

# Growing in the Grace of God #15 - Contrasts Between the Old & New Covenant Part 1

by Bob Hoekstra

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the difference between the Old and New Covenants, highlighting the contrast between living by the law and living by the Spirit of God.*

**Duration:** 55:28

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Romans 6:14, 2 Corinthians 3:6, 2 Corinthians 3:14, Galatians 3:24, Hebrews 8:6, Hebrews 9:15

**Topics:** "New Covenant", "Gods Grace"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the difference between the old and new covenants in relation to the ministry of death and the ministry of life. He emphasizes that the old covenant serves up spiritual death, while the new covenant is a life-giving ministry. The speaker highlights the importance of living by the spirit of God and applying His grace in our daily lives. He also emphasizes the role of faith in accessing God's grace and the sufficiency that comes from trusting in Him.

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## Transcript

Lord, we give you great thanks for your wonderful goodness, your glorious grace that has saved our souls and is now transforming our lives. We want to come before you and the only way we can access that grace, Lord, and that is by humble faith, confessing our great need, but also with confident trust in the great abundance of your gracious resources. So we ask you to teach us now in this mighty section of 2 Corinthians, in these contrasts between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant, just bring them alive and more clear than ever, Lord, because we know they're the difference between life and death in the spiritual walk and service.

Pour out your spirit upon us, Lord. We do not want to go through this section lightly or casually or routinely. We don't want to miss anything you have for us.

We want to be those who meekly receive the implanted word which is able to save our souls, and we know that can only happen by the mighty work of your spirit. So we ask you to pour out your spirit upon us in Jesus' name. Amen.

Study number eight, contrasts between the Old and New Covenants. By way of introduction, this is such a critical issue we're looking at in this study, this very unit, number eight of the twelve. It has to do with our

need to understand the difference between the Old and New Covenants, that is, between law and grace.

Verses to remind us and let us see the context of this passage, 2 Corinthians chapter 3, verse 6 and verse 14. Speaking of God who also made us sufficient as ministers of the New Covenant, servants of the New Covenant, we serve God and we do it under the arrangement called the New Covenant. Verse 14, immediate context, but their minds were blinded for until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament.

I am not at all sure why some translators in some versions put Old Testament there instead of Old Covenant. It's the same exact word, same term as in verse 6. Of course you can legitimately translate it, Testament or Covenant, but the contrast here is between the Old and New Covenants and I'm not sure, I don't know, maybe they lost concentration or something, but I think the most precise and most of the newer versions translated Old Covenant. But that's the issue, the contrast here between the New Covenant and the Old Covenant.

It is so critical to know this difference. It's critical to know it and know the difference between the two in issues of new birth, forgiveness, and justification. You know, we're talking about starting out with God.

It's critical to know the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Why? Because the Old Covenant does not provide new birth, forgiveness, or justification. That's how critical it is.

The Old Covenant is the law of Moses. The law of Moses doesn't provide new birth, forgiveness, or justification. So it's critical to know the difference between the Old and New Covenant when it comes to issues of new birth, forgiveness, and justification.

But it's just as critical in the realm of Christian living, it's just as critical to know the difference also in the new walk we're to have and the growth we're to have and the sanctification process we're to be in. See, the Old Covenant can't produce those either. The Old Covenant can't produce a newness of walk.

The Old Covenant can't cause spiritual growth to take place. The Old Covenant cannot give to us progress in sanctification. You know, when you spend time looking in the Scriptures what the Old Covenant cannot do, sometimes it almost sounds like it can't do anything.

Now, that's not true. We've already covered that, but we won't go back into that. There are abilities to the law of God, you know, reveal sin, God's holiness, convict of sin, accountability to God, tutor to Christ, real important things, but limited things too.

Important but limited. The extensive, expansive, ongoing, unending things God wants to do in through lives, that's what the New Covenant's all about, including new birth, forgiveness, justification, a new walk, spiritual growth and progress in sanctification. They all flow out of the resources of the New Covenant.

Remember now, one more issue of introduction, 2 Corinthians 3 verses 4 through 6. Remember the dynamic of the essential terms of the New Covenant for New Covenant living. 2 Corinthians 3 verse 4. And we have such trust through Christ toward God, not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God who also made us sufficient, how? As ministers of the New Covenant. Such confidence, such trust could be translated either way.

We've mentioned before, New Covenant servants can become the most confident people on the face of the earth, but not an ounce of it is self-confidence. It's God confidence, not confidence in self. That's the

way of the world, the flesh and the devil, but confidence in God.

Let's face it, no matter how great one's self is, confidence in self could never even begin to measure up to God. And then when you really get down to it, self-life is bankrupt. Jesus said you have no life in yourselves, innately, that you can draw on and contribute.

So we don't want self-confidence, we want God confidence for us, for our children, for those we minister to, and those we disciple. Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. Our confidence is on the basis of what Christ has done to make the adequacy of God available to us.

Trust through Christ toward God, thereby tapping in to the unlimited sufficiency of God. And verse 5 is all about living by the grace of God. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves.

Yes, you ask a random group of Christians on the street coming out of any group of churches, how much do you contribute to the Christian life and victory and progress and fruit? How much is from you and how much from God? And you can see the wheels turning, you know, see, 60-40, 80-20, 90-10. Oh, that's a tough one. It's really not that tough.

It's 100-0. None of it sources from us, it all sources from God. We're not adequate in ourselves to consider anything as being from ourselves, but that doesn't mean that everything we need cannot come to us.

It just can't source from us. But our sufficiency is from God. There's a sufficiency available for us.

We don't need to get buried in the paralysis or discouragement of inadequacy, because we have sources of sufficiency that are unending if we're willing to turn away from self to what God can provide. Our sufficiency is from God. We have a six-hour Living in Christ Ministries seminar called Growing in the Grace of God.

It's sort of an overview of half of this course. Early this next year, by the grace of God, we have plans in preparation to add another seminar, which actually now will be the seventh one that God has given us in the last four years. After five years ago, he gave us the one Counseling God's Way.

And this other one will start right here in 2 Corinthians 3.5. That will be the theme verse, because this whole second one will be about the New Covenant. Growing in the Grace of God doesn't really touch on it directly. It mentions it one time.

Why? Because it's an enormous issue in itself. And so many Christians, the only exposure they have to it is at the Lord's Supper. They don't know it's about a whole way of living.

And you can talk about it for hours, but only talk about grace. But this one will be called Living by the Sufficiency of God. And it'll just be a sequel to the Growing in Grace, but it'll cover, starting right here, cover these issues on the New Covenant and go back and pick up things we've already looked at.

This is a critical issue. See, this verse is about, though grace isn't mentioned there, it's all about living by the grace of God. Remember, how do you live by the grace of God? How do you live daily by the grace of God? Two great biblical issues, humility and faith.

We've already looked at them. Humility and faith. Humility admits we can't do it.

Faith trusts that God can do it. And look, that's what this verse says. Not that we're sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves.

That is a matter for humility. To accept that, to receive that, to agree with God on that one takes a heart willing to be humbled. I mean, that's beyond humbling.

That's humiliating. You mean I can't contribute anything to this? Oh, things develop and grow in us like faith, hope, love, fruit, but we don't originate, source it. It's something that God develops in and through us.

None of those things come from us. They come to us and grow in us. They have to come from God, too.

We're not sufficient ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves. Do you fight that? I used to. I used to fight heavy duty, and I didn't even like verses like that.

I had this attitude that those were put there for, I guess, some category of wimp Christian or something, you know. I imagine somebody needs that, but Lord, you know I don't, you know. I've got all this adequacy that you're just aching for me to contribute to the kingdom.

Boy, the flesh is blind, stubborn, stinky. Go on, anything else? And foolish for sure. How wonderful to read that and go, that's right.

It's also liberating. You mean God doesn't expect these things to be coming from me? Why was I beating my brains in for five, eight years, you know, thinking it all depended on me? Wow. One sense it's humbling.

The other sense it's freeing. But humility, and God gives grace to the humble. Accept what God has said there, and you make yourself, you stand up as a candidate for grace.

It's a humble confession. But faith is involved in living by grace. God gives grace to the humble, but that's James 4, 6, but Romans 5, 2 says, through whom? Through Jesus.

By faith we have access into this grace in which we stand. Faith accesses grace. It's like a God-given dipper.

He develops in our lives as He reveals Himself to us, and we begin to trust in Him. The more we trust in Him, it's like dipping in this heavenly ladle into the ocean of grace and just drinking it and splashing it and lavishing it in life and ministry. And here's the faith part.

Our sufficiency is from God. To any extent we believe that, stand on it, act upon it, it's just like reaching right into the resources of God and freely partaking, not for self-indulgence, not for self-righteousness, not for self-sins, but for the glory and service of God. My goodness, that was a long introduction.

We better get going here. It's hard to stop though, isn't it? Get to thinking about these things. Easy to get carried away, easy to become a fanatic.

Wouldn't that be great if we were in danger of becoming fanatics? So absolutely wild, sold out, overboard for God and His ways that people thought were just slightly unreasonable. Yeah, that's right, it might be a blaze, might be some heat from God. All right, that's the context in which we're studying in this visit together.

And we're going to see a contrast between the Old and New Covenant. The New we've looked at carefully, we've seen the Old and New issues set right into this chapter three. Now we'll begin to read and let the scriptures just lay out for us contrasts between the Old and the New Covenant.

See, seeing and embracing the truth in these contrasts between the Old and the New Covenant can set us free to an increasingly effective New Covenant walk with God, which will be based on the grace of God at work upon us, in us, and right out through us, touching other lives. If we don't see the difference between the Old Covenant of Law and the New Covenant of Grace, which do you think we will naturally gravitate to? The flesh runs right to the law, performance, watch this God, or watch this church, or here I go. And sometimes out of not self-righteous, blatant attitude, just zeal to please and serve God, you know? But oh, thank God for putting this clear contrast in the Word of God.

It's not the only place it's in scripture, but it just gets pounded on here, just phrase after phrase after phrase in this part of 2 Corinthians. Here's one contrast between the Old and the New Covenant, between law and grace, and that is ink versus the Spirit, 2 Corinthians 3.3. Clearly you are an epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God. The Old Covenant issues are likened to a covenant of ink, and the New Covenant, a covenant written by the Spirit of the living God.

The New Covenant makes us living epistles written by the Spirit of the living God. The Old Covenant is like writing out a life, or a covenant, or a ministry with ink that is human resource. When I think of ink instead of the Spirit of the living God, I think of the modern contemporary American church growth movement.

It's almost like the critical ingredient in the whole thing is glossy, four-color ink brochures. It's like if you lost colored ink, the whole movement would disappear. Why? Because it's based on ink.

Just man's ideas presented as impressively as possible to encourage, to kind of pump up, to give a hope but a false hope. Even coming to my mind right now is Dr. Robert Shuler. He has this institute of church growth that has worldwide impact on the evangelical church.

Like a lot of folks in ministry and pastors and others, I get a lot of mail like that. I remember his last big, I think it was 25th anniversary, church growth institute. Boy, that thing was impressive.

And this one folded out like, I mean, you could wallpaper a wall almost. I mean, it just kept folding. And you know, 10 steps to this, and how to break the 100 barrier, and how to break the 250 barrier.

Boy, you hear terms like that, you know instantly what it's about. Flesh. Why? Because God has no barriers.

The 250, you know, how to break it. How? It's not a barrier. Yeah, parking lots.

That's the key. That's right. That's it.

Number one issue. Kingdom of Heaven hinges on parking lots. I mean, it's amazing.

And dear hearted pastors, as well as those who just want to be professional hirelings, you know, they're all mixed together sometimes. Even dear hearted pastors go to those things with great hope that now we're going to have a mighty, a successful, a victorious, a big, a growing church. But it's based on ink.

Just human ideas put down in flashy ways on paper and communicated very cleverly, packaged and sold, and pastors taking them out to sell them from the pulpit to their people. It's ink. It's building the kingdom on

ink.

That's old covenant ministry. The clever things you can come up with that will make people do what you want them to do or lead them in a direction you think they ought to go, but it all hinges on how it's said, how it's thought up, how it's presented. Ink.

Old covenant. Flesh. The new covenant is a covenant of the Spirit.

Our lives, the relationship between us and God is not written by ink, but by the Spirit of the living God. Ink is about human resource. The Spirit of the living God is about divine resources.

How could you have a greater contrast? The whole church depends on what I write down and how I lay it out and what color ink I use and or how about the whole thing depends on whether or not I use the Spirit of the living God. The Spirit of the living God is given room and trust and faith to operate. They couldn't be more different.

Here's another one. Tablets of stone versus tablets of human hearts. That's also verse three.

Written not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God, where not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of flesh that is of the heart. A covenant that is written on tablets of stone like the Ten Commandments were is an external inanimate covenant. The new covenant is written on tablets of human hearts.

It's an internal living part of us. Now think of the difference. The law of Moses, the Ten Commandments, and all the rest, it's perfect, holy, and just.

There's nothing unholy or unright about it. It's just people use it for what God never designed it to be used for. That's the problem.

The Ten Commandments show the holiness of God. They convict of sin. They have that ability to tutor people to Christ because they say this is how holy you have to be.

You need a Savior. But think of it. Would you rather have the will of God, the revelation of the character of God and His holiness, written on an inanimate object externally that you had to try to live up to? Or have that same message brought by the same God who wrote that and written on the heart inside? In other words, God, by the Spirit, taking the holy character of the law and writing it on our heart, inscribing it on the innermost part of our being, from which Jesus said, flow all the issues of life, writing it there in our thoughts, our motivations, our priorities, our decisions, making it a very part of the core of our being.

Well, there's no comparison. Here's the difference. You and I trying our best to live up to external standards of holiness outside of our lives that we're looking at and trying to live up to.

Or God moving right inside and changing us from the inside out. Well, there's no comparison. The contrast is enormous.

May we not minimize it, miss it. Nothing's more critical in growth, service, ministry. There are only two kinds of options for growing and serving and ministering.

Old covenant, new covenant, law or grace. There's no third option. Everyone who knows the Lord is faced with that choice every day in growth, service and ministry.

Will I do it with ink or by the Spirit? Will it hinge on me living up to external standards, perfect as they are? Or the God of that perfect holy standard doing a work inside me that comes out. Wow. Major issue.

Here's another contrast. The letter versus the Spirit, who also made us sufficient, verse six, as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter. The new covenant is not of the letter, but of the Spirit.

For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. Covenant of the letter, that is rules to keep. Ten commandments in particular.

Of course, we add to that the contemporary evangelical do's and don'ts, you know. You did what? You went to church in blue jeans? Well, you can't expect God to bless that. Letter of the law.

Can't even find that in ten commandments. Well, those aren't enough. You need more than ten, you know.

Man, we can pile them up too, you know. You only witnessed to eight people last week? Well, you know God's got to be pretty peeved over that. Oh, the standards we lay on each other.

Now it's wonderful to go to church, it's wonderful to be reverend of heart, and it's wonderful to witness, but those things aren't the cause of spiritual vitality. They're the outworking consequence of spiritual vitality. Of the letter, rules to keep by our own best effort and resources.

You know what the letter does? It kills. The letter kills. But there's another covenant of the spirit.

Not rules to keep, but God to change us. Here's another contrast. Verse seven.

Well, you can catch a few verses together. Six, seven, and eight. Ministry of death versus ministry of life.

Speaking of God who made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit. For the letter kills, but the spirit gives life. But if the ministry of death, ministry of death.

Did you ever think of the old covenant of law being called a ministry of death? Makes you pause and think, doesn't it? But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, and it was. We'll talk about that later. So that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away.

How will the ministry of the spirit not be more glorious? Ministry of death versus ministry of life. The ministry of death is clearly seen in this terminology. Verse six, the letter kills.

Verse seven, the ministry of death. Straightforward, we're told the ministry of death to minister means to serve, to serve up, to offer, to provide. The old covenant's a ministry of death.

What does it serve up to people? Spiritual death. But the new covenant is a ministry of life. Verse six, the spirit gives life.

Verse eight, that's the ministry of the spirit. This ministry of the spirit is a life-giving ministry. Now think together for a few minutes.

The difference between the ministry of death and the ministry of life. You know, sometimes you get into Bible issues and people want to say, you know, boy, we have to split hairs over everything, you know. Well, we don't over some things, you know.

But some things we have to critically, earnestly, constantly sort out either or. I mean, how big an issue is this to sort out the difference between the old and new covenant in life and ministry? Well, right here we're seeing it's a matter of life and death. That's pretty serious.

As we go out to serve the Lord in our home Bible study or ministry in the church or perhaps pastor or whatever, what do we want? A ministry of death or a ministry of life? I'll tell you, when I started out in ministry, 1968 in Dallas, Texas, you could have appropriately put out front of our building, Old Covenant Community Church of Death. Well, we didn't do that. We had, you know, life-giving name out there.

We had a name that we were alive, but we weren't. We were quite dead. Yeah, Tombstone would have been good, but this is what it's about.

Are we going to be a part of the Old Covenant Community Church of Death or the New Covenant Church of Life? That's the difference. That's how critical it is. We're not talking here, do you want to pour, splash, sprinkle, or inundate? And not that that is a trivial issue even there, how you baptize people.

This is far more critical than that. I believe that scriptures teach immersion, but I cannot see God in heaven looking on a heart of faith, identifying with Christ and saying in their sprinkling, I'm sorry, there were 10 ounces too short there. It's not the kind of critical issue it is.

I was almost going to tell you a story, but the tape machine's on. I'll tell you at break time. The mind does funny things, doesn't it? It has nothing to do with our study.

Ministry of death versus ministry of life. Think of the difference. The New Covenant produces a ministry of life, God's life.

What is it like when it's manifest among people? It involves realities like love, peace, humility, confidence in God, a genuineness, a reality to it, fulfillment in lives, gentleness in hearts, warmth among people. Those are all signs of spiritual life. Those only come from living and serving and growing in the New Covenant.

That is, living by the spirit of the living God, applying the grace of God in our daily growth and service. Remember, don't forget now, God's grace is not just his willingness to forgive us. Oh, how many of us so often have underestimated the grace of God.

Oh, it's great that he'll forgive us. Great is his grace that forgives. Immeasurable, but it's more than that.

God's grace is not only his willingness to forgive us and provision to do it. It is his resource and dynamic power to mature and transform and equip us. That's what we're talking about here.

Do we want our life and ministry shaped by laws we have to keep and lay on others or by the work of the spirit of God in us and upon us and through us? And we're offering that to others. It's a difference of life and death. If we minister and try to struggle and strive under the ministry of death, the old covenant laws and regulations to keep by man's best dedicated, zealous effort, you know what's going to happen in our lives and ministry instead of love is going to develop judgmentalism.

Instead of peace, there's going to develop a striving anxiety. See, these are all signs of death, spiritual deadness. Instead of humility, marking life and ministry, there'll be pride and self-righteousness.

Instead of a church and a life and a ministry where people grow in confidence in God, there'll be lives characterized by self-confidence. Very American, yes. Very ungodly, according to the scriptures.

Instead of a reality, a genuineness developing in our lives and ministry, hypocrisy will arise, pretense. Instead of fulfillment in people's lives, frustration will mark life and ministry. Instead of gentleness, there'll be a harshness and a roughness.

I think there of the church that Deanie, my wife, and I came to know the Lord in. She, like 32 years ago, myself like 31 years ago. Praise God the gospel got out in that church enough so people could get new birth and salvation.

But there was very little growth spiritually in lives in that church. It was one of these classic God and country churches, and it was really flourishing in those days because Soviet Union hadn't crumbled this present state, you know. There was really something there to preach against, you know.

And not that it couldn't be a threat again. That's a whole other issue in itself. But the church isn't about praising country and hunting down communists.

That's not what the church is about. The church is about glorifying God, hunting down the lost, and letting them become disciples among the living. Well, in this church, which is very much an old covenant church, very legalistic, I was working there even before I was saved.

Doesn't say a lot for the church either, you know. But I remember the staff meetings. Boy, the pastor was harsh and rough with people.

They were living up to expectations. They were letting him down, and he's letting them know about it. And even though I wasn't saved, I was still there a while after I was saved.

Didn't take too long to begin to catch on. Something is really out of line here. But even when I was unsaved and going to staff meetings, I cringed for people.

I never faced his wrath because he liked my dad a lot. But he could just shred people. And often for no reason.

Not that any reason would be sufficient. But no reason was fine, you know. That's old covenant.

That's not the way we want to treat people. That's not what we want to see develop in those we disciple. We want to see gentleness, and meekness, and kindness.

The new covenant produces warmth in people's lives. The old covenant, coldness. Have you ever gone in a church, you visit it, and it's just, you know, you hardly even have a chance to get really acquainted, and you just sense a coldness.

What is it? It's a consequence of living under some form of the deadness of the letter. The ministry of death. The old covenant reminds you of your own personal deadness.

Having no life in ourselves. And then working on people to try and make it better. And then getting tough with them so they'll really get serious, you know.

It's a dead end street. It's sad. It's difference of life or death.

We want a new covenant ministry. What do you think God wants to see in our lives? What do you think he wants to produce through our lives in ministry? Love, peace, humility, confidence in God, reality, fulfillment, gentleness, warmth, or judgmentalism, striving anxiety, self-righteousness, self-confidence, hypocrisy, frustration, harshness, and coldness. One is life.

The other is symptoms of death. One reason I'm so convicted on this and have such a passion for it is, number one, I see in the scriptures, it's the watershed issue of life and service. Also, my memory is not so short that I can't remember when I was killing people with the Bible.

But once I saw that, I was so smitten within. I was just so overwhelmed. I couldn't believe how I approached ministry from man's point of view.

And once repenting of it, I wanted never, never again to indulge in an ounce of it. I'm sure I have along the way, but I don't want any of it anymore because it's a matter of life or death. Ministry of death or ministry of life.

You know what God wants to offer people? Life. And that more abundantly. Amen.

Here's another one. Ministry of condemnation versus ministry of righteousness. Ministry of condemnation versus ministry of righteousness.

That's the difference between the old covenant and the new. That's the difference between living by law or grace. The old covenant is a ministry of condemnation.

It says to us, and it says to people who try to live under it, and it says to those under whom we try to bind folks, it says you're guilty. It says you failed. It's a restrictive, repressive, inhibiting arrangement for walk and relationship and ministry because it's merit by performance.

It's a situation under which a person can never be at ease with God. Never. Why? Because one can never do enough under the standard to satisfy.

Why? Because the standard is, remember, perfection. Don't forget what the law is saying. It's not saying try your hardest.

It's not saying improve. It's not saying be better than others. It's not saying anything like that.

It's saying be holy, be loving, be perfect. As holy as God, as loving as Christ, as perfect as the heavenly Father. Trying to live under that, you always feel estranged from God.

I let Him down. I failed Him. How could He be accepting me? And when we lay it on other people, that's the way they feel.

They feel pushed back from God. They feel unaccepted. They feel God must be irritated because they know they haven't lived up to apparently what the standard is that you have to relate to God on.

Not at all. That's the old covenant. It's a ministry of condemnation.

Do we want to have a ministry of condemning people or a ministry of righteousness? That is a ministry that offers the righteousness of God to people. The new covenant, the ministry of righteousness, says righteousness in Christ is our portion, not only for justification positionally, but for sanctification practically,

not only imputed righteousness, but imparted righteousness. Praise God for imputed righteousness, that is, in our standing before God, in our account.

God does not see accumulated sins. He sees the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, signed over our name, deposited in our account. We have a righteous standing before God on the basis of the imputed righteousness of Christ.

To relate to God, the Father will take the righteousness of Christ, clothe us in it as it were, accept us in the beloved. But we need the imparted righteousness just as much. Imputed righteousness lets us relate to approach and live in the family of God.

Imparted righteousness lets us grow, serve, bear fruit, mature, become practically day by day in walk and service more and more like the Lord Jesus. A ministry of righteousness, dispensing, offering up, serving out for folks the righteousness of God in Christ. Now this is liberating.

This is enabling. This is a relationship built on grace. This lets people know deep in their heart by the conviction of the Holy Spirit that we are accepted in the beloved.

There's peace between us and God. Christ is both our propitiation and is a satisfactory payment for our sins, but he's also our daily resource of life. We're accepted in the beloved and the Father can look down on us and again say, I see there my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased.

Christ in us the hope of glory. That's only possible under the new covenant. Here's another contrast.

Fading glory versus remaining glory. Verse 11, for what is passing away was glorious. What remains is much more glorious.

Another contrast in the two covenants. The old covenant had a glory that was passing away, a fading glory. The new covenant has a glory that remains.

The old covenant, a fading glory, passing away. It's like the hype of a religious pep rally. 70,000 come together and they're asked, are we going to please God? What are they going to say? No.

Their heart is they want to. It's why they're there. So of course they say, yes, I promise I will.

Nothing wrong with intending to do the right thing. Nothing wrong with telling God you want to do the right thing. Something very wrong with thinking that will cover the issue.

It's easy to get hyped up and think you're going to walk out every day just like Jesus Christ on your own commitment. When 70,000 people are standing with you saying, yeah, me too. Then you think you can take the universe for God.

But the old covenant has a glory about it that fades. Two weeks after the pep rally. How many guys are home in their closet weeping before God for failure and incapacity? Wondering why they're the only ones that can't seem to do it right.

Yeah, sure. The old covenant, it has a fading glory, something glorious about it. Yes, we're going to do it.

Yes. We did that in the church I pastored. We had this plot, this chart, this plan, every house in the neighborhood on the wall and numbered, and we're going to go out there and take it for God.

We got together and pumped each other up. I mean, oh, man, we could have just gone straight on through India while we're at it. Man, I mean, it wasn't even three or four houses.

Blam! Get out of here with that religious stuff. Hey, is this working? We saw a lot of people come to the Lord in that church. We didn't see one come to the Lord through that procedure.

Not that you can't reach people door to door. I'm not saying that. That's a special calling, special gifting and all that, but God has people with it.

That's fine. We're going out there on our own conviction, our commitment. Man, we had the map.

We had the hype. We had the commitment. I mean, well, the devil must be hiding now.

No, he's just standing behind the first door we knocked on. Boo! Okay, okay, okay. We'll go to another house.

All right. You know, the glory fades. Why? Because the glory of the old covenant depends on my faithfulness.

Can I keep my promises? Can I keep my enthusiasm? Can I carry out my convictions? Can I perform to the level of what I said I would? Fading glory. The new covenant has a glory that remains. It remains like the everlasting God of the new covenant who imparts his life to us.

The one who says, I will never leave you nor forsake you. That covenant depends on his faithfulness, his commitment, his zeal. In Isaiah, it said the zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

God's zealous commitment. That's how the kingdom gets built. God doesn't run out of steam because God doesn't run on steam.

He's I am. He has all the being and resource for an eternity of calling out, building, sustaining an everlasting kingdom. What a difference.

A covenant with fading glory versus remaining glory. The glory of the new covenant stays because he stays. He's with us.

He never leaves us. He's reliable. He's the same yesterday, today and forever.

That's why we want to build our life on his promises. That's another seminar the Lord gave us, the newest one. Entitled, can you imagine why? Promised believers.

Promised believers. That's what God's looking for. Only promised believers will ever become promised keepers.

Put another way, only faith in a faithful God will ever make us faithful men. Trusting God changes us. He's always faithful.

We're always hit and miss. We'll sooner or later bomb out. He never will.

Faith in him will never be disappointed. That's what the new covenants about. And then one more, we'll take a break.

It looks like we're real close to the end of the outline. I know, but that last one probably should have been a sheet in itself. We'll get to that in a minute.

The next one, substantial glory versus excelling glory. Contrast between the old new covenant. The old covenant had a substantial glory, but the new covenant has an excelling glory.

You can see that in verses 7 through 11. But if the ministry of death written and engraved on stones was glorious, and it was, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance. But notice which glory was passing away.

How will the ministry of the spirit not be more glorious? The old covenant had a glory. Don't we think the new covenant will be more glorious? Sure. For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, and it did, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory.

For even what was made glorious, the law, old covenant, had no glory in this respect because of the glory that excels. The old covenant had a glory. When you compare it to the new covenant glory, it makes the old covenant look like it had no glory at all, even though it did.

For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious. Doesn't God pound that one home? That the glory of the old covenant was substantial, but the new is excelling glory, exceedingly glorious. Even making the old covenant look like it didn't even have a wit of glory, though it did.

You know that works. You see a car you think is really special, maybe growing up as a young man, and all of a sudden somebody drives another one by, and you go, mine is a junk heap. And yet you would have died for that car.

You polished it and worked on it, and all of a sudden here comes one by, and it's like nothing. No, it had a glory, but in comparison it's like a junk heap. There's a glory to the old covenant.

Then you compare it to the glory of the new, and verse 10 says it's like it doesn't have a glory. The substantial glory of the old covenant, it was glorious, it had glory, it came with glory. Here's the point.

It is glorious to know the truth, that man has a problem. Part of the glory of the law. The law reveals that problem.

Man has a problem of sin that keeps him from God, and once he's saved he has another problem, personal inadequacy to grow and serve and cause fruit and all the rest. The law points that up. You know if you've got a major problem, it's glorious to know what the problem is.

My precious wife has suffered for five years now with migraine headaches. Every common grace remedy known to man thus far has had zero impact on it, as well as supernatural remedies of prayer, laying on of hands and anointing with oil. Thus far, God has said no.

Now if God just revealed to her what caused them, it would be glorious. Just that would be glorious. Of course if you just totally remove them, it would be exceedingly glorious.

When you have a problem, it's great to know what the problem is. Man has a problem of sin and the law tells him that. Glory be to God.

We don't chuck the law out. It has important roles and it has a glory. But here's the point.

The new covenant is even more glorious, exceeds much more in glory. See it's far more glorious to know the solution is yours than to just know you have a problem. The old covenant just tells you have a problem.

The new covenant remedies the problem, offers forgiveness for sin and God's adequacy for man's inadequacy. Now that's far more glorious than just knowing you have a problem. The contrast between the old and the new covenants, they just scream out to us.

They're saying, don't choose to live by the old covenant of law. Do choose to live by the new covenant of grace. Personally, it'll be the difference between personal, spiritual life and death.

Thriving or drying up, bearing fruit or being barren. And in ministering to others, you'll have the same impact. Our impact on them will either be religious deadness from the old covenant of rules and regulations to try to live up to, or it will be life and joy and peace and growth and fruit and service if we minister out of the new covenant.

That's how critical the difference is. Praise God for a section of the word. This goes boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom.

You know, old, new, old, new. And every time you look, the one is so much greater than the other.

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