of God's promises, making the new covenant effective for all who believe.