

Curse for Violating the Covenant

The Kingdom and the Covenant, Session 17

Introduction

- In human covenants, such as marriage, some people will knowingly, even deliberately break their vow & violate covenant terms
- 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. As a result, each person is more dedicated to their partner's well-being than their own.

The Great Delusion

- A great delusion among many Christians:
 - There are no real consequences for disobedience – i.e., for violating our covenant terms – because God loves us & always forgives us
- If we continually violate covenant we might respond one of two ways
 - Beneficial response
 - We confess our sin & he forgives us
 - We repent – change the way we think
 - We produce fruit/results consistent with repentance
 - We discipline ourselves with Holy Spirit's help
 - Detrimental response
 - We justify ourselves in our thinking
 - We remain self-centered, continue thinking like the world
 - We experience fruit/results consistent with world system
 - If we continue, we ultimately experience covenant curse
 - God honors our free will, which he gave us
 - Regardless of what we do, he remains faithful (2 Tim 2:13)

The Covenant Curse

- If we align ourselves with God's kingdom – stay “in” him, honor our covenant relationship with him – we continue receiving covenant blessings
- If instead we violate our covenant or forsake it, we have aligned ourselves with Satan and chosen not to be accountable to anyone
- The curse for violating/forsaking covenant with God & not repenting is loss of God's blessing in this life, falling back into bondage to sin, then eternal judgment
- People use certain verses allegedly to show there is no curse for believers
 - Rom 8:1-2, ¹ “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.”

- Does the phrase, “no condemnation,” mean there is no covenant curse? Or does this refer to condemnation from the law of sin and death?
- Jn 10:27-28 (Jesus speaking), “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”
- Is it possible for us to leave his care?
- Believers can break covenant by turning away from God, and jeopardize their salvation
 - Heb 10:26-31

²⁶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. ²⁸ Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him who said, “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” and again, “the Lord will judge his people.” ³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

 - Who does “we” refer to in verse 26?
 - What do verse 26 & 27 state about believers who deliberately keep on sinning?
 - What does that mean?
 - What does it mean to trample the Son of God under foot?
 - How can we treat the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing?
 - How can we insult the Spirit of grace?
 - Who are “his people” in verse 30?
 - “dreadful thing” (Gk, adj, *phoberos*): causing fear, dread or terror
 - According to verse 27, how does God view Christians who keep on sinning?
 - 2 Pet 2:20-21, ²⁰ “If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. ²¹ It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred commandment that was passed on to them.”
 - Who has escaped the corruption of the world by knowing the Lord?
 - What does it mean for a believer to be again entangled and overcome by the world’s corruption?

- What do we call someone who has never known the way of righteousness?
- What does it mean for someone to “turn their backs on the sacred commandment”?
- We’re accountable for what we know
- If a sinner rejects the truth of Jesus’ sacrifice for their sin, what judgment will they experience?
- If we know the truth & reject it, the result will be worse than if we hadn’t known the truth
- How important is it to be alert to your own spiritual condition and that of other Christians?
- Winning souls is honorable and mandatory, but we may be abusing people if we win them to Lord, bringing them into covenant with him, but fail to disciple them & allow them to fall away
- Covenant curse is real
 - Some possible reasons God included a curse in this covenant
 - This is the covenant God uses to restore man to right relationship with him
 - Through this covenant God seals each believer with Holy Spirit and releases his power to transform the believer to be like him and ultimately reign with him in his kingdom
 - This covenant reflects God’s unlimited love for us and his intent to include us in everything he does
 - Those who have experienced all this and choose to continue living the old way must pay the penalty for their sins as all sinners must do
 - But they’ve committed a far worse sin than any sinner ever could
 - Lk 12:48(b), “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded.”
 - We’re accountable for our experience with God
- Consider some additional passages
 - Mt 24:12-13, “¹² Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, ¹³ but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.”
 - Jn 13:17, “Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”
 - Jn 15:2, “He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.”
 - Jn 15:10(a), “If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love.”
 - Rom 11:22, “Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.”

- Col 1:22-23, 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 – ²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.”
- 1 Tim 3:6, “He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.”
- 1 Tim 6:21, “...which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith.”
- 2 Tim 2:11-13, ¹¹ “If we died with him, we will also live with him; ¹² if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; ¹³ if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.”
- Heb 3:6, “But Christ is faithful as a son over God’s house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.”
- Heb 3:12-14, “¹² See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. ¹⁴ We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.”
- Jas 5:19-20, “¹⁹ My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, ²⁰ remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.”
- 2 Pet 3:17, “Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.”
- Mt 13:41-42, ⁴¹ “The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Questions

- What kingdom responsibilities or obligations does the existence of a covenant curse impose on us?
- How must this affect our thinking?
- How does this enable us to be more effective in the kingdom?

Conclusion

- May you have such a healthy fear of the Lord that you would do whatever is necessary to avoid violating your covenant with him.