

PART 2. THE VICTORY OF THE NEW COVENANT

SCRIPTURE—Jeremiah 31: ³³ 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. ³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

I. GOD’S UNILATERAL AFFIRMATION IN THE NEW COVENANT

Note: A unilateral [SINGLE] contract **involves only the promisor** [UNCONDITIONAL] while a bilateral contract **involves both a promisor and a promise** [CONDITIONAL]

⇒ **Old Covenant (Bilateral)**

- ❖ **Deuteronomy 30:15–18**, “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. **IF YOU OBEY** the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and **THE LORD YOUR GOD WILL BLESS YOU** in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. **BUT IF YOUR HEART TURNS AWAY**, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today, that **YOU SHALL SURELY PERISH**. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess.

⇒ **New Covenant (Unilateral)**

SCRIPTURE—Jeremiah 31: ³³ 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. ³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For **I WILL** forgive their iniquity, and **I WILL** remember their sin no more.”

- ❖ **Again in Jeremiah 32:39-41**, **I WILL** give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. **I WILL** make with them an everlasting covenant, that **I WILL NOT** turn away from doing good to them. And **I WILL** put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. **I WILL** rejoice in doing them good. (cf. Eze. 11:19; 36:26-27)

John Piper: God is taking the sovereign initiative to make sure that the covenant succeeds. God will not leave it finally in the power of the fallen human will to attain or sustain membership in the new covenant. He will give a new heart—a heart that fears the Lord. **It will be decisively God’s doing, not man’s.** And he will act in this covenant so that “they may not turn

from me” (Jer. 32:40). Thus John Owen comments, “This then is one main difference of these two covenants—that the Lord did in the old only require the condition; now, in the new, he will also effect it in all the federates, to whom this covenant is extended.”

Application: Are we grateful to God for His New Covenant who promised initiation to choose us for His transforming work in us?

Matthew Smith song:

My Lord I did not choose You
For that could never be
My heart would still refuse You
Had You not chosen me

You took the sin that stained me
Cleansed me, made me new
Of old You have ordained me
That I should live in You

*My Lord I did not choose You
For that could never be
My heart would still refuse You
Had You not chosen me*

Unless Your grace had called me
And taught my opening mind
The world would have enthralled me
To heavenly glories blind

*My Lord I did not choose You
For that could never be
My heart would still refuse You
Had You not chosen me*

My heart knows none above You
For Your rich grace I thirst
I know that if I love You
You must have loved me first

*My Lord I did not choose You
For that could never be
My heart would still refuse You
Had You not chosen me (2)*

2. GOD'S REGENERATION IN THE NEW COVENANT

SCRIPTURE—Jeremiah 31: ³³ 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.

Read the following:

- ❖ **Jeremiah 13:23**, Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then also you can do good who are accustomed to do evil.
- ❖ **Jeremiah 17:1**, The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron; with a point of diamond it is engraved on the tablet of their heart...

What is the hope of change?

- ❖ **Jeremiah 31:** ³³ 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.

Christopher Wright: “God’s own gift of repentance and obedience.” [REGENERATION]

- We believe because God gives us faith.
- We repent because God gives us repentance.
- We obey because God gives us obedience.

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758): “I think the difference here pointed out between these two covenants, lies plainly here, that **in the old covenant God promised to be their God upon condition of hearty obedience**; obedience was stipulated as a condition, but not promised. **But in the new covenant, this hearty obedience is promised.**”

Comment: IN THE OLD COVENANT THE LAW WAS ADMINISTERED EXTERNALLY. IN THE NEW COVENANT THE LAW IS INFUSED INTERNALLY.

THIS NEW COVENANT IS FULFILLED IN CHRIST JESUS:

- ❖ **Titus 3:3-7**, For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, **HE SAVED US**, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according **TO HIS OWN MERCY**, by the washing of regeneration (**NEW BIRTH**) and renewal (**NEW LIFE**) of the Holy Spirit, **WHOM HE** poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified **BY HIS GRACE** we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (cf. Romans 8:1-4)

❖ **2 Corinthians 3:3**, And you show that you are a **letter from Christ** delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, **not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.** (CHRIST WROTE ON THEIR HEARTS WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD)

- **Hear again, “I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.”**

John Calvin: The New Covenant “penetrates into the heart and reforms all the inward faculties, so that obedience is rendered to the righteousness of God.”

Philip Graham Ryken: For the Christian, obedience to the Law is not a prior condition for entering the New Covenant. Rather, it is one of the promised blessings of the New Covenant.

The evidence of God’s regeneration:

❖ **1 John 3:9-10**, No one born of God makes a practice of sinning (sinful lifestyle), **FOR GOD’S SEED ABIDES IN HIM**; and he cannot keep on sinning, **BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN BORN OF GOD. BY THIS IT IS EVIDENT** who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

Note: If you are a partaker of the New Covenant and a genuine believer in the Lord, the pursuit of righteousness and love for your brothers and sisters in Christ is a natural phenomenon because God’s seed abides in you.

Caution:

⇒ This doesn’t mean that believers won’t sin, but their hearts would be broken for sinning against God.

⇒ This doesn’t mean that believers do not require teaching on holy living, but their hearts are spurred to live a holy life through the exhortation of God’s Word.

Note: THE HEART THAT GOD GIVES IN THE NEW COVENANT IS NOT THE HEART THAT IS PERFECT BUT A HEART THAT COULD CHANGE.

Mark this: Under the Old Covenant, people were persistently disobedient with stubborn hearts; under the New Covenant people are increasingly obedient with broken hearts.

Application: Are we grateful to God’s regenerating work in our lives? Are we evidencing God’s regeneration in our lives?