

Incredulous

Grace Fellowship | Carlton Weathers | Genesis 17:15-27

Take your Bible and turn with me to Genesis chapter 17. Today we'll be looking at verses 15 through 27. This is the third message in this chapter, in chapter 17. And one of the reasons that we've slowed down on this chapter is because it's so crucial to our understanding of what it means to be in relationship with a covenant God.

There are a lot of ways we can see the scriptures, a lot of ways we can divide the scriptures, a lot of ways we can—uh—main themes that we can see coming through the Bible to us. None more important than the reality that God is bringing His covenant kingdom to bear on the world.

And that's not something that started with Christ, but it's something that started at the Garden of Eden. When God made covenant with Adam, Adam broke the covenant, fell into sin, separated from God, removed from the place of worship which was the Garden of Eden, and God promised a snake crusher who would come through the line of Adam to purchase back from sin and death those who believed in Him and trusted God, the covenant-keeping God.

This main line, this main trunk, we might think of it like the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River flows through the heart of our nation, right? And it—it grows larger and larger and larger, and at the mouth of that great river, down at the Gulf of Mexico, about a mile wide span from one side to the other of this great river flowing into the Gulf.

The covenants of God are like this river. They build one on top of another, on top of another as they flow to the ultimate end. That ultimate end being Christ in His first and second coming. The whole Bible holds together this way. And I think sometimes we do violence to the scriptures unintentionally because we study it like a recipe book where we drop in here, there, and everywhere picking up a verse for today.

And we don't keep that verse in its covenantal context. Genesis 17 is inside the context of the Abrahamic covenant. God has made a promise in Genesis 12. God has—has brought that promise forward in Genesis 15, and now in Genesis 17, He is externalizing and committing between Him and Abraham this great promise that He would give him not only one descendant, but many and great nations.

Inside of this context we come to Genesis 17, verse 15. And let's read this together now as we prepare to look at it today.

And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will

bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her." Then Abraham, like he did previously in verse 3, fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before You!" God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation. But I will establish My covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year." When He had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham. Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all those born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskin that very day, as God had said to him. Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. And all the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with the money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

We come to this passage and we must begin to ask the question: how will God do what He has promised to do? And how can we be sure that God did or will do what He has promised to do?

The first thing I want us to see from this passage is that God's seemingly impossible plan to fulfill His promise. God's seemingly impossible plan—it seems impossible what He's saying here—to fulfill the promise that He's made.

God gives assurance of His promise by giving a new name to His covenant partners. Now He's already done that previously with Abraham. We've already studied that together. When He came to Abraham and He appeared to him, He changed his name from Abram to Abraham. From "exalted father" to—the status of the "father of many, a multitude." He's changed his name. And now in verse 15 we see that in confirmation again, in confirmation of the promise that seems impossible, He changes the name of Sarai. Sarai and Sarah come from the same word. As far as we know, they have the same meaning: princess.

So what does it mean that He changed the name? I mean, here Sarai is and she's going to get a new name Sarah with the same meaning, what is God doing? I think it's important that we understand that first of all, this is not uncommon between covenant partners in the Ancient Near East. When a great king made a promise or a covenant with a lesser king, that lesser king often received a new name that was symbolic of the covenant that would be fulfilled to him or the promises that would be given to him.

This is one way of seeing it, that God is saying to Abraham—or to Abram and to Sarai—I promise I will do what I've said. I'm going to show you a sign in a moment that promises what I've promised will come true, but also I'm giving you a name so that every time your

name is said you will remember that I am your God, you are My people, and I have possession of you out of all the earth.

That leads us to I think the second meaningful thing about the change of name here. When you name someone, you take ownership over them, or possession of them, right? I mean, wouldn't it be strange—wouldn't it be a strange thing if one of the families in the church had a child and I showed up at the hospital and gave the child a name? Wouldn't that be strange? I mean, here they are, all cuddled up, sweet nothings being spoken in the ear of this crying baby, and I walk in as an outsider and say, "I'm going to name your child, this is the name."

How well received would that be? If you say it would be okay, you're weird. It's not—it's not possible. Why? Because I'm not the father. I have no right to name the child. So when God changes the name of Abraham and Sarah, I believe He's also saying, "You belong to Me. I have named you. I have given you a promise and I will keep it, and even in your names from this day forward you will be reminded of My word that was given to you and will be fulfilled."

So it speaks to God's sovereignty, His control, His possession of His people. And God has given us a name. God has also established on us a name, church: the Name above every name. The Name above every name, the Name of Jesus Christ is over us. We have a name. We are Christians. We are Christians, we belong to Him, we are set apart from all the rest of the world.

So God, in this seemingly impossible plan to give a child to these elderly parents Abraham and Sarah, He seeks to give them confirmation in one way by giving them new names.

But also I want us to see the response of Abraham to these promises. Now the promise is—is contained uh—in our passage. Look what He says: "I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

In the previous promise in this passage in Genesis 17, um—when He changes Abram's name, look what He says in verse 5: "No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you, and I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant."

So it's in 5, beginning in verse 5 of chapter 17, He's making promises to Abraham. And now, isn't it so good of God to include Sarah in these promises? Notice the change in our passage. The focus in the beginning is on Abram or Abraham, and now it's moved to Sarah. It's not just that Abraham—Abraham will have a son and he will be the son of promise, but you and Sarah will have a son.

He's becoming more specific with the promise. You see their—their plan in Genesis 16 might have had some foundation before He speaks this word in Genesis 17. You know, maybe God's just going to give Abraham a child. And so a child by Hagar is still a child of Abraham. So it—it seems logical, this must be what He's going to do. And God rejected the plan, and He confirms His rejection of that plan by saying in our passage: not only am I making Abraham a great nation, not only will kings come from Abraham, but they will come from Sarah. Abraham and Sarah.

It's an exact and specific promise. I mean, it—it's one thing to in general say something, and it's another thing to be extremely specific about what you're saying, isn't it? If God were to just say, "Oh, you'll have children," that would be enough, that would be a lot. But He just goes even more specific: not only will it be Abraham, but it will be Sarah who has this promised son.

God has a seemingly impossible plan working here. From the outside looking, there's nothing that would make you believe it's possible, and yet God has said it and so it must happen. It must happen.

Abraham, receiving this plan, this promise, responds. And I want us to notice and take time to look at his response. Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"

I pointed it out earlier, but look at verse 3. When God appeared to Abram and said, "I am God Almighty, walk before Me and be blameless, that I may make My covenant between Me and you and may multiply you greatly," in verse 3, Abram fell on his face. Same phrase for us in verse 17: he fell on his face. And so in verse 3, if you remember, I said when I preached that sermon, that was an act of worship. He fell at the feet of the Lord in worship.

And so as—some have uh—seen this verse 17, it would seem that in this passage he has become incredulous. Abraham, in other words, is saying, "It's not possible for You to do what You're saying You're going to do," in verse 17. Some people would see it that way, and they would—they would stress the incredulity that's being exhibited by the laughter.

But I want us to keep the laughter in the context of the falling. He's worshipping God again. He's falling at His feet again. He's not completely disbelieving. He's believing God and it's moving his heart in worship to even laugh. "How can this be?" we might interpret it. "Ha! I know it must be 'cause God says it, but how can it happen?"

I would say that the most faithful response is being shown in our text today. Because faith is not blind to the realities around it. Abraham says to God, "Shall a man that's ninety-nine years old and a woman that's ninety years old have a child?" In these words we can see that Abraham in his heart knows the promise must take place, but everything around him says: this is impossible.

We might say Abraham knew his own body and what it was capable of, and he knew: how will this be? And so it moved his heart like it often our hearts are moved when we're faced with the promise of God to worship and yet to wonder: how will it happen?

And it comes out in a laughter, almost a nervous laughter. Oh God, You're putting Yourself and Your Name on the line with a ninety-nine-year-old and a ninety-year-old. This seems beyond believability. And yet I will believe.

If it were just my word, I might allow you to disagree with me, but it's not just my word. Write down in your margin there, Romans 4. Paul helps us to understand what's going on in this passage. Paul, describing the faith of Abraham and the father of our faith that Abraham is, in his description, I want us to focus or just listen—if you're—if you don't have it turned, it's fine, listen to this. Paul says—I'll start in verse 16:

"That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations'—in the presence of the God in whom he believed..."

There he's quoting our passage.

"...in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist."

I want to stop right there and say, this is harkening back to the creation story, right? I mean, that's clear. It's clearly pushing us back to Genesis chapter 1 when God speaks into existence all things that we can see and cannot see out of nothing. He created it, we say *ex nihilo*, right?

But is Paul talking about the creation of the world, or is he talking about the creation of an ability that did not exist in Abraham? It wasn't that Abraham was going to have a hard time doing what God was saying was going to happen; it's that it was impossible in his flesh for Abraham to do what God was calling him to do.

But we don't serve a God limited by our limitations. We serve a God who calls into existence the things that do not exist. And so it's with that in mind that Abraham, hearing the promise that he would be the father of many nations, believed God. He believed God the same belief that justified him in Genesis 15:6 is the same belief that has him on his face chuckling before God: "How will this be that I will have a son?"

But he believed God, even in the face of things that seemed impossible to believe. And if that was it, that would be great, but in verse 18 of chapter 4, Paul keeps going. This is what he says about Abraham:

"In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, 'So shall your offspring be.' He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb."

That's Genesis 18, but it's here in this passage.

"No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised."

Our God doesn't call us to do the things that we can do, He calls us to believe in a God who can do what we cannot do.

And Abraham believed God. He believed God. I want to challenge you: do not put incredulity into this passage just because it seems like what is happening here. I don't believe Abraham is incredulous, for to be incredulous is to believe that something can't happen that's being said. But the Bible says he believed it. So the laughter is not a mocking of God, but rather an exuberant expression to the grace of the covenant of God. "How can this be?" "How can it happen?" Almost you can hear the tagline: "Well, if this—this is going to happen, I don't know how it's going to happen, and it certainly isn't going to be by me."

It called for absolute faith in the promise of God. God has a seemingly impossible plan for Abraham and Sarah, and yet He is making sure they know: "I will do what I've promised you I will do. You have new names, and you have the assurance of the sign that I will give you," and we've seen that sign of circumcision and we're going to talk about it again in a moment.

But this is not the only passage that comes to mind when we think about in the Bible this type of—of promise being made of a child. There's a parallel passage to our passage, I believe, in Luke chapter 1. Zechariah, who was serving his duty in the—in the Temple. Notice in Luke 1, verse 6, explaining about Zechariah and Elizabeth his wife, the writer, Luke, says this—notice how he characterizes this so good to see:

"And they both were righteous before God, walking blameless in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord."

Now in Genesis 17, God said to Abraham, "Walk blameless before Me." The writer in Luke—Luke says, "This couple, Zechariah and Elizabeth, were walking in righteousness, blameless before the Lord in all of His statutes, in all of—in all of His law." So Zechariah, being in the Temple, carrying out his regular duties as a priest of God, he has a strange occurrence: an angel, Gabriel, appears to him and tells him, "You and Elizabeth will have a son. You will have a son, and you will name him John, for he will be a forerunner to the Messiah."

Zechariah faces the same problem Abraham was facing: he's an old man and his wife's an old woman, and they haven't had any children. "How will this be?" Remember I—I was interpreting Abraham's laughter as him laughing as "How shall this come to pass? How will this happen?"

Look at Luke 1:18:

"And Zechariah said to the angel, 'How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.' And the angel answered him, 'I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news, this gospel. Behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time.'"

There's a parallel and a contrast happening here. Back in Genesis 17, God does not judge Abraham because of his laughter. He doesn't judge him. But in Luke 1, the parallel passage, He judges Zechariah through Gabriel. "You didn't believe Me. You didn't believe Me, you stumbled in faith, son. And so you'll be mute until the child is born and these things take place. That's the sign to you that I will do what I've promised I will do."

And it happened that way, that very way. In Luke 1:57 we read this:

"Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, which was customary, but his mother answered, 'No; he shall be called John.' They said to her, 'None of your relatives is called by this name.' And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, 'His name is John.' And they all wondered."

Look at verse 64:

"And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through the hill country of Judea, and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, 'What then will this child be?'"

So Zechariah was promised a son and he did doubt God. "How could this ever happen? I'm an old man." His doubt is not like the passage in Genesis 17. Genesis 17, Abraham—in our parallel in the Old Testament—Abraham didn't weaken in his faith, but he believed God and as he worships God even in the impossibility of what God's saying and he laughs as an overflow of the expression of what seems impossible, Paul tells us he believed God.

Zechariah, then, stands as an example of the same type promise—seemingly impossible—and yet isn't it gracious for God to show us one example of a man who didn't weaken in faith and another man who did weaken in faith in the New Testament?

So you may be here believing God with full assurance today. And you may be saying, "Yes! I don't know how it's going to happen, but He's going to make me blameless and I'm going to stand before Him, and I believe it with all my heart. I believe it with all my heart."

And you may be here today saying, "God has promised He will make me blameless, I—I don't know how He will ever make me blameless, how will this be?" And yet you both belong to God. Because it doesn't depend on the strength of your faith for God to deliver His promise; it depends on God.

So covenant people of God, if today you find yourself in a valley of darkness and doubt like Zechariah, and you face the discipline of God—maybe you're not made mute, but there's other discipline that comes into your life—the response to have to that discipline is to bless the Almighty God and believe. Believe! His discipline is for a moment, His discipline is His love to you, His discipline is His bringing you back to Himself.

Oh Abraham believed against all belief that God would do what He said, and Zechariah believed but he doubted, and yet they both end up at the foot of God's throne blessing God, worshipping Him.

And so in Genesis 17 we see this promise that seems impossible and Abraham's response concerning this is worship and concern for his son Ishmael. Look at verse 18: "Oh that Ishmael might live before You!" Ishmael, thirteen years old by this time, Abraham, can you imagine how much Abraham loves Ishmael? He waited so long to have a child and now he's had this child at eighty-six years old, and he must have doted on that boy.

My kids will tell you, if you have one child that's twenty-three and another that's eleven, the longer you're a dad, the softer you get. I'm sorry Hannah Grace and Noah. Can you imagine how tender Abraham was with Ishmael? How he picked him up and put him on his knee and tickled him and he laughed? How much joy that must have brought to his heart? And yet God is saying, "Not him, but another will be the promised child."

And so, isn't it only a fatherly move for Abraham to say, "But what about Ishmael? What about Ishmael?" He brings him up for consideration. But God makes it plain: His covenant promise will come through the promised son of Abraham and Sarah.

Look at verse 19. God responds, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac." Now the name Isaac means "he laughs." So God names the son after the response that He had. And some would say He named the son so that the laughter is encapsulated for the rest of their lives that He had. And some would say even

God's laughter over them, His joy over them is being recorded in the name of Isaac. "You laughed when you heard this great promise, well I laughed that I deliver it to you."

Isaac will be the child of promise. Isaac will be the child of promise. And—and look at what the play on names doesn't stop there. "As for Ishmael," verse 20, "I have heard you." What does Ishmael's name mean? "God hears." Oh, you're concerned for Ishmael, Abraham? You're My child, I know how much you love him, I've heard you. I'll bless him. He's not in the covenant, but he will be blessed.

God's magnanimous grace is in view here. It's beyond the covenant children, it goes even to the nations. God blesses Ishmael. And if you—when we get there you'll see it's not a small blessing: He makes him a great nation, twelve princes come from him just as was promised, and he is wealthy beyond measure. God did bless him.

God is not limited to blessing only His children, but in a common grace way He expands those blessings to the nations. Ishmael is considered here, but he's not the son.

Abraham's response to God is ultimately seen in the last paragraph. Abraham's response to God is shown to us by his obedience to God. God appears to him and tells him the promise of the covenant again. He changes his name, He changes his wife's name, and repeats the promise again. He deals with the matter of Ishmael, and immediately the text says, after God then raised up from him, Abraham took Ishmael his son and circumcised him.

You may think you love God, but that will only be known by whether you're obeying God. You see Abraham could have said, "Oh, I'm blameless before the Lord, I'm blameless." But I can't see blamelessness as a concept or an idea. I see it in the outworking of obedience. Say, "How do you know that Abraham believed God?" He went to extreme measures to obey God. And if you don't believe that, I won't become graphic, but believe it.

At ninety-nine years old he was circumcised in the foreskin of his flesh. At thirteen years old, talk about child—uh—discipline. "Son, come with me, we're going to be obedient today." "What?!" "You must have heard wrong, go back and talk to him again!" Right? We—we clean these passages up, but Ishmael comes with his father and is circumcised, and he doesn't just circumcise himself and Ishmael, but he circumcises the 318 trained men, he circumcises the other men in his household, he circumcises their children—some believe that the number stretched maybe even to a thousand men were circumcised on that very day.

On that very day. How quickly should I show my love for God by obedience? On that very day Abraham obeyed God. It's not worth much for you to say you love God. Let me see your love for God in your obedience, church. Jesus says, "If you love Me, you will obey My commands."

Abraham is a living picture of obedience out of love. God has said it, I'm not even sure how it's going to happen, but I believe it's going to happen, and so I'm going to go put the sign in my flesh. And this sign in his flesh reminded him that God would do what God said He would do. God will do what He said He would do. God will fulfill the promise. It's not up to me and my flesh to do this, God will do it.

All the generations that come will be circumcised on the eighth day after this initial circumcision. Every covenant has signs attached—sign and seal—and they match the covenant promise that they represent. If you think back just quickly at Noah, Noah received a covenant—restated to him again in the same covenant Adam had received—and what was the sign? The bow in the firmament, the rainbow. The sign matched the promise. It matched the promise: "I will never destroy the earth again by flood." So every time it rained, the rainbow prism shone that they might know God is keeping His word.

Abraham receives the covenant promise, and I would argue the substance of that is that God will give an offspring ultimately, an offspring that will crush the head of Satan. The promised offspring will come. And He covers it, as Corey said last week, with a sign, and that sign is rightly in the foreskin of the male reproductive organ because how will this come to be? Through reproduction. Through the people being expanded. And so God put a sign pointing to the substance: an offspring is coming that will make all these promises "yes and amen." It's put in his flesh for this reason.

The Mosaic covenant—we won't talk about it today, I'm running out of time—but in Exodus 31 the sign of that covenant is given: that you will keep the Sabbath day holy. Why? Because the land of Canaan was a land of rest. And so God made a covenant through the law to give them what He had promised Abraham: the land of rest. And what did He tell them to do on the seventh day? Rest. Why? Because the sign matched the substance. God promised the land, God gave a land, a land of rest that pointed to a great land that was coming, right? The sign matches the substance. You following me?

David is promised a kingdom and one who will sit on his throne forever, and the throne is the sign of that covenant between God and David. The throne that One will sit on.

And then we come to the New Covenant. We come to the New Covenant and one might think that what God would do is repeat the sign to Abraham in the New Covenant, but He doesn't do that because the two covenants don't match one another one-to-one. In the Abrahamic covenant, procreation brought about the next generation, the next generation, the next generation, that God might bring the Promised One, the promised seed.

In the New Covenant God is not working through procreation to bring His kingdom to the earth. God is working through spiritual salvation to bring His kingdom to the earth. And He's planting the children of Abraham in churches, which represent the kingdom on earth. And so He gives a sign to the church. What is that sign, church? Baptism.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

So who should be baptized? Disciples.

The sign of baptism is not my sign, it's not Grace Fellowship's sign, it's God's sign. And He has given that sign for a substantive reason. Because no longer is the promise coming through procreation; it's coming through evangelization and the salvation of many from all nations. And what do we do to include them, as Abraham included the men in the day of his signed covenant? We bury them in death and we raise them to newness of life—Romans chapter 6.

You cannot picture it any other way. Jesus wasn't partly under death, He was put under the water of death and raised for our salvation. So why would you resist the sign of this beautiful covenant that is eternally made with you in Jesus? Why wouldn't you, just as a disciple, obey your Master and receive the sign?

And it's not just that sign, but He attaches Himself to the sign of the supper. Baptism precedes the supper because baptism as the one-time sign-oath is given to all who have faith in Jesus, and only to those who have faith in Jesus, so that they might come and take the supper with all of those who are gathered with them, to preach the gospel until He comes again.

The sign matches perfectly to the covenant. Only God's spiritual children receive the signs in the New Covenant. Everyone who receives the sign only receives the true sign if they have faith in Jesus Christ. And therefore those who have not the ability or age can't receive the signs because they can't have faith yet. Parents that may make you wonder: what will God do with my children? May I just challenge you to believe that God will do what is right with your children.

Don't put things on them that don't belong to them so you can feel good about their salvation. Preach the gospel to them. Live a blameless life before them and call them to believe in Jesus. And when they believe and they exhibit that belief by obedience, baptize them and give them the supper.

Let's pray together. Father, as we close, we're reminded that it is Your covenant and it is Your signs and it is Your church, not ours. Forgive us, Lord, for our arrogance. Help us to accept by simple faith what You have taught us, as our father Abraham did. I pray, God, that You would help us as we go forward from this message, that we would have confidence that You will keep Your word to us. That we would believe against belief that You will keep Your word to us, that no matter how rough and tough this life may become and how dark the valley may be, that You will deliver us through the shadow of death.

And God, would You encourage the saints today as they come to Your table to eat, that the promise is true because You are the Savior, the Redeemer, the promise keeper, the covenant made in the flesh between God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, and the people of Your pasture. Lord help us now as we come, it's in Your Name we pray, amen.

Today we will take the supper in remembrance of what He has done and what He will do. He came, He lived this life we could not live, and He died the death we deserved to die. In the body represented by the bread and the blood which is represented by the fruit of the vine, we take those elements in as He commanded to symbolize the gospel of Jesus Christ.

But each time we do, we preach that gospel until He comes again. Until He comes again. Church, He's coming again. And when He comes, the Bible records for us a great feast that we will sit at banquet table with Him and He will eat and drink with us forever. Isn't that your hope in life and death? If it's your hope in life and death, if you have placed your faith in Jesus Christ, you've been baptized, made public profession of faith, and you now come and take the sign of His death, burial, and resurrection. Let's stand and sing together "Come Ye Sinners." We'll take the sign, we'll wait to take it in together, but as we sing, would you come forward and come to the back if you're in the balcony and take and eat.