

Descendants

The Kingdom and the Covenant, Session 18

Introduction

- Throughout history, when people entered personal, non-business covenants, they often included their descendants in the covenant
- This included their unborn children & the following generations

God's Covenant with Adam & Eve

- Ro 5:12, "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned."
 - Why did Adam's sin affect all humans?
 - All of Adam's descendants were affected by the curse for his violation of covenant
 - The covenant curse clearly affected Adam & Eve's descendants, including the ones born before they sinned; otherwise, there would've been a human race unaffected by sin

God's First Covenant with Israel

- Ex 12:24 (Passover), "Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants."
- Ex 30:8 (incense), "... so incense will burn regularly before the LORD for the generations to come."
- Ex 30:10 (alter of incense), "This annual atonement must be made with the blood of the atoning sin offering for the generations to come."
- God intended for this covenant to be in effect for many generations

God's Second Covenant with Israel

- Deut 28:46 "They will be a sign and a wonder to you and your descendants forever."
 - What is God's intent for their descendants?
- How would all their descendants be included?
 - Deut 4:9 "Only be careful and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them."
 - Deut 6:6-7, ⁶ "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."
 - Pr 22:6, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."
- In every covenant God made with humans in the Old Testament, he intended for all of their descendants to be trained & included in the covenant.

The New Covenant

- Acts 16:31, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and your household.”
 - Does this mean everyone in the household will personally accept Paul’s message, or does it mean the children will be saved by their parents’ response?
- Lk 12:51-53
 - ⁵¹ “Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. ⁵² From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. ⁵³ They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.
- In God’s covenants with Israel, he clearly intended for parents to teach their families about the covenant, so all the following generations would be included in the covenant
- Does the new covenant require the same?
 - Eph 6:4, “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”
 - “training” (Gk, n, *paideia*)
 - Heb 12:10, “Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.”
 - “disciplined” (Gk, v, *paideuo*)
 - Both words *paideia* and *paideuo* have *paidion* as the root word, which means “young child”
 - The words *paideia* and *paideuo* relate primarily to the upbringing of children, which involves direction, teaching, training, instruction and discipline; these words also apply to adults because the processes are the same
 - The new covenant also requires us to train our children & descendants about our relationship with God, by example & training
- 1 Co 7:14, “For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.”
 - This statement is in the context of marriages in which one spouse is a believer/Christian and the other is not (vv 12-16)
 - “A certain sanctity is conferred [passively] upon the unbelieving spouse.... Through the believing spouse the blessings of a sanctified marriage are bestowed upon the unbelieving spouse and thus more is given [passively] to him than his unbelief deserves.”
– *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, by R.C.H. Lenski
 - “children” (Gk, n, *teknon*): (in this context) a son or daughter of any age

- According to 1 Co 7:14, children of Christian parents experience some of the blessings of covenant relationship with God
- How does holiness relate to the covenant?
- Don't we believe all children are born with sinful human natures?
 - Psa 51:5, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."
 - Eph 2:3, "All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath."
- What if everyone who had at least one Christian parent was a Christian at birth?
- 2 Co 6:14-16
 - ¹⁴ Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God.
- So how do we interpret 1 Co 7:14, that children of a spiritually-mixed marriage are holy?
- Our lives should positively influence our families
 - Mt 5:16, "In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."
 - 1 Pet 2:12, "Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us."
 - How are these verses relevant to our children & grandchildren?
- What you do affects everyone in your domain, including your immediate family & descendants. It is the result of holiness & authority, & includes deliberate training.

Questions

- Since our covenant with God affects our descendants, what kingdom responsibilities or obligations do we have?
- How must this affect our thinking?
- How does this enable us to be more effective in the kingdom?

Conclusion

- Scripture indicates your children and descendants are affected by your covenant with God until they are mature enough to enter covenant themselves