

Mystery of Godliness

Lesson 10 — The New Covenant, Communion & the Dispensation of Grace | Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summary

About This Lesson

Lesson 10 of Keith Blades’ series “The New Covenant, Communion & the Dispensation of Grace” concludes the ten-lesson new covenant section by revealing why the New Covenant has three components of sanctification — because godliness itself has three components. Drawing from Genesis 1–26, Jeremiah 31, 2 Corinthians 3 and 6, and 1 Corinthians 2, Keith establishes that God’s original purpose in creating man was to produce a godly creature: one who thinks like God, acts like God, and labors with God in what He is doing. Each component of New Covenant sanctification is designed to restore exactly one of those three features of godliness. The lesson defines the mystery of godliness (1 Timothy 3:16) as God privileging Gentiles — in this dispensation of grace — with the issue of being godly. It closes with a preview of the next section: communion and the impact we make upon the angelic realm by observing the Lord’s table.



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Lesson at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 10	Three components of New Covenant sanctification correspond exactly to the three components of godliness; the mystery of godliness defined

Lesson Summary

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Mystery of Godliness *Sanctification, Godliness & What God Created Man For*

The Fundamental Problem: What Is Sanctification FOR? (Genesis 2:3; 1:26)

- The first use of “sanctify” in Scripture: God sanctified the seventh day (Genesis 2:3) — set it apart for His use; that is the definition of sanctification: to be set apart unto God for His use
- The key question is: what is God’s original intended USE for man? That is what sanctification restores the individual to
- Genesis 1:26 — “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” — God-likeness is godliness; God created man to be a godly creature
 - Three components of godliness: (1) to think like God does, (2) to act like God

does — doing righteous, holy, just things like God does, (3) to labor with God in what He is doing

- Man sinned — became ungodly; Romans 1:18–32 — three times Paul says “God gave them up,” corresponding to the three components of ungodliness: not thinking like God, not doing things like God, not laboring with God
- Sanctification sets the individual apart for God’s original use — to be godly — and since there are three components to godliness, there are exactly three components to New Covenant sanctification

Component 1: Heart Writing — To Think Like God Does (Jeremiah 31:33; 2 Corinthians 3:2–3)

- Jeremiah 31:33 — “I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts” — the first component of New Covenant sanctification provides for the first feature of godliness
- 2 Corinthians 3:2–3 — “Ye are the epistle of Christ... written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone but in fleshy tables of the heart” — the Holy Spirit writes the epistle of Christ on the believer’s heart in this dispensation of grace
 - The “law” written on the heart is not the Mosaic law — it is the law of righteousness, the law of Christ, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 6–8) — the standard of right thinking in God’s program today
- 2 Corinthians 10:3–5 — “Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” — the adversary wages war specifically against this because it produces God-likeness and makes an impact in the heavenly places

Component 2: God Dwelling and Walking In You — To Act Like God Does (2 Corinthians 6:16)

- 2 Corinthians 6:16 — “Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people”
- Not merely residing — actively walking in you so that what is seen is God walking around in you and what you do are the things He does; this is the second feature of godliness: acting like God does
 - Walking after the Spirit = doing things like God does; carnality = walking like mere men; Paul’s reproof to the Corinthians is that they were walking like men, not like God
- “I will be their God and they shall be my people” — the covenant intimacy that provides for this second component: the Holy Spirit dwelling and walking in the believer produces God-likeness in conduct

Component 3: Knowing the Lord — To Labor With God In What He Is Doing (1 Corinthians 2:10–16; Jeremiah 31:34)

- Jeremiah 31:34 — “They shall teach no more every man his neighbor... Know the Lord” — the third component of New Covenant sanctification: an intimacy of knowledge of what God is doing in His program
- 1 Corinthians 2:10–12 — “The Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God... that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God” — the Holy Spirit given to us reveals what God is doing and why
- 1 Corinthians 2:16 — “We have the mind of Christ” — taken into God’s privy council; the deepest form of intimacy of fellowship: knowing what He is thinking and doing so we can labor with Him in it
 - Exodus 33:12–13 — Moses: “Show me now thy way, that I may know thee” — he

knew God existed and was justified before Him, but needed to know God's ways and program to labor with Him appropriately

- In Israel's program this knowledge will enable the remnant to labor with God in establishing the kingdom; in this dispensation, the revelation of the mystery of Christ (the hidden wisdom of God) gives us what we need to labor with God in what He is doing today

The Mystery of Godliness Defined (1 Timothy 3:16; 1 Timothy 1:3–4)

- 1 Timothy 3:16 — “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness” — the mystery of godliness is God in this dispensation of grace privileging Gentiles with the issue of being godly
- In times past, Gentiles were without God in the world — consigned to ungodliness; God was with Israel, working toward a godly nation; godliness was not an issue with us Gentiles
- Now, by New Covenant sanctification received by grace through faith, God has made every component of godliness an issue with us in this dispensation of grace: justified and sanctified, we think like God, act like God, and labor with God in His program today
- 1 Timothy 1:3–4 — “Godly edifying which is in faith” — the purpose of sound doctrine in a local assembly: the edification of the saints unto godliness; the three-component package is what every aspect of Paul's teaching is designed to produce

Series Conclusion and Preview (2 Corinthians 3; Lesson 11 Preview)

- Lesson 10 closes the ten-lesson new covenant section — covering why a new covenant was needed, what it covenants for, how God had legal right to make Gentiles its beneficiaries, and what its three components of sanctification produce
- Paul was made an “able minister of the New Testament” (2 Corinthians 3) — the fuller appreciation of what that means deepens as the believer grows in godliness and experiences each component of sanctification
- Lesson 11 preview: communion in this dispensation of grace — why we observe the Lord's table, and the impact that observance makes upon the angelic realm

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Sanctification's Purpose: To Restore God's Original Use for Man

The most fundamental issue in sanctification is often missed because people don't first ask: what was God's original intended use for man? The answer is Genesis 1:26 — God created man to be godly: to think like He does, act like He does, and labor with Him in what He is doing. That is what God set man apart to do. When man sinned, that use was forfeited. Sanctification — being set apart unto God for His use — therefore means being made godly again. Every component of New Covenant sanctification is designed to restore exactly one of the three features of godliness that sin destroyed.

Three Components of Godliness = Three Components of Sanctification

The reason New Covenant sanctification has exactly three components is because godliness has exactly three. Component 1 — heart writing (Jeremiah 31:33; 2 Corinthians 3:2–3) — provides for thinking like God does. Component 2 — God dwelling and walking in you (2 Corinthians 6:16) — provides for acting like God does. Component 3 — knowing the Lord (Jeremiah 31:34; 1 Corinthians 2:10–16) — provides for laboring with God in what He is doing. Each component is received by grace through faith in this dispensation of grace — not by law performance.

The “Law” Written on the Heart Is Not the Mosaic Law

When Jeremiah 31:33 says “I will put my law in their inward parts,” the “law” is explicitly not after the old covenant (Jeremiah 31:32). Keith identifies it as the law of righteousness — the same term Paul uses in Romans 6–8 when he speaks of the law of Christ and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. It is the standard of right thinking and righteous conduct appropriate to God’s program — in Israel’s case, the program of the kingdom; in our case, the mystery program of this dispensation of grace.

The Mystery of Godliness: Gentiles Privileged with Godliness in This Dispensation

1 Timothy 3:16 declares “without controversy great is the mystery of godliness.” The mystery is not godliness itself — God always intended a godly nation (Israel) and a godly creature (man). The mystery is that in this dispensation of grace, Gentiles — who in times past were without God in the world and consigned to ungodliness — are now privileged with the full package of New Covenant sanctification and made godly creatures in Christ. This was never revealed before Paul; it is part of the hidden wisdom of God kept secret since the world began.

The Adversary Knows What Godliness in the Body of Christ Produces

2 Corinthians 10:3–5 describes a war being waged against the heart writing — the first component of sanctification. Keith notes that the adversary wages this war precisely because he understands what it produces: God-likeness in members of the church, the body of Christ, making an impact in the heavenly places upon his principalities, powers, mights, and dominions. The warfare is therefore not incidental; it is a direct counter-operation to the mystery of godliness being put on display. Appreciating this gives the believer a much deeper motivation for bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Key Scripture References

Genesis 1:26	"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" — the origin of godliness as God-likeness; God’s original intended use for man
Genesis 2:3	First use of “sanctify” in Scripture: God sanctified the seventh day — set apart for His use; defines what sanctification means
Romans 1:18–32	Wrath of God revealed against all ungodliness; three times “God gave them up” — corresponding to the three components of ungodliness

Jeremiah 31:32–34	New Covenant: not after the old covenant; heart writing (v.33); “They shall all know me” (v.34) — components 1 and 3 of sanctification
2 Corinthians 3:2–3	Epistle of Christ written by the Holy Spirit in fleshy tables of the heart — the heart writing component at work in this dispensation
2 Corinthians 6:16	“Ye are the temple of the living God; I will dwell in them and walk in them” — Component 2: God actively walking in the believer
2 Corinthians 10:3–5	Warfare against the knowledge of God; bringing every thought into captivity to Christ — the adversary’s counter-operation to heart writing
1 Corinthians 2:10–12, 16	The Spirit searches the deep things of God; given to us to know them; “We have the mind of Christ” — Component 3 at work
Exodus 33:12–13	Moses: “Show me now thy way, that I may know thee” — illustration of needing to know God’s program to labor with Him in it
1 Timothy 1:3–4	“Godly edifying which is in faith” — the purpose of sound doctrine; the three-component godliness package is what Paul’s teaching produces
1 Timothy 3:16	“Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness” — God privileging Gentiles with the issue of being godly in this dispensation of grace

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