

# New and Improved

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 3:1-11

## I. The new covenant that came with Christ changes hearts.

- A. A covenant is an agreement between God and people in which God promises to bless those who accept and commit themselves to Him. God promised a new covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-33: **“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel... not like the covenant that I made with their fathers, ...my covenant that they broke... For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”**
- B. Ezekiel 36:26-27: **“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.”**

## II. The new covenant that came with Christ brought the Holy Spirit.

- A. It is the Holy Spirit who brings the change and the power to the Christian life. The Law without the Spirit kills us (vs. 6). The Law tells us what to do to please God, but it gives us no power to obey it. But the Holy Spirit gives us life (vs. 6). The Holy Spirit makes us born again when we have faith in Jesus, and the Holy Spirit gives us the power to obey God’s commands.

## III. The new covenant that came with Christ brings righteousness and life.

- A. What came with the old covenant law that Moses brought down with him from the mountain? Condemnation and death (vs. 7). But the new covenant is a ministry of righteousness (vs. 9). How do we get that righteousness? 2 Corinthians 5:21: **“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”**

## IV. The new covenant that came with Christ is permanent.

- A. “For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory” (vs. 11). The old covenant was temporary because it did not represent God’s ultimate purpose to save both Jews and Greeks through faith in Jesus. The old covenant was destined to pass away when Jesus came. With Jesus came the permanent new covenant: a covenant bringing forgiveness, righteousness, eternal life, and the power of the Holy Spirit to change us.

### Application:

Rejoice that this new covenant has changed you and that it is changing others.

### Sources:

The Bible

Commentaries by Trent Casto, David Garland, and Gary Millar.

## **Sermon Outline Questions**

- 1) What makes the new covenant superior to the old covenant? What did God promise for His people in the new covenant in Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36?
- 2) Why is the Holy Spirit such a gift to Christians? What does the Holy Spirit empower us to do?
- 3) How do we get declared righteous by God? How long will the new covenant last?