



Grace Fellowship of Morehead, KY

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COVENANT is Essential! Part 2

This part of the series was preached from March 26th thru May 14th, 2023

Introduction

Last week, we checked out some foundational insights into the importance of covenant relationship for us and in God's eyes.

Without doubt...it is essential to have and understand that relationship that we have with God and with each other.

EXTRA INTRO: Last week we finished the message on the account given by Jesus in Matthew 18:23 where the servant owed a huge debt which was forgiven, yet refused to forgive a small debt by a friend.

Yes, it is talking about forgiveness...but in a deeper way it is MAKING IT CLEAR that **how we TREAT one another definitely determines what we enjoy in life, what we receive from the MASTER.**

Ephesians 2:10-13

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

NOTE: God created us...He knows what it takes for us to function properly and increase in life!

11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

BELOVED: *The blood of Jesus doesn't just connect us to Him, but connects us to one another!*

BELOVED: This covenant relationship changes everything for us!

We NOW have full access to things we didn't have access to before. We now have hope (expectancy).

THE THING IS...most people don't understand covenant.

Covenant Defined

DEFINED: An intimate, intricate, binding relationship between two or more people that unites their strengths in order to eliminate their weaknesses.

That is why we have the example of the children of Israel in the wilderness.

As much as they couldn't get into FAITH...they couldn't stand together either.

BETWEEN their murmuring, complaining, attacking, doubting, etc. they COULD NOT go in to the Promised Land.

BELOVED: There are a lot of stagnated dreams, not because God planned for you to have a stagnated, frustrated life...but because of failure to connect.

Two main reasons that God instituted covenant relationships:

1.) For us to know and understand His mind and His heart!

Isaiah 55:8,9

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

UNDERSTAND: The human brain does NOT have a drawing card (from life) to understand the heart of God. Everything we learn is about human love and human understanding.

Well covenant allows us to tap into heart of God.

INTIMATE – God is relational!

INTRICATE – He is deep and wide in His thoughts for you!

BINDING – He will NEVER let you go!

NOW: There is a temptation to continue in this area...but God wants us to understand the second MAIN reason...and it is the one we fail to comprehend.

2.) For us! For our benefit! To make us stronger and eliminate our weakness! For His body to be whole and strong!

The body of Christ has been limited...because we have been scattered.

God is NOT trying to control us with covenant understanding...He is trying to strengthen us with each other!

Genesis 2:18 – It is not good that a man be alone!

1 Corinthians 11:27-30 (*possibly read*)

We MUST understand that we are NOT totally connected to God without being connected to His body...one another!

So many people will sing, "He's all I need." But He really isn't.

He tells us that HE is the Head of the church and that we collectively are His body! We need ALL of Him...which includes each other!

BELOVED: Here is the key revelation of covenant.

Whatever you do to the body of Christ (your covenant partners, blood of Jesus)..is by extension what you do to God HIMSELF!

* If you give to someone...you are actually giving to God Himself.

* If you help someone in any way...you are actually helping God Himself.

* If you lie, curse, murmur, complain, look down on someone...you are actually lying, cursing, murmuring, complaining and looking down on God Himself.

Colossians 3:23 – "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;"

Why? Because you are!

That is why so many Christians are so frustrated with their lives...because they are trying to have a relationship with God...but not His peeps.

REMEMBER: Last week we looked at the children of Israel and their first effort to move into the Promised Land. They were tired of walking in the wilderness but they were basically every man for themselves.

They couldn't move in because they failed the covenant test. They murmured and complained...attacked leadership...and failed to stand together.

Our Example

REMEMBER: 1 Corinthians 10:11 – “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

Why do I teach on covenant?

Because getting stuck in a rut...perhaps being a Christian (a child of God), but stuck in a rut can make you feel helpless and hopeless.

I have seen so many people get stuck...stuck in frustration, stuck in that hopeless feeling. Honestly, that is the reason so many quit church...quit God!

HOWEVER: When you understand covenant...when you are living IN covenant, it will bring you purpose and passion. It will increase your ability!

So they wandered...40 years they wandered...older generation died out never receiving their promises...they wandered.

NOTICE: The things that happened to the Israelites in the wilderness were put in Scriptures FOR US...as an EXAMPLE!

Do you wander for 40 more years or is it time to step in?

TODAY: We are going to fast forward 40 years...after wandering...pointless...in circles...frustrated...IT IS TIME TO MOVE IN...FINALLY!

Some things had to take place! Covenant had to be re-instituted!

BELOVED: As much as every step of the way was a lesson in faith...it was a lesson in covenant! Relationships!

1.) Numbers 32:5-7, 14-15 – ***We are in this together!***

5 Wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan.

6 And Moses said unto the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here?

7 And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them?

THEN Moses recounts to them what happened the first time they were ready to move in...God got angry at them because they wouldn't stand together!

(New Living Translation)

14 But here you are, a brood of sinners, doing exactly the same thing! You are making the LORD even angrier with Israel.

15 ***If you turn away from him like this*** and he abandons them again in the wilderness, you will be responsible for destroying this entire nation!”

NOTICE: By not standing with their covenant partners...they were turning away from GOD!

The tribes of Reuben and Gad agreed to set up their tents and fields...settle their kids and families in...then they would go and fight until every tribe was settled (vs. 16-18)!

One of the main keys to covenant relationship is LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION.

Doing it together.

AGAIN: it is NOT good that man be alone (Genesis 1:18). God made Eve for Adam! God connected Ruth to Naomi...Boaz.

Think about Elijah's darkest days (1 Kings 19), where does God take him? To Elisha! Before David could move to the palace...God connected him to Jonathan.

NOTE: Who was the replacement for Jonathan? 400 men in the cave!

- * We fight together!
- * We attend together!
- * We live life together!

REMEMBER: Acts 20:18 – Paul was with them in all seasons of life.

COVENANT

Part 3 *is Essential!*

2.) Joshua 3:13-17 (read) – **Get and stay in your positions.**

The people ALL followed the priests...they didn't move until the priests moved...they didn't go their own way...THEY STAYED in their positions. Held their posts!

NOTE: It still took faith to walk across a river that had stacking water on one side! And it will take faith to stay in your positions...where God has placed you, doing what God has equipped you to do.

NOTE: That is why Joshua was chosen to follow Moses.

He stayed in his position, **with no hidden agenda**...just to be where he was suppose to be.

Exodus 24:13 – “And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God.”

Exodus 24:15 – “And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount.”

Then the children of Israel made the golden calf...

Exodus 32:7 – “And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves:”

So, Moses heads down the mountain...

Exodus 32:17 – “And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp.”

NOTICE: Joshua is just on a side of a mountain...waiting for 40 days...consistent...unmoving...faithful...has Moses' back!

Why? Because that is where he is suppose to be!

BELOVED: God has called us all to specific things.

Often we want short cuts or an easier way, but God has connected you to covenant partners that if we stay in our positions...we will reach those promises.

You say...well it is tougher than I thought it would be...

MARK HANKINS: “God would not design a plan for your life that did NOT require you to live by faith.”

PASTOR THAD: God would not design a plan for your life that did not require you to walk in covenant...to need someone else.

IMPORTANT: It took David about 15 years to take the throne that he was appointed for...but he stayed in place.

WHERE? In a cave...with 400 men who were in debt, distress and discontent. 400 men who were following a king with no throne!

400 men who obviously had their own list of problems...following a man who had his...but they all held their ground.

When it was time for the throne...they were next to him and were amongst those who gave millions of dollars to the building of the temple.

THEY had hundreds of opportunities to complain about where David was and where it seemed he was going...they may not have understood or agreed with everything he did...but they stayed in their place!

SUCH A TEMPTATION to move...you would be happier doing this or that...you could be a better leader...a better worship leader...a better teacher...a better this or a better that!

Stay where God has placed you...if you have a vision...share it with the pastor...God will direct him.

ILLUSTRATION: The guy who was angry that my dad gave the youth pastor position to someone who wasn't even in the youth ministry. I said, get behind her and encourage and help her succeed....if it is your position.

OBVIOUSLY: One of my favorite accounts in Scripture is the account of Ruth and Naomi (and Boaz).

Just think of Ruth and Orpah...the two Moabite sister-in-laws.

- * Both connected to Naomi initially.
- * Naomi even gave them a chance to go back...no issues.
- * **WHY?** Because it would give them an easier time to fulfill their lives!
Wow! What a thought...go back, I release you...so that you will have hope in life.
- * **QUESTION:** What do we know from Ephesians 2:12 about covenant...gives us hope in life!
- * Orpah went back...it made sense...she is even less than a footnote of history.
- * Ruth stayed in her place...nothing promised...only the fact of it costing her EVERYTHING...but it brought her EVERYTHING!
- * Blessings, favor, a wedding, wealth, etc.

UNDERSTAND: Like we said on Wednesday night...there was a clear covenant connection with Ruth and Naomi...Ruth connected to the blessing/anointing that was on Naomi's life...Ruth seemed to get the short end of the straw for a long time...but she stuck with it and she ENDED UP with a better life than Naomi had!

NOTE: Ruth never moved out of that covenant position, even as a wife, mom, grand mom....

I AM FACINATED with the story of the priests entering into the rushing/overflowing water, while it was still rushing.

The people had ONE JOB...stay in their place...

- * Not to tell the priests the places they think would be best to go into the water.
- * Not to tell the priests a better way to do it.
- * Not to do what they did with David (1 Sam 17) and give them some good traction shoes/or scuba gear.
- * Not to think of their own plan and go rouge.

UNDERSTAND: God appoints men of God for different purposes...and of course it doesn't release those men/women of God from all the responsibilities (example: God told Pastor Timothy to do the work of an evangelist).

- * Abraham was told to go to a land that he would be show...not to feed millions of people.
- * Joseph was told to feed millions of people...not to move anywhere.
- * David was to kill giants...Solomon was to share wisdom...Moses was to lead through the wilderness...Joshua was to lead INTO and TAKE OVER Canaan.

Sometimes, we get frustrated because the man of God we are following isn't doing things the way other men of God are doing them.

HOWEVER: You need to listen to that man's heart and understand if God has placed you under Him...your job is to be grateful God gave you that man of God...find your place...and be faithful. Hold down your side of the mountain. Work your field. Surround him when he is standing in the middle of the Jordan carrying the anointing.

BELOVED: I am not telling you that I am perfect...I wish I was...but I am telling you that God has placed me here...and he has given you to me to accomplish my dreams AND your dreams!

COVENANT

Part 4 *is Essential!*

Most people don't understand covenant...their thoughts are...

- * Jesus died for our sins (He did).
- * Jesus dies so we could go to heaven and live with him forever (He did).
- * We are destined to live here on earth as He sees fit (maybe, kinda).
- * If He chooses sickness, pain, frustration, a bitter cup, rough relationships, etc. for us...we must be okay with it...it is His will...and we must keep our eyes on heaven (that is NOT covenant).

KNOWING COVENANT: Changes your expectation on this earth.

What our COVENANT partner did on the cross changes what we get on this earth!

He took sickness...He took frustration..He drank from the bitter cup...on and on FOR US!

UNDERSTAND: He paid the price and forgave our debt (see Matthew 18:23).

NOW...our key is NOT just the relationship with have with Him...but learning to walk in covenant with others.

BELOVED: If we are going to MOVE into the land that God has for us...we NEED one another...we need to not just PUT UP with one another, but walk in covenant with one another.

God did NOT connect you to us to just do time...but for a purpose for YOUR LIFE and for OURS!

THEREFORE: We need this teaching.

3.) Joshua 5:4-9 (read) – ***Hearts are knit together!***

All the men had to be circumcised...because since they have been on their journey they had not carried out this practice.

Circumcision was a SIGN of the covenant (Genesis 17).

It was something that they carried with them that was the MARK of a covenant with God.

REMEMBER: Our circumcision is of the heart, now (Romans 2:29)! Through the blood of Jesus!

Very greatly represented by 1 Samuel 18 – Hearts knit together!

1 Samuel 18:1 – “And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, ***that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.***”

ILLUSTRATION: Buying the two necklaces with the two half of the hearts that are broken, but fit together.

NOTE: This is different...this is two FULL hearts made ONE LARGE heart!

Psalm 119:32 – “I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.”

When you do what His Word says...you will have an enlarged heart...because you will be connected with others!

BELOVED: What we are talking about is a GENUINE heart felt...heart connected...love towards each other. Passionate! Compassioned! Overwhelming commitment.

Two different times in the Song of Solomon does Solomon say, "I am my beloveds and he is mine." (2:16; 6:3).

This is the epitome of binding.

It is possessing one another! Taking ownership of one another. Taking responsibility for each other!

Your heart is my heart....my heart is your heart. Our hearts are enlarged. **THEFEFORE:** If one of us can put a thousand to flight...two of can put ten thousand to flight.

BELOVED: That is why most marriages that fail...fail. It is two people giving half of their heart or even worse...only concerned about their own hearts. Or one person giving their whole heart and the other person JUST TAKING IT and giving nothing. Covenant says our hearts are KNIT together.

THINK ABOUT why so many pastors quit (over 1700 every month)...is it just because they didn't have what it took to do it? Maybe, but most likely it came because they have given their whole heart to covenant partners who can barely give them an hour or two a week.

THOUGHT: I often think this when I am working around the church...this isn't Pastor Thad's church...it is our church. It is our responsibility, together! We are each other's responsibility!

BELOVED: Most people say the most beautiful story of covenant relationship in Scripture is *David and Jonathan*.

I say it the most tragic.

Two men whose HEARTS were knit together (1 Samuel 18); who made a covenant to stick to one another...yet, one of them could not leave the comforts of his palace to be where he needed to be.

1 Samuel says that Jonathan loved David...He knit the hearts together.
(1 Samuel 23:17 – I will be second to you)

HOW much did this covenant have David's heart?

2 Samuel 9:1 – "And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake? "

Jonathan is long gone...David has the throne...all David can think about is his covenant partner. I have to do something for Jonathan...his kin...to show how much I love him.

UNDERSTAND: The blood of Jesus brings us into a bonded relationship...when God places you in a local church, fellowship (covenant or partnership)...He has placed you where you will flourish. (Psalm 1:1-3)

You now carry the mark together! You walk together! You do life together! You trust...you plan... you share ideas...

You don't attack...you come up with ideas and carry them out with your covenant partners.

THOUGHT: There is a level where I appreciate people who go to dead churches but do so because THEY AIN'T leaving those people! There is a level of power in that.

The enemy loves to insert

- * competitive jealousies...
- * critiquing...
- * judging...
- * fault-finding (one of his favorites)...
- * offense...
- * selfishness... "I'll do it my way" spirit...
- * annoyance
- & unforgiveness/bitterness

WHY? To tear apart the hearts that God has surgically connected together!

COVENANT

Part 5 *is* Essential!

A Body Fit Together

COVENANT DEFINED: An intimate, intricate, binding relationship between two or more people that unites their strengths in order to eliminate their weaknesses.

QUOTE: God is not in the business of building ministries...but rather building a body!
When God gave the church HIS GIFTS in Ephesians 4 (five-fold ministries), it was to lead to a destination...

Ephesians 4:16 – “From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

- 1.) Whole body joined TOGETHER.
I am not saying that this does not mean the WHOLE BODY universal should be ALL functioning together to see us all carry out Christ’s plan (salvation...healing, blessing, etc.).
(AMP) – “...closely joined and firmly knit together...”
(MSG) – “He keeps us in step with each other....”
- 2.) Each part doing what it does.
(AMP) – “...when each part [with power adapted to its need] is working properly [in all its functions] ...”

ESSENTIAL: Not all of us working *INDIVIDUALLY* with the head...but working together, doing what EACH of us do.

PROBLEM: Most failed churches (marriages) are because one or more are not working properly in what they are suppose to do.

- * Doing what they deem cool.
- * Too me focused.
- * Too take, take, take focus!

BELOVED: God is NOT looking, so much, for a large organization (He doesn’t have a problem with them) as for an organism that can continue to grow.

EACH PERSON...doing what THEY do...to the best of their ability...for the good of the BODY!

UNDERSTAND: This mentality forms a security in the rest of the body. Everyone can be comfortable doing what they do!

LORD SPOKE TO ME: To be all you can be in covenant you cannot feel the need to PERFORM in order to be accepted.

- * If you do this I will accept you.
- * If you perform like that I will accept you.

ILLUSTRATION: If a pastor is trying to win the approval of his congregation (in part or in whole) by performing to a certain standard that pleases them...he will always find himself falling short of doing what God wants him to do.

If a pastor knows that he is fully accepted by God and by the circle of trustworthy partners...he will find a joy and peace flowing through doing what God has directed him to do.

BELOVED: God doesn't love you for what you DO...He loves you because you are HIS. Last week: "*I am my beloveds and He is mine.*"

This should be our mindset towards others too!

COVENANT DEFINED: An *intimate, intricate, binding relationship* between two or more people that unites their strengths in order to eliminate their weaknesses.

(focus on the intricate part of covenant...more than just hanging out)

We live in a "me-first" culture...so there are many things that we have just let go in regards to our relationship with each other.

"We don't have to go to church to be a Christian."

"It is okay to drink... 'cause Jesus turned water into wine."

"It is my money...and I want it now."

"How I live my life effects only me...no one else."

COVENANT

Part 6 *is Essential!*

Knocking Down Walls Together

4.) Joshua 6:1-5 - **Walk together...live faith together...shout together!**

(Not shout AT one another ;))

NOTE: The key word is TOGETHER!

Think about what the people were asked to do for seven days...thirteen times around the wall. The people had to walk in unison...together...13 times over 7 days...saying NOTHING!

~ Simply walking in unison.

~ Walk by faith in unison.

~ Worship in unison.

They did it!

REMEMBER: In Numbers 13 when 12 men couldn't agree or stand together...now around 3 million people are operating as ONE!

BELOVED: If it hasn't been clear that God was trying to get something through to these Israelites...His children...I don't know what else would be needed.

They left bondage together...but then IMMEDIATELY began whining, complaining, attacking, forming "go back to Egypt committees" to stop this thing and head back!

God, as infinite as He is, couldn't and wouldn't bring them into HIS PROMISES, unless they were operating as ONE!

Walk Together

THINK OF THIS: In order for them to set into what God had provided for them...they had to step together.

HONESTLY I am not going to spend a lot of time on this point...I feel that many of our previous points focused on this. But they HAD to move as one!

We live in a society that DEVALUES church attendance. INCREASES the value of INDIVIDUALISM...do what you want to do, when you want to do it.

God says...we MUST have our focus on EACH OTHER.

Philippians 2:2-4

- 2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.
- 3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.
- 4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

OBVIOUSLY this doesn't mean we all are the exact same...that would be amazingly boring.

IT MEANS that we are A BODY...functioning TOGETHER...for the increase of the BODY, for the INCREASE of the Kingdom, for the INCREASE of the HEAD! We walk together.

Hebrews 10:25 – “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”
TOGETHER!

THE BIG THREE: Ruth was together with Naomi, Elisha was together with Elijah, Jonathan was NOT together with David.

Live in Faith Together

My favorite part of this story is that Joshua added ONE special instruction to the people (that God didn't tell him).

Vs. 10 – “And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.”

UNDERSTAND: God didn't tell them to NOT say a word...but Joshua did! WHY? Because Joshua knew that their problems started and ended with what came out of their mouths.

Many times we think that when WE fail to walk in faith, that ALL we are hurting is ourselves...that is not true.

- * Others are looking at us...using us as inspiration...excuses.
- * Increase work on others to carry your load...things not getting done.
- * 2 or 3 agree...can't get 'em to agree?
- * Others need your faith when they are in a battle.
- * If you are constantly complaining or speaking bad over the congregation/ministry.
- * Your blessings, by faith, are essential to increase the body.

THINK ABOUT IT: If your digestive system doesn't increase from the infant stage...no matter how OLD you should be getting, you won't be getting the nutrients to sustain that body.

BY FAITH Abraham brought forth Isaac...what happens to US if Abraham never brings forth Isaac?

THINK of in Numbers...Joshua and Caleb were a power duo...but it wasn't enough. Moses did amazing things over and over again...but it wasn't enough. ***They had to do faith together!***

OBVIOUSLY: Joshua 6 is really pointing out the power of your mouth.

Proverbs 18:21 – Life and death are in the power of the tongue.

This is an absolute truth in the Word of God...you get what you say. Your life will develop only as far as your mouth lets it.

Think of the main problem in the church (in the wilderness)...when people open their mouths.

Psalms 59:12 (NASB) – “On account of the sin of their mouths and the words of their lips, May they even be caught in their pride, And on account of curses and lies which they tell.”

NOTICE: The mouth is rough (James 3)...and it is more than just bad confessions that will mess you up.

Joshua understood that 3 million people walking around a city ONE time a day (much less seven times on the last day)...with kids (how many times did they have kids sit down, tired)... perhaps with cattle/animals – All it would take was ONE person...ONE family...ONE group to get discontent and start saying something and EVERYONE else would start saying, “That is what I was thinking.” It would blow it for everyone and bring them back to the same results they got in Numbers 13.

Some sins of the mouth:

- * Faithless words.
- * How you talk about one another
- * What you say to each other
- * The integrity of your mouth/heart...your character (do your words match your actions) the faithfulness of carrying out what you say.

BELOVED: These are all a part of keeping covenant and the intricacy of covenant. What comes out of your mouth is essential.

THE BIG THREE: Their words were amazing. Focus on Ruth...even Elisha (1 Kings 2)! The verbal commitment they had.

Ruth 3:5 – “And she said to her, “All that you say I will do.”” And she did it!

DECLARATION: I will NOT let my words slow down or stop what God is doing in this fellowship. I stand with and move with this body as God leads us to our promised land.

Worship Together

Often people will make a big deal about the fact that “I worship at home”...that is my best time of worship.

BELOVED: You should worship at home...it should be an amazing time of intimacy.

HOWEVER: When we come TOGETHER in worship...we see MORE damage done to the enemy...BECAUSE WE ARE TOGETHER.

If 1 can put a 1,000 to flight; 2 can put 10,000 to flight; 3? 4? 25?

Together provides us power against the enemy.

UNDERSTAND: There are some walls that absolutely will not fall when you by yourself. We need each other.

Joshua 6:5 – “...all the people shall shout with a great shout;...”

So, we come to church...stand as the Steve gets ready...our thoughts move to...

- * I didn't get much sleep last night
- * I have a birthday party tonight
- * I don't really like that song
- * I wish the speakers were louder, softer, clearer
- * I need to check my make up, social media, my great uncle twice removed.
- * I need to use the bathroom
- * I better get my coffee, donut, did I turn my car off?

BELOVED: There is nothing about that says together.

Our minds are on everything but worship...singing the same words, but not together.

With how it is read in Joshua...if they would have walked together, not talked together, and ONLY a portion of them shouted...***the walls would have stood...stronger than ever!***

That is astonishing...

2 Chronicles 20:17-22 (NASB)

- 17 'You need not fight in this battle; **take your position, stand and watch the salvation of the LORD** in your behalf, Judah and Jerusalem.' Do **not fear or be dismayed**; tomorrow, go out to face them, for the LORD is with you."
- 18 Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the **inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshipping the LORD.**
- 19 The Levites, from the sons of the Kohathites and from the sons of the Korahites, **stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel, with a very loud voice.**
THIS IS EVERYONE!
- 20 **They rose early in the morning** and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa; and when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: Put your trust in the LORD your God and you will endure. Put your trust in His prophets, and succeed."
- 21 **When he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who sang to the LORD** and those who praised Him in holy attire, as they went out before the army and said, "Give thanks to the LORD, for His faithfulness is everlasting."
NOTE: Psalms tells us that we have ALL been appointed to sing! All the singers sang together...with the same purpose!
- 22 When they began singing and praising, the LORD set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were struck down.

NOTICE: All the mentions of them ALL...doing this together.
They did this thing together.

BELOVED: If we are going to move into the blessings of God...the promises of God...we will do so together. That is why God called us together.

COVENANT

Part 7 *is Essential!*

Tithing Connects to the Blessing

5.) Joshua 7:1-5, 11-13 – **Spiritual responsibilities together...tithing!**

I want you to remember, before we start this last point...that God is getting them set up in FAITH and COVENANT in order to move into the PROMISED LAND. So this has to do with FAITH and COVENANT.

Joshua 6:17-19

- 17 And the **city shall be accursed** (cherem), even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.
- 18 And ye, in any **wise keep yourselves from the accursed** (cherem) thing, **lest ye make yourselves accursed**, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.
- 19 But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: **they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.**

"Accursed" – devoted thing, with a curse attached to it
LEVITICUS identifies the TITHE as "accursed...devoted thing"...devoted to the Lord.

QUESTION: According to verse 18...who will bring the curse upon you if you take of the accursed thing?

ANSWER: "You make yourselves accursed!"

UNDERSTAND: Jericho was the first victory...the first possession as the children of Israel entered into the Promised Land.

God said this VICTORY is my VICTORY...it is holy and devoted unto me! Of all the rest of your victories...you can partake of the spoils, but not of this victory.

UNDERSTAND: God was in this thing for their increase and abundance...but they had to TRUST HIM!

That is what Jericho was to be...**but ONE person**, Achan, acted outside the lines and lived out the curse.

KEY UNDERSTANDING: With every blessing that comes from covenant, there is a curse for breaking covenant!

IN OTHER WORDS: To enjoy the blessing...there has to be a cost.

ILLUSTRATION: When we were in Tennessee and went into Books-a-Million and were checking out. The guy was rattling off being a part of their book club...all the benefits that we would receive..."would you like to join today?" I was a bit skeptical (this was our first time in the store)...and asked what it took. Just \$25 today and you can enjoy everything. Uh, no! But to get all the gift cards and discounts...you had to pay.

THAT IS covenant. Covenant gives you access to blessing upon blessing...but there is a part that you have to pay...you can't break it.

YOU MAY SAY: But Pastor Thad, we are talking about tithing...not covenant...right in the middle of the message on covenant.

Tithe is an essential part of covenant.

The tithe keeps access to His covenants!

Genesis 1 – God gives mankind amazing stuff...the world...His image...His authority...seed, increase, abundance!

Genesis 2 – The land is described...abundance!

You would say, "Yep, that is God's plan for man! Why are you bringing in the tithe to bring us down."

Genesis 2:16,17

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

The curse came upon them because they ate of what belonged to the Lord.

They could have eaten from EVERY TREE they saw...except for the one.

I known many people look at them and say, "dumbies". But we do the same thing...with our tithes.

Malachi 3:10-12

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

DISCUSS STEPS OF TITHING FROM MALACHI 3:

- 1.) Proving (God will prove to you that His hand is on the tithe...quickly).
- 2.) Obedience (Keep doing what you know is right...no matter what).
- 3.) Devourer is rebuked (You will continually find yourself asking, "how did God do that")
- 4.) Delightful land (Watching an open heaven flowing abundantly and living in that land of more than enough).

"Open the windows" – same words used in Genesis 6.

Hebrews 7:1-7

- 1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;
- 2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;
- 3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.
- 4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.
- 5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:
- 6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.
- 7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.
- 8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

- * Melchisedec is a type of Jesus.
- * So our tithe goes to Jesus...through men.
- * We are the ones blessed by our tithes. Vs. 6,7

BELOVED: Your tithe is essential for you to live in the blessings that have been provided for you. Jesus provided the blood for our covenant.

- * Tithing is a COVENANT issue...it activates the blessings of the covenant!
- * Tithing to the head of our covenant...activates what we have with one another.

UNDEMAND: If there is a breakdown in the covenant with the HEAD...we will NOT enjoy all the covenant blessings with those around us.

- * Tithe is a picture of trust!

Let's go back to Achan...

Look at Joshua 7 – Who lost the battle because Achan stole the tithe?

ANSWER: The whole group...36 men lost their lives, because of Achan! Yes...it cost Achan and his family their lives...but they were all in covenant.

UNDERSTAND: I am not saying other people are dying because of you not tithing...but the biggest lie that the enemy will tell you is that your tithe only effects you.

BELOVED: If you are in covenant with one another...it effects all of us! It will slow down what God is wanting to do in that covenant connection.

Conclusion

Why do I teach on covenant?

Because getting stuck in a rut...perhaps being a Christian (a child of God), but stuck in a rut can make you feel helpless and hopeless.

HOWEVER: Understanding covenant can bring you purpose and passion.

Do you wander for 40 more years or is it time to step in?