

(Covenant Series) 1. David and Jonathan

by Al Whittinghill

The sermon explores the profound significance of covenant in the Christian faith, urging believers to embrace the fullness of their relationship with God.

Duration: 1:12:58

Scripture: Psalm 25:1-5, Psalm 25:9-10, Psalm 25:13-14, Psalm 111:4-5, Psalm 111:9-10

Topics: "Covenant Series"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of David and Jonathan from 1 Samuel 18. The background is that David, a shepherd boy, has just slain Goliath, the enemy of God. David's faith in God and his trust in Him is highlighted as he volunteers to fight Goliath when no one else is willing. The speaker emphasizes the importance of knowing and remembering the Covenant with God. The sermon also mentions the symbolic actions involved in making a covenant, such as exchanging coats and belts, and the significance of sacrificing an animal as a sign of commitment.

Transcript

A man, several years ago, who lived in another country, and all his life had dreamed of moving to North America. And for years and for years he saved his money to go there, and all he could really afford was transportation by ship. And that was a dream of his, to move to America.

And so he saved and saved, and finally when he bought his ticket, years later, it took every penny he had to buy this large price ticket. So he didn't have any money for necessities on the trip. He put some cheese and some crackers into a little bag and went onto the ship and went to his little cabin.

He couldn't go to what he thought was first class in the upper deck. So he would go in and eat his little cheese and crackers and then walk around the deck. And as he walked he would look into the stateroom and he would see all these people in there with their bottles of champagne and their caviar and their wonderful food and steak and all these things.

And his mouth would just drool and he would then go back to his little room and have cheese and crackers. And he did this for the length of the entire journey, almost a week. And finally when they docked at the port in North America, he was getting off the ship and the captain said to him, Sir, we are so sorry that you haven't been with us during the voyage.

Have you been ill? He said, Oh no, no, I haven't been ill. I've just been in my room. Why haven't you joined us for the meals? The captain asked.

And the man said, Well, you don't understand. You see, it took all of my money to just buy the ticket for this voyage. And the captain had this pained look on his face as he looked at this man and said, I'm so sorry.

Oh, didn't someone tell you that the meals are included in the price of your ticket? And the old man, you see, had bought the ticket and he had really paid for the meals and they were his. He just didn't really enjoy them, even though they were included in the package. Well, that's like a lot of Christians today in a real sense, this picture who are in the family of God and who long to experience the abundant life of the Lord Jesus.

And they go to church and they admire as they see people who are rejoicing in the Lord and having victory and they long for this. But then they go back and they live on cheese and crackers, you might say, in terms of their Christian experience. And they don't really know that in the price of redemption, the banquet was paid for and everything that Jesus died to give us is ours if we'll just dare to believe him for it.

Sitting with Jesus at his table was included in the price of redemption. We don't have to have a cheese and cracker mentality. So tonight I'm asking the Holy Spirit to make that really clear to us as we look in the word of God at what I believe is one of the richest truths in the word of God.

Now that's a big statement and a big claim, but I believe it really is. And it will bless your heart. I believe like it's blessed my heart through the years.

Let's just pray and ask the Holy Spirit to open our eyes. Father, we commit to you now this time and ask you to to move us out of that cheese and cracker existence as Christians into that abundant life, into the the meat that God has for his children that the world knows nothing about the heavenly delights, the banqueting table of Jesus, the the Jesus food served by him. Move us out into those wonderful things that only you can give.

And we just thank you in advance in Jesus name. Amen. If you turn in your Bibles to Psalm 25, I want to read several verses from there, and then we'll turn quickly to another Psalm and read verses from there.

And we'll be moving rather quickly tonight. Someone said once the Lord never moves in a hurry, but when he moves it quickly. So we have scriptural justification for not being in a hurry, but moving quickly through the scriptures.

Psalm 25 and it's David's confidence in prayer. What is the basis of his confidence here as he's praying for health and sustenance? He says in verse one unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul? Oh my God, I'm trusting in thee. Let me not be ashamed.

Let not mine enemies triumph over me. Yea, let none that wait upon thee be ashamed. Let them be ashamed, which transgress without a cause.

Show me thy ways, O Lord. Teach me thy paths. So he's calling out to God to be taught the ways of God.

Lead me in thy truth and teach me for you are the God of my salvation. On thee do I wait all the day. Remember, O Lord, your tender mercies and your loving kindnesses.

Remember that word loving kindnesses for they have been ever of old. Remember not the sins of my youth nor my transgressions according to thy mercy. Remember thou me for thy goodness sake, O Lord.

Good and upright is the Lord, and therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way. We're talking about a way here.

All the paths of the Lord are mercy, and they are truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies. For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is great. What man is it that reverences or fears the Lord? Him, he, or he is the one that the Lord will teach in the way that he shall choose.

His soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall inherit the earth. Verse 14, the key verse, for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant. The word secret there means intimate counsel, deep understanding, personal communion, deep fellowship.

God has a secret that he wants to teach. Who does he teach it to? Those who fear him. Verse 14, it means those who reverence him, those who stand in awe of him in his person.

To those who stand in awe and revere him and respect him, he will tell secrets. God does have secrets, and he doesn't just tell them to everybody. He tells them to those that he can trust with those secrets, and those whom he can trust with this truth tonight are those who revere his name.

Psalms 111 brings this out. We read in several verses, verses 4 and 5, and then we'll read verses 9 and 10, talking about his covenant. You see, in Psalm 25, David's praying to be taught the way, and it's the way of covenant.

The secret of the Lord is his covenant, and he shares this secret with those who fear him. In Psalm 111, verse 4, he has made his wonderful works to be remembered. The Lord is gracious and full of compassion.

He has given meat unto those who fear him, and here it is. He will always be remembering his covenant. Verse 9, he sent redemption unto his people.

He has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and reverend is his name. So, the logical conclusion to those who fear him, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and a good understanding have all of those who do his commandments.

His praise endures forever. He will share things with those who respect him and teach them in the way of holiness and truth. Well, I believe tonight that an understanding of the blood covenant or the covenant principle in Scripture is absolutely essential.

I'm not talking about covenant theology. I'm talking about covenant as it is as an act, as it is as an institution in the Scripture. You know, it's possible to be blessed by God and not really understand why you're being blessed.

It's very possible to receive many, many things from him without ever really understanding his word in a real sense. He opens up the word and he opens up his character, but I may not understand it in full bearing. Well, to understand covenant, I believe, is one of the main keys to the Scripture.

If you allow the Lord to open up the covenant to you, you will begin to understand the Scriptures as never before. In the Old Testament, Israel lost sight of what it meant to be in covenant with God. And so the

prophets came and cut them with the word and had to remind them over and over, calling them back, calling them back.

Therefore, have I hewed them by the prophets, it said, because they forgot the covenant that they had with God. I believe the church of the 20th century has lost sight of the covenant, the new covenant, the blood covenant. So covenant living is a rarity today and in our environment that we live in.

And without this, Christianity is reduced very much in many people's experience to cheese and crackers and to a superficial thing. It's possible not to understand, but still be blessed. To rediscover the truth of the blood covenant for some of us would be the very gate to heaven for God's people.

It would really be the institute that open blessing to us. Now, the whole Bible is about covenant. In fact, it's divided into two covenants, the old covenant, which means testament and the New Testament.

That's what it means is a Hebrew word and a Greek word that means covenant. And every single promise in the word of God is a covenant promise. Every single relationship that a godly person has is a covenant relationship.

Every single salvation that a Christian on earth is ever saying is a covenant salvation. When we pray, we use covenant words and we may not understand it, but covenant pervades the scripture. And if I don't understand the covenant, a lot of the Bible will really be closed and sealed to me.

Every person who preached in the Bible operated out of a revelation of the covenant. So I need to investigate this truth. Once you see the covenant, the Bible will open up to you in a new way.

God's got to reveal it. It's not just knowledge. It's a revelation.

He'll have to show you. And it comes to the heart before the head. Well, let me just say some things as background.

And we're looking some scriptures about covenant. We could look at the whole book and and find things on covenant. But union is the essence of covenant.

It's when two things that are separate become one. The closest thing we have to it in the West is marriage. But it falls short in our society, because in a day when half of the marriages end in divorce, it's a caricature of what covenant really means to become one.

The Hebrew word Bereth B-E-R-I-T-H is very mysterious. You can look at different books and they'll tell you what it means. Some will say that it means to cut, and that means with the shedding of blood.

Others will tell you that it means to divide, to make separate, to cut down the middle. Others will tell you that it means to bind together so that it can't come apart. It's very mysterious to cut with the shedding of blood, but in that cutting to bind together as well.

Entering the covenant is called cutting the covenant in the Bible. You'll see where it says they made a covenant, but it means in the Hebrew they cut a covenant. It's an unbreakable bond.

It is a total commitment of two parties, one to another, an endless partnership, an intermingling of lives. When two become one, they're joined in one essence. Independence turns into total dependence and reliance on one another.

And there's a permanent bond that is totally unqualified. Once you're in it, you're in it, and you can never get out of it. It's forever.

And it's more sacred than my life. It is more important to honor the covenant than it is to even continue my physical existence. Now, the concept of covenant is older than man.

The reason is, is because it has its roots in the Godhead. We just read about the secret of the Lord and it infers to a covenant made before Genesis 1.1, how the father swore to the son and the spirit set his seal to have a vast family of children. We'll take that another week and study that in detail, but it can all be traced back to the father heart of God.

Now, wherever you go in the world, you'll find in societies, no matter how primitive they are, traces of blood covenant, traces of men shedding blood in sacred solemn pledge, giving their lives to one another to becoming one. You'll find in the Bible, the Mosaic covenant, the Edenic covenant, the Davidic covenant, and on and on different covenants. You'll find all of these, even in societies today, but in the West, it's a foreign concept.

The Bible is an Oriental book and the Oriental mind today really understands the concept of covenant. Well, wherever you go in anthropology, you'll find whether it be China, Australia, wherever it is, you'll find blood covenant where men haven't been civilized away from the truth of it. You'll find that it goes all the way back further than men's history.

Shedding of blood, Livingston and Stanley, both of these men in Africa found the power of blood covenant when they went in and saw hostile tribes, primitive tribes become close friends to them when they shed blood and they had a total difference of attitude. There's a book that I'll be recommending in coming weeks called the blood covenant that will take you into these institutions worldwide that will help you if you really want to go deeper in study. Let me just take you now to in Bible days, if I were going to enter covenant with one of you, what we would do.

And if you understand these steps that I'm going to give you now, how to cut a covenant for a Hebrew, a Semitic right, an ancient Semitic right, you would find that this would be the general way that it was done. It would vary sometimes, but this is the basic way. And you'll see steps of these throughout the scriptures.

Let me suppose that Andy Cataldo and I were going to enter into blood covenant and I would check him out very carefully before I ever did such a thing. Just like he's made really sure that he's going to marry Laurie before he ever engaged himself to her. You, you really make sure that this person is one you want to give your life to.

And so we would check each other out and I would make sure that he had integrity and that I could trust him to give my life to. Then we would come together in a public place or a field where we'd have witnesses, people who would witness the covenant. And as we would come together, we would know that this is an irreversible act.

We would then do certain symbolic things. I would take off my coat and give it to Andy and he would give me his coat. This would be saying all of my possessions belong to you from this day on.

If you need my car, my house, it's yours as your need. It will belong to you. All that I have is yours.

And so secondly, I would take off my belt or the scriptures would say girdle doesn't mean the same thing as today, but for the ladies. But I would take off the belt as a symbol of the abdominal strength, the strength of a man. And as I took this off, it would be saying all of my strengths are at your disposal.

Andy, all of me is yours. If you need to build a house, my strength is available. I will get behind you and help you with my belt would be my weapon, which would be a sword or a bow or a spear, something such as that.

And it would be saying from now on, all of your enemies are my enemies and all of my enemies are your enemies. I'll fight for you and your enemies will know there's another half of you, even though it's invisible. And so we would exchange coat, belt and sword.

And by doing this symbolically say that all of our time and talent and ambition and strength is totally exchanged. And two souls have become knitted together in a indissolvable union where two are one. Now, then we would come to the solemn part of the ceremony where for the Hebrew, we'd take a clean animal.

We would sacrifice this animal unto the Lord. And then we would split this animal right down the backbone. They did this as late as the day in Jeremiah.

You can read in, in Jeremiah chapter 34, how they cut a calf in half and tried to make a covenant with God to deliver the city. We would cut an animal right in half and make two stacks of fresh meat. They'd be blood all over the ground and it'd be a very gory site.

It was meant to be fearful. And as we would stand there facing one another with the walls of freshly slain meat with blood everywhere, we would then walk a sacred figure eight. I would walk around those pieces and he would walk and would say the familiar words of scripture.

The Lord do so to me and more. If I go back on this covenant, you'll find it over and over in the Bible. The Lord do so to me and more.

We'll look at it tonight too. In other words, if I break this, let it be to me as this animal and more. And as we walk those halves of blood, then we'd stop after that facing one another, we'd take our weapon and we'd make an incision, the breath, the cut and blood would flow in the scriptures.

It's hinted at when it says Jehovah has made bear the arm of his strength in the presence of all nations. I would slice my arm and hold it up to the sky and swear by him who lives forever and ever. Mizpah.

That means the Lord watch between me and thee while we're absent one from another. In other words, God, you've marked this down. We're giving our life to one another and I would swear myself away to you.

You know, we still raise our hands in the courtrooms going all the way back to that ancient custom of swearing in the presence of God. We still do many of these things without knowing why. You know why a bridegroom carries his bride across the threshold.

You know why there's a fireplace in the living room. I'll just salt your oats and say it all goes back to covenant years and years ago. It all goes back to covenant.

We'll cover it before we're through in these next couple of weeks. But then as we cut our wrists, we would make the oath and then we would clasp our hands in the scriptures. It's called striking the hands.

Our bloods would mingle and we would become in that moment blood brothers. In some pagan societies, they would drink that blood with a cup of empty cup beneath their bloods and they'd each take a drink of it and they would say that they're becoming part of each other. But the Hebrew would never drink blood such as that.

But shaking hands, we still do this and we become friends and we don't make the incision. If we had to, perhaps we'd have less friends. Maybe then after we made the incision and shook hands, we would then get salt or some dark powder, placing it in that wound and at that point we would then have what we call a mark, a seal.

It was the seal of the covenant and from that day forward, that seal would remind me of privilege. He's my blood brother, but also of responsibility. I've sworn in the name of God that I will stand for him and I would fight for him.

I will be his, he will be mine and we will be blood brothers. So the seal born in my body, another half of me, it was a real mark of ownership. Then we would exchange blessings and cursings.

I would say to him, Andy, blessed are ye when you go in your house and when you come out, may your fruit be plenteous on your farm and I would just give him all kinds of blessings. May you have long 200,000 miles on your car and just pronounce all these things. May when you get married, you and Laurie be so happy and I have many, many children, but then it'll end if you break this covenant.

May your tires pop every day. May your wife nag you morning, noon and night and may you have athlete's foot and all these curses. And you know something for the Hebrew, they believe that once you spoke these things, it was done.

Remember when Jacob was blessed, he tricked his father and he says, I've spoken it, I can't take it back. The power of life and death are in the tongue. God honors those things in a very real sense.

It's such a solemn time. Like he honors the vows at a marriage for a man and a woman. We would then pronounce them blessings and cursings.

I would show him my bank account. He would show me his. And if you needed, it's there.

That's what we'd do. And then there'd be a name change. I would become Al Cataldo Whittingill.

That would throw him for a loop, Italian and whatever English. And he'd become Andy Whittingill Cataldo. That would really throw him for a loop.

Uh, and we would then be known as blood brothers. After we changed our name, we would then have a covenant meal, which for the Hebrew would consist of bread and wine. I would break bread, putting it in his mouth.

We still do this at our marriage ceremonies where the husband and wife put food in each other. It's a big joke, but it goes all the way back to covenant feeding each other. And from the one cup I would feed him.

He would feed me. We'd become part of each other drinking from one cup. It's like communion in our day, but I would feed him and a dual personality.

We would become two becoming one. Then there would be at the end, an exchange of gifts, something very precious, something very dear, something that was a memorial to what we had just done in the Bible. You'll see Jacob and exchanging a flock of sheep.

You'll see another place, a well being dug, uh, near Sheba, the well of the oath it's called, or in another place in Abraham's day, an Oak, the Oak of memory, the plane of fatness. It's a covenant term. You'd find that there might be a large stack of rocks put there to be an Ebenezer to say, this is a covenant.

We've made like Jacob and Laban made a large stack of rocks and then had a meal at the top of it. That's strange. You see, unless you know what they're doing in terms of covenant.

So from that day on, Andy and I would become friends. Anytime you see the word friend in the Bible, it means someone who's done what we've just said. David was the friend of Hiram, the King of Tyre.

They did what we just said. They walked in covenant together. Therefore, when it came time to build the temple, Solomon called upon, uh, his father's covenant man.

And he sent him all the materials from Tyre to build Solomon's temple. You see, the Arabs have an expression that blood is thicker than milk. That means that if I'm in covenant of blood with Andy, then my relationship to him is even closer than my flesh and blood brother who nursed at my mother's breast along with me.

Blood is thicker than milk. That's why the Bible says in Proverbs 18, 24, there is a friend that stick a closer than a brother. There is a friend, one who's in covenant with you.

And I have an obligation to you from this day on. The obligation is a well-known Hebrew term called Hassan. It means loving kindness.

It means mercy. It means, uh, grace. It's a, it's a big, big term, but, uh, in the old Testament, it's translated different ways, compassion, uh, greatness of heart, uh, but mostly loving kindness.

Whenever you see that word, it's a covenant attitude. All of my plans must be made in light of you. All that I am must be planned in the light of you.

I'm bound to you, brother of mine to fulfill the oath of covenant, regardless whether I feel like it or not. It's a sacred choice sworn and sealed by blood in the presence of God. So a friend fulfills all the blood covenant guarantees.

Now, the example of this I want to cover is in the scripture in first Samuel chapter 18. You'll never understand what we just, uh, what we're going to read unless you know what we just went through those steps. It's the account of David and Jonathan.

That's what my wife and I named our first son for, because this truth is so precious to us. Well, the background for this chapter 18 of first Samuel is that David, the shepherd boy has just slain Goliath. He's the only one in all of Israel that remembers the covenant.

All the rest of them are shivering in the boots. They're afraid of the enemies of God. He's out there mocking them and saying, aha, you bunch of women.

Uh, no offense, ladies. Uh, but you wouldn't go up against the giant either. Maybe unless you knew the covenant.

Uh, but as, as he mocked the armies of God, David heard this and he knew the covenant God, and he'd killed a bear and he'd killed a lion. And he says, who is this uncircumcised Philistine that we should let him mock the armies of God? Why doesn't somebody go out there and teach him a lesson? And they said, who will do it? He says, I'll do it. You know why he did that? Because he was trusting God and not himself.

Well, he went out there and he took five smooth stones. Somebody says, why? Because Goliath had four brothers. You can check it out in the Bible.

He was ready for, for anything that might come in case they came along. And he took back that sling and Goliath says, you little punk, you're coming out against me. I'm going to make bird seed out of you.

And David said, you come to me with a spear and a sword and a shield, but I'm coming to you in the name of the living God whom you're defying this day. I'm going to take your head off and you'll be bird seed, not me. And he threw that rock and such a thing had never entered Goliath's head before that he would be defeated like that.

And as he toppled headlong, he was beheaded. Well, needless to say, it put them in amazement as they saw someone operating in covenant. It always does when the religious crowd sees a person operating in the power of the covenant, it'll baffle them.

And so King Saul says, bring that boy to me. I want to question him. And they talked.

And then Saul's son, Jonathan, when he saw David coming with the head of Goliath banging at his side, his heart was knitted to King David and they really became one in the spirit. And so they made a very special arrangement here. And let's read it.

And first couple of verses of chapter 18, it came to pass when he had made an end of speaking to Saul, that's David speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knitted with the soul of David and David loved Jonathan as Jonathan, excuse me, and Jonathan loved him as he loved his own soul. And Saul took David that day and wouldn't let him go home anymore to his father's house. And now God's secret here.

Look at this. And Jonathan and David made a covenant. The word means blood covenant because he loved him as he loved his own soul.

And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him. And he gave it to David and his garments in, even to his sword and his bow and his belt. This account will make no sense to you unless you know what we just went through.

And we know that they made a covenant there and they swore sometime around this time. How do we know that? Well, because later we see over in chapter 20, some things that confirm that Jonathan is committing himself to David in the making of a covenant. He's saying my allegiance is to you, David, even before my own father.

And I'm yielding my right to you, David, to be King. Jonathan was a prince. And so, you know what happened? They came back to the city and as they did, the ladies were singing, Saul has killed his thousands, but David has killed tens of thousands and Saul's ego just couldn't take it.

And so it's that javelin effect. You know what it is? Those who you welcome at first, when they displace you, Saul threw a javelin at David while he was sitting, playing the instrument for him in the court, chasing away Saul's demons. And, uh, and so David had to run for his life and, and he was going to be killed.

He went out of the way and Jonathan met David out in a field in the evening by prearranged signal. And there they confer as two friends. Look at what it says in verse eight, David is speaking chapter 20.

David is using covenant language and he's saying to Jonathan, therefore, you shall deal kindly with your servant for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the Lord with you. Notwithstanding, if there is iniquity in me, if I'm not walking in it, slay me yourself. Why should you bring me to your father? And so Jonathan went on and said some things.

Verse 11, look what Jonathan said to David, come, let us go out into the field out. They go to a field, both of them. And Jonathan speaks to God and to David at the same time, a solemn pledge.

Look at this. Jonathan said to David, Oh Lord, God of Israel tomorrow, when I've tested out my father, anytime the third day. And if there's good toward David and I don't send to tell him or let him know and show it to him, the Lord do so much and more to Jonathan.

What's he doing? Well, you can't prove it, but it seems like he may be pointing to something, but he's calling down a curse on himself. Nevertheless, if he doesn't honor what he's saying, if it pleases my father to do evil, then I'll show it to thee and send thee away, David, that you may go in peace and the Lord be with you as he's been with my father and you, Jonathan says to David, while I'm living shall not just show me the kindness of the Lord that I die not, but you shall not cut off your loving kindness from my house forever. No, not even when the Lord has cut off the enemies of David, everyone from the face of the earth.

What a confession for the Prince to say to a vagabond fugitive. When you become King, remember that our children are in this covenant and unborn children are to be honored. So verse 16, Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David saying, let the Lord require it at the hand of David's enemies.

Jonathan calls David to swear again. They'd sworn before because he loved him. He loved him as he loved his own soul.

Look at verse 23 as touching the matter, which you and I have spoken, behold, the Lord be between me and thee forever. Look at verse 42. You see covenant language again.

Jonathan said to David, go in peace for as much as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying the Lord be between me and thee and between my seed and thy seed forever. And there they left one another. Now this includes children.

Then this covenant is born to Jonathan. Mephibosheth is a little boy and he grows up. And during this time, David is pursued by Saul.

Saul begins to tell lies to the people about David, and they begin to believe those lies. They chase David out into the wilderness of Mahon and Ziph and Ongedi. And they, as his own words, he's been a step between him and death.

Saul is on his case day and night, just ahead of his clutches. David is praying and writing songs. And as as Saul is threatening and hating David, he is determined to rid himself of David.

So Saul tells lies and says, hate David, hate David. If David ever gets you, Mephibosheth, Jonathan, he's trying to lie to everyone. He'll take your head off.

He wants to be king. And he distorts the character of David. So just as Saul is about to get to David and kill him, there's an incredible thing that happens.

The Philistines rise up and come up in battle against King Saul and his kingdom. Now, everyone hates David or thinks that he's a criminal, except for Jonathan. He's different.

He's in covenant with David and he knows David. So as Saul leaves off his chase of David, he runs to a place called Jezreel. And there he fights the Philistines and they lose the battle.

And Saul and several of his sons, including Jonathan, their lives come to an end. They die there. Well, word comes to David in 2 Samuel chapter 1. He says, Oh, Jonathan, oh, Jonathan, exceedingly wonderful was your love toward me, greater and deeper than the love that a man has for a woman was the love.

You see, it's even deeper than a marriage love. This this kind of covenant of God that we're talking about here, that Saul is that David is lamenting over. So news of this death reaches the palace back where Jonathan and Saul had lived.

And the nursemaid of little Mephibosheth, who is now five years old, hears and they're evacuating the palace. They're afraid now that King David will come and off with the head of all the intended heirs. That's what they did in those days.

You'd cut off all the heirs, so you'd be King without a threat. They weren't afraid of the Philistines. They were afraid of David.

They run away. And in the process of running this nurse, this unnamed nurse drops the little Prince Mephibosheth. And as she tells about in 2 Samuel 4 for just one verse as she's evacuating, she drops him and falls on him or something.

But he crushes his legs and he becomes a cripple from that day forth. Therefore, his name is Mephibosheth, which means despised thing. And from that day forth, he is a man who is supposed to be born for royalty.

But he's walking with a limp. He's unable to walk in the way of his intention. His legs are paralyzed for life.

And surely he is ashamed of himself in that sense that he's away in a place called Lodibar. Saul's aides take Prince Mephibosheth out to a place called Lodibar. You know what the name means? Lodibar.

No brand. They take him out way out east of the River Jordan. It's a desert place.

They have old black goat's hair tents and it's hot. The temperature is awful. There's nothing there but a bunch of old stinking, sweaty companions.

You know, you can see the old chapped lips and old stinky beards and dirty clothes and goat's hair tents and a bunch of people that tell you, hate David, hate David. And you're growing up in bitterness and you're growing up in hatred. There in Lodibar, the prince in exile grows up and Mephibosheth is surrounded by these haters of David and they're lying to him.

He grew up hating the faceless king and he's plotting for the day that he can muster enough strength to come and take over. David's on my throne. I'm going to someday put a knife between his ribs and take back from him that which he's got that belongs to me.

And so here we see the prince in exile, self-imposed exile, born for royalty but living like a vagabond. And all the time Mephibosheth did not know that King David was in covenant with him through Jonathan and that he bore in his body the marks of covenant as he sat on the throne. Mephibosheth is hating the one that he's born to be in covenant with.

He's in ignorance. He's believing lies. He's living in fear and ignorant of the truth.

Well, David puts down the enemies as he comes to the kingdom and seven and a half years he sets up his throne in Hebron and he's waiting to catch the rest of Israel under his power. He's asked to come to the throne. In this time he brings the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem and he praises God.

He's showing that he wants all of Israel to worship the Lord. And then after he puts down the last battle, the last enemy, 16 years have passed. By this time Mephibosheth is 21 years old.

He's a young man right in his prime, but he's crippled and surely he's still full of bitterness and hatred. Well, David, when he comes to a point of peace, remember he said, after you put down all your enemies, you will not forget the loving kindness of God. Look at second Samuel chapter nine.

One day David is sitting on his throne. Second Samuel chapter nine, the house of Saul. You see, I'm sure that was a normal question because kings when they were in power would always try to kill those heirs that were left of the previous king to eliminate a threat.

They would start to say, and then he says the unusual thing that I may show him kindness, covenant word for Jonathan's sake. And there was of the house of Saul, a servant whose name was Ziba. He was Saul's head servant actually.

And when they had called him to David, the king said unto him, are you Ziba? And he says, your servant, I am. He's saying, and the king said, are there not yet any of the house of Saul that I may show? Look at this, the kindness of God to him. I want to show him the kindness of God.

And Ziba said to the king, Jonathan has a son. He's lame on his feet. He might've added.

He's afraid of you, David. He's hiding from you. And the king said, where is he? And Ziba said to the king, behold, he's in the house of Meshia son of Amiel hiding in Lodibar.

Then King David said and fetched him out of the house of Meshia son of Amiel from Lodibar. I have an obligation, says David. I have an obligation to show loving kindness.

Perhaps he looked down and saw the mark. If there was one in that exchange between he and Jonathan, is there any left of Jonathan's house? And only Ziba would tell him. And so David excited says, go get him.

And he sends out his chariots. I can imagine these splendid white steeds and gold chariots going out to this, this, uh, this kind of far out remote town that never even sees an envoy of the king. And, and here they see this cloud of dust and, and they say, then he comes over and he looks out the window of his tent and he sees these massive, beautiful chariots surrounding him.

And he says, ah, this is it. This is it. He's gotten me first.

And they come in and say, where is it? And they, I can imagine that they put him in the chariot before he even has a chance to fight or anything and take him face to face with the king. He's confronted with something he doesn't even know. And so he's brought in before what he knows is certain death.

I mean, he's been in rebellion. He is on a wrong race in the sense of, of his own thinking. And he is a doomed man.

He deserves death. So he comes in and look at Now, when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul was come to David, he fell on his face and he did reverence. He was scared.

And David said, Mephibosheth, he calls him by name. And he answered, behold your servant. And if you could put yourself in Mephibosheth's place, you can imagine the fear he surely felt.

And instead of hearing off with his head or, or stone him or something, he says, Mephibosheth. And David says, verse seven, fear not, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan, your father's sake. I'm going to restore.

I love that word, restore to thee all the land of Saul, your father, and you will eat bread at my table continually. You've been living in no bread. Now you're going to be in the place that's continual bread.

Same word used for the showbread in the tabernacle, the bread of faces always in the presence of God. And he bowed himself and said, what is your servant that you should look upon a dead dog like me? At last I found you, Mephibosheth. I've been saving something for you, all of your inheritance.

It's been just waiting for you. I've been saving them. And Mephibosheth can't believe his ears.

I'm sure expecting death. Now he hears blessing and there must be a mistake. David, I've been wanting to kill you.

I can hear him thinking. And David says, oh, there's more. There's more, Jonathan.

You're going to become a son to me. You're going to become an heir. You're going to feast at the master's banqueting table.

You're going to put that which brings you the most shame, your lameness beneath white linen, out of sight, out of mind, face to face fellowship with the King and his family. From now on, I'm going to call you mine. There's a place for you at my table.

And suddenly you see Mephibosheth realizes the truth and he realizes he's been believing a lie about David and his character and all the things that he's been believing. And he cries out, I'm a dead dog. Only one thing worse for a Hebrew than a dog.

And that's a dead dog. He's saying I'm the worst. I'm lower than the scummiest of scum.

Like someone might say today. I mean, you can get a word lower. I'm a dead dog.

There's nothing lower to confession of repentance and brokenness. And it's almost like David says, Mephibosheth, I do know who you are. I know.

Let's read on continually. Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said, I've given to your master's son everything that pertains to Saul and all his house, a king's inheritance. And thou, therefore, in your sons and your servants, you will farm the land for him.

You will bring in the fruit. Your master's son must have food to eat. Mephibosheth, thy master's son shall eat bread always at my table.

And then he goes to say that he, verse at the last part of verse 11, he will eat at my table as one of the king's sons. And so David says to Mephibosheth in the sense, Mephibosheth, even though you can't understand it, I'm not doing this to you because of who you are. I'm doing this for the sake of Jonathan.

I'm doing this because of a blood covenant. This is the covenant kindness of God. This is the kind of kindness that God shows a covenant oath to bless you.

I'm bound by a blood covenant sealed before you were even born. Now, put yourself in Mephibosheth's place at this place. He had to make a choice.

He had to make a choice, which was to enter the covenant that was his by grace or go back to Lodibar and die a miserable, wretched death, thinking about all he could have had. Seems like an easy choice, doesn't it? Well, it wasn't. You see, Mephibosheth had to die in a very real way.

First of all, he had to die to his own ambition to be king. He was a prince. He had to lay down that aspiration to sit on the throne and say, David is king.

I am not. He is Lord. And secondly, he had to die to all the lies he'd ever believed about David.

He believed that David was a vile person out to just do the worst thing concerning him. He had to realize David is a good king. And my Jonathan knew that, my father.

And thirdly, he had to leave Lodibar. You can't be in covenant with King David and live in no bread Lodibar. You can't live in the wilderness and be in covenant with the king who's in the castle.

You have to get up from where you are, die to the old life and rise up and become a friend of royalty. Well, he said yes. And everything changed in a twinkling of an eye.

They put a ring on his finger. They put shoes on his feet. I imagine they began to call him my Lord, Mephibosheth, union and relationship.

Now, imagine this here again. We're conjecturing again. But imagine yesterday in the wilderness.

Here's old Mephibosheth, stinking companions, no fruit, no nothing. And today he's in the palace and they say, let us take you to your room. And down he walks a marble hall and up some stairs with greenery hanging everywhere into a room with tapestries all over the wall.

And he goes over and looks at this silk sheeted bed with aloes and cinnamon and this young fellow over there with a with a salt where those things they play songs on. He's singing praises to God. And there's a big pile of fruit.

He didn't know where to pull one out because it might fall down. And there's water in his room flowing through. And there's this big round thing that if you hit it on, everybody runs from every which direction to

get you anything you want.

And I'm sure in that moment, as he he says, they're not even treating me like I deserve. They're not even treating me like who I really am. His mind was absolutely blown.

And then they come and say, come and dine, Mephibosheth. The master call us, come and dine. And so down he goes to the master's table.

His feet are out of sight and he's sitting there. And as they're feasting, he and his mind is blown. He says, I've spent my whole life hating this man.

I don't deserve to be here. I've plotted to kill him. What am I doing here? I wanted to get rid of him.

He threatened me. And now this kind of kindness doesn't make sense. I don't deserve this.

I can't figure it out. Just then David reaches out for a roll or something, a piece of bread. And there's the scar.

And he says, that's it. I don't understand it all. But there's something about that mark that means that's why I'm getting it.

Something in that mark, something in the covenant, something. Behold, what manner of love that David has shown unto me that I could be called a child of the king and feast at his table continually. Someone says, Mephibosheth, you're not worthy to be here.

You better prove yourself. And Mephibosheth says, I know I'm not worthy to be here, but go ask King David about blood covenant because the whole thing was his idea. Well, you see the parallel here.

All of us in this room belong to another family, very much like Saul's family, a family that's threatened by God, a family that is a very insecure in the reign of its own life and our own channels of authority. All of us like sheep have gone astray and we're living in rebellion. And naturally we don't want God around.

He threatens me. I feel about God the way that Saul felt about David. And if you've never seen God like that, then you've never really seen what he demands of you.

Because let me tell you, he wants it all. He wants to take your life. And that's very threatening when you begin to see that at first.

Well, there's one that's different in Adam's race, just like there's one that's different in Saul's family. And that one that's different in Adam's race is the Lord Jesus, just like Jonathan was in Saul's family. He's in the family of Saul, but not like Saul.

Jesus is in the family of man, but he's yet totally like men, but totally different. He's not like everybody else. He was sinless, but yet he was bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.

He ate. He wept. He left footprints.

He had 98.6 temperature when he walked around. He never stopped being God when he became man. It's amazing.

It's great is the mystery of godliness that God became a man. And the Jonathan of the human race is Jesus. He is exactly that.

And so when I see that Jonathan was the only one in Saul's family that could enter covenant with David because he loved David, then I see that Jesus is the only one in Adam's race that could enter covenant with the king, the father, because he knew the father, the only the God man can enter covenant with God. When I see this, it puts the whole ministry of Jesus in a new light. It changes everything.

It shows me a real man entering a blood covenant, amazing with God. And he is the messenger of the covenant prophesied throughout the Old Testament, the Malachi in the book of Malachi, my representative. Everything he did was about his father's business.

He moved toward that moment when he, as a representative man, would walk up that hill that we call Calvary. And there, as a representative man, enter a open-ended covenant for other men with his father. So the climax of all of eternity was when a valid true man who was God walked up Mount Calvary and cut a solemn blood covenant with God, the unveiling of the plan of the ages where Jesus stood on behalf of all other men.

That's Calvary as God intended. And he didn't just cut a covenant for us back then. He cut a covenant as us.

Oh, that's the secret of it. He was as if we were there in his place doing what he did by faith. Just like Mephibosheth was in the loins of Jonathan and represented there with David when they entered covenant.

So were you and I in the Lord Jesus by faith when he cut covenant with his father in the scripture to prove it. I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live, but not I, because the life now that I live in the flesh, I live by the faithfulness of the son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

He was a man who stood on behalf of all other men. He was worth all other men. And what he did, they did too.

You see, that's why Jesus Christ died. And he explained it to his disciples just before he went away. It's covenant language, the last supper.

Remember that that last supper the night before he was arrested right there? And he says in Matthew twenty six, twenty six. Listen to this. As they were eating, Jesus took bread.

He blessed it. He broke it. And he says to his disciples, take and eat this.

It's my body. Normally nothing was said at that point in a Passover when the bread was passed. But he's saying this is my body.

It's broken for you. He took the cup. He gave thanks and he gave it to them and said, drink all of it for this is my blood of the new covenant, New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

My body, my blood, the same Passover they've been eating for years within it, the ingredients of the new covenant right there in mysterious, hidden, secret form. And the disciples knew what he meant that when you eat this, when you drink this, you're entering eternal new covenant prophesied by Jeremiah, where God would be in you all that he's been asking out of you and you've been trying to do it yourself and can't do it and you're tired, but he will be in you the bread of life. So I'm going to cut a covenant for you, says

Jesus, and I'm not going to use a lamb or a bull like they've been using for years.

I'm going to use my own body. This is my body. This is my blood.

Remember last week, unless you eat his flesh and drink his blood, you have no life within you. Sacrifice an offering you did not desire, says Hebrews 10, but a body you've prepared for me. God prepared a body for sacrifice.

And so when Jesus sacrificed himself, he achieved blood covenant between God and man. He took the fountain of his own life and he poured it out, cutting covenant with the father at Calvary. When he said it's finished, it meant that it was finished.

He paid the price of the new covenant and paid the curse of the old covenant being broken for us and as us. And he rose again to be that covenant memorial. God raised him from the dead and set him on high.

And today he lives at the right hand of God, the father, like that pile of rocks in the old Testament to say God will keep his promise. The resurrection was God saying, this is a memorial. And before I ever break my covenant, I'll put him back in the ground.

That's what he's saying in the resurrection. You know, before Jesus died, it says in Isaiah 52, 14, his visage, his face was marred more than any man. They beat him to look like hamburgers.

What it says in the I'm not trying to be irreverent, but it says that in the Hebrew, he looked like a monster. I mean, they they tore his beard out. They hit him with rods and they whipped his back with this cat of nine tails.

It would pull the flesh off your back like your size of a man's finger. But yet when he was raised from the dead back, having been plowed like by furrows, when he rose from the dead, all these wounds from the crown of thorns and all the rest were healed except for those wounds in his hands and in his side. Why do you think all the other were healed and he kept those in his side and his hands? I believe this Roman crucifixion put the nail here on the small of the wrist, not in the middle of the hand.

They have books that tell you they found them in archaeology right between the small bones in the wrist where a man could hang for days and not bleed to death and have an excruciating time. Jesus came and he said, reach here and put your put your hands in my side and feel these wounds here. You know what he was doing? I believe he was saying, look, these are the marks of new covenant in the Old Testament and Isaiah forty nine sixteen.

It says, can a woman forget her sucking child? And the answer is, yes, plenty do today. But then it says, can I forget you? Oh, Israel, I have written you in the palms of my hands. You know, today in heaven there is a man who is God raised from the dead with our names written on his heart, in his body.

There are covenant marks, just like in King David, pleading for us. I love this verse. I've got it in the front of my Bible.

It says five bleeding wounds he bears received on Calvary. They pour out effectual prayers. They strongly plead for me.

Forgive him. Oh, forgive. They cry.

Don't let that ransomed sinner die in the Old Testament, too. It is a question there that one day they'll ask to the Messiah in Zechariah thirteen, six and seven. It says one shall say to you, what are these wounds in your hands? And he will answer and say, these are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

You see, it's hidden in the scripture that Jesus cut a covenant for us. But John, the apostle, looked into heaven and he saw in the book of Revelation chapter five, a lamb on the throne, the Passover lamb, that he is our Passover. We eat his flesh, we drink his blood, and he has in him the marks of death.

It says in Revelation chapter five, verse six, a gentle lamb with scars of death right there in his body. So a living lamb sitting on a throne with a circular rainbow around it, which means covenant. The other side of covenant.

Jesus, the living guarantee. Emmanuel, God with us raised from the dead. Now let's relate it to us and finish this tonight and see what God has to say.

You see, if you're like me, my Jonathan, my Jonathan entered covenant with King David, the father, before I was even born. You know, I've had this experience sometimes reading books that I say, what a great book. When was this written? You look at it, 1400 or something like that.

Great Christian truth. Well, Jesus was crucified long before we were here. And when I was born, I found myself in a Lodibar.

Have you ever discovered you live in Lodibar apart from him? You can do nothing. And you're lame. You can't, you know, you were born for something more than the mundaneness of everyday life.

There's more to life than this. There's something more ultimate. And you feel lame on your insides.

The whole time we didn't know that our covenant representative sat at the right hand of the father with marks of a covenant in his body, a covenant cut in my name before I was born. I felt about God the way Mephibosheth felt about David. I felt he was out to get me.

You know why? Because I knew I deserved it. I knew that that I had broken the Ten Commandments and I knew that I was guilty and I knew that I deserved punishment. And I believed all the lies about God's character that the devil kept pumping into me.

If God ever gets ahold of you, if you ever really become vulnerable to him, if he if he ever has a chance, boy, you will get yours. You'll really get it. I mean, he will he'll he'll cripple you.

He'll he'll break your heart. He'll make you live all the rest of your life in a monastery in Antarctica, something like that without a coat. I mean, that was the concept that I had of God.

I thought he was pretty horrible, but the whole time I wanted to know him in a in a funny little way, but I kept away from him. And so Mephibosheth thought if David found him, it'd be the end. And so so did I. Have you ever felt that way? If you haven't, then you probably never really seen what he's demanding on you.

Well, then God sent the Holy Spirit out to my hiding place. My hiding place was behind a desk in the business world. And there, surrounded, plotting, trying to get ahead, trying to run my own little kingdom, hoping for the day I'd have things right.

The loving kindness of God surrounded me and the Holy Spirit brought me face to face at a worship service with God's confrontive claims in my life. And I remember I was terrified because, you see, I thought that when God really got me where he wanted me, it'd be all over. I knew I deserved hell.

Nobody had to tell me that. And I said, it's all over. But when I heard God's voice, what did I hear? It wasn't go to hell, but it was out.

He called me by name. He says, at last you've come. Ah, I want to restore to you everything you've lost because of Adam's sin and more.

And I'm going to bless you with all spiritual blessings in Christ. I'm going to raise you up and cause you to sit in heavenly places. I'm going to give you righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Spirit and the abundant life.

And have you ever had this thought? Lord, I'm astonished. I've been rebellious toward you. You must not know who I am.

But Al, I do know who you are. I know exactly who you are. And I want to say this is not because of who you are.

This is because of a covenant that was cut for you in blood before you were even born. This is the covenant kindness of God for Jesus' sake. You're Jonathan's sake.

Little children, our sins are forgiven for his name's sake. It says in 1st John 2.12. And so I cry out, unworthy, unworthy. And he says, there's more.

I'm going to bring you to my table. You're going to be a joint heir with Jesus Christ. I'm going to restore to you.

You're going to feast at my table. And all those things that made you lame, that you're ashamed of, I'm going to put out of sight, out of mind, and you're going to be birthed into a family, have fellowship with the king and his sons from now on. There must be a mistake.

Realizing that I've been deceived for years, I say this, God, you must have me mixed up with a missionary's kid down the street. And I quote the words of Scripture in Titus 3, 5, and 6. It's like almost the Lord saying, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his loving kindness, he saved us by the washing of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Well, that's pretty clear, isn't it? Well, at this point, friends, we have a choice to make.

We have to make a choice, just like Mephibosheth when he's there. We have to die. We have to lay down our claim to running our own life, being our own king, our own Lord, and say, Jesus is Lord.

Jesus is Lord. He has the right to reign. Secondly, I have to die to all the lies I've believed about God, that he wanted to make me do the worst thing possible and hurt me as much as he possibly could.

And I have to die to that. I have to change my mind about my loathing. I've got to rise up and leave the place of poverty and move in with King Jesus into the center of his will by faith.

I must realize I've been bought with a price. I'm no longer my own. If I'm going to enjoy the benefits of the covenant, I must belong to the giver of the covenant.

In other words, I've got to rise up and receive a life. I become the friend of God, like Abraham, the father of our faith. I become in a union relationship.

And this is why there's no halfway, because it's holy. It's sacred. This is what becoming a Christian is in a very real sense.

Jesus said, you are my friends. If you are doing the things I have commanded you, it doesn't mean you become friends by doing what he commands. It's saying, look, you are my friends.

You'll know them because they'll be seeking to obey me with all their heart. There's no halfway. So I've got to die to myself and live to God to enter the power of the new covenant.

That's what it says in Hebrews. A covenant is in force after men are dead. I've got to give up my life to receive his life.

I've got to let go of the natural to receive the supernatural. I've got to say, I'm no more a citizen of time to really enjoy the beefsteak of eternity. Eternal life is not something that's coming for a Christian.

Eternal life is today. He is eternal life. It's not going to be in the sweet by and by.

It's right now, today. And so at that point, God seals us with the Holy Spirit. Instead of a mark of circumcision like the Old Testament or in the skin, it says in Philippians 3.3, we have a circumcised heart.

He takes the Holy Spirit and he seals us in our heart. Ephesians 1.13, how be it after you believe you are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. And he becomes the indwelling fulfillment of every requirement of God.

He takes up residence in me. He causes me to walk in his word, to know his law in my heart and in my mind. That's Christianity, friends.

And I'm going to tell you, that's beefsteak. And too many people live with cheese and crackers. I become a blood brother to God.

Joined to him intimately in the inner man. 1 Corinthians 6.17, he who's joined to the Lord is in one spirit. We're one in the spirit, an inward seal of the Holy Spirit and the outward testimony of baptism saying I am his.

So like Mephibosheth, going from the wilderness to the castle is quite an experience. One day you've been in the bars or been in your prospective business barrenness or your housewife blues or whatever else and watching Edge of Nausea and all that stuff. And yesterday a rebel and today you're sitting with God's children, feasting on the word of God at the master's table.

And you're, it just seems too good to be true. You're singing the hymns of Zion and you're enjoying Calvary and you can't understand it. And your mind begins to go out on you and you say, why am I getting this, Lord? Why do you love me? And you look around for a reason and you can't find one.

And just then you look at the throne of God and you see Jesus with those covenant marks. And you say, that's it. That's the reason I'm getting all of this.

I don't understand it all, but I know that it's because of the oath that was sealed in blood before I was ever born. God's loving kindness became a person. He took my place in death then, and he's to take my place with me in union covenant living now.

And we're saved by his mercy and loving kindness alone, alone, alone. There is no other reason. Freely justified by his grace.

So it's finished. The question is tonight for you and me, do I really dare to believe that? That Father God loves me as much tonight as he will a million years from now. I can't add to it one bit by having a tremendous devotional life.

I can't take from it one bit by falling on my face. If I'm in Jesus, he looks at me and he says these precious words to me. Dear, so very dear to God, dearer you could not be.

The love wherewith I love my son, such is my love for thee. He loves me with the love of Jesus and I am to him as Jonathan was to David. I am ever with him.

Think of this word, oh guilty soul, despair not. Christ can make you whole. In him does pardon, peace and grace, a sure and blessed hiding place.

The covenant confirmed by blood is based upon the oath of God. By his self he has sworn. Therefore when the devil comes and tries to accuse me, I don't have to defend myself.

The Bible says agree with him quickly and point to Jesus. I like to say when the devil knocks at the door, I send Jesus to answer and no one is there. The trouble is when we answer it, we get licked, we get really licked.

Devil, why don't you go ask Jesus about the blood covenant? You're right, I'm pathetic, but Jesus loved me first and I love him because he first loved me and so I've given him my coat. What's my coat like? Filthy rags. When did he put it on? When he cut covenant at Calvary.

He put on my righteousness and he gave me his white linen, just like a lamb's coat. He put it on me, the garment of salvation. I have his coat, he has mine.

We exchange belts. My strength, which is zilch, nothing, zero. And he gave me all power is given unto me in heaven and earth.

Go ye therefore. He gave me his omnipotence for my impotence and he gave me his sword. I had to lay down my carnal weaponry of the flesh, no power at all, but he gives me the word of God, the sword of the spirit as I take his weapon up.

And he himself is my Passover lamb, my sacrifice divided down the midst. The veil was torn in the middle when he was crucified to say it was his flesh, the way into God, the way of holiness to walk in him. And so our name is changed.

I become Christian. I confess him before men, Christian, little Christ. And he writes my name in the lamb's book of life in heaven.

And we have that family meal together. The Lord's supper, the princes of God sit down together and eat in his presence. And all of our sin is beneath white linen and a daily memorial.

He sits on the throne in beauty and holiness. And he lives in me as a changed life. That's the memorial every day.

His mercy is you every morning. The new covenant is when God does everything and we can't add to it or take from it. We just say a thankful yes, a humble, broken Lord.

I'm in union with you. So it's trying gives way to trusting. Trying is looking at what I'm doing.

Trusting is looking at what he has done. It gives way and doing gives way to done and struggling gives way to resting. See, some of you tonight as we're finished may have seen for the first time what salvation is really all about.

And those of you who know what salvation is all about, I've seen some lights clicking on as to that. You really do have rest. You really do have peace and you really do belong to him.

Oh, blessed assurance. Jesus is mine and I'm his. And that's a real reason for rejoicing.

He won't change his mind if I'm his. So our God is a covenant keeping God. And to those who revere him, he shows his secret.

And those who know this secret can sparkle even in darkness. But you know, there are a lot of people who still live in Lodibar. There are a lot of people who don't know that in the price that Jesus paid, there's meat and there's steak and there's heavenly delights and there's abundant life.

But rather, they live on cheese and crackers, just doing the best they can. Rise up and sit at the king's table tonight. We're going to pray and I'm going to ask you to just drive a stake tonight and say, Lord, not only am I in covenant with you, but I'm in covenant with your people.

It's not only vertically, it's horizontally. And all that I have belongs to you. Therefore, all that you have belongs to me.

And I'm not going to look for a reason why you love me. I'm not going to look at my failures. I'm going to just look at you and praise you for the kindness of God, which comes to me, amazing grace.

Do you dare to believe it? You see, that's what faith is all about, daring to believe that you're righteous in Jesus Christ when you know you're not any other way. We can say tonight, I am as righteous as Jesus Christ. You say, I could never say that.

Well, if you can't say that, that means you're trusting some other righteousness and you'll find that it's your own coat. It's filthy rags. Take off your coat and take his, that garment, that rainbow colored garment that the father gives to the son of his right hand.

He'll let you wear it while you're here. Well, let's just pray together. Father, tonight we can rejoice in the certainty of your promise.

Every promise of God is yes and amen in Christ Jesus. The blessed seed to whom the promises were made in him, we're heirs and joint heirs of God. Thanks be to God for this unspeakable gift that we wear

this righteousness that is not of the law, but of the hearing of faith.

Tonight, release hearts to believe God and out of that total reception that we have with God, out of such goodness, may real repentance come. Lord, this is the only way to enter the covenant, repent and believe. I'm a dead dog, but I dare to believe that you're great enough.

How great thou art to cover it. We thank you for your greatness tonight and we say to God, be the glory. Thanks be to the lamb of God.

Thank you for washing our sins in your own blood. Thank you that we stand in this large, wealthy place of grace in the unsearchable riches of Christ. I wonder why our heads are bound.

I do sense the Lord would have this happen tonight. If you're here and we'll be doing this periodically, I want to just tell you in obedience to the Holy Spirit. Tonight, you're saying to the Father, like Mephibosheth, yes, yes, I want to be in covenant with God.

I thank you that I've seen this tonight and I'm taking you at your word. I'm going to let you love me without a reason. There's no more reason in my mind, but Jesus and Lord, I'll take that.

I'll take you at your word. I want to be in covenant with God. I want you to live out in me by your spirit, the Christian life.

If that's your prayer tonight, as a memorial to the Holy Spirit, to him, would you quietly, just quietly slip to your feet? This is not for people who've been walking in the covenant for a long time, but this is for people who are saying to God, oh, Lord, I want to walk in this. I want it to be real in my life. And I just stand before you in faith, daring to believe that you're the answer.

Will you just do that in his presence now for his eye alone? Father, your eye beholds everything. Thank you for faith that's in hearts here. We thank you for setting us free from ourselves that we might walk in all that you are.

Thank you for this secret tonight, this wonderful truth of blood covenant. And we know it's a big truth and we pray that you'll bind it to our hearts and may we meditate on it and may it bring forth fruit to Jesus. Thank you for these that have stood to their feet, who want to live in the power of your covenant.

And I just ask you to bless them and may this become a scorching, beautiful reality in their heart. Just the zeal of God. And we pray this in the name of Jesus.

Amen. Well, thank you so much for coming tonight. And we are very grateful to have you here and look forward to seeing you next week.

We'll be covering more on the blood covenant next week. I think we're going to, I think we're going to study the life of Abraham and how he is the father of the faithful in Genesis 15 and 17. So you might read on Abraham in Genesis to lay a background for what we're going to be doing.

God bless you and have a great week.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/al-whittinghill/covenant-series-1-david-and-jonathan/>

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