

When I was 12 years old, my dad got me a set of golf clubs and took me to play golf at Mountain Aire Golf club in West Jefferson. We had a great time! But, something began to happen. I started to grow like a weed. I mean REALLY GROW. Like within the next two years, by the time I was 14, I had gone from being 5' 8" to 6' 3". Guess what that meant regarding my golf clubs? You grow 7" in about two years and your golf clubs BECOME? Too short!

Well, I tried to play with those clubs for the next couple of years until I was around 16 and finally, one day, my dad said to me, "Son, I'm giving you my clubs...I'm no good at golf and I really don't enjoy playing...and I want you to have my clubs." Well, I took those clubs and went to the driving range and I absolutely could not believe what a difference they made. I went from playing golf with clubs that looked like putt-putt clubs to clubs that had extensions for a young man my size. It totally revolutionized the way I played. I went from topping everything to smashing the ball like I was supposed to... **It was so much fun and I was no longer frustrated.**

You know, I've still got those clubs and I'm grateful to my dad for giving me those clubs. When I play (about twice a year), I think of my dad! **Now why do I tell you this story?** Because in my mind this describes what we've been talking about in the book of Hebrews for weeks...the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. You see, The old covenant...which we call, "the Law"...was given to Moses on Mount Sinai with all of it's rules and regulations given to the nation of Israel guidance and the ability to govern itself), well...it was like my old golf clubs...the LAW couldn't do the job adequately...compared to the New Covenant...the coming of Jesus...like my new golf clubs.

You see, when Jesus came to this earth, He fulfilled the Law...He was the perfect reality of what the Law had foreshadowed for centuries. When Jesus died on the cross and then (**point to the tomb**) rose from the dead...He opened the way to God... When that curtain tore from top to bottom in the Temple on Good Friday...it opened the way for all, who would come through Christ... to God. Today on Easter Sunday, we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus...the sign and symbol of the New Covenant!

Now, do I still have those old clubs, my first clubs...yes, I do, but I just don't use them anymore. Why would I? They are no good to me... But, it doesn't mean they aren't good clubs...they are...and they helped me for a season of time...but, I needed better clubs to perform at my best. Jesus offers to humanity, the BEST... He offers to you today...this Easter Sunday...the BEST for your life. Today, we're going to see ONCE AGAIN that Jesus is the BEST this life has to offer...because He got up from the dead to prove it!

Hebrews 9:15-28

¹⁵ Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. ¹⁶ For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. ¹⁷ For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. ¹⁸ Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. ¹⁹ For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, ²⁰ saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you." ²¹ And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood

both the tent and all the vessels used in worship.²² Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.²³ Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.²⁴ For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.²⁵ Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own,²⁶ for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.²⁷ And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,²⁸ so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Church family, what we just read is the summation of everything we've studied up to this point in the book of Hebrews. That SUMMATION: Jesus is better than the Old Covenant. No...He didn't abolish it...throw it away...like my golf clubs...He just replaced it...fulfilled it...with something better: HIMSELF. You see, for 8 chapters the Apostle Paul has described WHY Jesus is better than the old system that these Hebrews...these Jews...have been following all of their lives. And church, you know it had to be so hard for these folks to change the way they have been taught and lived, since they were children. But, something happened that changed everything. THAT...**POINT TO TOMB...**

...A death that resulted in a resurrection. Jesus' death and resurrection changed everything. And isn't that what death does? It changes everything! Someone in your family dies and everything changes. Nothing will ever be the same again. Routines...family traditions...it all changes...everything is different. And it's usually at death that one of these is pulled out of a safe deposit box and read...



The "Last Will and Testament." And we all know that a "Last Will and Testament" doesn't go into effect until the person dies...right? My WILL...will not go into effect until I die. **That's verse 16.**

Hebrews 9:16-18

¹⁶ For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. ¹⁷ For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. ¹⁸ Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood.

"Covenants and blood"...is what we just read about. that's God's way of dealing with sin. Covenants and blood. You know there have been FIVE COVENANTS of Scripture... Here they are: (This is a busy chart...but, look at the BLUE, the Five.)

THE FIVE COVENANTS OF SCRIPTURE								
A Divine Biblical Covenant is a promise from God, formalised in a legal framework, solemnised by sacrifice and guaranteed by oath. The five Covenants are stepping stones through time as God brings history to a climax in the Millennium in the restoration of all things that were lost through man's sin in Eden's garden. <i>(The word "Unconditional" below refers to the promise within the Covenant, not necessarily the individual enjoyment of its blessing)</i>								
The COVENANTS	Refs	Type	Duration	Sign Symbol	Sacrifice	Timing	Beneficiary	Purpose
Noahic 2,348 BC	Genesis 6:18 8:20-22 9:8-18	Royal grant One-way Unilateral Unconditional	Everlasting	Rainbow (Gen 9:13-17)	Genesis 8:20-22	Inaugurated just after the cataclysmic worldwide destruction of the flood.	Made with Noah and his seed (with all of humanity and the animal kingdom).	To secure the earth as a STAGE for the restitution of all things (Acts 3:21) when all will be administered by Christ in Millennial Kingdom (Eph 1:10-11).
Abrahamic 1,913 BC	Genesis 12:1-3 15:13-18 17:9-11, 19 22:15-18	Royal grant One-way Unilateral Unconditional	Everlasting	Circumcision (Gen 17:11)	Genesis 15:8-21	Inaugurated just after the disaster of Nimrod's rebellion, the sin of "the sons of God" and the Tower of Babel.	Made with Abraham and His seed (Israel). Its spiritual blessings are enjoyed by believers now by faith.	To secure an innumerable SEED to enjoy the land and blessing (and the world through them). Not yet fulfilled but will come to pass in the Millennial Kingdom at Christ's second coming (Luke 1:71-75, Rom 4:13)
Mosaic - Old - Sinaitic 1,491 BC	Exodus 19:5-8 24:3-8 31:13-17	Suzerain Two-way Bilateral Conditional	Temporary (BC 1,500 to AD 32). Renewed 7x (eg. "Land Covenant" of Deut 29)	The Sabbath (Exod 31:13)	Exodus 24:4-8	Brought in just after the dramatic birth of Israel as they left Egypt. Abolished in the death of Christ (Heb 7:12-18, 8:13, 10:13)	Made with Israel. On stone. No connection with the church.	Added as a temporary supervisor to teach righteous STANDARDS and magnify sin until Christ came (Gal 3:22-26). No longer in force (2 Cor 3:9-11).
Davidic 1,042 BC	2 Samuel 7:11-16 Psalm 89:3-37	Royal grant One-way Unilateral Unconditional	Everlasting	Christ's resurrection and enthronement (Acts 2:30-33)	2 Samuel 6:17-18	Inaugurated between the past chaos of the "Judges period" and the future apostasy of Israel and Judah in the post-Solomon era of a divided Kingdom of Israel.	Made with King David and his Royal seed.	Secures a son of David as SOVEREIGN , to sit on a throne and reign for ever (Luke 1:32). Currently "dormant" but remains in place to be taken up when the Son of David (Christ) ascends David's throne in the Millennium.
Messianic - New - Second - Better - Everlasting 33 AD	Isa 59:20-21 Jer 31:31-34 Eze 36:24-31 37:26-38 Heb 8:8-12 10:15-18	Royal grant, One-way Unilateral Unconditional	Everlasting	Bread and cup (Matt 26:28, 1 Cor 11:25)	Hebrews 10:8-25, 29 13:24, 13:20	Announced in 606BC at the time of the Babylonian captivity. Then Inaugurated on the darkest day in human history, the day when the Lord Jesus was crucified.	Enjoyed by believers spiritually now. To be nationally enjoyed by ethnic converted Israel at Christ's return, both spiritually and physically (Jer 31:31-34, Eze 36:24-31, 37:14-28, 39:25-29).	Replaces Old Covenant (Jer 31:31, Heb 7:18-19, 8:13). Secures SALVATION , a new heart and forgiveness for all of God's people (Heb 8:10-11). Includes a return to the land and peace for future converted Israel, ensuring they never again lose it through disobedience.
The above Covenant programme contains "Biblical covenants" only. It is not to be confused with what is popularly known as "Covenant Theology", which is a framework constructed by Reformed theologians in the 16 th and 17 th Centuries. "Covenant Theology" posits three "theological covenants", namely the "Covenant of Redemption" (made between the Father and the Son before creation), the "Covenant of Works" (made with Adam in the Garden of Eden) and the Covenant of Grace (promised in Gen 3:15 just after the fall), none of which are actually called 'covenants' in the Bible. Furthermore, Covenant Theology does not distinguish between Israel and the Church, nor does it see a literal 1,000 year future Kingdom on earth. For these reasons, Covenant Theology is seen to present an inadequate framework for understanding the true Biblical "covenant programme". www.webtruth.org								
								Michael J Penfold 2017

You have the Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic and Messianic (Jesus) covenants. Let's just take the first three... COVENANTS and BLOOD. In the Noahic covenant God told Noah to build an ark, and then get in...and then God shut the door and there was death...the shedding of blood...because of the FLOOD... #2 Abraham. God said, "Leave your home...trust me...you will be MY people and the sign of this will be circumcision of all the males...blood. #3 Mosaic...God told Moses to go up on Mt. Sinai and He would give Moses the Law...the instructions for how the people should live...and it was signified with BLOOD. Did you know that? Blood was used to inaugurate the Mosaic covenant... How? Well, **turn in your Bibles to Exodus 24.**

Exodus 24:3-8

³ Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do."⁴ And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.⁵ And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord.⁶ And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar.⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient."⁸ And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words."

Blood... Without the shedding of blood...there is no forgiveness of sin... That's verse 22. **Go back to Hebrews 9.**

Hebrews 9:22

²² Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

You see, under the Old Covenant, the people and all of the objects of the Tabernacle were purified with blood. Look at the screens. See the “Message of the Tabernacle.” Start out at the bottom, right:



- The SHOWBREAD ...the table that held 12 loaves of bread, representing the 12 tribes of Israel and this reminded the people that God fellowships with sinners.
- The INCENSE, like the prayers of the people...rise like smoke, because God hears sinners.
- The CURTAIN, torn from top to bottom at Jesus' death-securing the sinner's ability to come to God.
- The ARK OF THE COVENANT, was the symbol to the people that God reigned over them.
- The LAMPSTAND showed that God gives light to sinners.
- The TABERNACLE itself...it showed that God lives among sinners.
- The golden LAVER, it showed that God cleanses sinners and then...you have
- The ALTAR. What does an altar mean? DEATH...BLOOD SHED...the Altar shows that God saves sinners. How? By the shedding of Blood.

You see, everything in that Tabernacle...everything in the eventual Temple that was built by Solomon...it was all ceremonial...it was all a shadow pointing to the REALITY OF JESUS and what would come to humanity because He shed His own blood for the forgiveness of sin. Again, the Law and the Tabernacle and all that stuff in the tabernacle was like my old golf clubs...that could never do the job. It was insufficient...until Jesus came and did what? Gave us His best on the cross!



From the Passion Play...Justin did such a fantastic portraying Jesus' death on the cross...blood... You may have seen the soldiers (who also did a great job...everyone did) in the play would wipe blood on Justin's arms and chest...but, we all know...it wasn't real blood...it was fake blood. But, not at Calvary 2,000 years ago...no...dripping off that cross was the blood of Jesus!

You see... going back to the beginning...to the Garden of Eden...



from the day that God killed an animal to give Adam and Eve a covering for their sin...God has been covering sin by way of blood. But an animal's blood was never sufficient. The blood of an animal could only COVER sin...someone... a perfect, sinless, someone...had to come and shed His blood to NOT COVER the sin...but, CLEANSE, totally TAKE AWAY the sin. **That's verses 24-26**

Hebrews 9:24-26

²⁴ For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. ²⁵ Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, ²⁶ for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Think about the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. The Old Covenant was represented by this...



The 10 Commandments... What are they made of? STONE... But, the New Covenant is represented by flesh and blood...



Jesus Christ...

Stone versus Flesh...

Listen carefully on this Easter Sunday...the New Covenant was given to humanity by Jesus so that hearts of stone could be replaced with heart of flesh. To go from death to life. The New Covenant offered by Jesus has the ability to change human hearts. The Old Covenant could never do that. Remember in our study back to Hebrews 8, verse 10...

Hebrews 8:10

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Church, I want to explain something that we already know...but, hearing in the way I'm going to describe will hopefully bring freshness to it... And that is this... It's easy to segment or compartmentalize our lives between the spiritual and the natural...the sacred versus the secular...the external versus the internal. I would say it this way. The secular or the external part of who we are as human beings could be represented by stone...what we may call: the outer shell of who we are...but, the spiritual...the internal...the sacred part of who we are would be what's in the inside...the heart and soul of a person...their spirit.

Listen...may I remind us this Easter Sunday...for the human being...being in the presence of God is the most wonderful experience of life. Oh...being conscious of God's presence is greater than any other experience of life. Why? Because the presence of God is LIFE and it can only be found through Jesus...the Way the Truth and the LIFE!

Oh dear people... **Do you want to know what can cure every problem** or worry or anxiety of your life...it's being in the presence of Jesus...it's having the conscious awareness of His presence in your soul.

I'll also say this...Listen...the greatest love the human soul can ever experience is the love of Jesus...and this is not experienced just intellectually...it's more than a bunch of facts...or rules or regulations...that's Old Covenant...that's old golf clubs...NO...the love of Jesus is experienced in the greatest degree in our spirit... Get this now...God is spirit and only through our spirit...since we are created in image...as Spirit...can we truly know and experience the presence of God.

You see, when the veil was torn...when Jesus said from the cross, "It is finished"...then and only then could we come into the presence of God!

So many Christians today are trying to walk a tight-rope between the sacred and secular...between the spiritual and the natural...and they've compartmentalized Jesus to what they do on Sunday...or some little pray they pray as they fall asleep at night and so they caught in a trap where they find no peace in either the sacred or the secular...because they have one foot in the secular...the world and Church, the things of the world...will never satisfy...but, they only have one foot in the things of Jesus, they're not totally committed...just partially and yet, Jesus said FOLLOW ME...that's all of you...100% and so there's not joy in that... And so you live torn...miserable. Oh...that's no place to be. You must decide...will you follow Jesus and surrender your heart to Him...or look to the world to make you happy. That's what the soldier in our play had to decide...



Have you made your decision to follow Christ?



Listen...for those of you here today who have never accepted Jesus, by faith into your life...into your spirit...your heart...please understand the sobering reality of this...

Hebrews 9:27-28

²⁷ And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, ²⁸ so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

You know, we've been talking about Climbing Mountains throughout this series...



We've talked about what it means to leave Base Camp and go for the summit...to reach the top. I've been enamored and I've told you throughout the series that I've been reading about those who have sought to summit Everest...the tallest mountain in the world at 29,029 feet.

Did you know the first attempt to climb Everest was in 1922? British climbers made it all the way up to 26,800 feet...only 2,200 ft from the top. I've told you before what happens at 26,000 feet.



You enter, "The Death Zone." What happens in the Death Zone...why could they climb no further? They couldn't breathe. They weren't using oxygen tanks. It's amazing they made it that far. Eventually oxygen tanks would be used...but even then... it was amazingly difficult. Attempts were made to summit Everest in 1924, 1933, 35, 36, 38, 47, 50, 1951, 52 and then, on May 27, 1953 two British climbers made it all the way to 28,700 feet...only 329 feet from the top...the summit; and they were able to do so because they were using this type of oxygen apparatus...



That's called a "rebreather" or "closed-circuit" oxygen system. In layman's terms...a rebreather is an oxygen tank that absorbs the carbon dioxide that we exhale when we breathe and recycles it by mixing it with pure oxygen so it can be reused by the user. This differs from an open-circuit breathing apparatus, where the exhaled carbon dioxide is discharged directly into the environment. Oh those climbers were only 329 feet away.

Well, 2 days later, two more men decided to make one final attempt to summit. They were considered the fittest and most determined climbing pair on the mountain that year. These two guys...



New Zealander Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay of Nepal. And at 11:30 am on Friday, May 29, 1953 Hillary and Norgay summited Mt. Everest for the first time in human history! Edmund Hillary would arrive first and then Tenzing Norgay...moments later and Hillary would snap this photo...



as Norgay rammed down a stake with the flags of New Zealand and Nepal firmly planted on the top of the world! What a feat! Later in July of 1953...their story would be chronicled by *Life* Magazine. Here's a picture of that...



Interestingly in the article it was discovered that while at the summit they buried a few sweets and a small cross in the snow before descending. **By the way, since then...**there have been over 7,600 summits by close to 4,500 people. Moral of the story is this...Hillary and Tenzing needed the right equipment to get the top and that couldn't have happened prior to the technology of the rebreather.

Listen carefully and we'll be done. (Pastor Brad begins to come forward for invitation.) Today is Easter Sunday and we are all reminded of the fact that Jesus conquered the greatest mountain a human being will ever encounter-not Everest-**DEATH!**

Death is the mountain man can't conquer...not on his own. So, using that as mountain and seeking to climb as an example...let's imagine it's not Hillary and Tenzing climbing Everest...let's imagine it's you and Jesus climbing the mountain of death side by side... You are seeking to go to the top...and at the top is heaven...eternal life...

Problem is...you've just made your way into the Death Zone...you and Jesus...and, there's even greater problem...there's only one tank of oxygen...and one mask...and without hesitation...Jesus takes it off his back and puts it on yours and adjusts the mask on your face...and smiles...

AND YOU WATCH JESUS FALL into the snow... and you suddenly realize...He's going to die without the tank...but, on His knees, He says, "Go...I've made the way... clip to the rope that I've secured for you...you'll make it...follow my way... Go before it's too late...you'll have enough if you leave now!!! GO!!!!!"

And you turn and you clip to the rope and you glance a look to the top and then you look back at Jesus and this is what you see...



You say..."That's not Mount Everest!!" No it's not, "It's Mount Calvary," and it was there that Jesus gave the ability...the air in your tank to get you to heaven!

You know I'm really thankful my daddy gave me that long set of golf clubs...but, on this Easter Sunday...I'm really thankful my heavenly gave me Jesus so that I could live the best this life has to offer and one day get to heaven to see Him.