



The **PRINCIPLES** of **FIRST MENTION**

The Beginning of Covenant **Robert Morris**

Focus The first time the word “covenant” is mentioned in the Bible is Genesis 6:18 when God makes a covenant with Noah. There are five major covenants in the Bible; some are unconditional, and some are conditional. The covenant with Jesus requires us to believe in Him and surrender our will to God.

Fun What was your favorite sport growing up?

Review Key Scriptures: Genesis 6:18; Hebrews 8:8–10

1. The unconditional covenants

Three of the five major covenants in the Bible are unconditional. God gave Noah a rainbow as a sign of the universal covenant He made to never again destroy the earth with a flood. God’s covenant with Abraham that he would be a father of many nations was unconditional because God put Abraham asleep and made the covenant with Himself. And in God’s covenant with David, He promised to give a lamp to David and his sons forever (2 Chronicles 21:7). These covenants are encouraging because they aren’t contingent upon the people’s behavior but on God’s faithfulness.

2. The obsolete covenant (Mosaic)

The covenant God made with Moses, the Old Testament law, is obsolete (Hebrews 8:13). If the old covenant was faultless, we wouldn’t have needed a second one. The purpose of the old covenant was to show us what sin is. However, it had no power to help us fulfill the law.

3. The new covenant (conditional)

The Israelites did not continue in God’s old covenant, and God promised to

make a new covenant. In Hebrews 8:10, God said, “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 in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” The Holy Spirit empowers us to live a righteous life. This covenant is conditional upon the death of Jesus. We can enter into this covenant when we believe in Him and choose to die to our own will, take up our cross, and follow Jesus.

Group Dynamics Idea Plan a game night with your group. It can be as simple as board games or something like going bowling or meeting up for go-karts. Having fun together will strengthen the connection of your group.

Discuss

1. What comes to your mind when you think of the word “covenant”?
2. Why did God put Abraham to sleep when He made a covenant with him? What do you think God was trying to teach us?
3. God’s covenants with Noah, Abraham, and David were unconditional. What would have happened if those covenants could have been broken by behavior? How does this apply to us?
4. Read Hebrews 8:6–7 and Hebrews 8:13. Why is it encouraging that the new covenant through Jesus makes the old covenant obsolete?
5. Jesus died to make the new covenant possible. What does it look like for us to enter into that covenant by believing and dying to ourselves?
6. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this message? What is something you can do this week to respond to this message?

Take Home

As we conclude, remember the following:

- Some of God’s covenants are unconditional.
- The old covenant has been made obsolete.
- Jesus’ crucifixion gives us the option to say yes to God’s covenant.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, You are faithful even when we are not. Thank you for making a covenant with us through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. We make a choice to lay down our lives and follow You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

New Leader Tip As a leader, be sure you have a prayer covering. Think of two or three people you know who are committed to prayer and ask them to pray for you every day or every week. Tell them your prayer needs as they come up and ask your team to pray for you to have wisdom and be protected.