

Introduction:

1. Name something you once used regularly that is now obsolete. What has replaced it? Is it better? Why do you think so?
2. What have you bought that was “new and improved”? Did it live up to its billing? Why do you think so?

Understanding:

3. Read Psalm 19:7–11 about God’s laws. What are some of the descriptions and attitudes towards the law here? Is anything negative said about the law? In the light of all this, why did God get rid of the old covenant anyway?
4. Even non-Christian people have a moral code. How does their code of right and wrong work? What kind of judgements do they make? How could you reply wisely to them when they say “Oh you Christians! Always judging!”
5. Look at verse 10 which includes “I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. “But we are often tempted to turn back to external rules. How is today’s teaching helpful in preventing us from turning back?
6. So God says, “There’s a day coming when I’m going to change the desires of my people. I’m going to change their hearts.” Read John chapter 4:10-14. Explain how Jesus’ way here is a wonderful contrast to the Old Covenant. How does this encourage you today?
7. We heard an illustration of God being pleased with the steps we take in our Christian lives ----even when we fall flat on our faces. How does this a new covenant idea differ from the Old Covenant system? What do we learn about God from the fact that He set aside the Old Covenant in favor of this new way of walking with him? How does this encourage you?
8. Psalm 147:3 says: “He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds”. Explain how we have a much better way of experiencing that truth in the New Covenant than did people in the Old Covenant.
9. Ancient covenants had 2-sided obligations of obey... or else. But what do we mean when we say that the new covenant is one-sided? How does that have a powerful impact on our lives?
10. Read 2 Corinthians 3:6-11 which speaks of the glory of the new covenant. What does it mean that the letter kills, but the spirit gives life? Why does Paul say that the old covenant was glorious? What is the comparison he is making?
11. Pastor Dave talked about insecurity, judgmentalism and bitterness in those whose heart is not right with God. In Psalm 73 Asaph the Psalmist wrestles with these same issues. What truth from God does the Psalmist see here as an answer? Does he see all the truth? What is missing in Asaph’s solution? How does the Lord’s new and better covenant answer this?

Application:

12. In Luke 22:20 Jesus takes the cup and says “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.” Connect what you heard in today’s teaching to the powerful symbolism in the cup. Think of an area of your life where you struggle with sin and forgiveness. And pray in faith that Christ’s blood will begin to free you from that bondage.
13. In what ways do you struggle with getting God’s approval? How is today’s teaching a remedy for that? How does it help you encourage someone else who struggles with getting God’s approval?