

# Hebrews 1:1-3

by Conrad Murrell

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the New Covenant and its implications for our lives, and warns against the pitfalls of covenant theology and dispensationalism.*

**Duration:** 26:33

**Scripture:** Hebrews 1:1

**Topics:** "Jesus"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that Jesus Christ is the ultimate revelation of God and His will for all rational creatures. The New Covenant, which brings eternal blessedness, cannot be made with the house of Israel. The preacher argues that Israel refers to spiritual Israel, not national or ethnic Israel. The sermon also highlights the progression of divine revelation from the Old Testament to the New Testament, with Jesus Christ being the culmination. The preacher emphasizes the importance of interpreting the Old Testament in the light of the New Testament and highlights the unchanging nature of God's word and law.

---

## Transcript

Chapter 1. Chapter 1, verse 1. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto me thus by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world, who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purchased our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on the high. There appears to the unspiritual eye to be great theological differences between the divine revelation given in the Old Testament and that in the New Testament. One of the reasons for this is the enormous contrast between the old covenant that was made with ethnic and national Israel and the new covenant that is made with spiritual Israel.

The unregenerate doctors of Hebrew law did not recognize Christ as their Messiah nor understand his teaching, nor did the Greek philosophers of that day have a clue to what God was unveiling through his Son. Therefore, if we are to rightly understand the new covenant, we cannot look to traditional old covenant thought or to the wisdom and scholarship of the world. I Corinthians 2, 7 and 8. For the early church, the received canon of the new covenant was not the Mosaic law of the old covenant, but the teachings of Jesus and that of his early apostles, Ephesians 2, 20 and 1 Timothy 6, 3, 2 Timothy 1, 13.

It is important, however, to observe that both Jesus and his apostles drew authority from the Old Testament scriptures, interpreting and applying them in such manner as was suitable to the advanced revelation of the new covenant. After the death of the early apostles, the church's canon began to be more patristic. Certain men called church fathers, who for various reasons rose to preeminence in the church, were looked to for the answers to thorny theological and ecclesiastical issues.

Scriptures were interpreted according to their teachings and writings. From this patristic period, Christian doctrine in the established church began to decline, hitting new lows in the fourth century with the Constantinian hybrid of Christianity, paganism, and a state in which the popes were all paters. The pope emerged.

He called fathers in the emerging of the pope. Through the years, however, absolute papal authority gradually gave way to sinners. Theological issues were decided in church councils, sanctioned by state powers and handed down by political ecclesiastical authorities in the form of creeds and confessions.

The mindset of such synods, creeds, overseen by state civil powers, was necessarily sacral. Sacralism has no place, whatever, in New Covenant, and it fits quite well in the Old Covenant. So the Old New Testament was interpreted largely in light of the Old Testament.

The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century did nothing to purge this Old Covenant leaven out of Christendom. Instead, a magisterial reformers and their successors firmly reestablished it in their own confessions and creeds. It is yet with us today under the general nomenclature of covenant theology.

Covenant theology sees God dealing with His people according to two covenants. The first is a covenant of grace, a suprahistorical agreement thought to have occurred between the three persons of the Trinity in which the elect are to be saved by grace. The second is a covenant of works given to Adam at creation, bearing the promise of eternal life or death on the basis of his obedience or his disobedience.

Adam, of course, failed and all men fell in him. And hope of redemption fell back on this Old Covenant of grace. This covenant of grace is said to have two administrations, one to Israel, which has passed away, the other to the church, which is now the elect, in effect.

Instead of the biblical terms, Old Covenant and New Covenant theology maintains one covenant and two administrations. God has always and only one eternal purpose in redemption, and He has employed various covenants at different times to execute that single purpose. But it is bad theology to confound God's eternal purpose, that which He purposed within Himself, with covenants, all of which were made in time and place by specific men.

There is no scripture anywhere that articulates such a dual administration of one covenant, nor is this an adequate description of covenant theology. It does not sufficiently account for the radical differences in the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. This is the only window dressing, and it will not even earn it the title of covenant theology.

What receives less press but really drives the engine of Reformed ecclesiology is the cornerstone of covenant theology. That is the contention that God still deals with people, not individually, but with groups, with whose heads He is in covenant. Barney is in covenant with God.

All the rest of y'all own his coattails. That's what they believed at that time. This not only perpetuates church state sacralism, but unconverted covenant children in the church, but charges one person with the

sins of another.

It makes the New Covenant church merely an extension of Old Covenant, Israel modified to include Gentiles. A plethora of other evils follow. Its eschatology hope includes Christianized, not converted, Christianized world in which the church rules society with a sword of steel.

While creedal denominations descending from Protestant Reformation generally ordered by the covenant theology, non-creedal statements such as Baptists, Bible churches, and other independents have in recent years fallen heavily under a relatively modern dispensationalism. This theology attempts to resolve the perceived tension between the Old Testament writings and those of the New Testament by a series of succeeding dispensations during which God tries men's obedience to new revelation of that particular time period. It carries within its hermeneutics, however, the same erroneous consumption of covenant theology to which the New Testament revelation must be interpreted literally in the light of the letter of the Old Testament.

Prophets did not even see. Is that not amazing? The realization of God's supreme eternal purpose of gathering together all things in Christ, Ephesians 1.10, is made a minor parenthesis to small and insignificant by the prophet to see. Further dispensationalism is compelled by the Old Covenant literalism to have a rhetoric Hebrew kingdom with a rebuilt temple, and restoration of abolished Aaronic priesthood together with animal sacrifice.

Then he who is now King of kings, Lord of lords, exalted above every principality and power in heaven and with earth must undergo another humiliation to come down and sit on the earthly throne and reign over this political thing. If we are to understand and live in the light of New Covenant truth, we must cut loose our moorings in both of these prevailing systems which held a death grip on most modern churches, elevating our eyes to the higher authority of the inspired Word of God. The Holy Scriptures will yield their treasures when we are guided by these following givens of divine revelation.

1. God is immutable, unchanging in person, character, and will. 2. His Word is truth, therefore also unchanging. His law is His revealed will for His rational creatures.

His law, which is intended to govern the devotion and behavior of men in their present state of existence, reflects His divine perfection, therefore cannot be changed or abolished. 5. Therefore there must be a continuity between that revelation in the Old Testament and that in the New Testament. They are not contrasting one another.

6. There is a progression in divine revelation from earlier to later times, always increasing in clarity and finally culminating in Jesus Christ. People are moving in one or two directions. You are getting better or you are getting worse.

Nobody is static. We either grow or we die, perish. 7. There is a corresponding increase in the blessedness of God's people from earlier to later times, culminating in eternal glory.

8. In time, God is always moving forward. He never reverts back to something He once had and has been abandoned or restores something ruined. Don't look behind you.

Keep looking ahead. He has always created something entirely new, replacing the former. 9. The invisible eternal realities are revealed by representation in types and figures of temporal things and events.

These are teaching tools intended to make clear to us upon whom the ends of the world have come. 10. The earthly and temporal first appears, followed by the heavenly and eternal.

The former gives way, passes away for the latter. The figure is corruptible and disappears, but the reality is incorruptible and endures forever. Isn't that wonderful? Therefore, the Old Testament, the dimmer light, must be interpreted in the light of the New Testament, not the other way around.

Christ is the end of the law. End is translated from Greek *telos*, which indicates not sensation, but the objective and the fullness of purpose. Christ Himself, not merely His teachings and His example, but His person, is the brightest, clearest, perfect, and final revelation of the invisible God and His will for all rational creatures of all time.

He is the way, the truth, and the life, the ultimate of God's revelation, Jesus Christ. His life, His death, typified in the cup at the supper, purchased and contains for us all the sun and substance of eternal blessedness of the new covenant. Who is Israel? The new covenant cannot be made with the house of Israel.

Therefore, it is first important to know who Israel is. It cannot be national Israel, for that nation ceased to exist after the fall of Samaria in 732 B.C. Nor can it be ethnic Israel. Paul thoroughly dismisses ethnic Israel as the elect of God in his discourse found in Romans 9 and 11.

True, elect Israel is not all Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob's children, but a remnant chosen by sovereign grace. Of all Abraham's descendants, the new covenant extends only to them, for they are, and they are the only ones that shall surely be saved. Isaiah 58 and Romans 11 But this house of Israel with whom the new covenant is made is not elect ethnic Israel only.

Christ broke down the wall of division between ethnic Israel and the Gentiles, abolishing the alienation that was created by legal letter precepts and reconciled both to God in the offering of His body on the cross. Further, Paul assures us that all who are Christ by faith are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3.26 It might be helpful for us to note that the promise is the promise that God gave to Abraham in Genesis 12, sometimes called the Abrahamic covenant, some elements of which are realized only in the new covenant.

It was given 430 years before the old covenant was made at Sinai and preempts Sinaitic limitations. It has always been the eternal purpose of God to save a people for His glory by grace through faith in the perfect, obedient life of His Son, all grace through faith. All who are saved by grace through faith were given this grace before time began.

II Timothy 1 and 9 This is the eternal purpose of God qualifies the new covenant to be described as the everlasting covenant in Hebrews 13. My law I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts. It is powerfully significant that God did not say, I will abolish my law or I will change my law or I will give a new law.

Nothing of the sort is fairly suggested. There is never in all the scripture any indication that God has reconsidered His law. Why should He? It is perfect.

Why should He make a mistake? Found in its wanting, God has reconsidered His law. Found it wanting, that is it wrong law, or rather the law is not efficient, in antiquated and in need of updating. From one end of the book to the other there is nothing but praise, wonder, adoration, and vindication made for God's law.

To despise God's law would be to slander Him whose person is reflected in it. It is also significant that God did not say, I will write the Mosaic law in their hearts, or the Ten Commandments, or the law of the old covenant. Nor yet has He said, I will write a new law in their hearts.

The law written in the hearts of God's people is simply God's law, His revealed will for the devotional and moral behavior of rational creatures. When was such a law given? It was given immediately at creation. And the Lord has commanded the man.

Genesis 2.16 and John 1.17 No more means there was no law before Moses and the Sinaitic covenant, than it means that there was no truth before the incarnation. Nor is Romans 5.12 intended to teach there was no law before Moses. In fact, it teaches the exact opposite.

People were dying before Mount Sinai. Death is caused by sin, any sin, not just Adam's sin only, by which the whole race was ruined. There can be no sin apart from therefore law.

Therefore law was given at the beginning. Man has never seen, been, nor ever shall be without law to God. Thank the Lord.

If God be God, He must rule. He who rules must communicate, make His will known. He did, He has, and He forever will.

There is no new legal code whatsoever in the new covenant. Even the new commandment, which John records in the gospel, later admits it in John 2.7.8. Then if John 5 is no new one, but an old one, one that had been known from the beginning. How could the blood of slain Abel cry out to God for vengeance if royal law of love had not been violated? Did not Jesus teach that the entire revelation of God, all the law and the prophets hang upon the supreme love of God and equal love of neighbor? Again, the apostle Paul tells us that in 1 Timothy 1 and 5. I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

The old covenant was inadequate. The weakness lay not in the covenant itself or in the unfaithfulness of its giver, but in the ability of the people to keep their obligation. A sinful people cannot keep the holy law.

This, the final provision of the new covenant, abolishes that weakness by abolishing the sin that mandated the faithful failure on the first. God does not forgive sins by fiat, but by paying its penalty in the full person of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. All sin has to be paid for, ratified.

Once, in the end of the world, He hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Don't worry about your sins. You don't hold it light, but pay for and rejoice in Him.

You don't go around weeping and crying and begging God to forgive you. Your sin is forgiven before you ever did it. By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

The new covenant cannot be nullified by the saint's sin, simply because God refuses to charge them with sin. No use you telling God or begging God to whoop somebody. He ain't going to do it.

You think they need whooping? He'll take care of it. You don't have to. It is in the full glare of our inaudible weakness, the undeniable guilt of our souls, and in the full knowledge of our inability to do better, that we hear that sweet sound of grace.

So far from charging us with the guilt of our sins, God refuses to even take note of them, to even acknowledge that they exist. Otherwise, none could stand. God has not only abolished them from His

sight, but from our very conscience.

Sometimes you might be remembering something you did in the past. I have. And blush.

And cringe. But I did. But it's gone.

Otherwise, no sinner could ever be saved. His sins are still there in the past. But you can be joyful and happy.

The astounding truth of this is that a Christian cannot be made to feel guilty. It is not that he does not have a sense of right or wrong. Far from it, he has the keenest of moral senses.

But he cannot be brought under condemnation, even when he sins. He knows he yet has unshadowed acceptance before God. We are enabled to draw near in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from all evil conscience.

The legal-minded person who does not understand grace is horrified by all of this. He thinks such liberty will inculcate a spirit of licentiousness. In fact, it does just the opposite.

Grace has made our heart in perfect tune with the spirit of God's righteous commandment. Deliberate, willful sin is now alien, and it cannot find root in our souls. The reign of righteousness, of God's law in our heart, the light of the teaching of Christ and the Apostles on the Old Testament, and a conscience that cannot be brought under condemnation and guilt renders legal government of Christians contrary to the New Covenant.

God has broken the chains of bondage. They cannot be intimidated by fear, and have no need of outward letter-law constraint or restraint. It is at this point that all the misguided wrangling about law and grace emerges.

Thanks the Lord that He has been taken care of in Christ's death on the cross. Father in Heaven, we cannot begin to wonderfully estimate and explain the fact that we sit here today, stand here today, knowing these things, rejoicing in them, while millions out there yesterday, today, and forward know nothing of them. We thank You for this precious, priceless privilege, the fact that Jesus paid it all, and it shall not be condemned.

Bless us now, we pray, and make us to behave. We can't ever be, but behave worthy of Your calling and Your blessings. For it is in Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28212.mp3>  
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/conrad-murrell/hebrews-11-3/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**