31 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” 35 Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—the LORD of hosts is his name: 36 “If this fixed order departs from before me, declares the LORD, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before me forever.” 37 Thus says the LORD: “If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, declares the LORD.” 38 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when the city shall be rebuilt for the LORD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. 39 And the measuring line shall go out farther, straight to the hill Gareb, and shall then turn to Goah. 40 The whole valley of the dead bodies and the ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be sacred to the LORD. It shall not be plucked up or overthrown anymore forever.”
Can you think of any instances in the biblical storyline up to this point where God has shown Himself to be faithful, even when His people weren’t?

Why do you think the Bible emphasizes that we ultimately have a heart problem, not a behavioral problem?

Ever since the fall of the first man and woman in the garden of Eden, God and human beings have been estranged. Sin resulted not only in an estranged relationship with God but also in enmity between God and humanity. Sin is an infinite offense against an infinite God. Thankfully, God loves His enemies and has sent Christ to be the reconciler between us and God. Through Christ’s death, God provides the means whereby that broken relationship is restored and renewed (Rom. 6:23; 2 Cor. 5:18-19).

Christ as Reconciliation

99 Essential Doctrines
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Have you ever been tempted to follow God simply because of the desire for outward prosperity and peace or to go to heaven? How is it possible for your heart to be redirected toward a deep love for God?

What does the fact that God desires to make Himself known demonstrate of His character? What are some ways we can grow in our knowledge of God now?
His Story

How will you point someone to Jesus this week towards the knowledge of God and the forgiveness of sins?

Christ Connection

Despite having God’s law, God’s people were still unable to obey Him because of the sinfulness of their hearts. The prophet Jeremiah prophesied about a coming day when God would write His law on His people’s hearts and provide lasting forgiveness of sin. This prophecy points to God’s provision of Jesus. Through Jesus, God offers us forgiveness, and through the Holy Spirit, God enables us to obey His commands.
In your own words, how would you describe the difference between the old covenant and the new covenant described in Jeremiah?

How does the new covenant demonstrate God’s grace and mercy toward us?

Why is it important that we emphasize obedience to God out of our love for Him?

How would you respond biblically to the often-heard notion in our culture that people don’t really change?

How has this session challenged you to grow in your knowledge of God this week?

How can you strive to make God known to others this week?
Hollywood has made billions of dollars off of good love stories. They’ve learned the way to our pockets is through our emotions. Journalists have also discovered we love pouring over every detail of someone else’s engagement and gorgeous wedding. Love captures us like no other emotion or feeling, but with love comes the potential for betrayal. Deep joy can cause gut-wrenching pain.

In these verses we read of God’s faithful love; we listen as He calls His people to singing and dancing. But previously we are confronted with God’s disappointment in His people (2:13). Israel abandoned and betrayed God (3:20). Recognizing the pain of such abandonment makes chapter 31 demonstrate God’s faithfulness all the more richly.

God reminds His people that He has loved them with an everlasting love—despite betrayal. He calls them to sing, shout, proclaim, praise, and say the greatness of His love. The greatest love story of all has been written by God, and His faithfulness is without end.

In what specific ways are you proclaiming God’s faithfulness?
Like a prodigal son, Israel will return home. In this passage, Ephraim represented the ten northern tribes of Israel. Because God is a good Father, He will have compassion on His children despite their direct disobedience. God still yearns for His people to return because they are like precious sons and daughters in His sight. It’s this kind of love that makes a home inviting. It’s this warmth that binds our hearts to God.

It must be noted that in the midst of their wandering, God disciplined His people like any good father would do (v. 18). A father who doesn’t discipline isn’t a father at all; he is a father of chaos. God longs for His people to live good and satisfying lives that reflect His glory; therefore, He gives them boundaries. Psalm 18:19 reads, “He brought me out to a spacious place; He rescued me because He delighted in me.” God gives us boundaries out of love, and because He knows what is best for human flourishing, He will gently correct us when we’ve veered off the path.

We live in an age when we are bombarded with messages of “You can!” “Your destiny is yours!” “You are in charge of this day.” And certainly you are. No one is coaxing you out of bed besides the persistent pleas of your parents. But this message can subtly turn into a false gospel of “me.”

Throughout the early church, we see a movement of God, one that has allowed us to have the Bible in our hands today. Men and women believed so deeply in the Messiah Jesus and His death and resurrection that many were killed as they carried the message into our generation.

This certainly was not the case because they mustered up an “I will” mentality. It was because they depended deeply on the movement of the Holy Spirit to flatten mountains and make paths through jungles. We must start first in prayer and follow up with dependency. God will fulfill His promises, and we will follow in obedience.

| In what ways is God calling you to be obedient today? |
Have you ever gone to a restaurant only to eat the most incredible dessert? You savor each bite and almost let it melt in your mouth, aware that this marvelous treat is something far too good to be eaten quickly. You quickly ask your server to give your compliments to the chef and timidly ask for the recipe. The chef walks out to graciously say thank you but then proceeds to share that she only shares her recipe with her exclusive guest list (a list you will never get on because you don’t have any of the credentials).

Although this example pales in comparison with God’s declaration of the new covenant, it is one for us to take in bite size (pun intended).

Unless you are a believing ethnic Jew, you have been grafted by faith into the body of chosen ones through the priceless blood of Jesus. You have been invited into all the insight God has revealed to His people Israel. The recipe is yours.

Jeremiah recounted words of assurance. Only God can measure the heavens. Only God can know the inner heat of the earth. As sure as the sun rises and sets, the survival of Israel, God’s people, is as certain as the laws of nature that God has ordained. And this is not by their doing but a free gift handed to them.

The expression “because of all they have done” refers to Israel’s evil deeds. Even their righteous acts are like filthy rags before the Lord (Isa. 64:6). In spite of them, God’s love is assured. Israel is still His people and always will be. God’s new creation, “the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16), has now been brought into existence through the miraculous birth, sinless life, and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. This will always be the way to salvation—through the matchless love of Christ. It was nothing of our own doing. Instead, we are saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8), and this leads us to bow in humility before God the Father, who seals our inheritance in Him forevermore.

**What measures can you take today to get to know God better and experience His presence?**

**God’s kindness leads us to repentance (Rom. 2:4). In what ways does God’s kindness through His Son, Jesus, lead you to repentance today?**