

## The New Covenant: Lesson 9

We have completed the reference to the New Covenant at the last Passover, first Communion in Matthew, Mark and Luke.

We now come to the important reference to the New Covenant by Paul in 1 Corinthians 11; but remember we have covered the first two points on why the New Covenant is mentioned in the New Testament. Both from the eschatological passage.

Matthew 8:11

<sup>11</sup> **"I say to you that many will come from east and west, (Gentiles) and recline *at the table* with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven;**

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I. This verse speaks of Gentiles from all periods of history will sit at this table in the Kingdom of Heaven.

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II. Abraham is the father of all those who believe in JESUS CHRIST as Savior whether Jew or Gentile, regardless of the dispensation.

Romans 4:11

<sup>11</sup> **and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited/imputed to them,**

(and verse 16)

<sup>16</sup> **For this reason *it is* by faith, in order that *it may be* in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,**

The table of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is to include all Israel with whom the New Covenant is made. Believers of all ages—Jews and Gentiles—are assembled together with Israel in the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

**For this reason,  
the New Covenant is mentioned  
in the Eucharist of the Church Age.**

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- III. The New Covenant is mentioned at the Eucharist of the Church Age because there is a direct– theological relationship between the Lord’s Supper of the Church Age and the Ultimate fulfillment when we will all recline in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

<sup>23</sup> **For I** (Paul now note back to verse 17... *but in giving this instruction*) **I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread;** (Last Passover, First Communion)

24 **and when He had given thanks, (*eucharisteo*) He broke it and said, "This is My body, (representation, not identification) which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."**

Remembering here refers to Past, Present and Future.

25 **In the same way *He took* the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me."**

So we come to the question as to why JESUS CHRIST, in instructing Paul, mentions the New Covenant.

The real issue is given in the next verse.

26 **For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.**

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- 1 We have well seen from the Old Testament that the New Covenant is not for the Church, but for Israel in the Millennial Kingdom

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  - 2 The New Covenant was **Promised** in the Old Testament, Jeremiah 31:31-35

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  - 3 The New Covenant was **ratified** at the death of JESUS CHRIST –by His blood

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  - 4 The New Covenant will be **enacted** at the setting up of the Millennial Kingdom.

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  - 5 The Church Age is not the Age of Israel, there is no replacement theology.

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6 But to remind the Church that it is not the end of the Plan of God; but history is climaxed with the glorification of Israel, with the Son of David, Son of God, Son of Man sitting on the throne in the Kingdom—and to keep the Church oriented to this fact in the Plan of God, JESUS CHRIST made the New Covenant part of the Communion Table, to be constant reminder of the glory of Israel that yet to come.

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7 Every time any member of the Church Age celebrates the Eucharist, it is a reminder (**do this in remembrance of me... until He comes**); that JESUS CHRIST has come and died and risen; and a reminder that He is coming again, to enact the New Covenant—glorifying His people: Israel. **For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.** (With His death is the **ratification** of the New Covenant and with His coming is the **Enactment** of the New Covenant.

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8 So important to JESUS CHRIST is the **enactment** of the New Covenant that He desires the Church to remember it and to look forward to its **enactment**.

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Now we come to what appears to be a most complex point on the New Covenant in the New Testament.

By way of introduction, do not read more into this passage than what it says. It is amazing the first and most important lesson in Systematic Bible Study; in exegesis is **Observation:**

**What does the passage say?**

The three steps are

## **Observation, Interpretation and then Application.**

You might be surprised at the number of ‘**scholars**’ who fail on **Observation**, by reading into the text what it does not say.

They then start ‘**sound interpretation**’!

The only problem is that is not what the text says.

You have to ask yourself two key questions:

**What does the text say?**

**What does the text not say?**

So many see what is not in the text,  
And, therefore, the rise of false doctrines.

Then you have the Three Major Rules in Exegesis:

**Context • Context • Context**

**What is the *context* of the passage?**

And one final rule:

**Effective Bible Study requires asking the right Questions.**

Questions that will be important in our study of  
**2 Corinthians 3:5**

**WHO IS TALKING?**

**WHAT IS HE SAYING?**

**WHAT IS HE NOT SAYING?**

**WHY IS HE TEACHING WHAT HE IS TEACHING?**

2 Corinthians 3:4-6

4 **Such confidence we have through Christ toward God.**

5 **Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as *coming* from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,**

6 **who also made us adequate *as* servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.**

Paul is teaching all believers on being adequate to serve the Lord.

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## I. Confidence in **Christ**

And he starts out with our position in Christ

Verse 4

**Such confidence we have through Christ toward God.**

Here is the application of a passage we often use for Salvation.

John 14:6

**Jesus \*said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.**

And while this is certainly true in reference to Eternal Salvation, it is also true in our Spiritual Lives each day.

And to complete the concept of these words this is the only way of coming to God the Father for all eternity.

	Phase one:
	<b>Salvation, being Justified by God the Father is through JESUS CHRIST.</b>
	Phase two:
	<b>Living the Spiritual Life is by our position in Christ</b>
	Phase three:
	<b>No one lives with God the Father for all eternity except through JESUS CHRIST.</b>

**PRINCIPLE:**

**As long as you are in Christ by Faith in JESUS CHRIST  
you can have confidence throughout your life  
that you can come to God the Father.**

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## II. Our Adequacy from **God**.

Verse 5 **Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as *coming* from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,**

This is most important in mentioning the New Covenant.

The call of Christian Living requires a power beyond the ordinary. It cannot be lived by all the natural abilities we have no matter your IQ or your physical strength.

Observe:

Paul uses the all-inclusive **we**, referring to every believer throughout the Church Age. And he first points out that we are not qualified – we are not adequate in ourselves.

The word Paul uses to express adequacy is the Greek word for being **sufficient**. This goes back to the question in 2 Corinthians 2:16 **...who is sufficient—adequate for such things?**

And now Paul is answering that question.

We get the idea of word from the Marine slogan “are you able to be a marine” (how many push-ups can you do in one minute, etc.)

Well, Paul is addressing being **sufficient, adequate, competent**, being **worthy** to be a servant of God. Paul makes it clear that no one (we) is adequate in themselves ...by their first birth.

Many Preachers live by their own human abilities ...as **speakers, motivational speakers**, even ‘**thinkers**’ able to think through



things. Paul makes it clear that no one is adequate in themselves but our adequacy, “**our sufficiency is from God.**”

Our **natural lives** are limited by and often guided by our environment.

*(e.g. A person with a high IQ in the jungles of Africa, will not have the same advantages as a person with a high IQ here in America. A person with exceptional physical strength in parts of India will not have the same opportunities as one with exceptional strength in America. A person with average IQ but who is taught by exceptional teachers will have a great advantage in life.)*

The same is true of our **Spiritual Lives**. **Our Spiritual Life** must have a new food! And it must have a new source of strength.

**“the new man in Christ cannot live on the same mean as the old man in Adam.”**

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### III. Sufficient in the **Holy Spirit**.

This brings us to verse 6.

**who also made us adequate *as* servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.**

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- 1 One must be adequate to serve the Lord.

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  - 2 Our adequacy must come from God.

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  - 3 The Age of Israel was given the covenant of the Law – written outside of them, written on stone, and they did not keep the Mosaic covenant.

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- 4 They were not able to live up to the Old Covenant – Mosaic Law.
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- 5 So, in The New Covenant God supernaturally makes every Jew adequate, sufficient to serve Him in the Millennium where God will be their God and they will be His people.
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- 6 **GOD WILL MAKE THEM ADEQUATE, SUFFICIENT** by doing two things to every believing Jew.

First, He will supernaturally write His Word on their hearts and

Second, He will supernaturally give them the Indwelling and Filling of the Holy Spirit.

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- 7 Here in 2 Corinthians 3, Paul is looking at what will make them adequate to serve God and he sees one point **common** between a believer in the Church Age and the believing Jew in the Millennium. And that is the Power of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

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- 8 So, Paul declares that God **also made us adequate**.

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- 9 The first important point of grammar is to observe the use of the conjunction used to introduce *comparisons* **also**, emphasizing the adequacy and comparing us with another branch of servants; Servants of The New Covenant—we are also made adequate.

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- 10 **He made us adequate** This is the **AORIST ACTIVE INDICATIVE** referring to the act of God on each and every person who believes in JESUS CHRIST as Savior.

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The moment you believe in JESUS CHRIST as Savior, among the 34 things He does to us and for us is to make us **adequate**—The Greek verb combines two concepts: to be competent or adequate plus **to make.**

Therefore, it means that God supernaturally made each one of us at the point of Faith in Christ –God made us competent or adequate. This is part of making us a ‘**new man**’; **a new spiritual species.** He supernaturally made us competent or sufficient.

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11 Question:

*He made us adequate to do what?*

**As servants**

This is the Greek word for **minister, servant** or **deacon.**

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12 Question:

Ministers or servants of what?

**of a new covenant**

Here is where we must be observant of the original manuscript. It does not say, **servants of the new covenant** as the King James reads. There is no definite article before *New Covenant.*

Everywhere else in the New Testament when we have **New Covenant** it is preceded by the definite article.

In Luke 22:20 **the New Covenant;**

1 Corinthians 11:25 **This cup is The New Covenant;**

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But we must observe that there is no definite article here in 2 Corinthians 3:6

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13 So, we must understand the presence and absence of the definite article 'the' in Greek grammar.

Simply stated

the presence of the definite article 'identifies'.

The absence of the definite article 'qualifies'.

In Luke 22:20 and 1 Corinthians 11:25 the presence of the definite article identifies this as the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31.

But here in 2 Corinthians 3 with the absence of the definite article Paul is saying **who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant.**

Not The New Covenant but a New Covenant.

What Paul is doing here is making a point of what will be demanded in the New Covenant.

**Observe:** Paul is not saying that we are adequate as Servants of the New Covenant. We know we are not because we are not Jews and the New Covenant is for the Jews.

Paul is not saying that we have any part in the New Covenant in the Millennial reign of JESUS CHRIST.

Many people read this into what Paul is not saying.

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14 What Paul is saying is that we have the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives Life! So, we are

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adequate to live and serve God because of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

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- 15 There are many aspects of the **New Covenant** as we have studied in the Old Testament, but Paul is emphasizing that we are also Indwelt by the Holy Spirit and that qualifies us to serve God under the **quality of the New Covenant**.

The absence of the definite article emphasizes quality not identity.  
**Paul is teaching that we are qualified in this one way to serve God in that we have the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.**