

New Covenant, Communion and the Dispensation of Grace

A 12-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

This 12-lesson series by Keith Blades addresses a widespread misunderstanding among grace believers: the failure to recognize that we in the Dispensation of Grace are beneficiaries of the New Covenant. That failure has direct, practical consequences — it leads believers to place little or no significance on the Lord’s Table, robbing them of the impact God has designed that observance to make. Beginning with Paul’s declaration in 2 Corinthians 3:6 that he was made “an able minister of the new testament,” Keith establishes from Scripture the meaning of the New Covenant, what it specifically covenants for (total spiritual fitness: justification and sanctification), why the New Covenant is not the program — neither Israel’s prophetic program nor the Mystery — but the means by which God makes individuals spiritually fit within whatever program they live in. The series then moves into communion itself, examining both its commemorative nature and its designed impact upon principalities, powers, and angelic beings in the heavenly places — culminating in the truth that “as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.”



Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 1	Introducing the series: grace believers as beneficiaries of the New Covenant (2 Cor. 3:6)
Lesson 2	Surveying the covenants of God’s program with Israel: what the New Covenant doesn’t covenant for
Lesson 3	Clearing the ground: the New Covenant is not about land, throne, or kingdom — those belong to other covenants
Lesson 4	Israel’s education in God’s Jehovahhness: the wilderness trials proving natural spiritual unfitness under Law
Lesson 5	What the New Covenant covenants for: total spiritual fitness through justification and sanctification
Lesson 6	The New Covenant is NOT the program — it makes individuals spiritually fit in the program in which they live

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 7	Establishing our beneficiary status: three foundational matters (Heb. 7, Melchizedekian priesthood)
Lesson 8	God's sovereign right to bring in the Dispensation of Grace; the New Covenant's basis in mercy and compassion
Lesson 9	Paul as able minister of the New Covenant; our commonness with Israel's saints as NC beneficiaries
Lesson 10	Deep examination of the four components of Jer. 31: especially sanctification and God's purpose in it
Lesson 11	Introducing communion: the Lord's Table — commemoration, impact, and connection to the New Covenant
Lesson 12	The designed impact of the Lord's Table: showing the Lord's death to principalities and powers till he come

Lesson Summaries

L1

Introducing the New Covenant *The Foundational Problem Among Grace Believers*

- The series begins by identifying a widespread failure among grace believers: not appreciating that we are beneficiaries of the New Covenant.
- This misunderstanding produces a practical consequence — little or no emphasis on the Lord's Table, and failure to participate in it with proper significance.
- Key passage: 2 Corinthians 3:4–6 — Paul declares himself made an “able minister of the new testament.”
 - The text is plain: “new testament” (new covenant) — attempts to alter the translation to escape this meaning are rejected as evasion.
- Keith's aim: to show from Scripture that we are beneficiaries of the New Covenant, and why understanding this gives communion its full weight and significance.
- The problem isn't a lack of intelligence — it's a lack of willingness to let Scripture say what it says without importing a grid that overrides the plain meaning.

L2

The Covenants of God's Program with Israel *Surveying the Background Covenants*

- To understand what the New Covenant covenants for, one must first see what it doesn't covenant for — those issues belong to other covenants in Israel's program.

Covenants Surveyed:

- Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1–3) — the land covenant; God's

unconditional promise to Abraham and his seed regarding the land of Canaan.

- “Get thee out of thy country” — Abram called out of Ur of the Chaldees into the promised land.
- The Throne Covenant (Davidic) — covenants for the throne, the seed of David, the everlasting kingdom.
- The Sabbath Covenant and others connected to Israel’s prophetic program.
- Understanding these distinctions is foundational: once you know what the other covenants cover, you can ask what the New Covenant specifically covenants for.

L3

What the New Covenant Doesn’t Covenant For *Clearing the Ground Before Building*

- Before properly understanding what the New Covenant covenants for, it is essential to recognize what it does not covenant for.
- The New Covenant does not covenant for land, throne, kingdom, or national restoration — those promises belong to the Abrahamic, Davidic, and other Israel-program covenants.
- Hebrews 6 is examined in this context — the apostle provides the remnant with their education in these foundational distinctions.
- Grace believers who import the New Covenant as a “program” covenant (promising land, kingdom, etc.) completely miss what it is designed to provide.
- Once the ground is cleared of what the NC doesn’t do, the way is open to see what it specifically and exclusively covenants for: spiritual fitness.
- This distinction is also the key to understanding why the Lord’s Table ought to have great significance and why enthusiasm for communion is the natural result of understanding the NC correctly.

L4

Israel’s Education in God’s Jehovahhness *The Wilderness Trials and the Law Covenant*

- The Law Covenant was established at Sinai — Israel entered into a covenant based on their own merit and performance before God’s holiness and justice.
- God gave Israel a series of wilderness trials designed to educate them in their own natural spiritual unfitness.

Key Trials:

- Exodus 15 (Water of Marah) — the foundational trial; God sets up the framework: obedience brings blessing, disobedience brings disease. Israel’s natural response: murmuring.
 - The trial reveals what natural Israel is made of — they are not equipped to perform at the level the Law demands.
- Exodus 16 (Manna) — they murmur again, demonstrating the consistency of their natural unfitness.
 - “How long refuse ye to keep my commandments” — their murmurings were against the LORD himself.
- The Law’s function: not to save Israel but to put their sin and natural inability

on full display, making evident that “by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

L5

What the New Covenant Covenants For *Total Spiritual Fitness: Justification and Sanctification*

- The New Covenant covenants for precisely what the Law could not produce: total spiritual fitness for a member of the human race to be utilized by God in his plan and purpose.

Two Components of Spiritual Fitness:

- Justification — the imputation of righteousness; God declares the individual righteous on the basis of Christ’s work, not human performance.
- Sanctification — the making holy; God writes his law in the heart, making the individual inwardly transformed and set apart for his use.
 - Romans 8:3 — what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son accomplished.
- The NC covenants God by his Jehovahness to do what is necessary to provide both justification and sanctification — making the individual fit on the basis of grace alone, not merit.
- Natural Israel possessed natural spiritual unfitness — they were naturally unrighteous and naturally unholy. The New Covenant addresses both deficiencies completely.

L6

The New Covenant Is NOT the Program *Spiritually Fit IN Whatever Program God Operates*

The Central Distinction of This Series:

- The New Covenant is NOT the program — neither Israel’s prophetic program nor the Mystery — it is the means by which God makes an individual spiritually fit to operate in the program in which he or she lives.
- A beneficiary of the New Covenant receives justification and sanctification by God’s grace and thereby becomes spiritually fit to be utilized by him in his plan and purpose — whatever program that plan operates through.

Jeremiah 31:31–34 — Four Components of the New Covenant:

- “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts” — sanctification (inward transformation).
- “And will be their God, and they shall be my people” — intimate covenant relationship.
- “And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour” — direct knowledge of God (no longer mediated through external instruction alone).
- “I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” — justification (the foundation of all the rest).

Both Programs Share the New Covenant:

- The remnant of Israel in their prophetic program are New Covenant beneficiaries (Heb. 10, 12, 13).
- We in the Dispensation of Grace are likewise New Covenant beneficiaries (2 Cor. 3:6; Rom. 1–5).
 - The programs differ; the New Covenant spans both — making individuals

spiritually fit within each program respectively.

- Hebrews 7:18–19: “The bringing in of a better hope did” — not “will” — perfection already achieved through the NC.
- Hebrews 12:22–24 — the remnant have come to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the blood of sprinkling — the New Covenant in full effect.

L7

We Are Beneficiaries *Three Foundational Matters to Have in Frame of Reference*

- Now that the NC’s content (spiritual fitness) and scope (both programs) are established, Keith turns to examine our status as beneficiaries in the Dispensation of Grace.
- Three matters to have firmly in place before examining our beneficiary status:
 - 1. Spiritual fitness — justification and sanctification — only comes through being a beneficiary of the New Covenant. There is no other means.
 - 2. God implements his Jehovahness and grace exclusively through the New Covenant — it is the vehicle of his compassionate, gracious dealing.
 - 3. The Law Covenant has been disannulled: “There is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof” (Heb. 7:18).
- Hebrews 7 — the Melchizedekian priesthood: the Lord Jesus is priest after the order of Melchizedek, functioning in connection with the New Covenant.
 - “There is verily a better hope” — and it has been brought in. The perfection the Law couldn’t produce, the NC has produced.
- These three points form the essential backdrop for every subsequent lesson on our role as NC beneficiaries and our observance of the Lord’s Table.

L8

God’s Sovereign Right and Compassionate Basis *The Legal and Grace Foundation of the Dispensation of Grace*

- Romans 9:15 — “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy” — establishes God’s legal and sovereign right to bring in the Dispensation of Grace on the basis of his own Jehovahness.
 - Exodus 33–34: God’s declaration of his name and character to Moses is the legal foundation Paul appeals to in Romans 9 — God had already declared his sovereign freedom to extend compassion.
- The New Covenant is not arbitrary — it is the execution of God’s Jehovahness: his mercy, compassion, and grace brought to bear upon the human race’s spiritual unfitness.
- Hebrews 5 — the high priest with compassion on the ignorant and out of the way: a picture of Christ’s compassionate ministry as the Melchizedekian priest of the New Covenant.
- When dealing with the NC, you are always dealing with compassion, mercy, and grace — not law, merit, or human performance.
- This sovereign grace basis is what distinguishes the NC from every other covenant and is what makes it “a better covenant established upon better promises” (Heb. 8:6).

L9

Paul — The Able Minister of the New Covenant *Our Commonness with Israel's Saints as NC Beneficiaries*

- Romans 15 — Paul's ministry to the Gentiles: he is presenting the benefits of the New Covenant (justification and sanctification) to every creature.
- Paul's gospel offers the precise benefits the NC covenants for: perfect justification and perfect sanctification = total spiritual fitness = the gift of God's grace.
- The designation "saints" is significant: it is what the justice of God calls a beneficiary of the New Covenant — used for Israel's remnant saints AND for us.
 - Saints in Macedonia (Philippians) and Achaia (Corinthians) recognized commonness with Israel's saints in Jerusalem — they shared the same NC benefits.
- This commonness is not a blending of programs — it is the recognition that both groups are NC beneficiaries, spiritually fit by the same grace, justification, and sanctification.
- 2 Corinthians 3:6 remains the banner declaration: God has made Paul (and thereby us through his ministry) an able minister of the new testament — not the letter, but the spirit that gives life.

L10

The Four Components of the New Covenant *Justification and Sanctification in Depth*

- Jeremiah 31:31–34 is revisited for a deep, component-by-component examination — particularly the sanctification elements that tend to cause confusion.

The Four Components:

- Heart writing / God in his people / taught by God — these are the three expressions of sanctification in Jeremiah 31.
 - Heart writing: God inscribes his law inwardly, making the individual respond from within rather than to an external code.
 - God in his people / they shall be my people: the intimacy of relationship that sanctification produces — functionality in God's will.
 - Taught by God: direct knowledge and fellowship — no longer dependent on external mediation alone for knowing the LORD.
- Forgiveness of iniquity / sin not remembered: justification — the foundation upon which all three aspects of sanctification rest.
- God's fundamental purpose in sanctification: enabling a member of the human race to fulfill his God-given purpose — to be utilized within his plan.
- Justification is rarely the sticking point; sanctification is where most grace believers hesitate. Understanding these four components resolves that hesitation.

L11

Introducing Communion *The Lord's Table — Commemoration and Impact*

- 1 Corinthians 10 — the cup of blessing is the communion of the blood of Christ; the bread is the communion of the body of Christ.
- Two inseparable aspects of the Lord's Table as taught by Paul:
 - Commemoration — a memorial service memorializing the Lord Jesus Christ

Adonai Jehovah and his death.

- Impact — the designed effect the observance has, primarily upon principalities, powers, might, and dominions in the heavenly places.
- The naturalness of the Lord's Table: because we are New Covenant beneficiaries — just as the remnant were when the Lord first instituted it — observing it is the natural response of an informed NC beneficiary.
- Context of 1 Corinthians 10: Paul brings up the cup of blessing in the context of correcting the Corinthians' behavior regarding idolatry — showing the Lord's Table as a counter-declaration.
- The impact upon principalities and powers is the subject Keith will develop fully in Lesson 12 — this lesson lays the frame of reference.

L12

The Designed Impact of the Lord's Table *Showing the Lord's Death to Principalities and Powers*

- “As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come” (1 Cor. 11:26) — the “shewing” is an active display directed outward, not a reflexive personal reminder.

Two Dimensions of Impact:

- Impact in Israel's program: John 15–16 — the world's hatred, the name of Jehovah, apostate Israel's rejection, the testimony of remnant saints. Romans 11:7–10 and Hebrews 13:9–13 — Israel's table and the Lord's table as the defining boundary.
- Impact upon principalities and powers in heavenly places: the cross displayed constantly in the face of the angelic realm.

Key Passages on Angelic Impact:

- 1 Corinthians 2:6–8 — the princes of this world (angelic beings) crucified the Lord of glory in ignorance of the hidden wisdom.
- 1 Corinthians 4:9 — we are made a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men.
- Ephesians 3:7–12 — the purpose of Paul's dispensation: to make known through the church the manifold wisdom of God unto principalities and powers.
 - “That now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.”
- Colossians 2:10–15 — Christ triumphing over principalities and powers through the cross, making an open shew of them.
- 1 Timothy 5:21 — elect angels as witnesses; the Lord's Table is observed “before the elect angels.”
- Commemoration and impact are one package — you cannot separate them. Every observance of the Lord's Table is a fresh declaration of the Lord's death to the principalities and powers who crucified him in ignorance.

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

The New Covenant Is Not the Program

The most critical distinction in this series: the New Covenant is not to be identified with either Israel's prophetic program or the Mystery program of the Dispensation of Grace. It is the means by which God makes an individual spiritually fit — through justification and sanctification — to operate within whatever program God is running. Both the remnant of Israel (in the prophetic program) and believers today (in the Mystery/Dispensation of Grace) are beneficiaries of the same New Covenant. The programs differ; the New Covenant spans both. Confusing the New Covenant with the program leads to either wrongly claiming Israel's kingdom promises or, in the opposite error, denying that grace believers have any connection to the New Covenant at all — which then renders the Lord's Table meaningless.

Spiritual Fitness: Justification and Sanctification

The New Covenant covenants specifically for total spiritual fitness — the two components of which are justification (righteous standing before God through the imputation of Christ's righteousness) and sanctification (being made holy inwardly, fitted to function in God's will). The Law could not produce either. God covenants by his Jehovahhood to do for the individual what they cannot do for themselves. Both components are essential — sanctification is built upon the foundation of justification, and together they constitute the complete spiritual fitness the New Covenant provides.

The Two Aspects of the Lord's Table

The Lord's Table as taught by Paul has two inseparable aspects: commemoration (a memorial of the Lord's death) and impact (an active showing of the Lord's death to principalities and powers in heavenly places). These are not two optional emphases but one unified design. To observe the Lord's Table only as a personal remembrance without understanding its outward impact is to participate in only half of what God designed. Every observance is simultaneously a memorial and a proclamation — directed at the angelic realm that crucified the Lord of glory in ignorance.

The Law Covenant and the New Covenant

The Old (Law) Covenant and the New Covenant stand in direct contrast. The Law Covenant was conditional — based on Israel's merit and performance. It could not produce righteousness or holiness; it could only put sin on display. The New Covenant is unconditional — based entirely on God's Jehovahhood, his mercy and grace. Where the Law demanded performance and received failure, the New Covenant provides what it demands through God's own action. "The bringing in of a better hope did" (Heb. 7:19) — not will, but did — perfection already achieved.

We and the Remnant as Co-Beneficiaries of the New Covenant

Paul's gospel offers the benefits of the New Covenant to every creature. The designation "saints" applies to both remnant Israel and Body of Christ believers because both are NC beneficiaries — justified and sanctified by the same grace. The saints in Macedonia and Achaia recognized their commonness with the saints in Jerusalem on this basis. This commonness is not a blending of programs but a shared participation in the New Covenant's provision of spiritual fitness. Understanding this commonness is what gives both the Lord's Table and Paul's ministry their full weight and significance.

Key Scripture References

2 Corinthians 3:6	Paul declares himself made an able minister of the new testament (covenant) — the anchor text of the series
Jeremiah 31:31–34	The four components of the New Covenant: heart writing, God in his people, taught by God, forgiveness of sins
Hebrews 7:18–19	“The bringing in of a better hope did” — the Law set aside; perfection achieved through the New Covenant
Hebrews 8:6	Christ the mediator of a better covenant established upon better promises
Hebrews 9:15	Christ the mediator of the new testament; redemption of transgressions under the first testament
Hebrews 10:10	“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”
Hebrews 12:22–24	“Ye are come unto Mount Sion” — the remnant’s position as NC beneficiaries under the blood of sprinkling
Hebrews 13:20–21	God of peace through the blood of the everlasting covenant; made perfect in every good work to do his will
Romans 8:3	What the law could not do in the flesh, God accomplished through his Son — NC basis for sanctification
Romans 9:15	“I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy” — God’s sovereign right to establish the Dispensation of Grace
1 Corinthians 10:16	The cup of blessing is the communion of the blood of Christ; the bread the communion of his body
1 Corinthians 11:26	“Ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come” — the impact dimension of the Lord’s Table
1 Corinthians 2:6–8	Princes of this world crucified the Lord of glory in ignorance of the hidden wisdom
Ephesians 3:7–12	Making known the manifold wisdom of God unto principalities and powers through the church
Colossians 2:10–15	Christ triumphing over principalities and powers, making an open shew of them through the cross
1 Timothy 5:21	Elect angels as witnesses — the Lord’s Table observed before the angelic realm
Genesis 12:1–3	The Abrahamic Covenant — the land covenant; distinct from what the New Covenant provides
Exodus 15	Water of Marah — the foundational trial proving Israel’s natural spiritual unfitness under Law

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