



# THE NEW COVENANT

A Study of the Scriptural Foundations and  
Practical Applications of the  
Gospel of Grace



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[John15Academy.com](http://John15Academy.com)



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#### Introduction

At John 15 Academy, we want children and young adults to grow up confident of their new identity in Christ—and knowledgeable of the scriptural foundations of the gospel of grace. This curriculum guide is created to help you lead your middle school and high school students through two great books, one devotional, and Appendix C of my book. In this guide, you will find a reading schedule and suggested writing responses. Additional curriculum guides will be available for future studies.

I recommend buying paperback copies of both of the books—a copy for you and each student, one copy of the devotional for your family to share, and you can print out a copy of Appendix C (with my permission!) for each student from this e-book.

It's important for each student to have a copy of the books for two reasons:

1. They are beginning to build their own personal library of mature books, and
2. They can highlight and underline and make notes in the margins of their own personal copy of a real book.

Here are the links to purchase the texts for Year One:

[\*The Naked Gospel\* by Andrew Farley](#) (Also available on audio from Audible.)

[\*The Cross Worked\* by Zach Maldonado](#) (Also available on audio from Audible and Apple.)

[\*Trust for Today. 365 Days of Encouragement—A Year With The Trueface Team\*](#)

In my book, [\*Education by Design, Not Default: How Brave Love Creates Fearless Learning\*](#), I include A NEW WORLDVIEW in Appendix C. I suggest you start each semester by reading this new worldview aloud with your children. After you read, spend 15–20 minutes reflecting and having the

students write 3–5 personal considerations and 3–5 questions they have in response to the reading. Write your own considerations and questions, too. Take turns sharing the considerations and questions—and allowing these ideas to guide your discussion.

I am quoting from my book (pp. 133–137) here:

### **A New Worldview**

After the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our purpose is no longer to strive to earn an identity—or the approval and acceptance that may come with success. Our purpose is to keep trusting the God who loved us enough to offer us the identity of His Son—Christ-in-me, and Christ-in-you.

A new heart is ours for the trusting. We have a shame-free identity, too—even when we struggle. Trusting this Christ-in-me identity, I can live a life of hope instead of fear. Because we trust and experience the love and forgiveness of God, we find the freedom we could never earn under the law. We are free to love, instead of simply perform.

Law cannot restore the world; law only has the power to condemn. Trusting the law, we live measuring outcomes according to law's standards. Law bears the fruit of judgement and punishment; ask any child who's spent more than a day or two at school.

Trusting Christ, we live new lives, trusting His life, now observable in us. Love knows that what is inside us will come out. *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things, there is no law." Galatians 5:22–23, KJV.*

### **A Worldview Changed by Grace**

- We believe God is who He says He is; God is love (1 John 4:8). God is always the initiator in relationship: He always moves towards us in love and truth. God's love is fully committed; we never have to earn His love. His is the love of a servant—attentive to our needs. His love is faithful; completely trustworthy. God's corrective love leads us and provides direction; His "jealous for us" love sets boundaries and provides protection. God's affirmation tells us our significance in His heart and in our world.
- We believe the original good news changed everything—and offers, not a better way of doing the old life, but a new way and a new life.
- We believe we access this new life trusting God; we believe we grow up in this new life by trusting God. Trust is the door that opens to God's love—and the love of others.
- We believe the moment we trust God, we are given the gift of a new nature—and the

indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. I am no longer a sinner, striving to become a saint; I am now a saint who sometimes sins. This new nature is Christ-in-me and Christ-in-you; 100% righteous because of His life abiding in us. Christ-in-me and the reality of the Holy Spirit abiding in me equips me to live my new life with strength greater than my own. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are mine for the trusting. I did not have this power in my old nature.

- We believe sin is a force—whose motive is to work against God’s perfect design. Sin damages and kills. This damage and death is the punishment of sin—not God.
- We believe shame is a force—whose motive is to convince us to hide from God and from each other, especially when we need help. Shame comes in the shadow of sin. Shame offers us an invalid identity; shame names us by our struggle.
- We believe grace is Jesus. His blood paid for our sins once and for all. He always expresses Himself in unconditional, transformational love. Grace matures us as we continue to trust God and experience His love. We believe grace is the stuff of miracles. *“He who is in you is greater than he (Satan) who is in the world [of sinful mankind],” I John 4:4, AMP.*
- We believe our behavior is the mirror of our beliefs. When I trust who God says He is, I trust His love for me—and I experience His love that changes my behavior. I let Him meet my real needs. When I trust who God says I am, I trust His righteousness in me; I trust the fruit of the Spirit in me to give me encouragement and strength to live a life of love. When I trust who God says you are, I see your needs and love you in the ways God designed for me to love you. I remind you often of your true identity, and let you remind me of mine. I let you see my real needs, too—and receive your love in the ways God designed you to love me.
- We believe the motive of this new life is “be loved” and “love one another.” This motive is very different than “fix my sin” or “get everything right.” When my motive is “fix my sin,” I am trying to do what only the cross of Christ can do. When my motive is “love one another,” I am trusting the power of my new nature. In my maturity, I discover I am sinning less and getting more things right.
- We believe love is a process of meeting needs. When our needs are met, the weak become strong. We believe our God-given needs include: commitment, unearned love, servant love, faithful love, corrective love, “jealous for”/protective love, and He often uses others to meet them, too.
- We believe maturity is the fruit of our trust—just as salvation is the gift of our trust. As I trust the truth about who God is, and who He says I am—I grow up. As my maturity grows, so will

my character and my capacities.

- We believe—in all the truth of our new nature— “joy” is “it’s good to be me here with you.” We build joy strength as we trust, bond, and live life in healthy relationships. Experiencing the grace gifts of forgiveness and repentance, we learn to return to joy from every unpleasant emotion. We believe in owning the influence and impact of our sin in the lives of others; forgiveness can rebuild trust—so we can experience each other’s love again.
- We believe “in this world we will have struggle” and personal humility offers opportunities to receive help when we trust God and others. [“The goal of the Christian life is not in what you can produce, but how you learn to depend upon Christ in what you cannot produce” \(John Lynch\).](#)
- We believe in life lived in relationships of trust and communities of grace; we believe these communities speak the language of love and truth. We believe these relationships offer protection from shame, blame, condemnation, manipulation, and unmet needs. We give others permission to protect us in these healthy ways.
- We believe trusting our new commandment, “Love one another,” equips us to be grace carriers that others can trust. We don’t count mistakes; counting tempts us to commit other sins. We take our sin and mistakes seriously, not because they disqualify us or speak in any way about our identity, but because sin and mistakes hurt us and hurt others. Hurt invites shame and lies and separation. The cross of Christ erased the sin from my report card and gave me a shame-free identity. Grace can restore our relationships with others, too.
- We believe in abiding in a big and beautiful world—trusting the love of God as He offers us beauty, good work, inspiration, challenge, delight, grand affections, leisure, and rest.

## **A Daily Devotional**

The habit of beginning the day reading a reminder of truth from scripture is a life-giving habit. One book of devotions we recommend during The New Covenant study is [Trust For Today: 365 Days Of Encouragement—A Year With The Trueface Team](#). This book includes both wisdom—and humor. It’s can be a fun and deeply inspirational family treasure.

You can start reading this book from the beginning, even if you’re starting this study at the beginning of the school year. Simply use a bookmark to keep your place instead of using the date markers at the bottom of each page.

You can use this book in several ways—and feel free to do what feels natural and fits in your routine at home. The daily readings could be shared with the entire family at breakfast and/or

lunch time. Or you can read these daily devotions at the end of each day as a reminder of the assurance of God’s love before falling asleep. Always include reading the scripture reference included with each day’s devotion.

You may choose to use some of the readings as transcriptions—including the scripture. Choose to use some of the scriptures for memory work—or as a beautiful addition to the stationary you’re using to write a letter or a thank you note.

Books can become like family members. We can include them as a part of our daily conversations and learn to speak the language we hear when we linger in their pages. This devotion can become a member of your family that encourages you to laugh—and that inspires you to trust the laughter and the love of our loving heavenly Father.

### Instructions for Reading the Books

The reading schedule provided below for each book will help you pace yourself through this text. The New Covenant study is a subject designed so that the books are read aloud—together. When I work with students, my general guideline is for each person to read one page—or until the end of the paragraph that began on that one page—and then take turns.

Reading aloud can feel awkward at first—and it is vital. Hearing a text read aloud while you are looking at the text is a huge benefit to comprehension. Oral reading fluency supports comprehension, too. Too often, older students don’t get the opportunity to read aloud—and their brains *need* the experience. Reading aloud helps to build a mature vocabulary more than reading silently.

If your child is hesitant to read aloud because they struggle, remind them they are still learning and struggle is a natural part of the learning process. If they don’t work through the struggle, they will stay stuck. Remind them that it takes practice and effort to grow—and that you’re not concerned or impatient. If they need additional support, you can help them by using the echo reading and choral reading techniques discussed in the *ALL THINGS READING* e-book. You may also tell them a day or two ahead of time the pages that they will get to read aloud, so they can practice and be familiar with the text. Your part is to help them struggle well in truth—and protect them from lies and shame. Don’t protect them from the struggle. Help them grow.

If your child is afraid of what other people will think if they struggle to read aloud with fluency, use the opportunity to help them sort the lies from the truth. *“You are not the only one who struggles.” “It feels devastating, but your feelings don’t tell you the truth.” “The struggle won’t last forever. You’re learning and getting better every day.” “We’re for you—and quietly cheering you on. We’re here to encourage you, instead of discourage you.”* You can also use the opportunity to have an important discussion about empathy.

You and each student will need a note taking page for recording considerations and questions

each day after the reading. You may print out a page from the John 15 Academy—or simply divide a piece of lined paper in half and label on side “Considerations” and one side “Questions.”

After the reading, spend 10–15 minutes reflecting and having the students write 3–5 personal considerations and 3–5 questions they have in response to the reading. Write your own considerations and questions, too. Take turns sharing the considerations and questions—and allowing these ideas to guide your discussion. When you begin the next lesson, have each student read one or two considerations (or questions) from the notes they made during the previous lesson as a reminder of what you’re learning.

This pattern of sharing considerations and questions will become familiar to you as you use it in all text-specific subjects. The students will find their notes valuable as a form of brainstorming they can use as they plan their paragraphs and essays in response to the reading.

Some days, your work together will simply be reading and discussion. Other days, you’ll read, discuss, and then transcribe or begin the written response indicated in this guide. Remember, this guide is simply a guide. You may add written responses or skip one or two. Your part is to lead your children in a transformative experience with these texts.

Remember the transformational triangle? Sit side by side and enjoy receiving truth and love from the pages of well-chosen books.

You will naturally find several paragraphs and passages while you’re reading that are great selections for transcription. These will often be the passages you underline or highlight. You may assign certain passages for transcription, and/or let the students make some selections for themselves.

A reminder about transcription: It is a careful and thoughtful endeavor. The work is done neatly and with attention to accuracy. It is helpful if you, as the teacher, keep your own transcription journal as a beautiful example for the students to follow. Feel free to read or reread the discussion about transcription in the *BECOMING A WRITER* e-book.

### ***The Naked Gospel by Andrew Farley***

Begin the study of this book by reading the back cover text—and respond in discussion with what you’re wondering about what’s inside the pages of this book. The table of contents is a part of the front cover—take a look at the chapter titles, too. What are you wondering? What does the subtitle mean: *Jesus plus nothing. 100% natural. No additives.*

The reading schedule includes 16 days of reading to complete this book. You can plan to have the subject “The New Covenant” on your weekly schedule once or twice a week—and complete

this book in either 8 weeks, if the subject is in your schedule twice a week, or complete the book in 16 weeks, if the subject is in your schedule only once a week. The writing responses can be started during class time after the reading and completed by the student independently. Remind them—it's always ok to ask for help.

## Reading Schedule

**DAY ONE:** pp. 15-28

**Written response:** Choose one question from p. 221 and write a 1-3 paragraph response.

**DAY TWO:** pp. 29-42

**DAY THREE:** pp. 43-52

**DAY FOUR:** pp. 53-64

**DAY FIVE:** pp. 65-75

**Written response:** Write a one paragraph response to 3 or 4 of the questions on p. 222.

**Written response after reading Parts 1 & 2:**

Write a five-paragraph essay contrasting “the naked gospel” to traditional religion.

Organize your essay so that your first paragraph introduces your three main ideas of contrast and include a thesis sentence. The middle three paragraphs will explain each of the three ideas in detail. The last paragraph will restate the thesis and offer the reader a practical “so what?” that encourages them to think deeper about this topic.

**DAY SIX:** pp. 77-93. Discuss responses to the questions on p. 223.

**DAY SEVEN:** pp. 95-108

**DAY EIGHT:** pp. 109-115 A suggestion for transcription: “A Definition” on p. 114.

**DAY NINE:** pp. 116-129

**Written response:** Write a one paragraph response to 3 or 4 of the questions on p. 224.

**DAY TEN:** pp. 131-143

**DAY ELEVEN:** pp. 144-155

**DAY TWELVE:** pp. 156–169

**Written response:** (Chose one)

OPTION ONE: Write a five-paragraph essay explaining the significance of forgiveness, atonement, and confession. Organize your essay so that your first paragraph introduces your reader to the topic of different responses to sin and includes a thesis sentence that lists: forgiveness, atonement, and confession. Your second paragraph should explain what you've learned from the text about forgiveness; your third paragraph should explain what you've learned about atonement, and your fourth paragraph should share what you've learned about confession. The concluding paragraph will restate the thesis and offer the reader a practical "so what?" that encourages them to think deeper about their own responses to sin.

OPTION TWO: Write a one paragraph response to three or four of the questions on p. 225.

**DAY THIRTEEN:** pp. 171–185

**DAY FOURTEEN:** pp. 186–199 Discuss responses to the questions on p. 226.

**DAY FIFTEEN:** pp. 201–213

**DAY SIXTEEN:** pp. 214–219

**Written response:** (Choose one)

OPTION ONE: Write a one paragraph response to answer question one or two on p. 227

OPTION TWO: Write a letter to the author Andrew Farley to respond to question four or five on p. 228. Andrew Farley's mailing address is: 6007 66th St. Lubbock, TX 79424. [His website](#) also offers many videos as well as links to popular recordings on his radio broadcast.

### **THE CROSS WORKED by Zach Maldonado**

Begin the study of this book by reading the back cover text—and respond in discussion with what you're wondering about what's inside the pages of this book. Look inside at the table of contents and take a look at the chapter titles. What are you wondering? What do you think the subtitle means: *Why You Can Have CONFIDENCE On The Day Of Judgement*

Read this text aloud to the students—from Zach Maldonado's website:

*"Do you doubt God's goodness? Are you fearful that He will judge you for your mistakes?"*

*For many of us, we get saved and then we're told we need to do more, be better, and try harder*

*in order for God to love and forgive us. We have even bought the lie that God is punishing us for our sins and that one day we will have to face judgment for every single mistake we make.*

*In The Cross Worked., Zach Maldonado explores the Scriptures about forgiveness, reward, and judgment, and dismantles the popular religious jargon around these verses, helping readers:*

- *Discover the forgiveness they have in Christ.*
- *Overcome their fear of God's judgment.*
- *Know the goodness and love of God.*

*By the end of The Cross Worked you'll understand how to enjoy Jesus and live each day with confidence!"*

Discuss your own fears and ask the students if they have these fears. What are the assurances you each trust? and what do you wonder about?

The reading schedule includes 12 days of reading to complete this book. You can complete this book in either 6 weeks, if the subject is in your schedule twice a week, or complete the book in 12 weeks, if the subject is in your schedule only once a week. The writing responses can be started during class time after the reading and completed by the student independently. Remind them—it's always ok to ask for help.

This book includes a Study Guide on pp. 157–163. Consider this suggestion: Read the study guide questions BEFORE you read each chapter—to help form your thoughts about what's to come, and to guide your notes on your considerations and questions page. You may also use the questions as writing prompts in addition to the writing responses offered here, or as a different choice from these suggestions.

## Reading Schedule

**DAY ONE:** pp. 1-14

**DAY TWO:** pp. 15-22

**DAY THREE:** pp. 23-32

**DAY FOUR:** pp. 33-44

**DAY FIVE:** pp. 45-56

**DAY SIX:** pp. 57-70

**Written response:** Write a five-paragraph essay about three key ideas in "Reason 1-You're Totally Forgiven." Choose three chapters that were significant to you in Reason 1 and use

the main ideas in each chapter as the focus of each of your three paragraphs in the “body” of your essay. Organize your essay so that your first paragraph introduces these three key ideas and include a thesis sentence. The middle three paragraphs will explain each of the three ideas in detail. The last paragraph will restate the thesis and offer the reader a practical reason to trust the ideas you’ve discussed.

**DAY SEVEN:** pp. 71-80

**DAY EIGHT:** pp. 81-93

**DAY NINE:** pp. 95-104

**DAY TEN:** pp. 105-115

**Written response:** Write a five-paragraph essay about three key ideas in “Reason 2-You’re Just Like Jesus.” Choose three chapters that were significant to you in Reason 2 and use the main ideas in each chapter as the focus of each of your three paragraphs in the “body” of your essay. Organize your essay so that your first paragraph introduces these three key ideas and include a thesis sentence. The middle three paragraphs will explain each of the three ideas in detail. The last paragraph will restate the thesis and offer the reader a practical reason to trust the ideas you’ve discussed.

**DAY ELEVEN:** pp. 117-138

**DAY TWELVE:** pp. 139-151

**Written response:** Write a letter to Zach Maldonado sharing your experience of reading his book. Include details in your letter about one or two key ideas that were meaningful to you, and perhaps how your understanding of the gospel has been transformed. Zach Maldonado’s mailing address is: 6216 66th St. apt 1403 Lubbock, Texas 79424. [His website](#) offers several videos and other information that maybe helpful to you.

[This video](#) “Seeing Jesus” shares more of Zach’s heart for people to know the truth about Jesus.

## Conclusion

Congratulations! You’ve completed The New Covenant study as a part of your membership in John 15 Academy. My prayer is that your soul is finding both great joy and real rest as you explore your true identity in Christ—and offer this opportunity for exploration to your children, too.

Thank you, Jesus—there is great hope!