

THE NEW COVENANT

TRANSITIONING FROM THE OLD TO THE NEW

- John the Baptist marks an important transition from one covenant administration to another.
 - In Mark 1:1–8, John is called a “voice” (cf. Isaiah 40:3). He’s also called “Elijah” (Malachi 4:5–6). He is the forerunner to the Messiah.
 - There are several important things we should note about John’s ministry.
 - First, he is the voice that cries in the *wilderness*.
 - Second, his message is one of repentance in preparation for the coming of the Messiah (Malachi 3:1–5).
 - John is the greatest of the Old Testament prophets. In Matthew 11:11, Jesus says, “Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”
- Relationship of the Old to the New
 - There are two administrations of the one covenant of grace. But these two administrations are neither equal nor can they be reversed in order.
 - Redemptive-history is moving in a particular direction, and Mark’s primary purpose in his gospel is to identify and introduce Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is far greater.

INSTITUTION OF THE NEW COVENANT

- The Last Supper is recorded in Mark 14:22–26; Matthew 26:17–30; Luke 22:7–38 (cf. 1 Cor. 11:17–34). Jesus was celebrating Passover with his disciples in the Upper Room.
 - Mark 14:22—²²And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, “*Take; this is my body.*”
 - Later, he took the cup, ²⁴And he said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.”
- Jesus needed to die in order to save his people from the penalty due for their sins.
 - This death was necessitated because of God’s arrangement with Adam in the Garden.
 - God deals with his people through a federal head and requires perfect obedience.
 - Adam failed to obey. And because of his transgression, we sinned with him and fell in him into an estate of sin and misery.
 - Given this reality, we can see our need of a Redeemer.
 - The people needed to be cleansed. There needed to be atonement for their sins.
 - God provided for them in the Old Testament in the sacrifices.
 - But was this blood sufficient? Could that blood cleanse the people of their sins once for all?
 - This drives us to consider Jesus’s words as he institutes a new covenant.

- At the time of the third cup, the cup of blessing, Jesus interjects that this is his blood of the covenant.
 - His words recall Exodus 24:8—And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.”
 - Isaiah 53:12—poured out for many
 - Jeremiah 31:31—this is the blood of the covenant. It’s a new covenant.
- After the third cup, there is no fourth cup mentioned. He said he would not drink of it until he drinks it new in the kingdom of God (Mark 14:25).
 - The Passover reminded the people of God delivering his people from Egypt. Yet in 1 Corinthians 5:7, Paul declares that Christ has been sacrificed as our Passover lamb.
 - In other words, there is a fundamental link between what God was doing in the Passover and what Christ did in offering himself as a sacrifice for the sins of his people.
- The same reward that was offered to Adam is secured by Christ.
 - He *purchased* reconciliation and an eternal inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. This came through his perfect obedience and his personal sacrifice.
 - Jesus satisfies the demands of the covenant of works vicariously for his people.
 - Jesus needed to obey the law of the Lord perfectly. But in order to redeem his people from their sin, the wages of which are death, he had to die.
 - His life was the vicarious sacrifice for the sins of his people.
 - This points to the need for both Christ’s active and passive obedience.
 - Through Christ’s life *and* death, his people may be brought to the originally-intended destination, a heavenly inheritance (1 Pet. 1:3–7; 1 Cor. 15:49–50).
- This has always been the hope for God’s people. Hebrews 11 tells us that even the Old Testament saints looked forward to such an inheritance.
 - There is one savior—whether for people living after Christ’s death and resurrection or before.
 - WCF 8:6—Although the work of redemption was not actually wrought by Christ till after His incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefits thereof, were communicated unto the elect in all ages successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices, wherein He was revealed and signified to be the Seed of the woman, which should bruise the serpent’s head, and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world being yesterday and today the same, and for ever.