

Christmas Is Coming

Entering Into Covenant Thinking

1. The Bible says that God is a covenant-**making**, covenant-**keeping** God.

The word, covenant occurs in the Old Testament **286** times, and **33** times in the New Testament.

Everything God has ever done with the human race has been done in **covenant**.

2. God will never interact with you in a positive way **outside** of covenant.
 - Covenant means: a permanent, solid relationship – it's how He **relates** to us.
 - Covenants are about binding people together in relationships – again it's about **people**.
 - * Covenant **binds** us to God in a permanent solid relationship.
3. This covenant relationship has been made available through the **birth** and **death** of Jesus.

Hebrews 8:6-7

⁶ But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. ⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

Hebrews 8:8a

⁸Because finding fault with them...

Them: were the many covenants that were made on the earth.

He, God was saying, none of these covenants **satisfied** Him regarding relationships.

Hebrews 8:8-9: ⁸Because finding fault with them, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— ⁹not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord.

- The writer of Hebrews is writing to the Jews (it's for **us** also)

Why: They were in the Old Covenant and all the law and sacrifices they were born into since the days of Moses.

4. The book of Hebrews was written to help a Jewish person to make a **transition** from the Old Covenant into the New Covenant.

This is so important: when you understand covenant, then you understand **God**.

There are always 3 elements to a biblical covenant and they are essential if you take one out, you break covenant.

A. A **promise** or **promises**

Hebrews 8:6

⁶ But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

- It begins with someone making a **promise**.
- 5. The Bible tells us here that Jesus made us better promises so the New Covenant began with **many** promises.
- A covenant is an **agreement** between two parties.
- One person says, I will make you this promise if you keep your **end** of the deal.

God said: I am writing to come into a relationship with you and the relationship I want to have is based on these **promises** here.

- The promises are based on what His Word says in the Bible → so the Bible is a **covenant** Bible and the words in them He cannot break or He **will not** break.

Hebrews 6:11-12

¹¹ And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 6:13-20

¹³ For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, ¹⁴ saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." ¹⁵ And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. ¹⁶ For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation *is* for them an end of all dispute. ¹⁷ Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, ¹⁸ that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. ¹⁹ This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the *Presence* behind the veil, ²⁰ where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

- There are very few certain things in the world but church family – God's promises are certain. He will never **break** His promises.

2 Peter 1:2-4: ² Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³ as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴ by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.

- Tells us what? He has given us everything through promises – over **700** of them in the Bible.

Again: through His promises you become a partaker of His divine nature which means: you know God.

So, enter the promised land and **believe** and **proclaim** them for you.

Now, let's look at the second element of covenant.

B. **Blood** Sacrifice

- You do not have a covenant unless there is a **shedding** of blood.

The word covenant also means – to **cut**.

Matthew 26:28

²⁸ For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Hebrews 10:11

¹¹ And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

- Old Testament sacrifices never took away sin or forgiven.

God found **fault** with all the Old Testament covenants.

Explanation: In the Old Testament, once a year they brought the lamb and shed its **blood** on the Mercy Seat.

Mercy Seat – means to **cover**

Why were they covered?

Answer: So God could **relate** to man.

When Jesus died on the cross, what happened?

Answer: The veil in the temple was **ripped** from the top to the bottom.

The Spirit of God came out from behind the veil and lives **in** you and me.

Hebrews 10:12-14

¹² But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. ¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

- * Jesus' blood **totally** erased sin!!
- * One sacrifice shedding of His blood **established** a covenant.

Church = God is not mad at you – but, your job is to live your life in faith in the **blood** of Jesus, and go **boldly** before the throne of God.

The third element is a **sign**.

C. There always is a **sign**.

Remember the promise to Noah?

Answer: the **rainbow** – I will never flood the earth again.

God made many promises to Abraham.

- Main sign was **circumcision**.

God made a covenant with Moses:

- The sign is the **Sabbath** Day.

6. When the sign is established, it **seals** the deal / the covenant.

* You and I must understand and think this way.

God is very passionate about **signs**.

Hebrews 10:15-18

¹⁵ But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, ¹⁶ "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," ¹⁷ then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." ¹⁸ Now where there is remission of these, *there is no longer an offering for sin.*

There are 3 covenant signs in the New Covenant and if you bear them, you please God. How do you bare them?

- A. You must **receive** the promises.
- B. You must **believe** in the blood of the covenant.
- C. You must **bear** the signs of the covenant.

Here are the signs:

A. The **Holy Spirit**

- When in the early Church, the Day of **Pentecost** was the sign He entered into a New Covenant with the Church.

Ephesians 1:11-14: ¹¹ In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. ¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

He seals it with the Holy Spirit (**relate** to the Holy Spirit) it pleases the Father - a covenant.

Respecting and **inviting** the Holy Spirit is a sign we are serious about God.

Luke 12:10 – God is very passionate

¹⁰ “And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven.

The second covenant sign is:

B. **Water Baptism**

Mark 16:16

¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

Colossians 2:9-12

⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;
¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. ¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

7. Water Baptism is the New Covenant circumcision made by the hands of God – it's done in your **heart**.

** When you go down in water baptism, Jesus comes and takes away part of you that's **unclean** so you have victory over sin.

Yes, you are saved by confessing Jesus as Lord – you have greater victory because you rise out of the water, **heart-circumcised**.

The third sign of covenant:

C. The Lord's **Supper** / **Communion**

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner *He* also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

1 Corinthians 10:14-17

¹⁴ Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. ¹⁵ I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say. ¹⁶ The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? ¹⁷ For we, *though* many, are one bread *and* one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

Let your heart and mind always think **covenant** and relate often especially in communion.