



GRACE-LOVE-TRUTH COURSE.

PART 2B:THE NEW COVENANT

www.gracelovetruth.com

PART 2B: THE NEW COVENANT

INDEX

3. MINISTERS OF A NEW COVENANT

- 3.1 MINISTERS OF TRUE SPIRITUAL LIFE
- 3.2 SCRIPTURES THROUGH THE EYES OF THE NEW COVENANT
- 3.3 MINISTERS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD
- 3.4 IT IS GOD'S GOODNESS THAT LEADS TO REPENTANCE
- 3.5 WHAT ABOUT THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?
- 3.6 THE NEW COVENANT IS NOT A MIXTURE OF LAW AND GRACE
- 3.7 OUR PUNISHMENT AND AFFLICTIONS ARE ON JESUS
 - I) THE OLD COVENANT
 - II) THE NEW COVENANT

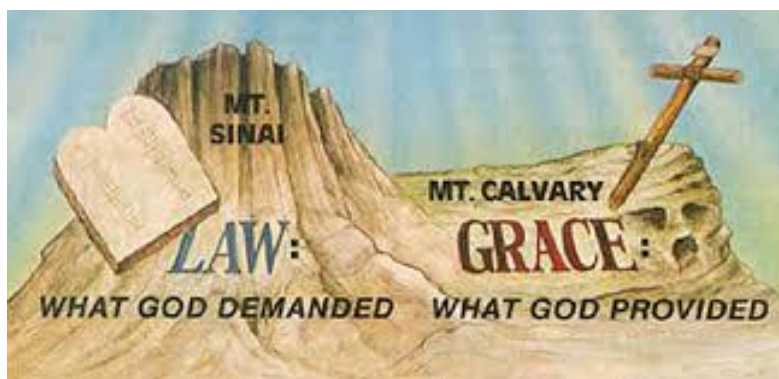
4. COMMUNION IS A CELEBRATION OF THE NEW COVENANT

- 4.1 COMMUNION CELEBRATES GOOD NEWS
- 4.2 IT IS A CELEBRATION OF GRACE
- 4.4 NO ONE IS WORTHY, EXCEPT BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH
- 4.5 WE CELEBRATE NEW COVENANT HOLINESS
- 4.3 IT IS A REMINDER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, NOT OF OUR SINS
- 4.6 NEW COVENANT HEALTH FOR ALL WHO BELIEVE
 - 4.6.1 LAW-BASED COMMUNION BRINGS DEATH
 - 4.6.2 WHY ARE SO MANY SICK?
- 4.7 THE NEW COVENANT OF LOVE
- 4.8 GROUP WORK

5. GROUP EXERCISE AND QUESTIONS.

3. MINISTERS OF A NEW COVENANT

2 Corinthians 3:3-9. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone [The Ten Commandments] but on tablets of human hearts. Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter [The Law of Moses] kills, but the Spirit gives life. Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone [The Ten Commandments were written on tablets of stone], came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!



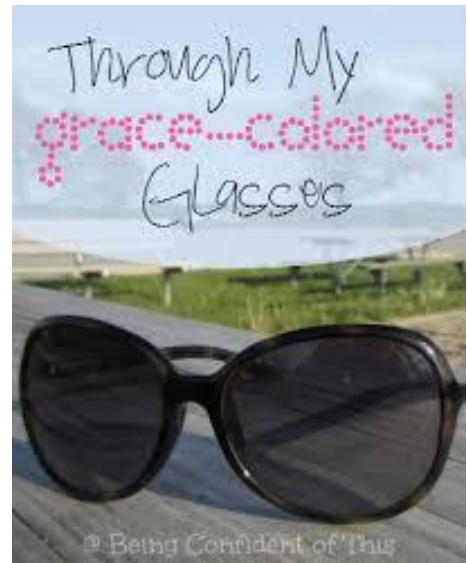
3.1 MINISTERS OF TRUE SPIRITUAL LIFE

The New Testament is strong on the fact that we are ministers of the New Covenant of the grace of Jesus Christ and not of the Old Covenant of the Law. We are called to preach the good news of Jesus Christ, the cross, forgiveness for sins, blessings and His grace. This is what brings about true spiritual life that changes people and the world around us. When preaching in synagogues, Paul taught from the Law and the Prophets to reveal Jesus. However we have no record of him ever preaching the Law and the Ten Commandments to convict sinners or Gentile unbelievers. Paul teaches (Romans 2:15) that it is the conscience of Gentile sinners that has already convicted them of sin - not the Ten Commandments. The above Scriptures clearly state that the Ten Commandments are a ministry of death and condemnation and the opposite of the New Covenant Ministry of the Spirit which reveals Righteousness in Christ. This spiritual life and the terms of the New Covenant are unique to Christianity and they are the good news that we are to proclaim.

3.2 SCRIPTURES THROUGH THE EYES OF THE NEW COVENANT

John 5:38-39 Nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me.

The Scriptures take on a completely different meaning for those reading them under the Old Covenant of the Law and those reading them under the New Covenant of grace. It goes without saying that the way you read a contract or agreement depends on what party you are to that contract or agreement. The Law was made between Israel and God. When you place yourself under the Law, your purpose in reading Scripture will then become to understand the laws, principle, statutes, rules and regulation that you need to fulfil to uphold your side of the agreement. The Bible then becomes a rule book. On the other hand, the New Covenant of grace was made between God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. For those who have been included in Christ by grace through faith, all the requirements of the New Covenant were fulfilled on the cross (Galatians 2:20). Our purpose in reading the Bible then becomes to see Jesus, His New Covenant and the good news of His grace. It is no longer a book of rules but instead a love story about relationship between God, His Son, His beloved children in



Christ and the kingdom He has prepared for them. As New Covenant believers, when we read the Old Testament we must now read it on the basis that all the conditions have been fulfilled by Christ. Where people were punished for sin, we now see that punishment on Jesus, where people were cursed for disobedience, we now see the curse on Jesus, where people got sick because of sin, we see health through Jesus', and where people were disqualified because of sin we see Jesus as our qualification. This is the good news of God's grace - but, be warned it is offensive to those who want to do it by themselves. We now read the Old Testament with a new mindset, always pointing to Jesus as our fulfilment of the Old Testaments and its conditions. It is no longer about "We must", but now it is about "Jesus has."

3.3 MINISTERS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The relationship of the New Covenant in regard to the Kingdom of God is as follows: Jesus is the King who reigns and rules. Born Again believers are the citizens and ambassadors of the kingdom. The constitution of the kingdom is the New Covenant. The system of governance is God's grace. The

Administrator of the Kingdom is the Holy Spirit. The Law of the Kingdom is love. The manifesto of the kingdom is glory to God and salvation for mankind.

3.4 IT IS GOD'S GOODNESS THAT LEADS TO REPENTANCE

Romans 2:4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?

Under the New Covenant it is the goodness and love of God and not the Law of Moses that leads to true repentance and changed lives. The key issue is that we are now ministers of life that comes through preaching Jesus and His grace, not ministers of the Law that brings death and condemnation.

Can you find any incidents in the New Testament that would bear this out? List as many as you can find:

3.5 WHAT ABOUT THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?

Eph 2:14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, Eph 2:15 by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace....

Paul is clear that the Law is dead to New Covenant believers and ministers (Ephesians 2:15) and the Ten Commandments are not part of our ministry. He states that a ministry that preaches the Ten Commandments brings death and



condemnation, not life. Maybe this is why so many of us are sick and so many are dying? Admittedly, a ministry preaching Law may have some glory, just like Moses had some glory, but it was fading. I have always been puzzled as to why over the years we have seen revivals, healings, anointing, moves of the Spirit just fading away after a while (2 Corinthians 3:11). This is because we start off in the Spirit but often end up mixing Law with the grace the Spirit brings, and where there is Law, the glory

fades because Law is based on our performance and self-effort which we just cannot keep up. Law gives glory to man, grace gives glory to God (more on the Law in part 3).

Although we are not ministers of the Ten Commandments (Law), there are time that they can be used to show the proud and self righteous that they fall short of God's holiness and like everyone else need to be saved. This is the correct and good use of the Law.

3.6 THE NEW COVENANT IS NOT A MIXTURE OF LAW AND GRACE

Most of us have grown up hearing a gospel that is a mixed message of Law and grace which teaches that we are saved by grace but have to live by Law, rules, regulations and methods instead of in grace, by the Spirit and the Word. Because of this mixed gospel many believers are experiencing the bad fruit of the Law , which is condemnation, death, spiritual dryness, a lack of joy, a sense of never being worthy, guilt, fear, ill health, very few miracles, minor signs, and little wonder, no passion (2 Corinthians 3:7).

Mixing grace and Law is robbing the Church of her true inheritance. Law-based Christianity is killing churches and believers all over the world and driving people away from God as they can never make the grade, they always fall short and they burn out trying to prove themselves through "doing" for God. The good news is that we are righteous in Christ and blessed by Jesus' grace (John 1:16-17). Grace is the way to overcome all the sin and evil we see around us (Titus 2:11-12). We live in an amazing time when the Holy Spirit is bringing us into a full understanding of the power of the cross and that Jesus is our all in all. Not only are we saved by grace, but as God's beloved children, we live in grace. We are not ashamed of this gospel of the grace of Jesus Christ. This is the gospel that has power (Romans 1:16) to revitalize the church, change people and change the world.

3.7 OUR PUNISHMENT AND AFFLICTIONS ARE ON JESUS

Isaiah 30:20 Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them.
(this is from the Old Covenant),

Because of the cross, what was true under the Old Covenant of the Law is no longer true for those under the New Covenant of grace, especially with regard to God afflicting us and punishing us.



a) THE OLD COVENANT

Under this old agreement no one was born again, no one was called a child of God, no one was filled with the Spirit. Prophets had to hear God for people, priests had to present prayers on people's behalf. Righteousness was based on good works and perfect Law keeping. Under the Covenant of the Law of Moses God's judgment and wrath against sin and self righteousness resulted in death, sickness, affliction by evil spirits, punishment and curses (Deuteronomy 28) coming upon those who sinned, backslid, rebelled and disobeyed. This continued until such time as they repented and turned back to God. Adversity, affliction, sickness and hardship was used to train God's people (Isaiah 30:20). It wasn't good news, as Israel's history proved, they never made the grade and suffered greatly for it (Romans 9:30-10:4).

b) THE NEW COVENANT

Under this new agreement, believers are born again and are a new creation, we are children of God, the Holy Spirit permanently lives in us, we have a personal relationship with God, we hear Him and He hears us when we pray. Our righteousness is Jesus and is imputed to us by faith. Our sins are forgiven and



forgotten and we now also have the power to say no to sin. We do good works because we are under grace and not to get right with God. Our punishment for sin and curses were taken by Jesus on the cross. God now trains and teaches us through the Holy Spirit and by the Scriptures not through adversity, affliction and sickness.

So what is the bread of adversity and the water of affliction in a New Covenant sense? Simple, we point to Jesus. His body suffered adversity and affliction for our sake and it becomes for us the bread of adversity and affliction, and thus the bread of Life as the crushed grain of the bread reminds us of His crushing, suffering and death (Isa.53) for us so that we could have His life now – that is why we regularly celebrate communion. When Jesus was afflicted on the cross by the spear in His side water flowed out along with the blood, this becomes for us the water of affliction.

To walk in victory it is critical for us to be clear which covenant we are under, otherwise we will wrongly believe that God is cursing us, God is making us sick or God is giving us poverty so as to teach us and train us. We then justify our afflictions by Scriptures taken from the Old Testament and

a obsolete covenant that we are not under, instead of looking to Christ and the cross. We then call Satan's works, God's work and wrongly suffer instead of standing firm in Christ against Satan's schemes (Ephesians 6:11). If you believe you are being afflicted, are sick, are poor and are depressed because your loving Heavenly Father is punishing you or training you, ask the Holy Spirit to show you if this is really true. Receive freedom and blessings in Christ by the grace of God (Romans 1:16).

4. COMMUNION IS A CELEBRATION OF THE NEW COVENANT

Luke 22:17-20 After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

We are called to celebrate the New Covenant that came through the shedding of the blood of Jesus and the punishment of his body. Jesus said we should remember his death and celebrate his death. Why? Because he died in our place, so it's good news for us, it's something to celebrate and be thankful for.

4.1 COMMUNION CELEBRATES GOOD NEWS

Under grace, the Lord's Table (communion) becomes central to Christian life, as it is a focus on the finished and all sufficient work of the cross and Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 2.2). The Lord's Table is a celebration of the good news of the New Covenant. It is a spiritual party and feast! It is a remembrance of the grace that came through the cross. It is a remembrance of Jesus' death that has made us righteous, i.e. right standing and relationship to God. It is not a remembrance of the Old Covenant and Law. It is not a remembrance of our sins, it is not a remembrance of our unworthiness.



4.2 IT IS A CELEBRATION OF GRACE

Communion is a physical sign of God's gift of grace given through the New Covenant in the blood of Jesus. Having complete freedom to break bread and drink the cup of salvation together should be a central part of our fellowship. It is a celebration and reminder of the price Jesus paid to set us free from the Law and our slavery to sin. Communion is a wonderful reminder that God himself suffered and died for us (1 Corinthians 11:26) so we may have a full abundant, grace-filled, life. It is a reminder that we are to trust only in grace for our righteousness and not ourselves. The cross of Christ is the only thing that qualifies us in God's eyes and that is good news, as it takes the pressure of performance off us, as grace is free and without condition to all who would believe.

4.3 IT IS A REMINDER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, NOT OF OUR SINS

1 Corinthians 1:30 Christ Jesus has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

Communion is a reminder of our righteousness in Christ and not of our past sinful condition or our present failings. When we come to the Lord's communion table we have to examine and judge ourselves to ensure that we are in belief - belief as to the finished work of the cross. We are to be focussed on Christ's righteousness imputed to us by faith, and not on our sins. God declares that He has already forgiven us and remembers our sins no more, we must not make Him out to be a liar by denying this by being sin conscious all the time (more on the forgiveness of all sin in part 4). We have to judge ourselves as to if we believe that His body broken and His blood shed on the cross was sufficient and that He has purified us from all sin and made us righteous, once and for all time.

Sometimes we erroneously believe that the work of the cross has to be added to? We do this by thinking on, or accounting as credit before God, our good works, confession of sins, devotion time, prayers, and Bible reading time, etc. (these are good but not when offered to God as credit). If we come to communion with this mindset of adding to the work of the cross we make a mockery of the sufficiency and finished work of Christ's suffering and death. The sin of unbelief in the finished work of the cross is the sin we need to deal with. Moral sin is the fruit of unbelief and the Law.

Interestingly the Scriptures teach that it is the Holy Spirit who convicts us of this unbelief (John 16:9).

4.4 NO ONE IS WORTHY, EXCEPT BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

Isaiah 64:6, (KJV) But we are all as the unclean thing, and all our (self) righteousness's are as a menstruation cloth.

Only the righteousness and holiness that Christ imputes to us is good enough for God. Even as believers, any righteousness or holiness that we bring based on our good or bad actions and works is

still like filthy rags to God (Isa.64:6). We can only take communion in a worthy way by relying on the imputed holiness of Jesus given to us by grace (more about righteousness in part 5).

4.5 WE CELEBRATE NEW COVENANT HOLINESS

Hebrews 4:16, "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence."

Many feel they cannot partake of the Lord's Table because they are not "holy" or worthy enough.

This is a lie and a deception! The simple truth is that no one is worthy to take communion if they

focus on their actions and sins instead of on Christ's

righteousness freely given and received by faith (1

Corinthians 1:30). Sadly many believers judge their

holiness by comparing themselves with others. If we

think we are holy because of the way we live and think -

and the brother next to us is not because he has been

sinning, then we have become self-righteous and are in

danger of becoming Pharisees. If we judge ourselves by

our actions and thoughts instead of who we are in Christ

then we are still lost in sin. However if we rightly judge ourselves as righteous and holy in Christ we

can approach God's throne boldly, as for us it has become the throne of grace and no longer the

throne of judgement (Hebrews 4:16). We all know that as believers our daily actions may still fall

short of God's holiness - we all continue to miss the mark to some degree, but this is no longer the

issue with our Abba Father. He no longer relate to us according to our sin or sinlessness, but purely

through Christ. God sees all believers as righteous in Christ. The fruit of knowing Jesus is (His)

holiness - however if we think we are better than others then we deceive ourselves. We cannot

come to the Lord's table with a superior attitude but only with humbleness, knowing that only grace

is sufficient. It's exactly in this situation that the good and proper purpose of the Law comes into

effect as the Law always show us we fall short and cannot rely on our holiness based on our actions

but only true holiness given to us (imputed) by Jesus. Anyone coming to the Lord's Table claiming to

be holy on a comparison or works basis is coming in an unworthy manner that dishonours the work

Jesus did on the cross.



4.6 NEW COVENANT HEALTH FOR ALL WHO BELIEVE

1 Corinthians 11:25-27 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. "Therefore, whoever eats

the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.

Interestingly, this is the only place in New Testament where it explains why Christians are sick and dying. This is a teaching on health and sickness that revolves that around The Lord's Table. It is critical that we consider this carefully and have a clear understanding of what it is saying, as this is one of the keys to health. To state the obvious; our Abba Father does not want to harm us because we have acted irreverently or in a wrong way during communion. Sadly many have been taught exactly this. False teachers imply that very thing that represents and brings life actually brings sickness - that is simple wrong! We believers are children of a good and loving Heavenly Father who cares for us and calls us His beloved children. Under the New Covenant God never, ever inflicts sickness on His beloved children.

4.6.1 LAW-BASED COMMUNION BRINGS DEATH

The Old Covenant of the Law brought sickness if one did not perform (Deuteronomy 28) – it is bad news. Coming to the Lord's Table with a law and works mindset and belief system is spiritually dangerous. Law and grace cannot be mixed. Grace plus law equals law and law produces death! The Scripture 2 Corinthians 3:6-17 is clear that the Law cause death and we all know that death normally comes through sickness. The context of 2 Corinthians, including the teachings on the Lord's Table, is that law based Christianity denies the work of the cross, brings death, ill health and condemnation and we need to free ourselves from the law and the dead works it requires and trust only in grace! (more on the Law in part 3).

4.6.2 WHY ARE SO MANY SICK?

There is huge controversy over the issue of sickness among believers and it is not the purpose of this course to address this issue in detail. However, the reality is that many believers are weak and sick and grace is the solution to this. As we look briefly at the relationship between health and grace we need to clarify that people are not sick because they have not confessed their sins or not dealt with some relational issue and thus been afflicted by God. There are many causes of sickness,



the main one being the fallen creation we live in and the over busyness and stresses of modern life. However the scriptures indicated that one of the possible reasons that some believers are not gaining victory in their health is because they cannot accept the full sufficiency of the cross for them personally and are unable to enter into the rest of grace. Many take communion in an unworthy manner because they think Jesus' bloody body, crushed, broken and spat upon was not enough for their full salvation, sanctification, justification, healing and righteousness. Sometimes we do not live in health because we find it hard to believe that Jesus did enough to earn it for us on the cross. Deep down we are in the "unbelief" as to our worthiness and this manifests in ill health. When we live under condemnation we sub consciously believe we deserve to be punished for our sins or lack of performance for God. Sickness can be a fruit of this wrong belief. Sadly my experience as a pastor has shown that many sick people often feel they need to do something to earn their healing and they desperately try to make bargains with God instead of simply resting in his love and grace. Believers who come to the Lord's Table in an unworthy manner means simply that they have not rested from their own dead works (Hebrews 4:9), law keeping and sin and condemnation consciousness. Often guilt, stress, busyness, anger and negativity overwhelms their lives and depression and sickness is the fruit. Every loving father wants to see his children well and healthy, how much more so with Abba! Trusting him, and abiding and resting in grace and the finished work of the cross leads to good mental and physical health.

4.7 THE NEW COVENANT OF LOVE

Jesus, the exact image and representation of God, always healed and never ever wished sickness on anyone. No earthly father would do such terrible unloving thing to his children, how much less so would the God, who bore our sin and diseases in His own body on the cross. So let us treat any teaching or belief that God afflicts and disciplines us through sickness with the contempt it deserves understanding that it is not valid for those under the New Covenant. Regularly celebrating at the Lord's Table will in fact bring us increased health as it will remind us of what was won for us on the cross and by the stripes of Jesus!



4.8 GROUP WORK

During the group time, discuss the following statement and Scriptures in light of the teachings of covenant and how we can apply them both in our own lives and when proclaiming the good news to the lost. Discuss any other pertinent points that these teachings have highlighted.

"The New Covenant is reconciliation between man and God and the time of grace."

Colossians 1:20, "Through Jesus, God has reconciled to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation."

Ephesians 1:7, "In Jesus we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace."

5. GROUP EXERCISE QUESTIONS:

- 5.1 What is a covenant and how is it ratified?
- 5.2 What covenant are Christians under?
- 5.3 Describe the basic terms of this covenant.
- 5.4 What covenant was Abraham under?
- 5.5 When did the covenant of the Law start?
- 5.6 What covenant was Israel under prior to the Law?
- 5.7 When did the New Covenant start?
- 5.8 who or what is the principle focus of the New Covenant?
- 5.9 What was God's response to sin under the Old Covenant of the Law?
- 5.10 What is his response under the new covenant? Can you think of a scripture to back up your answer?
- 5.11 How does one enter into the New Covenant?
- 5.12 Are we all ministers, if so what do we minister?
- 5.13 What leads people to true repentance. Can you quote a scripture. How do you feel about this?
- 5.14 What are other names for "The Lord's Table"?
- 5.15 Write a paragraph on what "The Lord's Table" is about.
- 5.16 Write a paragraph on grace and the New Covenant and share it in your group.

Now that we have laid the foundation of the New Covenant, established that we are only under the terms and conditions of the New Covenant, which is grace, and explained the difference between the Old and New Covenants, next we will look at the Law of the Old Covenant and explain its actual purpose and application