

Introduction:

- Last week we started our study of covenant. We asked ourselves why covenant seemed so foggy to us. I.e. Low visibility. Our culture is not exposed to covenant. The Bible is relatively silent on covenant because it revolves around covenant culture (meaning it is understood). Satan desires to keep covenant understanding hidden from us.
- Ps 25:14 became foundational to us: *"The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant."* (Psalm 25:14, ESV)
- We covered three reasons for covenant: 1. Love between two friendly parties. 2. To end disputes between enemies. 3. To establish relationship between a weaker and stronger party.
- The word covenant in Hebrew means 'to cut'.
- *Endurance*, Shackleton's Incredible Voyage, by Alfred Lansing. The 1914 attempt to reach the South Pole, one of the greatest adventure stories of the modern age. In August 1914, polar Ernest Shackleton and the crew of the *Endurance* became locked in an island of ice. Crew of twenty-seven men. When their ship was finally crushed between two ice floes, they attempted a near-impossible journey over 850 miles. Two years and no loss of life. That is an adventure! Shackleton was an explorer who loved to discover. That is what we are doing in regard to covenant.
- *"Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old day by day regularly."* (Exodus 29:38, ESV)
 - Morning and night – start of the day and end of the day.
 - Two lambs – perfect, without blemish. This means they were perfect...valuable. Blemished lambs were not allowed, they had low value. This is why God sent His Son, perfect of the greatest value. His blood brought Him death and me life!

I. Covenant Create A Bonding Of Life Covenant become the foundation of our faith because covenant is the epicenter of where we understand our relationship with God!

- A. Like in marriage it helps two people become one.
 1. The ceremony of two coming together. All that the husband is he brings. All that the wife is she brings. They now share all things.
 2. You have the terms of the covenant...their vows to one another.
 3. You have the exchange of rings
 4. A new name is given. I.e. Mrs. Kelly Franklin
 5. A wedding meal. The cutting of the cake and feeding each other.
- B. There are two covenants in the bible. Within these two are six that we will eventually look at and which the Bible is most arranged around.
 1. The Old Covenant - *"that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly."* (Genesis 17:2, ESV)
 - a) The covenant that God cut with Abraham

- b) In Gen 15:1-21 vs**18 We see God cutting covenant with Abram. This lets Abram know that God is now bound to do what He said to him.
 - c) The covenant was creating a bonding of life! The Life of God with the life of Abram.
 - d) Abram knew that God was binding himself to him based on covenant. His battles would now be God's battles. God is saying everything I have is yours and all you have you are giving to me...Even your son Isaac. Are you seeing how much rich the story of Abraham taking Isaac to Mt Moriah becomes? And God's words, "Now I know I can trust you!"
2. The New Covenant
- a) The Covenant cut with Jesus.
 - b) The Cross is where God cuts the new covenant.
 - c) The New Covenant was creating a bonding of life. The life of God will all humanity.
 - d) God through Jesus was binding Himself to humanity. Through the most precious and valued sacrifice - Jesus, Son of God. God could trust Jesus, that is why He got the mission to come and save us!
- C. The 'what' of the Gospel is Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead on the third day. The 'why?' is because God wanted to have a binding relationship with me. He loved me that much! He wants me to have everything He is!
- 1. To those who would humble themselves to God...become a friend of God he would reveal, teach, and make known His covenant...not contract.
 - 2. It is a 'win win' situation with a Kind loving God.

II. Recognizing Covenant

- A. Covenant Language is all through the Bible. We become so familiar with it that we are not alerted to it or we take it for granted. I.e. The old illustration, "Momma why do you cut the turkey in half to bake it? That is what grandma did. Grandma, why did you cut the turkey in half? Because it wouldn't fit in the over, otherwise. So familiar with that we lose the "why?" of covenant. I am talking about recognizing covenant.
- 1. Language is what makes a people group able to communicate with one another. It also serves as a barrier when that language is not understood.
 - a) As long as we speak the same language we can communicate. Unless, you are speaking something in my language that I do not understand. I.e. Trigonometry.
 - b) If we do not speak the same language or understand what is meant by the language we have a barrier.
 - 2. Therefore if we speak the same language and we understand the terms communication taking place we are communicating. If we do not understand the

terms of covenant then we will not receive benefits of what is being supplied.

- B. Recognizing covenant terms. What are the words that are used to communicate covenant in the Bible?
1. Covenant, oath, swear, sacrifice, blood, Priest, law, blessings and curses, Mercy, loving kindness, faithful, inheritance, generations, exchange.
 2. Like I said last week when I used terms related to football anyone who knows football would realize I am talking football. I.e. You may recognize the terms and associate them to football but never understand the game.
 3. What I want you to do as you read the scripture is to recognize when the writer is using covenant terms. When he does he is speaking from a covenant perspective.
 4. Many of these terms actually describe the process of cutting covenant. Therefore when the NT writers use them we have to be sharp to catch and not just read over them.
- C. Understanding what covenant means. *The Blood Covenant, Garlow, pp. 25.*
1. Covenant means to 'cut' to bind together in obligation. Not with ink but with blood.
 2. It is a very encompassing agreement between two parties that is carefully outlined and agreed to.
 3. It is an agreement between two parties that bind them together with specific obligations.
 4. A covenant was for life and the generations to follow.
 5. Entered into on the basis of strengths and weakness that complement one another.
 6. "A tangible expression of love and trust."
 7. A relationship based on blood being shed to enact the seriousness of covenant.
 8. There is no such thing as a casual covenant. This covenant is based on 'hesed' love, (kindness or loving kindness) which is the active pursuit of wanting to bless ones covenant partner.

Conclusion:

- Covenant is creating a bonding together of life. It is not a contract. It is far stronger.
- It is found all through the Bible we just have to learn to recognize it.