

A hand with manicured nails holds a clear incandescent lightbulb. Inside the bulb, a realistic image of the Earth is visible, with the Americas in the center. The text is overlaid on this image.

"Making Sense in a Senseless World"

Saturday Seminar

March 23, 2019

Laurelwood Baptist Church

Dr. John Weeks, Presenter

East Clark County Saturday Seminar

“Making Sense in a Senseless World”

Laurelwood Baptist Church
March 23, 2019



Welcome!

We are glad you are here today with an interest in God's plans for the whole world and for you personally. This seminar will be based on the living, abiding Word of God as the final authority.

What is God's purpose through my life today? Where is it all headed? Why are things in this world so messed up? Why did God allow evil to enter His world? Is my Christian life a constant struggle toward unreachable goals designed to frustrate me? The answers will encourage and challenge your heart today.

Please make yourself comfortable and enjoy the relaxed environment. Grab a cup of coffee and a snack to eat during the presentations and again at break times.

Let us know how we can serve you better during this morning's seminar.

Maranatha (1 Cor. 16:22 -- Our Lord Come!)
John Weeks
ACL Director (Adult Christian Learning)
Laurelwood Baptist Church

INFORMATION

- We do ask you to silence your cell phones during the sessions.
- We do provide pens for you to take notes during these sessions. If you no longer need the pen after today's seminar, just return the pen to the materials table.
- This day conference is being video recorded to be available outside of today. The materials packet is free for your use. This is your permission to duplicate materials as long as you print the credit on a page.
- Restrooms are located on the south wall of the Fellowship Hall by the children's rooms.
- The snacks, coffee, and water on the tables in the back are yours to enjoy at any time during the day. We ask that your coffee be covered.

SCHEDULE FOR THE SEMINAR

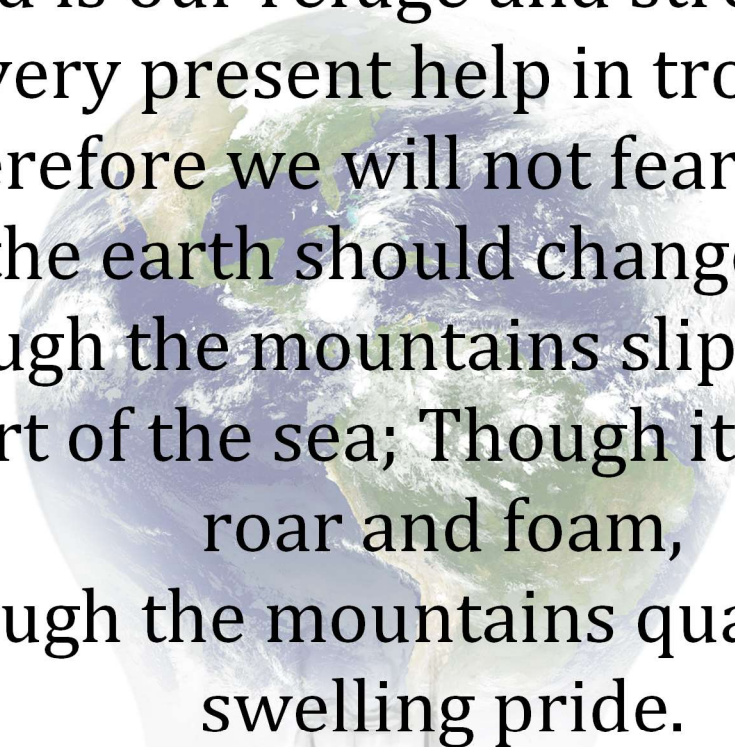
8:45 am	Pick up materials	
9:00 -- 9:50 am	1st Session :: Why Did God Create Me?	#Godspurpose4u
9:50 -- 10:00 am	BREAK	
10:00 -- 10:50 am	2nd Session :: How God Answers the Question of the Ages Through My Life	#Godsmethod4u
10:50 -- 11:00 pm	BREAK	
11:00 -- 12:00 pm	3rd Session :: Power for the Uphill Road	#Godspower4u

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Dr. John Weeks taught at Southeastern Bible College, Birmingham, Alabama for 4 years. He also taught 20 years at Multnomah Biblical Seminary in Portland, Oregon. Dr. Weeks takes full responsibility for the content of this seminar and these materials.

Dr. Weeks acknowledges the insights by many professors, teachers, pastors, and books that have been woven into these materials.

"Making Sense in a Senseless World"



God is our refuge and strength, a
very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though
the earth should change and
though the mountains slip into the
heart of the sea; Though its waters
roar and foam,
Though the mountains quake at its
swelling pride.

Psalm 46:1-3

Why Did God Create Me?

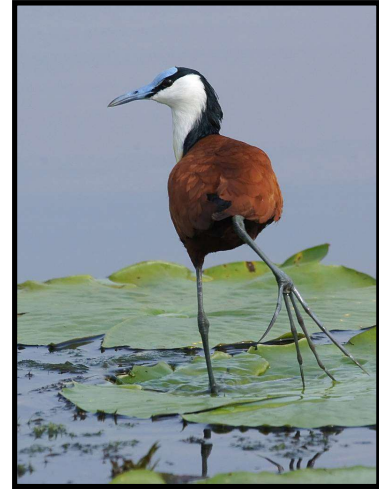
Session 1

Our world is so messed up. How do I make sense of it? Is God really in control of everything when it seems so out of control? The answers are in the Bible. We think we know our Bible.

We probably miss God's purpose for each one of us as Christians in this room because we often approach the Bible like Jacana birds. When some people open the Bible to study, they hunt & peck at many texts without realizing how it all fits together.

Today we look at the whole picture of God's plan and answer some key questions.

- 1) **What's world coming to?** provides biblical perspective on history
- 2) **Why am I here?** clarifies God's purpose for creating this world, and for creating me
- 3) **What's it all about?** provides panorama of God's program



We will understand Bible better & you will see how it the big picture relates to your life.

In this senseless world, we suspect that the biggest problems we can see are only small part of God's overall grand purposes.

3 FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS in the Bible.

1 GOD IS SOVEREIGN AND RULES OVER ALL, 1 Chronicles 29:10-13.

10 So **David** blessed the Lord in the sight of all the assembly; and David said, "Blessed are You, O Lord God of Israel our father, forever and ever.

11 **Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all.**

12 Both riches and honor *come* from You, and **You rule over all**, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone.

13 Now therefore, our God, we thank You, and praise Your glorious name."

God's sovereignty refers to His rule, authority, or kingdom. He rules throughout history.

- God's sovereignty is expressed throughout the Bible.¹ (see supplement at the end of session 1)

Psalm 103:19

The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all.

Rulers and presidents might claim sovereignty over a limited region, but God's sovereignty differs in extent.

- God's sovereignty extends to ALL creation, 1 Chronicles 29:11

God is sovereign not just over nations on earth, but over everything in all His universe.

"Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed **everything** that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and You exalt Yourself as **head over all**.

God's eternal kingdom extends to everything in existence, whether unseen spiritual forces like demons or angels, or physical forces in the universe, weather, tornadoes, hurricanes, volcanoes. Ultimately all powers and governments on this earth are under His authority.

As the Creator, God is the originator of all things & all things are subject to His authority.

If God is sovereign, it raises some doubt in some minds. What about all the natural disasters happening under His watch? What about all the suffering that is not obviously man-made?

Are we to think that God brought evil into world? He allowed it in His overall purposes, but God did not originate evil. Where does evil & suffering come from?

The question of evil is answered by 2nd foundational truth.

2 SATAN REBELLED AGAINST GOD'S RIGHT TO RULE.

Structure of Ezekiel 28:1-17.

The Law of transparency looks "beyond" the human ruler (vv.1-10) to Satan who controls that ruler (vv. 11-17).

- Lucifer was 2nd only to God, Ezekiel 28:13-14.

"You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering:
The ruby, the topaz and the diamond;
The beryl, the onyx and the jasper;
The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald;
And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you.
On the day that you were created they were prepared.
14 **You were the anointed cherub who covers**, and I placed you *there*.
You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

- Sin originated in Lucifer's heart, Ezekiel 28:15.

You were blameless in your ways from the day **you were created UNTIL unrighteousness was found in you.**

Lucifer did not want to be 2nd in authority. He wanted to be #1. That attitude became the foundational sin in the universe. It is repeated by people throughout human history.

Some Christians think that Lucifer's sin was PRIDE. Ok, but how did that pride express itself?

- Lucifer's **sin was His desire to be independent of any authority outside of himself**. Rebellious attitudes toward authority is a reflection of pride.

What was Lucifer thinking? Isaiah 14:12-14 uncovers his willful rebellion.

12 How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn!
You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations!

13 But you said in your heart,
'I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and
I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north.
14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High.'

Don't blame God for the mess we are in. Blame Lucifer. He brought evil into God's universe.

This is when all the trouble started and when sin began. Evil entered God's creation at this point, before God created the earth and the universe.

Where did the problems start? In Lucifer we have origin of the problem of evil in our world.

Sin and evil started in the mind & heart of God's highest created being. It started in Lucifer's rebellion against authority. His sin was pride, yes.

The fundamental sin in the universe is rebellion against God-appointed human authority, because it is rebellion against God Himself.

Sin started in the mind and heart of
Lucifer,
the highest of God's created angels.
He brought his sin to the earth.

What were the early results from Lucifer's rebellion against God's authority?

- 1] His rebellion caused angels to rebel against God and brought chaos to this earth. Satan tempted Eve to rebel against God's command. Then Adam rebelled, and evil entered our world.

Pride expresses itself today as "I'm number one." "I'm more important than anybody." "You can't tell me what to do." If someone is greater or placed in authority over us, our hearts want to rebel.

People today proclaim themselves as the ultimate authority. "I'm my own person." "I don't answer to anybody." "Don't fence me in." "I want to be freed from anyone else's restrictions, rules or demands."

Lucifer's original sin permeates American society today. It explains our messed up world throughout human history (Psalm 53:1-3 was written about 3000 years ago).

THAT IS WHY OUR WORLD IS SO MESSED UP.

- 2] The false kingdom of Satan was set up – “god of this world,” “the prince of the power of the air,” possessor of this world’s kingdoms temporarily. Matthew 4:8-9² and 1 John 5:19.³
- 3] In addition to Satan & his demons ruling this world and roaming this earth, God also cursed the earth itself (Genesis 3:17-19).

According to Romans 8:18-23,⁴ creation groans -- Pollution, global warming, damaging floods, hurricanes, or other natural disasters happen because sin entered our world and brought the curse.

- 4] Lucifer's rebellion against God's authority raised an important question:

IS GOD SOVEREIGN??

If one could rebel against God’s authority & establish an independent kingdom & that kingdom is allowed to exist, then the rebel must be greater than the One against whom he rebelled.

If God exists, **why does He allow such a mess to continue in this world?** That's the common question we hear.

Here's how God answers this question:

God must establish His sovereignty in light of Lucifer’s rebellion. Therefore, God formed the earth into an inhabitable place & purposed to populate it with people in His image through whom He could establish the fact of His authority--like a drama on earth's stage.

That's the purpose, the reason why we exist on this earth -- to prove to others that God has the right to rule.



GOD'S ETERNAL KINGDOM



This leads us to our 3rd foundational truth.

3 GOD IS DEMONSTRATING IN TIME, ON EARTH, HIS RIGHT TO RULE.

What is the purpose of history? God is developing on this earth in human history what might be called ‘God's Kingdom Rule.’

- God's kingdom purpose on this earth throughout human history displays God’s right to rule. How?

- God delegates His authority to different administrators on earth & through them demonstrates His right to rule. All but one are people designated by God.

1. At every stage in history, God appointed certain authorities to represent His rule and to curb evil in this world. They are specially chosen actors in the drama of history.

- Those chosen by God for this role are not always aware of this role.
- These God-appointed authorities are designed by God to:
 - represent God's authority toward other people.
 - suppress evil and sin in this world.

Let's point to one example from biblical history: The prophet Samuel was God's appointed authority. When the people rejected him, note what God says to Samuel in 1 Sam. 8:7 -

The Lord said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for **they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.**"

-

2. When people submit to these God-appointed authorities, they prove God's right to rule. That is the role of other people in this drama, and **our responsibility today: To recognize and submit to God-appointed human authority.**

What does this drama show?

- Human history unfolds the drama that is designed by God to prove His right to rule, His sovereignty.

The earth is a stage where the Drama shows that the creature had no right to rebel against the Creator because God is sovereign over everything.

Why did God create you & me? God created us to display His sovereignty, *to make me a living amplifier to boom out His sovereign glory.*



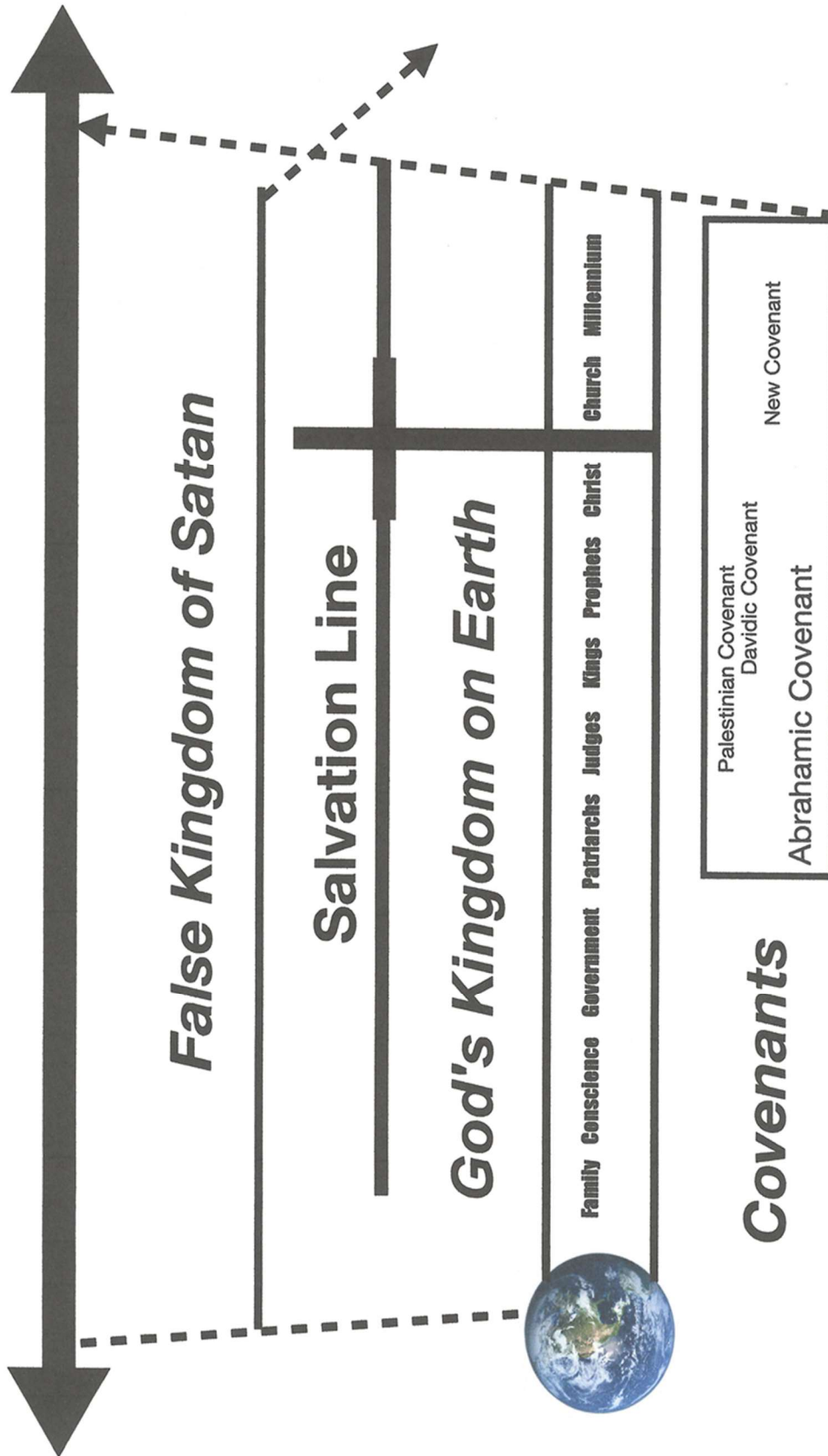
That's our main PURPOSE for being on this earth!

God wants each one of us to boom out the answer to the fundamental question of why He created us -- be an amplifier of God's purpose for me in this world.

We are created to dramatically portray God's sovereign glory.

As a Christian, you have the key role in this drama today. Have you reviewed your lines for this drama? Have you looked at the script, the Bible?

The Eternal Kingdom of God



Supplemental Notes for Session 1

¹God's sovereignty is expressed throughout the Bible.

Jeremiah in Lamentations 5:19

You, O Lord, rule forever;
Your throne is from generation to generation.

Daniel 2:21

It is He who changes the times and the epochs;
He removes kings and establishes kings;
He gives wisdom to wise men
And knowledge to men of understanding.

Daniel 4:34-35

God wanted the most powerful world ruler, Head of the Babylonian Empire, to recognize that God is sovereign over all eternally.

But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom *endures* from generation to generation.

35 "All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven and *among* the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, 'What have You done?'

Psalms 47:1-9

¹O clap your hands, all peoples; Shout to God with the voice of joy.

²For the Lord Most High is to be feared, a great King over **all the earth**.

³He subdues peoples under us and nations under our feet.

⁴He chooses our inheritance for us, the glory of Jacob whom He loves. Selah.

⁵God has ascended with a shout, the Lord, with the sound of a trumpet.

⁶Sing praises to God, sing praises; Sing praises to our King, sing praises.

⁷For **God is the King of all the earth**; Sing praises with a skillful psalm.

⁸**God reigns over the nations, God sits on His holy throne.**

⁹The princes of the people have assembled themselves as the people of the God of Abraham, for the shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted.

Isaiah 40:21-26

21 Do you not know? Have you not heard?

Has it not been declared to you from the beginning?

Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

22 It is He who sits above the circle of the earth,

And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers,

Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain

And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

23 He *it is* who reduces rulers to nothing,

Who makes the judges of the earth meaningless.

24 Scarcely have they been planted,

Scarcely have they been sown,

Scarcely has their stock taken root in the earth,

But He merely blows on them, and they wither,

And the storm carries them away like stubble.

25 "To whom then will you liken Me

That I would be *his* equal?" says the Holy One.

26 Lift up your eyes on high

And see who has created these *stars*,

The One who leads forth their host by number,

He calls them all by name;

Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of *His* power,

Not one *of them* is missing.

²Matthew 4:8-9 All the kingdoms of the world belong to the devil temporarily.

8 Again, the devil *took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."

³¹ John 5:19

19 We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of* the evil one.

⁴Romans 8:18-23

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.



How Does God Answer the Question of the Ages Through My Life?

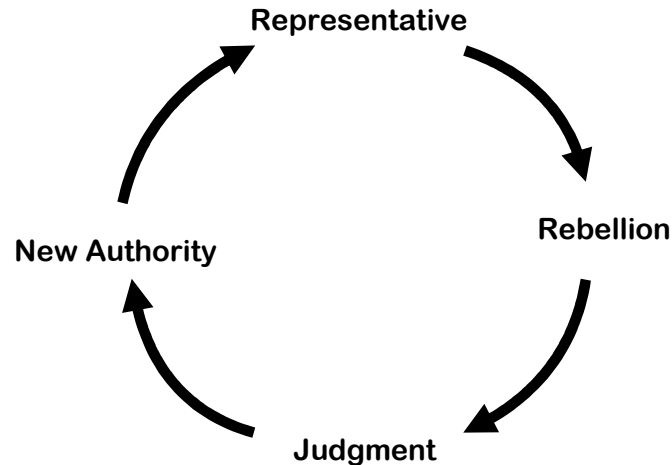
Session 2

God created earth as a stage for the longest running reality show ever. Every person in this room is an actor in it. Point of this reality show: **Is God really sovereign? Does He rule?**

The way God's reality show works is this. When human actors submit to God-appointed authority, they demonstrate God's right to rule. Not submitting to the authority shows Satan's right to rule. Rebellion repeats Lucifer's original sin. His attitude was "I'm my own self. Nobody tells me what to do."

So human history is God's drama seeking to show His right to rule rather than Satan's right to rule. **The drama repeats a pattern throughout history.** What's the pattern during each act in the drama?

The pattern begins with God appointing a representative of His authority. Then people rebel against this representative. Then God judges. Then God appoints a new representative, and the drama moves to the next act.



Let's trace this pattern through biblical history.

GARDEN OF EDEN (family)¹ (see supplemental notes at the

end of this session 2)

- God established His authority by instituting marriage and the family.
- Adam was God's divinely appointed representative as head of his family.

Family is the first God-ordained institution in this world, and the man was made "head" of his wife and kids. **God's human representatives are human, flawed, and even sinful. Still, they are**

selected by God as His authority over us in this earthly reality show. We submit because of their role, not because of their character or their effectiveness.

When Satan came to tempt Adam and Eve, he approached Eve. Satan wanted them to disobey God in rebellion against God's authority.

When Eve & Adam disobeyed, God judged with a curse of sin & death & immediately added a new representative. The family is still God's institution on earth, but He added a 2nd representative after sin invaded people's lives.

CONSCIENCE.²

- Conscience is God's law written into every heart.

Romans 2:14-15

14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves,
15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,

- Once sin ruined the drama, restraint on sin was **an inner moral governor called conscience**. It is placed by God into every person born into this drama on this earth.

Did it work? No.

Genesis 6:3, 5-6

3 Then the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

5 Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

6 The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

Every person today is born with a conscience. **Does it work today? Not really.** Kids are natural born sinners. Kids don't have to be taught to disobey or sin. People today sometimes ignore conscience & rebel against God's inner moral governor.

Sin became so widespread during the days of Noah that the Bible says, "every intent of the thought of man's heart was only evil." So God judged world => universal flood. After the flood, God added a 3rd representative of His authority to appear on stage:

HUMAN GOVERNMENT.³

- After the flood, God instituted government as His new representative of His authority on the stage, Genesis 9:6.

5 "Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man. 6 Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man."

- People today are commanded to be in subjection to government whatever form it takes, Romans 13:1-4.

1 Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.
3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;
4 for it is **a minister of God** to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is **a minister of God**, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

The Roman government in Paul's day is described as a "minister of God." Why? Because it represents divine authority on this earth. Whatever the form of government, it is God's appointed authority on the earth, even today. Nero (a very bad emperor) was in power at the time.



We say, "Government is corrupt." Often it is. But people have been rebelling ever since even under good government. God kept governments in place throughout the world, & decided to focus on 1 nation => Israel. He ruled over Israel through men called:

PATRIARCHS

- These men were tribal chiefs appointed to be God's representatives. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob...
- Patriarchs are sometimes called "gods" (small "g")
 - Moses is called "god" to Aaron.

Exodus 4:16

Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and he will be as a mouth for you and you will be as God to him.

- Moses called "god" to Pharaoh. In what sense?
Exodus 7:1

Then the Lord said to Moses, "See, I make you as God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.

Submission to Moses was submission to God's authority. Grumbling against God's appointed human representative Moses was rebellion against God Himself. See Num. 16.

How did it go? The people of Israel grumbled against Moses. So, God judged Israel by sending nations against them. When Israel cried out because of the painful disciplines of God, God sent deliverers called:

JUDGES

People rebelled & asked for a king. What was God's response? "Samuel, they have not rejected you. They have rejected Me."

1 Samuel 8:7

The Lord said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for **they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me** from being king over them.

A good review of the pattern of history is found in 1 Samuel 12:6-12.⁴

KINGS How did they do? God was not pleased with them, so He sent additional representatives:

PROPHETS

The prophets were God's appointed spokesmen. What happened? Let's listen to Jesus review the pattern: Matt. 21:33-46 in the Parable of the Owner of the Vineyard.⁵ As the Owner of the Vineyard, God kept sending representatives, and the nation kept rejecting them and killing the prophets.

"Quit sending representatives. They make mistakes. They are flawed. Come yourself."

So the Owner of the Vineyard decided to send His own Son – "they will respect my Son." So God sent:

JESUS CHRIST – This is an event we celebrate every year at Christmas.

- He is the Best representative of God's kingdom authority on earth. Couldn't be any better! Was He corrupt? NO! Was He weak? Did He make bad or unwise decisions? NO!

How did people respond to His flawless character and authority?

- His own people rejected Him and eventually crucified Him!

The blackness of rebellious hearts was revealed when they crucified God's own Son.

Jeremiah 17:9 --

The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick;
Who can understand it?

How did God respond to rejection of His own Son? God judged Israel by setting them aside temporarily & He purposed to do a new thing. What is the new authority today? The "Mystery" form of the kingdom on earth today is:



THE CHURCH⁶

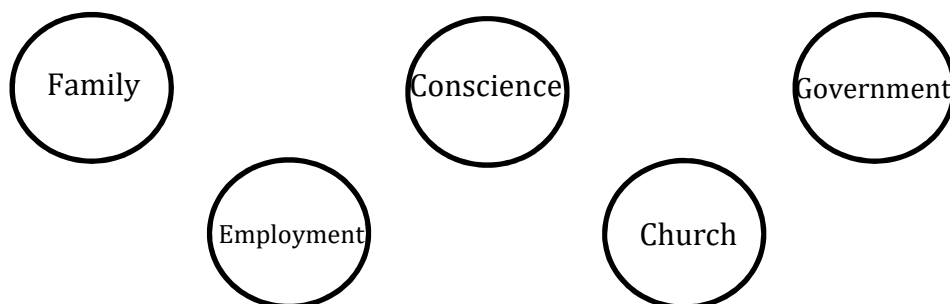
- The Church is God's newly appointed representative today.

The God-appointed human representatives in any local church are pastors/elders. Too many church-goers grumble, complain, criticize and stir up dissension against their church leadership. They treat them like a skeet-shoot and blast them out of their position of authority.

- The Church's sphere of authority was added to family, conscience, & government. God's rule today is administered in 5 spheres in this world:

Family, Conscience, Government. The New Testament adds Employment,⁷ & a new authority called the Church.

SPHERES OF AUTHORITY TODAY



SUBMISSION TO GOD-APPOINTED AUTHORITY IN MY LIFE IS SUBMISSION TO GOD.

Our attitude of submission to God-appointed authority is our responsibility as Christians today. Our attitudes & actions toward these authority figures answers this question every day.

Since **SUBMISSION is so important for us today**, what does “Submission” mean?
Submission has become a rejected and "outdated" idea in our world today.

1. Submission: joyfully choosing to put myself under God-appointed authority.⁸

The Greek word means "to put oneself under" the authority of another. This involves my attitude toward these people and my conscience.

- I respect their position.
- I give honor by deferring to them in attitude.
- I choose to defer to their decisions with good attitudes if I disagree with them.

2. God wants submission *even if the authority is a bad leader*. Ex: Nero.

It's harder to submit to a leader who is sinning.

God allows us not to submit 2 times:

- a. when the God-appointed authority acts outside their God-given sphere of responsibility.
- b. when the authority personally asks me to do something that requires me to disobey God.

If I choose not to submit, I must be willing to accept the consequences: thrown into jail; lose my job.

Examples: Daniel's 3 friends were asked to worship an idol. They refused and were thrown into a fiery furnace to be executed. Daniel himself refused to stop praying, and he was thrown into the lion's den. Peter and John were commanded by the authorities not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus (Acts 4:18).

My attitude of submission to God-appointed
authorities in my life is my **CORE**
RESPONSIBILITY in His reality show every
day.

Submission to God-appointed authority is the key! This is how I answer the Question of Ages!

Is it working? How do people in general respond to this newly appointed authority, the Church, today? **In general today, people do not respect the church. People inside & outside church rebel against the church, its pastors, elders, & leaders.**

Sadly, some church leaders publicly disgrace the name of Jesus through their sin. Other church leaders are sometimes abusive.

Even some Christians will say, "I love Jesus but hate the Church." This attitude plays into Satan's hands, because it is rebellion against God's appointed (and often flawed) representative.

So, after Jesus Christ returns to take His true Bride, the Church, out of this world, God will judge the world in form of the Great Tribulation & establish a final Representative of His right to rule. It's the Final Act on this stage we call the earth.

Here's the hope for us today! Here's climax of all biblical history! It's called the:

MILLENNIAL KINGDOM Jesus Christ will come back to earth a second time to rule & reign.

- **God will finally answer the question of the ages through Jesus' kingdom reign on this earth.**

Satan will be bound for the entire 1000 years (Rev. 20:1-3).

God will establish authority in sphere where it was 1st challenged – the earth.

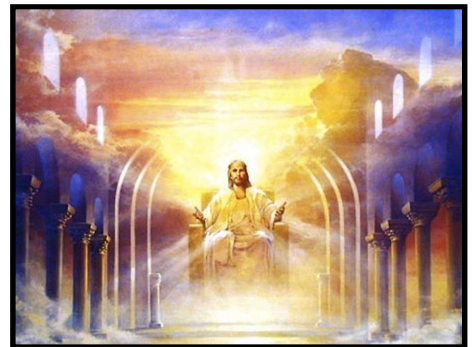
Rev. 11:15 "the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord..."

- **The millennial kingdom will demonstrate authority of the King, Jesus Christ, & His right to rule over the whole earth.**

Everything will be put under His feet – all rebellion will be swiftly judged. There will be perfect peace, perfect justice, a perfect environment, and perfect government on the earth.

Amazingly, when Satan is released at the end, rebellious hearts are revealed!

- **Then, the earthly kingdom will merge with God's eternal kingdom to prove God's right to rule.**



1 Corinthians 15:23-28. God will show that the point of the whole drama is to show the importance of submission to authority. Jesus reigns until everything is in subjection to Him.

23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

24 then *comes the end*, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.
25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.
26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death.
27 For He has put all things in **subjection** under His feet. But when He says, "All things are put in **subjection**," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in **subjection** to Him.
28 When all things are **subjected** to Him, then the Son Himself also will be **subjected** to the One who subjected all things to Him, **so that God may be all in all**.

The future for those of us who know & love God is indeed bright!

This is our confident expectation: JESUS WILL REIGN. You can be joyfully optimistic about your personal future if you know God through your personal faith in Jesus Christ.

Meanwhile Christian, **how do you answer the Question of Ages through your life? How does your attitude toward authority answer "Who has right to rule?"**

When we submit to authority, we answer: "God does."

SUBMISSION TO GOD-APPOINTED AUTHORITY IS SUBMISSION TO GOD.

Who are God's appointed authorities in our lives today?

In the **family**, it's husbands or parents if we still live at home. God also expects us to be sensitive to our **conscience**. He has placed conscience as a governing authority in our lives.

Submitting to **government** includes paying our taxes, and submitting to local police and city and county officials.

The Bible also mentions the **employer**, or those who represent the authority on an employer, such as a boss, manager, or supervisor.

Today, God also puts over us **church leaders**, pastors, elders, and deacons.

How are you doing? Remember:

SUBMISSION TO GOD-APPOINTED AUTHORITY IS SUBMISSION TO GOD.

Let's put our guns away.



Supplemental Notes for Session 2

¹Family

For marriage.

See the Apostle Paul in Colossians 3:18

Wives, **be subject** to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

See the Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 3:1-7

In the same way, you wives, **be submissive** to your own husbands so that even if any *of them* are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,

2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.

3 Your adornment must not be *merely* external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses;

4 but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

5 For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being **submissive** to their own husbands;

6 just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

7 You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

For children toward parents, the Apostle Paul.

Ephesians 6:1-4

Children, **obey** your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

2 Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise),

3 so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.

4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Colossians 3:20-21

Children, **be obedient** to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.

21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.

²Conscience

A good conscience is a powerful tool for living

1 Samuel 24:5

It came about afterward that David's **conscience** bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's *robe*.

1 Timothy 1:5

But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and **a good conscience** and a sincere faith.

1 Timothy 1:19

keeping faith and **a good conscience**, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.

1 Peter 3:15-16

and keep **a good conscience** so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

17 For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.

Continual rebellion against conscience dulls its effectiveness.

1 Timothy 4:2

by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own **conscience** as with a branding iron,

Titus 1:15

To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their **conscience** are defiled.

³Government

1 Peter 2:13-15

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, 14 or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. 15 For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.

⁴1 Samuel 12:6-12 provides the pattern in Israel's history.

Then Samuel said to the people, "It is the Lord who appointed Moses and Aaron and who brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt.

7 "So now, take your stand, that I may plead with you before the Lord concerning all the righteous acts of the Lord which He did for you and your fathers.

8 "When Jacob went into Egypt and your fathers cried out to the Lord, then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron who brought your fathers out of Egypt and settled them in this place.

9 "But they forgot the Lord their God, so He sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the army of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them.

10 "They cried out to the Lord and said, 'We have sinned because we have forsaken the Lord and have served the Baals and the Ashtaroth; but now deliver us from the hands of our enemies, and we will serve You.'

11 "Then the Lord sent Jerubbaal and Bedan and Jephthah and Samuel, and delivered you from the hands of your enemies all around, so that you lived in security.

12 "When you saw that Nahash the king of the sons of Ammon came against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,' although the Lord your God was your king.

⁵Jesus' Parable of the Owner of the Vineyard, Matthew 21:33-46

Listen to another parable. "There was a landowner who planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey.

34 When the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce.

35 The vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third.

36 Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them.

37 But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

38 But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.'

39 They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

40 Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?"

41 They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers who will pay him the proceeds at the *proper* seasons."

42 Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'The stone which the builders rejected, this became the chief corner *stone*; this came about from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

43 Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.

44 And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust."

45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them.

46 When they sought to seize Him, they feared the people, because they considered Him to be a prophet.

⁶Church

Christians are to submit to the leaders God appoints within each local church.

Acts 20:28

Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Hebrews 13:17

Obey your leaders **and submit to them**, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

1 Corinthians 16:16

that you also **be in subjection** to such men and to everyone who helps in the work and labors.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction,
13 and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.

The Church is God's chosen representative of His authority in relation to the world.

John 17:21-23

that they may all be one; even as You, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; 23 I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.

Philippians 2:14-15

Do all things without grumbling or disputing; 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,

Matthew 5:16

Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

1 Peter 2:12

Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.

⁷Employment (Slaves - Masters)

"Slaves" in the New Testament were paid hired help owned by a master, something like a maid or a butler. Onesimus was a runaway slave who became a believer under Paul's prison ministry, and Paul wrote about it in the book of Philemon.

1 Peter 2:18-19

Servants, **be submissive** to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.
19 For this *finds* favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.

Ephesians 6:5-9

Slaves, **be obedient** to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ;
6 not by way of eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.
7 With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men,
8 knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.
9 And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Colossians 3:22--4:1

Slaves, in all things **obey** those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who *merely* please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.

23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,

24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and ^bthat without partiality.

Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.

1 Timothy 6:1-2

All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and *our* doctrine will not be spoken against.

2 Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these *principles*.

⁸Word Study on the Greek word translated "Subjection" in 1 Corinthians 15:27-28 (also "submission")

hypotasso (Strong's 5293)

5718 ὑποτάσσομαι (*hypotassomai*), ὑποτάσσω (*hypotassō*): vb.; ≡ Str 5293; TDNT 8.39

1. LN 36.18

(dep.) **obey, be obedient** (Lk 2:51; Eph 5:22 v.r.);

2. LN 37.31 **bring under control**, put in subjection (**1Co 15:27**; Eph 1:22; Php 3:21; Heb 2:5, 8)

Swanson, J. (1997). [*Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek \(New Testament\)*](#) (electronic ed.). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.



Power for the Uphill Road

Session 3

What?! I was fine until you said that the key is submission! All of the sudden the road of the Christian life seems too steep!

We are like a man who sees a car for the first time. Since he doesn't know how it works, he pushes it.



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If the question of God's sovereignty depends on my ability to submit to human authorities, then we are all in trouble! I mess up too much. IS THIS ALL THERE IS? **Is the Christian life a constant struggle toward unreachable goals designed to frustrate me?**

We have good news. It doesn't depend on me or even the success of the Church world-wide. The success of God's purposes in the world and in my life depends on God keeping His contracts.

God provided 2 guaranteed contracts:

1st: God guarantees His sovereign authority will be established on the earth. It could be called "**The Big Picture Contract.**"

The 2nd contract could be called "**The Personal Picture Contract.**" It guarantees that God provides what I need to do my part.

The 1st contract is found in Gen. 12:1-3. God made a contract with Abraham, but it relates to all of us today.

1 GOD GUARANTEES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HIS SOVEREIGN AUTHORITY BY THE ABRAHAMIC CONTRACT.

- God promises 3 permanent provisions for the nation of Israel: a physical land, physical descendants, and a blessing, Gen. 12:1-3.¹ (See the supplemental notes at the end of session 3)

This world-wide contract requires signatures. We find God signing the contract in Gen. 15.

- God ratified this contract as a blood covenant, Gen. 15.²
- The Genesis 12 contract guarantees the final establishment of God's sovereignty and eternal kingdom.
 1. Because the Church is weak, it is hard to see God's sovereign authority today. So the Lord will take the Church out of this world, judge the world, & set up His sovereign authority on this earth in the final form.
 2. When Jesus comes again to earth to rule the earth, ALL CREATION will be subjected to His authority. His kingdom will come and His will be done on this earth.³

3. At the end of 1000 years of perfect rule, Jesus will surrender His earthly kingdom to the Father to settle the question of ages, 1 Cor. 15:22-28.⁴

28 When all things are **subjected** to Him (Jesus), then the Son Himself also will be **subjected** to the One who **subjected** all things to Him, **so that God may be all in all.**

GOD IS SOVEREIGN AND RULES OVER ALL.

3. At the end, the false kingdom of Satan will be destroyed forever, Rev. 20:7-10.²

Point of Action:

"God, I confess my sin of doubt of Your Word. In the middle of this messed up world, it is so hard to see that You are still in control. I confess that I've even blamed You instead of reading Your clear Word and believing that You are sovereign over all. I confess my unbelief. I trust You."



"How does this relate to me today because the Abrahamic Contract is with Israel thousands of years ago. I think it is ancient history!" The Bible says I am "grafted in" (Romans 11:17) to the 3rd provision of the Abrahamic Contract => the blessing part. I'm grafted in by the unconditional **New Covenant**. The original new contract is found in Jeremiah 31:31-34.³

Hebrews provides a New Testament perspective since we Gentiles in the Church are grafted in. Hebrews 8:6-8.

6 But now He (Jesus) has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a **better covenant**, which has been enacted on better promises.
7 For if that first (old) *covenant* had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.
8 For finding fault with them, He says, "Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, when I will effect a **new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah;"

So what's the difference? What makes it "new"?

Old covenant => linked to Moses & the Law; external obedience. It was "Faulty" because required me to push my car. The old contract depends on me.

The New Contract is "The Personal Picture Contract." This new contract is different from the old one in several ways.

The New Covenant guarantees that each one of us has a new way to live every day.

2 IN THE NEW CONTRACT GOD GUARANTEES POWER TO SUBMIT.

This new way to live is better than the old one. (Hebrews 8:9-12)

- The old contract is "faulty," Hebrews 8:9.

Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not care for them, says the Lord.

1. The old one was a strict law written on stone tablets.
2. The old way depended on pushing your car well -- "If you will..." It was outward.
3. The results were guilt, frustration, and defeat (8:9b -- "For...") God's people didn't keep their part of the contract.

Too many Christians today are still trying to live under the terms of that same old contract. They try to push their car. It only results in frustration and defeat.

- The new contract is better in several ways, Hebrews 8:10-12.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them on their hearts.

And I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

11 And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, and everyone his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all will know Me, from the least to the greatest of them.

12 For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.

1. The NC is written on human hearts. The NC is based on the presence of Holy Spirit in my life. Christian, the Holy Spirit is placed in you to empower you every day.
2. The new way is better because it depends only on God. God says "I will."
Everything coming from God, faith coming from me. This is inward.
Where does the power come from? The power comes from the indwelling Spirit of God.

The man who was pushing his car needed to be shown the motor! There is enough power even uphill when it is tough to submit to authority!



3. The results enable us to obey God, including **submission to God-appointed authority!**
 - Heart obedience (8:10a)-- able to be in submission to authority!
 - Fellowship with God (8:10b)
 - "Know the Lord" speaks of a personal relationship (8:11)
 - Forgiveness of sins. (8:12)
 - Freedom & Power to obey!

These provisions in this contract are Wonderful!

Is this contract already in effect? If not, where do I sign? Just like the Abrahamic was a blood contract, so too the New Contract.

- Our new contract is a blood covenant, ratified by the blood Jesus Christ, Hebrews 9:15-18.⁴

When? When Jesus died on the cross, His shed blood put the New Contract into effect.

Luke 22:20

And in the same way *He took* the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood."

WE HAVE A NEW CONTRACT, A NEW WAY TO LIVE, MADE POSSIBLE BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

Christian, when you trusted Jesus Christ to rescue you from sin & hell, you entered into the New Contract. God placed His Spirit in you to empower you every day.

I know I have the Motor. What should I do as a Christian?

Quit pushing your car. Disciplines yes, but by His power. You can't do it.

WE HAVE A NEW WAY TO LIVE – BY THE POWER OF THE INDWELLING SPIRIT OF GOD.

Refuse to live Christian life by struggling in your own power to keep God's laws and rules. Trying to obey by your own strength is futile. Start living by the terms of the new contract!

Christian: Jesus died to enable us to obey God's Word!

Galatians 2:20.

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but **Christ lives in me**; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I **live by faith** in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

HOW DOES THE CHRISTIAN LIFE GET DONE?? By faith.

Trust God to do it within you. Be submissive toward God-appointed human authority in your life!

When God says submit to these human authorities, He expects you and me to believe that He has provided the power to do it.

If we don't submit then we are guilty of unbelief as Christians. We are doubting God's power within us.

Make the choice to obey by trusting Him. "Get in the car" --- trust Him, then act in obedience.

What do I do to actually "get in the car"?

I say "Lord, I believe You. I trust You."

Then I choose to have the attitude and do the action that shows my trust and obedience.

POINT OF ACTION

"I have renewed my commitment to keep marching through this mess with my head held high with confidence in Your promises and Your power within me."

I must daily show my faith in the Lord. Trust that the Lord will give to you all the strength and emotional energy you need to get up the steepest hillseven though it might cost me.. **make choices to stand** with God, Jesus Christ, and His people:

- I refuse to express road rage as I drive through town.
- I refuse to listen to someone gossip about leaders placed over me.

- I choose to focus on positive things instead of grumble about authorities.
- I resist saying damaging words about God-appointed leaders: parents, church leaders, government officials, boss.
- I pay my taxes with a good attitude.
- Lord, I choose to resist social media knee-jerk reactions to what I see.
- At the moment I'm tempted, I stubbornly refuse it and I send that thought away.

GOD HAS PROVIDED ALL THAT IS NEEDED IN THE TERMS OF CONTRACTS SIGNED BY HIM.

So how do we know it's all going to turn out the way God planned? Is God really sovereign? Did He set the world in motion and things got out of hand?

What guarantee do we have that God is really sovereign? How can we be sure that His right to rule will be demonstrated? It's in the ABRAHAMIC contract!

What about my responsibility today? God's power is guaranteed in the NEW contract! There is no road too steep in your life.



Supplemental Notes for Session 3

¹Genesis 12:1-3

1 Now the Lord said to Abram,
"Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to **the land** which I will show you;
2 and **I will make you a great nation**,
and **I will bless** you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing;
3 And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse.
and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

²In Genesis 15:8-21 God instructed Abraham to set up a blood covenant by cutting the animals into 2 halves so that the 2 parties could walk between the pieces. But God put Abraham into a deep sleep and God Himself walked between the pieces to insure that the contract could not be broken.

³The Lord taught His disciples to pray "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10).

⁴1 Corinthians 15:22-28

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.
23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,
24 **then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father**, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.
25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.
26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death.
27 For **He has put all things in subjection** under His feet. But when He says, "All things are put in **subjection**," it is evident that He is excepted who put **all things in subjection** to Him.
28 When **all things are subjected** to Him, then the Son Himself also will be **subjected** to the One who **subjected** all things to Him, **so that God may be all in all**.

⁵Revelation 20:7-10

7 When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 8 and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.
9 And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And **the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever**.

⁶Jeremiah 31:31-34

Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when **I will make a new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,
32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the Lord.
33 "But **this is the covenant which I will make** with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

⁷Hebrews 9:15-18

For this reason He is the mediator of **a new covenant**, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were *committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.
16 **For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it.**
17 **For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives.**
18 **Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood.**

