

“Come up Higher and Understand Covenant”

Happy Friday,

As we near the end of our second week I want to talk about contract vs covenant today and tomorrow. Whether this is a foreign concept or a familiar one, to be informed or reminded is never a bad thing.

We live in a world where contracts are king. Scammers, identity thieves and con artists run rampant and no one seems trust worthy. To protect ourselves in leases, in business and in life most people rely on contracts. Our brains are acclimated to think this way and many times we can project those same concepts on God. But God is not a God of contract, but of covenant.

With a contract, if one agreeing party does something in violation of the contract then it is considered broken. The whole contract becomes null and void. Basically the signers of a contract agree to hold up their end of the deal as long as the other person holds up theirs too.

With a covenant, both parties agree to hold up their ends *regardless* of whether the other party keeps their part of the agreement. A violation of a covenant by one party doesn't give the other person right to not withhold their part. A contract restricts while a covenant expands.

If we are conditioned to “contract thinking” it can cause a misunderstanding with our relationship with God. If we naturally filter everything we understand about God in terms of a contract, we will assume that if we don't hold up our end, then, contractually, God won't hold up his. This puts us in an attitude of striving or performance. This is what religion does. Religion will keep you in a contract way of thinking and continually remind you of what you do wrong. The opposite of this is relationship and truth, that understands that God relates to us based on the light of Jesus perfection. How thankful I am for this.

When we do not understand or see this rightly, our understanding and thinking is warped and the way we pursue and see God will also become warped. Our perception will become our reality and fulfilling the things that God has for us through this covenant will be stifled.

We see it in marriage everyday. When marriage is viewed as a contract instead of a covenant it becomes a paper signed with easy way outs, instead of a true, I'm fulfilling my side whether you do or not. Covenant says until death do us part and contract says until you do something I don't like.

Why does it matter? When I know I have options, I can get lax or uncommitted. When I'm in true covenant, I understand that I'm in this for the long haul, so my commitment is to make it worth while. It is a transition from you and me to we. A true co-laboring to benefit, edify and expand whatever we are a part of. Regarding ourselves spiritually, the expansion is the Kingdom.

There are many covenants shown in the Bible. Through Jesus the old covenant was fulfilled and we inherit the King of all covenants. It is important to understand that Jesus did not just end one covenant, He fulfilled it. That understanding gives us confidence that He will not "end" the new covenant but fulfill it.

The New Covenant is the promise that God makes with humanity that He will forgive sin and restore fellowship with those whose hearts are turned toward Him. Jesus Christ is the mediator of the New Covenant, and His death on the cross is the basis of the promise. The New Covenant was predicted while the old covenant was still in effect—the prophets Moses, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel all allude to the New Covenant.

The prophet Jeremiah said "The day will come,' says the Lord, 'when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. . . . But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day,' says the Lord. 'I will put my law in their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. Jesus Christ came to fulfill the Law of Moses and to establish the New Covenant between God and His people. The Old Covenant was written in stone, but the New Covenant is written on our hearts. Entering the New Covenant is made possible only by faith in Christ, who shed His blood to take away the sins of the world relates how Jesus, at the Last Supper, takes the cup and says, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood"

(Jer 31:31-34 ESV). It is referenced again in the New Testament in Hebrews 8:8-10.

Receiving and understanding Covenant, positions me to understand what I am to give and what I am to receive. And He has given us Better covenant promises: Salvation, fruitfulness, blessing, grace, faith of the son of God, Christ inheritance, unbroken, unhindered relationship. A covenant of love. The power of the blood. Healing, provision, SOZO (wholeness:spirit soul and body).

We will talk about this more tomorrow, but for today just ponder on the way(s) you view your relationship with the Lord. Does it look like covenant confidence or contractual business?

I hope you have an awesome day!
~Pastor Kelly