

# New Covenant- Repentance & Heavenly Kingdom -1

by Zac Poonen

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*The New Covenant is about life, not knowledge, and requires humble dependence on God as a loving father.*

**Duration:** 10:13

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:24, Matthew 18:3, John 15:5, Romans 6:14, 1 Corinthians 1:30, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Galatians 3:24, Hebrews 12:2, James 4:6

**Topics:** "New Covenant", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the concept of the New Covenant, highlighting the lack of understanding and living out of this covenant among many Christians. It emphasizes that the New Covenant is not merely about knowledge but about experiencing true life in Christ. Drawing parallels from the Garden of Eden, the sermon explains how choosing to decide for oneself what is good and evil leads to spiritual death, contrasting the principles of the law and grace. It underscores the importance of humble dependence on God, likening it to a child relying on a loving father for guidance and sustenance.

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## Transcript

Last Wednesday we considered something about the New Covenant and since I'm going to be here for a few weeks I thought I'd take a series about the New Covenant. So I'll continue today and then on this Wednesday and next Sunday and so on. The reason is because my observation in the last 32 years that we've been operating as a church is I've traveled to many parts of India and been in many churches in many countries.

This is my personal observation. I haven't been to every church in the world. I've not met every Christian in the world.

But among those I have met, 95% of born-again believers don't have a clue about what the New Covenant is. And even some who understand it in their heads do not live in it. I'll give you one example.

If you lived in it, you'd never be depressed. It's true. Never.

There's a command in the Bible called, Rejoice in the Lord always. Always means, in today's language, 24-7. There was no such command under the Old Covenant.

You never find that in the Old Testament because nobody could obey it. Where is it found? It is found in the New Testament. How many Christians have you met in your life who can say, that is true in my life? There is my proof.

95% of Christians do not live in the New Covenant at all. They know a lot of truth. Their head is filled with knowledge.

But it's like these babies who got hydrocephalus, a huge head and small body. They don't live long. I want to warn you, the New Covenant is not about knowledge.

It's about life. Many have knowledge, but few find the way to life. Many who have knowledge are on the Broadway.

The two trees in the Garden of Eden symbolize the two covenants, the law and grace. Who gave the law? God. Who planted the tree of knowledge of good and evil? God.

Who planted the tree of life? God. Who gives grace? God. Who gave the law? God.

And yet he said, if you live by it, you'll die. Who planted the tree of knowledge of good and evil? God. And he said, if you eat of it, you'll die.

Exactly the same. Those two trees symbolize two principles by which you can live your life. And you know, many people say, how can God send good people to hell? The point is not whether they were good or not.

The point is according to God's standard, did they have life? In other words, did they live a life of faith and dependence upon God? Or were they good according to their own knowledge of good and evil? When some people say, think that they are good, it's because they got two percent in mathematics in a class where everybody else got zero or one. They're good. Not good according to God's standards.

Not at all. That's why the Bible says those who compare themselves with each other are spiritual idiots. That's a paraphrase of 2nd Corinthians 10 verse 12.

Those who compare themselves with each other. Absolutely foolish. If you want to compare yourself, my dear brothers and sisters, let me give you one bit of advice.

It'll save you from all pride for the rest of your life. If you want to compare yourself, compare yourself with Jesus. Full stop.

That's it. And with nobody else. Many problems in our lives are solved when we compare ourselves with Jesus.

We never get discouraged. Because when you look at him, he never discourages anybody. So Adam reached for knowledge and all the children of Adam reached for knowledge.

Adam didn't die because he killed Eve or spat on her face or called her some bad name. You know why he died? Because he wanted to have the knowledge of good and evil himself. Decide himself what is good and evil.

And when you decide yourself what is good and evil, you die. That is the old covenant. Have you understood the meaning of the tree of knowledge of good and evil now? When you choose to decide

yourself what is good and what is evil, you die.

When you decide yourself what television program is good and what is evil, according to your understanding, you die. And unfortunately, your children die too. Because you make them watch it.

When you decide yourself what books are good to read and what are not good to read, you die. And your children die too. And you're the cause of their death.

When you decide yourself what type of conversation is good and what type is bad, you'll die. That was Adam's problem. He wanted that that's what the devil wanted him to do.

The devil didn't tempt him to murder Eve. No. The devil didn't tempt him to tell a lie to Eve.

The devil is so sharp and so clever, he told him something which looked so innocent, just like he tells you. What's wrong in knowing good and evil? What's wrong in yourself deciding what is good and evil? Oh, how plausible that argument sounds to clever people. And Adam was very clever.

He said, yeah, that sounds reasonable. Just like you say. And Adam died and you die.

The law never brings life. And that's what the Old Testament law did. It told people this is good, this is evil.

Honor your father and mother? Good. Committing murder? Evil. Don't take the name of the Lord in vain? If you don't take the Lord's name in vain, that's good.

If you commit adultery, that's evil. The whole Ten Commandments is just a list of good and evil. It's a tree of knowledge of good and evil.

What did it bring? Death. Then why did God give it? For a number of reasons. One, to show man his sin.

To show man that he was incapable of ever reaching God's standard. And to show man that you can never save yourself no matter how hard you try. So it is a preparation for grace.

You know, they say when these people who are lifeguards on the seaside, they are taught when you see a man who doesn't know swimming, drowning, don't go to help him when he's struggling initially. No. He will drag you down.

Let him struggle, struggle, struggle, struggle and give up and begin to sink. That's the time to go and catch him because he's exhausted. Otherwise he'll drag you down.

It's true. You have to wait till that guy has struggled and struggled and struggled and struggled and struggled and said given up, then you go and save him. It's exactly like that that the Lord saves us too.

We try to keep the law. We try to keep the law. We struggle, struggle, struggle, struggle, struggle, struggle and those are honest.

There are very few. Those who are honest say, I can't make it Lord. I give up and the Lord saves them by grace.

But those who are not honest and the vast majority are like that, they struggle, struggle, struggle, fail but they will not admit that they are failing. They become hypocrites. They were the Pharisees who never got saved.

There are multitudes of them in today's churches. Multitudes. In fact, the vast majority.

There are no Pharisees out in the world who don't go to the churches. No. You'll never find a worldly Pharisee.

You'll find worldly Christians but not worldly Pharisees. Pharisees are the ones who are religious, who go to meetings, churches. They have a lot of knowledge of the Bible and all that but they haven't got a contact with God.

What is the tree of life? The tree of life is a life of dependence on God where his life flows into you. Like Jesus said, the branch in a tree, where the sap, the Holy Spirit flows into you. It's not something you produce.

It's not something that you're determined to have. It's something God gives and God gives it to those who are humble enough to say, Lord, I can't make it. I depend on you exactly like that branch in the tree and there's no guarantee that you'll be like that forever.

After five, ten years you may think, I've got enough experience now. I can pull out from the tree and decide what's good and evil on my own. That's how many believers backslide and die again.

It's a feat if you remain in the tree till the end of your life. If we endure until the end, we will be saved. We can.

Isn't it much easier to live in helpless dependence on God than to try and run your own life? Isn't it much easier to be a one-year-old child whose father cares for you than for you to run your own life? That's why Jesus said we must be like children, dependent on the father, humble enough to acknowledge that we know nothing. You find many believers like that? Very few. Those are the ones who found life.

Humble dependence on God as a loving father. That is the new covenant.

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