

Covenant Purposes

The Kingdom and the Covenant, Session 8

Introduction

- A covenant is a loving, enduring relationship in which each partner focuses on the other's well-being and success, including what they deserve, need or want.
- Our entire relationship with God is based on the "new covenant," which includes salvation, justification, righteousness, sanctification, holiness, healing, provision and everything else
- It's a legally binding relationship that grants specific rights & privileges, and imposes specific responsibilities on each partner
- Its terms & provisions are not optional or negotiable
- God does not make the new covenant with us as individuals
 - It's a covenant between God the Father and God the Son of Man – the Jewish man, Jesus
 - Heb 1:5; 5:5, "... today I have become your Father"
 - Ro 1:16, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile."
 - Father guarantees the divine side of covenant, the Son guarantees the human side

Covenant Purposes

- The new covenant is a legal relationship between those who choose to enter it
- The terms of a covenant consist of its purposes & requirements for those who enter it

Purpose: Restore us to relationship with God

- Why did humanity lose relationship with God and when did that happen? Was God surprised by that?
- 1 Co 2:7-8,⁷ "No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."
- Heb 9:15, "For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance – now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant."
 - "ransom to set them free" (Gk, n, *apolytrois*): a release or redemption of a captive or slave by payment of ransom
 - Jesus died as a ransom to do what?
 - So what control does sin have over us now?
 - If mankind's sin broke our relationship with God, what effect does Jesus' death for the sin of the world have on that relationship?
- Col 1:21-22,²¹ "Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation."
 - Was the letter of Colossians written to sinners or saints?
 - Col 1:1-2(a),¹ "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,² to the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse."

- According to vv 21-22, what was Father's goal?
- Ro 8:1, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."
- Rom 8:16-17, ¹⁶ "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."
 - "testify" (Gk, v, *symmartyreō*): testify in support, confirm, testify along with others
 - God's standard is for everything to be confirmed by 2 or 3 witnesses
- Mt 6:9, "This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven'"
- Eph 1:4-5, ⁴ "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will."
 - "be adopted as his sons" (Gk, n, *huiiothesia*): a legal proceeding that creates a parent-child relation between persons not related by blood; with the adopted child being entitled to all privileges belonging to a natural child, including the right to inherit
 - How could God predestine us before the creation of the world to become his children?
 - Rom 8:16-17, because we're God's children, we're also his heirs
- Adoption completely changed our identity & nature
- One of the purposes of the covenant is to restore us to relationship with God

Purpose: Restore his image & likeness in us

- Gen 1:26-27,
 - ²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
 - The Hebrew words translated "image" and "likeness" are very similar in meaning
 - "image" (Heb, n, *selem*): visual appearance of something or someone
 - "likeness" (Heb, n, *d^emut*): similarity in appearance, character or nature
- Jas 3:9, "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness."
 - "likeness" (Gk, n, *homoiosis*): quality of being similar
- 1 Jn 3:2, "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."
 - "like" (Gk, adj, *homoios*): like, similar
- "likeness" (Gk, n, *eikon*): image; similarity in appearance, character or nature
 - Ro 8:29, "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers."
 - "likeness" (Gk, n, *eikon*)
 - "firstborn" (Gk, adj, *prototokos*): first in a series
 - 1 Co 15:49, "And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall

we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.”

- “likeness” (Gk, n, *eikon*) (twice)
- 2 Co 3:18, “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”
 - “transformed” (Gk, v, *metamorphoo*): to be changed in outward appearance as result of a change in nature
 - Mt 17:2, “There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.”
 - “likeness” (Gk, n, *eikon*)
 - “glory” (Gk, n, *doxa*): glory, splendor, radiance, honor
- We’re to be becoming increasingly like Jesus
- Col 1:15, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.”
 - “image” (Gk, n, *eikon*)
 - Jn 14:9(b), “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.”
 - “firstborn” (Gk, adj, *prototokos*)
- God created us in his image and likeness, to look and be like him, to think and act like him; to be his peers, as much as created beings can be peers of their Creator.
- Another purpose of the covenant is to restore God’s image & likeness in us

Purpose: Prepare us to serve in God’s kingdom

- A new Christian or most older Christians don’t understand God’s kingdom and our role in it
- Mt 28:19-20, ¹⁹ “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
 - “make disciples” (Gk, v, *matheteuo*): to initiate or instruct a disciple in the ways or teachings of a specific teacher or leader
 - “teaching” (Gk, v, *didasko*): to teach, instruct; to impart skills or knowledge
- In general, the purpose of such teaching is to conform our thinking to God’s written & spoken word; i.e., help us repent, literally change how we think
- Training is essential
 - 2 Tim 3:16, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.”
 - “teaching” (Gk, n, *didaskalia*): activities of educating or instructing, imparting knowledge or skill
 - “training” (Gk, n, *paideia*): the whole education and instruction of a disciple
 - 1 Tim 4:7, “train yourself to be godly.”
 - “train” (Gk, v, *gymnazo*): to develop a person’s behavior by instruction and practice
 - Heb 12:11, discipline “produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”
 - “trained” (Gk, v, *gymnazo*)
 - Training is essential, but only worthwhile if it produces thinking compatible with God’s
- The purpose of discipleship training: help us become effective in God’s kingdom

- That teaching should prepare us for two vital kingdom functions: (1) make legal rulings, (2) reign as a kings
- 1 Co 5:12-13(a), ¹² “What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? ¹³ God will judge those outside.”
 - “judge” (3x) (Gk, v, *krino*): (1) to decide a legal question, act as a judge; (2) to make non-legal decisions or choices
- 1 Co 6:2-3, ² “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? ³ Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!”
 - “judge” the world (Gk, v, *krino*): to decide a legal question, act as a judge
 - “judge” trivial cases (Gk, n, *kriterion*): any proceeding in a court of law
 - “judge” angels (Gk, v, *krino*)
- We’re to learn how to judge matters properly in our domains; according to God’s standards & ways
- I believe when we reign with Jesus on earth in the millennium, we’ll make legal judgments over cities, nations or regions of the world
- I believe in eternity, we’ll also make legal judgments over spiritual beings, including angels
- Mt 28:18, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”
 - “authority” (Gk, n, *exousia*): authority; a legal privilege reserved exclusively to a particular person or group
- Parable of minas
 - Lk 19:17, “‘Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’”
 - “take charge” (*exousia*) or have authority over 10 cities; i.e., he will reign over 10 cities
- Application to us
 - 2 Tim 2:12, “If we endure, we will also reign with him.”
 - “reign” (Gk, v, *symbasileuo*): reign as king alongside another or others
 - Rev 2:26-27, ²⁶ “To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations – ²⁷ ‘He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery’ – just as I have received authority from my Father.”
 - v 26, “authority” (Gk, n, *exousia*)
 - v 27, “rule” (Gk, v, *poimaino*): govern, guide, help; conceived of as tending sheep or goats
 - Rev 20:6, we’ll reign with Christ for 1,000 years
 - “reign” (Gk, v, *basileuo*): rule as a king or supreme ruler
- If we prove ourselves faithful in life, we’ll rule as judges & reign as kings in Jesus’ earthly kingdom
- Part of our training includes reigning appropriately in our current domains; then Jesus will promote us to reign with him over the nations

Conclusion

- Primary purposes of the new covenant:
 - restore us to relationship with God
 - restore his image & likeness in us
 - prepare us to serve in his kingdom