

GOD HAS A PLAN FOR EVERY PART OF YOUR LIFE

(Our God is a Covenant God)





COVENANT AND EVANGELISM

Week 10

REVIEW: ELEMENTS

- *What are the **elements** of a covenant?*
 1. Parties
 2. Condition
 3. Promise or Blessing
 4. Penalty or Curse





REVIEW: THE COVENANTS

God Relating to Mankind

REVIEW: COVENANT OF WORKS

1. Parties

2. Condition

3. Promise/Blessing

4. Penalty/Curse

1. God and Adam – Adam represents all men

2. Obedience – Perfect, personal obedience

3. Eternal Life – Communion with God forever

4. Death – Spiritual, physical, judicial



REVIEW: COVENANT OF GRACE

- **Parties**: God the Father and Jesus Christ, as representative of the elect
- **Promises**:
 - Be a God to His people
 - Give His people a new heart
 - Forgive their sins and make them holy
- **Condition**: Faith in Christ



REVIEW: COVENANT OF GRACE

Covenant of Grace is One Covenant. It is the same in substance in both the Old Testament and the New Testament

- “I will be your God, and you will be My people”
- There is only one way that God saves His people — it is progressively revealed



REVIEW: COVENANT OF GRACE

- What then essentially happens in the Covenant of Grace?
 - God accounts **(credits)** the righteousness of Christ to the believer
- That righteousness is two things:
 - Fulfilling obedience for us
(the life he lived)
 - Paying the penalty for our disobedience
(the death He died)



REVIEW: GOD'S RELATIONSHIPS

Covenant of Works

- Adam
- *"do this and live"*
- All mankind outside of Christ

Covenant of Grace

- Christ
- *"the just shall live by faith"*
- Elect = believers





COVENANTAL SALVATION

COVENANTAL SALVATION

- God created man
- God entered into covenant with man (Covenant of Works)
 - *"The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, in which life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience."* (WCF 7.2)



COVENANTAL SALVATION

- Man **broke** that Covenant of Works
- Man is now **incapable** of keeping the Covenant of Works
- *"Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant"* (WCF 7.4)



COVENANTAL SALVATION

- God **provided redemption** by a second Covenant of Grace
 - “God entered into a covenant of grace...to ***deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery***, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer” (WSC 20)



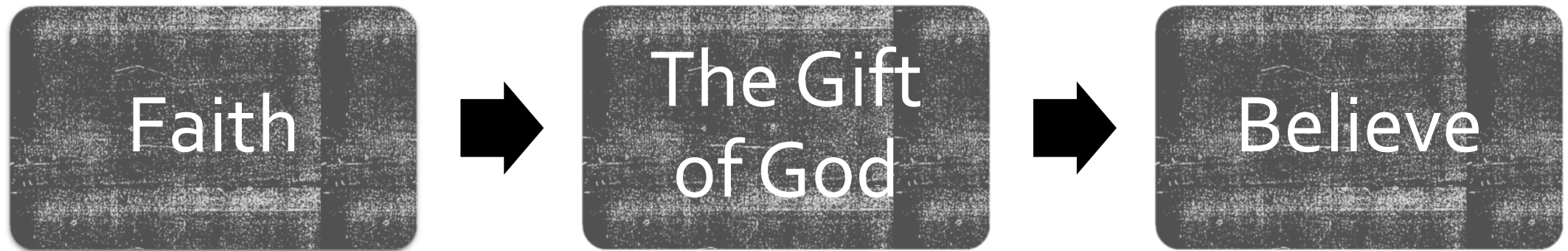
COVENANTAL SALVATION

- The condition of the second covenant is faith (a **saving** faith)
- *"He freely offers to sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, **requiring of them faith** in Him that they may be saved"* (WCF 7.3)



WHAT DOES THAT SOUND LIKE?

ASYMMETRICAL SYNERGISM



COVENANTAL SALVATION

- God **provides faith** to those in the Covenant of Grace
 - *"promising to give to all those that are ordained to life His Holy Spirit, to **make them willing and able to believe**"*
(WCF 7.3)



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- How is it related to the gospel?
- Does it really make a difference for evangelism?
- Isn't evangelism much simpler than that?





A COVENANTAL GOSPEL

HOW IS IT RELATED TO THE GOSPEL?

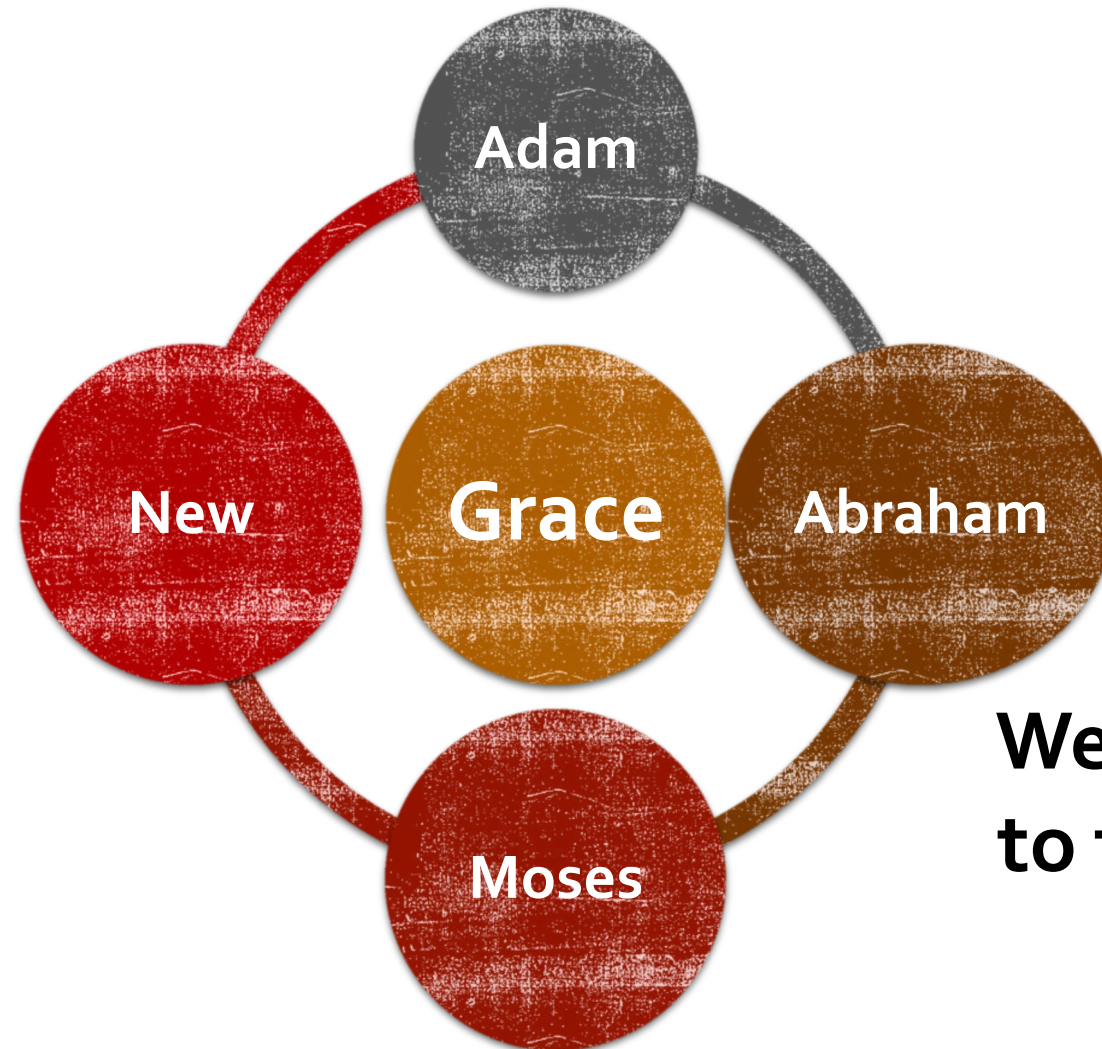
Because salvation is covenantal, the gospel (or the “good news”) must be covenantal

“Covenant Theology is not just about continuity of the Old and New Testaments... Covenant Theology is the gospel.”
(Ligon Duncan, *The Theology of the Gospel*)



REVIEW: A CENTRAL THEME

The Bible is
the story of
God's grace



We are called
to tell of that
grace



A COVENANTAL GOSPEL

- Only a covenantal view of salvation properly shows the role of the Trinity in salvation:
 - **The Father**-- eternal covenantal love in sending His own Son as a sacrifice (John 3:16; Rom. 8:32)
 - **The Son** -- covenantal unreserved sacrifice (Romans 4:25; 8:1)
 - **The Holy Spirit**-- covenantally applying the purpose of the Father and work of the Son (Heb 9:14)



A COVENANTAL GOSPEL

Only a covenantal view of salvation explains:

(1) man's need of grace

- as a lost covenant-breaker

(2) the source of grace

- God's provision in the work of Christ

(3) the means of grace

- the administration of God's covenant



A COVENANTAL ATONEMENT

Only a covenantal view of the atonement properly shows us that it was:

- Designed by the eternal love of God
- the willing work of the Son
- accomplished by uniting the believer with Christ



DOES IT REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

- Evangelism is nothing more than telling others about God's way of salvation
- How do we know what God's way of salvation is?
 - We can only know salvation through the what the Scriptures say about salvation
 - We dare not trust in "tradition" or "methods"





WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?



A NON-COVENANTAL GOSPEL

What is the gospel as it is presented from modern non-covenantal and Arminian perspective?

- Do not begin with God, begin with man and his need
- “Are you unhappy?
God has a wonderful plan for your life!”



A NON-COVENANTAL GOSPEL

What is the gospel as it is presented from modern non-covenantal and Arminian perspective?

- Do not talk about the Law of God
 - Law = bad; grace = good
 - “Don’t turn men off by talking about the Law”



A NON-COVENANTAL GOSPEL

- Faith is something man must do on his own as a result of his will
 - ✓ “God has done His part, now you must do yours”
- Repentance is not necessary for salvation, it is a “second work” for “spiritual” Christians
 - ✓ “Carnal Christian” teaching says that Christ can be Savior without being Lord



A NON-COVENANTAL GOSPEL

- Man is saved by “accepting Christ as his personal savior” and “asking Jesus into his heart”

Where do either of these phrases appear in the Bible?

A hint: they don't!



A NON-COVENANTAL GOSPEL

The individual is always the focus

- Don't talk about church, or responsibility or a covenant community –
- focus on what Jesus can do for me.



IS IT REALLY THAT EASY?

- Do I really need to be a theologian to evangelize?
- Isn't the gospel only telling men they are sinners and asking them to confess their sins and ask for forgiveness?



IS IT REALLY THAT EASY?

YES!



THE DIFFERENCE

- The true promise of salvation is not health, wealth, happiness or even freedom from the penalty of sin
- What is the true promise then?
 - The same that it has been from Genesis to Revelation, from Adam to this very day
 - **“I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Hebrews 8:10)**



THE DIFFERENCE

- The Biblical ground of salvation is union with Christ
- Only by being united with Christ as our covenantal head (*cf.* Romans 5) can we escape the wrath of God
- Through union with Christ we have communion with God



UNION WITH CHRIST

- Covenantal
- Spiritual
 - Cannot happen outside of election (2 Tim. 1:9)
 - It is the work of the Spirit (1 Cor.12:13)
- Vital (John 15:4; Galatians 2:20)



UNION WITH CHRIST

This union is effectuated by:

- Faith in Christ
- Repentance
- Diligent use of the means God has provided



A COVENANTAL UNION

- Saving faith **continues**; it is not a single act made by a single decision and then forgotten. (John 15:1-8; John 8:31-36)
- Saving faith is not merely an external profession of faith; it involves an internal change of heart and an internal union with Christ.



FAITH & REPENTANCE

- Repentance is the twin of faith; Saving faith includes repentance
- God requires and grants repentance to those in covenant with Him (2 Tim. 2:25)

*He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever **confesses and forsakes** them will have mercy.*

(Proverbs 28:13)



FAITH & REPENTANCE

Some passages for study about the importance of repentance in the gospel:

- Acts 11:17
- Acts 20:21
- Ezekiel 36:26-31
- Acts 8:22



MEANS OF GRACE

- God's covenant with men is the means to the end of obtaining life
- God has provided not only the end, but the means, as the covenant is administered through:

"ordinary and outward means...especially the word, sacraments and prayer"

(WSC 87)



COVENANTAL EVANGELISM

- How do we use the covenant to call others to salvation?
- We use the outward means God has decreed
 - ✓ Preach the Word
 - ✓ Be in prayer for the lost
 - ✓ The **church** is the God-designed vehicle for evangelism



COVENANTAL EVANGELISM

- **How do we use the covenant to call others to salvation?**
 - We speak of a covenant God who always keeps His covenant
 - every time you see a funeral, you see God keeping His covenant of works
 - We speak of the conditions that God has decreed
 - Saving faith is the condition-- it includes repentance to life



COVENANTAL EVANGELISM

Avoid the error of Arminianism

- It is not that half the work is God's and half is man's
- If we are saved it must be by covenantal union with Christ
- We cannot remain independent and be in covenant with God
- How can two walk together unless they are agreed?
Repentance is necessary (Acts 26:17-20)



COVENANTAL EVANGELISM

Avoid the error of Hyper-Calvinism

- There is an *outward* as well as *inward* call
- There is a “free offer;” it is the administration of the covenant
- Man does have responsibility-- he must fulfill the conditions of the covenant



NEXT WEEK:

- We apply a covenantal way of thinking to **the Church**
- Homework:
 - Romans 11
 - 1 John 1



COVENANT AND THE CHURCH

NEXT WEEK

