**1. Motivate**

What was a time when you were really excited about something new?

* buying a car
* moving to a new house

A video introduction to the Bible study is available. View it at <https://tinyurl.com/3us6krk7> . If you have no wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/2x7vxbe6>

* new computer
* new TV
* any time I get a new tool
* certainly a new baby
* bought a new musical instrument
* got a new crown on a bothersome tooth
* new phone – more features than I can understand
* brought home a new pet

**2. Transition**

God promises something new that is better than anything in our list.

* God gives us new life in Jesus Christ

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 A New, Unique Covenant

Listen for what is new.

Jeremiah 31:31-32 (NIV) "The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

Consider the concept of a covenant and its validity.

* A binding promise of far reaching importance
* Between God and His people
* Defines obligations and commitments
* Relational and personal
* Exchange of names can validate a covenant making it authentic and genuine
* Has social, legal, religious and other aspects

What does the word “new” denote in reference to the covenant the Lord will make with His people?

* replaces previous covenant
* amends or extends a previous covenant
* says it will not be like the covenant made with forefathers
* previous covenant had to be replaced because first one was broken

Which past covenant of the Lord does He likely refer to in these verses? What happened to that covenant?

* covenant with Moses
* no longer in effect because the people had broken it
* they had disobeyed, rebelled, broken the requirements

A covenant is a promise. What is God promising in these verses?

* covenant was between God and all of Israel (both northern and southern kingdoms)
* new conditions
* characterized by faith, not blind obedience

What imagery did the Lord use to describe the covenant relationship?

* God had taken them “by the hand”
* He had been as a loving husband to His people
* they were like His bride
* same imagery used in NT scripture – the church is “the bride of Christ”

What did the Lord imply by referring to Himself as a husband?

* His love for His people
* His care for them, protection
* the people’s expected reciprocal love and submission
* the people’s dependence on Him

3.2 A Committed Relationship with God

Listen for a different type of relationship.

Jeremiah 31:33-34 (NIV) "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

What is the major distinction of the new covenant?

* God’s law not something carved in stone
* instead God placed in their (our) hearts and minds
* God gives us what to do along with the desire, courage, ability to do it
* speaks of a personal relationship

To whom is the Lord accessible?

* verse 34 says “they will all know me”
* from the least to the greatest

What great promise is stated about the Lord’s treatment of sin?

* God forgives our wickedness
* God remembers our sins no more
* God knows your sins but in “forgetting” them, He chooses not to act in judgment
* He can do so because the sentence of judgment (death) been enacted upon Jesus Christ

Note what is learned about God from this new covenant.

* He is a forgiving God
* He works in the lives of those who receive Him – repent, confess, believe
* He wants to have a personal relationship with individual people
* He wants to have an influence on whole groups of people – a church, a community, a nation

What does it mean that God’s instructions are “written on our hearts”?

* God indwells each believer by the person of the Holy Spirit
* God’s Holy Spirit impresses upon our intellect, our emotions, and our wills what God requires
* and He empowers us to pursue and act out God’s will
* the Holy Spirit produces in and through us the Fruit of the Spirit … love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control
* no longer a collection of commandments etched in stone, held in an inaccessible place

3.3 Covenant Established through Christ

Listen for who brings the new covenant.

Luke 22:14-20 (NIV) When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. 15 And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16 For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." 17 After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. 18 For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." 19 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." 20 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.

Why do you think this was so important for Jesus to share this meal with His disciples?

* they needed a specific event to remember
* when you do something, participate in it, it is better remembered
* there was important symbolism in the elements of the meal
* He wanted to communicate important Truth to them

What traditions do you see here that was hundreds of years old?

* Passover celebration
* supper together after nightfall
* drinking of cups of wine
* unleavened bread

What new elements does Jesus declare?

* bread represented Jesus’ body “given for you”
* cup of wine (fruit of the vine) represented Jesus’ blood “poured out for you”
* He declared it to be a new covenant (contrasted to the old given to Moses and the Patriarchs)

Why do you think Jesus chose the elements of bread and wine to represent His body and the new covenant?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Bread | Wine |
| * a basic element of life
* bread is “broken” as was His body
* Jesus was the “Bread of Life”
* we “receive” this “Bread” (accept Christ’s death) to be effective for salvation
 | * symbolized shed blood, even similar color
* was the result of a *crushed* grape
* we must “partake” of the blood to make it effective
 |

⇨ Together they paint a very graphic picture of what God accomplished in the death of His Son Jesus and how I receive it to be effective for me.

Why do you think it is still important for believers to “do this in remembrance” of Christ?

* we need the symbolism just as much as the disciples …
* maybe even more since we were not physically with Jesus 2000 years ago
* we need concrete objects to help us understand
* we need tangible objects, activities to help us remember
* many of us are visual learners … the visual of the bread and the cup of juice teach us important truths
* Jesus was also implying that this looked forward to when He would celebrate with believers when the Kingdom of God is literal … more than spiritual, as it is now

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.



Application

Get rid of something old.

* Find something that’s taking up space in your life.
* Perhaps it’s an old physical item that you just don’t need any more or an old attitude that’s keeping you from God’s best.

If you are financially able, buy something new for someone else.

* Perhaps it’s new school supplies for a local elementary school.
* Maybe new clothes for children in foster care, or a new book for a friend.

Share a meal.

* Have a meal together with someone you might not normally eat with.
* As the Lord leads, talk about your experience of living in relationship with Christ.

Cryptogram Puzzle

Our embassy in Thepri Mairos sent us this message in the diplomatic bag. It comes from the underground church. Our regular decryption staff is off to Jr. Hi summer Bible Camp. Can you help us? The key is below the message and the “Hello World” example shows how the secret code works. For technical help go to <https://tinyurl.com/2x7vxbe6>
Your deacon board will want to receive the message when you finish.