

Recovering the Purpose of the New Covenant

by Alan Martin

Alan Martin's sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the New Covenant as a means to restore God's honor and transform His people.

Scripture: Matthew 7:21

Topics: "New Covenant"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of caring about God's name and honor. He uses the example of Nehemiah rebuilding the wall in less than three months because he cared about God's name. The preacher explains that this concern for God's honor is not just an Old Testament concept, but it is also relevant in the New Testament. He encourages believers to seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit and empowered by God's grace in order to bring honor to the Savior. The preacher concludes by stating that those who truly care about God's honor and obey Him will be saved and taken home by the Lord when He returns.

Transcript

I guess the Lord knew the projector wouldn't be out, so I didn't need to make my outline so you could see it. That's great. You have your Bibles, don't you? You still use those? And read those daily? I have a message on my heart this morning called, Recovering the Purpose of the New Covenant.

Recovering the Purpose of the New Covenant. Now if I say, assume that something needs to be recovered, it means that I believe there's a purpose in the New Covenant that is largely lost upon many people. What would that be? What is the purpose of the New Covenant? How can you understand it? Well, first off, there's the New Covenant.

What does that mean? There was an Old Covenant. Well, evidently, someone decided there must be a New Covenant because something was wrong with the Old. You can't understand the purpose of the New Covenant, unless you understand what the problem was with the Old.

Turn to Hebrews chapter 8, verses 6-8. And the writer of Hebrews understood that the believers, especially the Jewish believers of his day, would want to know why there needed to be a New Covenant. The New Covenant he's referring to is the covenant spoken by Jeremiah.

Behold, the day is coming, says the Lord, and I'll make a New Covenant. But let's read from verse 6. Hebrews chapter 6, verse 8. Hebrews chapter 8, verse 6. But now he has attained a more diverse ministrations, inasmuch as he has become a mediator of a better covenant which is founded upon better promises. For if that first covenant was faultless, there would not be a place sought for a second.

But God found fault with the people. There's the problem. The problem was with the people.

He goes on to say, For in complaining against them, the Lord says, Behold, days come, says the Lord, when I will complete upon the house of Israel and upon the house of Judah a New Covenant, not according to the covenant which I had when I made them with their fathers, in the day that I took hold of them by their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not remain in my covenant. That was the problem.

The problem was with the people not remaining within the covenant. And if you don't remain in something, you step out of its bounds. That's what the Bible calls transgression.

You transgress if you step outside the bounds you've been given. Or another way of calling it is trespass. What's trespassing? You're stepping into an area that does not belong to you.

God's people continually mixed with the world, and adopted the world's practices and conformed to the world's ways, transgressing and trespassing continually, until He said, I'm done. They say, this is not working. And it created a very particular problem.

Turn to Ezekiel chapter 36. And you can see the particular problem it created. Because here's something that we need to understand about God.

He's a person. And you know what a person can do? He can take things personally. So this problem of the people continually stepping out of the boundaries, God took it very personally and said, I've had enough with this.

I'm going to do something about this. And actually He says He's going to make a new covenant. He's going to make a new covenant that will fix this problem.

Here in Ezekiel chapter 36. Let's start in verse 16, I believe it is. And of course, if you wonder what I'm reading out of, I'm reading from the Greek manuscript in the Old Testament.

So that's why it may sound a little different. But in Ezekiel chapter 36, verse 16, And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O son of man, the house of Israel has dwelt upon their land, and they defiled it by the way they lived, and by their uncleanness. And according, it was like to me, according to the uncleanness of a woman on her monthly cycle.

And I poured out my rage upon them for blood, for which they had poured out upon the land. And in their abominations they polluted the land. And I scattered them unto the nations, and I winnowed them into places according to their way, and according to their sin I judged them.

And then they entered into the nations, and when they entered there, they profaned my holy name. In the saying, the nations were saying, These are the people of the Lord. And they've been cast out of the Lord's own land.

Cause God's holy name to be profaned. There in verse 21, And I spared them because of my holy name, which the house of Israel profaned among the nations when they entered there. And because of this, the house of Israel thus says to the Lord, Not for your sake I'm going to act.

Isn't that interesting? Do we realize that God did not make the covenant for the sake of any man? It's for His own sake. And I think that's what's lost in the teaching of the new covenant. That it's not about us.

It's not about our getting to go to heaven, and our getting our sins forgiven, and our being accepted, and our being loved. And God gets nothing out of it. The reason He established a new covenant, the very purpose of Him establishing a new covenant, was to stop the profaning of His name by the people who call themselves His people.

So He's going to have to do something different. If that's the problem, what does He say He's going to do about it? Let's continue to read the same chapter. Chapter 36, now in verse 23.

And I will sanctify My great name, the one being profaned among the nations which you profaned in the midst of them. And the nations shall know that I am the Lord, says the Lord, when My name is being sanctified among you before their eyes. And I will take you from out of the nations, and I will gather you from all the lands, and I will bring you into Your land, and I will sprinkle upon you clean water, and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.

And I will put in you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you, and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give to you a heart of flesh, and I will put My Spirit in you, and I shall make it that you shall go by My righteous ordinances, and you shall keep My judgments, and you shall do them, and you shall dwell upon the land which I gave to your fathers." Do you see what God says He's going to do? I'm going to make an entirely different type of people than the people who continually profane My name by their character and their conduct. I'm fed up with this. They're making My name.

They're dragging My name through the mud, and I've had enough. I'm going to create a people, and I'm going to do such a dynamic work within them. I'm going to give them a new heart.

I'm going to put a new spirit in them. I'm going to cleanse them of this tendency to transgress My laws, and I'm going to inspire them by My Spirit in them to actually walk in My ways. And what does that produce? That produces God's name being honored by those who claim to be His people.

And that's what needs to be recovered in the New Testament. The way Christians are living today is causing the world to despise Christianity because they're not walking in the fullness of the New Covenant. And there's reasons we've done that.

Because we've turned the New Covenant into our good news. But what does God get out of it? See, for someone to say, and I want to be merciful in saying this, but when someone takes more comfort in the fact that even though their child is doing horrible, that doesn't read the Bible, don't attend church, living in disobedience, at least they're Christians and they're going to heaven. When someone takes comfort in that, you know what they're showing? They care more about their child than God's name.

You know what Jesus said? He who loves father or mother or son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me. If that's what it's all about, the fact that we get to go to heaven, even our kids who don't even serve God anymore, at least they get to go to heaven, we have changed the Gospel. That's not even why God made a New Covenant.

That just causes His name to continue to be profaned by the people who claim to be His people. That's not the righteousness He talked about. I want to try to illustrate to you how concerned God is about His name and how special it is when someone is touched by His Spirit and begins to be concerned for His name.

You know, twice God was ready to destroy the entire nation of Israel down to every single person, two occasions, do you remember when? One was at the Golden Calf, and the other time was right when they were at the Jordan River and God had told them to go in and take the land and ten spies had come back and said, no, there's too many giants, this is too tough. Both of those occasions, God said to Moses, step out of the way, get out of the way of these people, I am about to wipe all of them out, I'll start over with you. And Moses stood in the gap and interceded.

But how did he intercede? Have you ever thought of it? Oh no, Lord, You're too kind to do that. Oh Lord, these are just poor people, they don't understand. Oh come on Lord, just be loving and forgive them.

Was that His appeal? No. His appeal was, Lord, if You destroy all these people at once, the Egyptians will say it was You who brought them out so that You could kill them here. It's going to affect Your name.

And the Lord listened to Moses. Did He spare the people entirely? No. Actually, what happened on that first occasion, Moses stood at the edge of the camp and He raised His voice in a shout and He said, all who are on the Lord's side, come to Me.

And you know who came to Him? The entire tribe of Levi. They ran to Him. And you know what Moses told them to do, according to the Lord? Strap a sword on your side.

And go through the camp and don't spare anyone who you see frolicking in sin. Slay them right there on the spot. And they did that.

And when they came back to Moses, the Lord said, now you are going to be My priest. Because you are more concerned about My name than your relatives. We've lost that fear of God in this land.

We've lost that fear of God. The very reason this group of people became the priests was because they were willing to be against their father and mother. Do you think Jesus meant it meaninglessly when He said, if any man loves father and mother more than Me, he's not worthy of Me? He knew what He was saying.

He knew the Scriptures very well. And sadly, these priests didn't continue in that same fear. If you read in the book of Malachi, I could quote you from the book of Malachi, Malachi chapter 1, Malachi chapter 2, Malachi chapter 3, you'll see that the priests themselves, the tribe of Levi became corrupt.

And the Lord raised up a prophet named Malachi and He confronted them with this in Malachi chapter 1, and He said, it's you, O priest, who are despising My name. You're showing contempt for My name. And of course, it surprised them.

They asked the prophet, how are we showing contempt for the Lord's name? He says, you're bringing corrupted sacrifices before Me. Your sacrifices aren't the best. Some of them are contaminated.

And He goes, I won't receive your sacrifices. Try offering a blemished sacrifice to your governor and see if he would accept it. If your own governor would accept it, why are you bringing Me anything less than your best? And He goes on to tell them in chapter 2, if you do not put it in your heart to honor My name, if you

don't set your heart to honor My name, I will curse your blessings.

Indeed, I have already cursed him. And the Lord gave a picture of what it would look like. He says, I'm going to take the waste product from your sacrifices and I'm going to spread it on your face.

This is God. This is the God we serve when He's concerned about the indignity His own people are doing to Him. And you think, is that just Old Testament? No.

I exhort you by the mercies of God to present your bodies a what? Living sacrifices. How? Holy and what? Acceptable. You think God is any less displeased if we bring to Him a half-hearted worship? If we come and gather before Him and we don't bring Him the best of our strength, we're not loving Him with all of our might, all of our strength, all of our soul.

You think God just understands that we're just distracted in the world? We just can't help it. We're just so weak. Listen, that kind of thinking continues to cause God's name to be profaned.

And everyone in the Old Testament and New Testament that was deeply concerned about God's name, God worked in a wonderful way. You remember Joseph? Experiencing all the temptations of the world, why did he resist Potiphar's wife? What did he say? How can I do this evil thing and sin against my God? It's no wonder he was chosen by God to be the ruler over all the land of Egypt and save the nation during the seven years of famine. There was another young man, Daniel and his friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

You know them as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They were exiles into Babylon. God had so judged His own people for the way they were living, not listening to the prophets after 17, 18 years of trying to speak to them, that He sent the Babylonians to actually lay siege and ransack His own people.

God had the Babylonians laid siege so long there was no food in the city and people were fighting over babies to see who would eat them. Because God was upset about how His name was being treated. And so He gave the city into the hands of the Babylonians and Daniel, and Azariah, and Mishael, and Azariah were carried off into Babylon.

But there, even though they were in the people carried to exile, they had a heart to honor God and they purposed in their heart not to be defiled by the king's food. And you know what happened as a result of it? God gave them ten times the wisdom of everyone else in training. God poured upon them His grace and power.

Why? Because their hearts were set to bring Him honor. That's what happened to Nehemiah. Remember the story of Nehemiah? Jerusalem had laid in ruins for years.

The wall was torn down. The city was a mess. The people were living mixed with the nations.

And Nehemiah asked one time, someone had come from Jerusalem and he asked him, what's the situation there? And when he heard it, it broke his heart. And he wept for three days. And you should read his prayer.

You should see his prayer. He pours out his heart to God about the reproach his people were bringing on His name. And you know what God did? God raised this man up.

He calls the king to give him favor. He went and in less than three months what the people had lived with for a long time, the wall was rebuilt because he cared about God's name and His honor. All through the New Testament.

This is the way it is. It's not Old Testament. You realize that this is the secret.

This is the secret to the life of Jesus. Jesus had one vision. He said if your eye be single, your whole body will be full of light.

He had a single eye. You know what His single purpose was? Every word and every act will glorify my Father. Everything.

My power, the power and the grace He's given me are to reveal Him and to bring Him honor. And even when His disciples asked Him how to pray, He was so conscious of what His Father's purpose was. What is the foundation He laid when He taught His disciples how to pray? When you pray, pray this.

What did He say? Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. There's no other purpose. If you lose that purpose, what's the purpose of prayer? Is the purpose of prayer just to get rid of your cancer? Is the purpose of prayer just to get rid of your pain? Is the purpose of prayer just so God can spare your son or daughter so that even though they're living against the ways of God, bringing repose to His name, but you still want them to be blessed? No wonder our prayers are not heard.

Why should He care? But when a person is concerned about His name, His will, and His interest, God listens. Because you know what one of the greatest sins of all is? And I don't think we catch it. One of the sins mentioned in the Ten Commandments, or one of the commandments in the Ten Commandments has been very poorly understood by God's people.

And it's the third commandment. Can anyone remember what the third commandment is? The first commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto me any graven image. Thou shalt have no other God before me.

Still one and two. And the third one, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. You know what we think taking the name of the Lord thy God in vain, someone saying, oh, or holy, that's what we think it is.

You know, Jesus made it very clear what taking the name of the Lord our God in vain is. In Matthew 15, here's what He said, These people draw near Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Their worship of Me is in vain.

There's nothing more vain than calling yourself a Christian and not walking in righteousness. Nothing brings God more... It would be better for you not to claim to be a Christian than to claim to be a Christian and live like the world. Paul said, we have no business judging those outside.

They don't claim to be Christians. But if someone claims to be a Christian and is a fornicator or a thief or an idolater or drunkard or slanderer or sensual with such a person, what did he say? They don't even eat. Why? Because they bear the name and they're taking the name of Jesus through the mud.

It's not that God doesn't want to be merciful. But He says in the 10 Commandments, He said, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God for the Lord God will not cleanse anyone who takes His name in

vain. Wow! It's a serious matter not to take being a Christian seriously.

But is it just Old Testament? Is God a different God? Let me ask you a question. Sometimes it's tough for us to look at the severity of God. You know what an idol is, right? An idol is an image of God we've created from the kind of God we want.

Right? We've invented Him from our imagination. And you know what? A lot of people invent a God that leaves out His severity. It leaves out His wrath and His judgment.

Let me ask you this. How many of us believe that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever? Amen, amen. Alright, so you believe that.

So was God just as loving during the flood at Noah as He was when He sent Jesus? Was God any less loving during the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah? Was God any less loving when He told the Israelites to wipe out the seven nations of Canaan? Do you understand He is so loving that when He sees the cancer, the moral cancer that's polluting His people, that He says it must be destroyed. Isn't that kindness? If you go to your doctor and you have a serious illness, what do you want Him to be? Straight with you? Or suave with you? You want Him to be straight. Yeah, you don't want Him to jump on you.

Can you tell it to me? Easy. But you want Him to be straight, don't you? The problem with losing God's purpose in creating a new covenant being that He will bring honor to His own name is we in the attempt and the mistaken attempt, and I will say, a sincerely mistaken attempt to show God to be all-loving and all-merciful have forgotten that He actually saves people by warning them about what He's going to do if they don't turn. We forget that.

What did most of the Bible passages about Jesus' coming again about? What do they talk about? Judgment. Isn't He coming in blazing fire full of wrath to take vengeance upon those who know not God and obey not the Gospel? Isn't that what Paul said? That's what he said. Peter said, Knowing that all things shall be destroyed in this way, that the heavens shall melt with the fervent heat and the elements shall be dissolved with fire.

What type of people ought you to be in all godliness and holiness making every effort to keep yourselves spotless and blameless before Him? And if you don't think that God would judge you for the way you live, then how do you interpret many, many shall say unto me, Lord, Lord? And I shall say to them plainly, depart from Me, you workers of iniquity. I never knew you. You know what He was saying when He was saying, I never knew you? You were never in it for Me.

It wasn't about My will and My honor and My glory. It was all about you. It was about your comfort.

It was about you having this good news. You know who the people who gave the most positive message were in the Bible? Who can tell me who the people who gave the most positive message were in the Bible? Can you name them? They were called false prophets. And what was their message? Peace.

Peace, peace. When there is no peace. What did they mean by that? Here's what the Lord said to them.

These men healed the wounds of My people superficially. And you know what that's like in our day? That's just like us all getting together and keeping telling one another it's all good, it's all good, it's all good, we're all good. Good service.

We had a good service. We had a good revival. We had a good work day yesterday.

There was three of us here. And that was better than the last one because there was only one. So we tripled with 300% increase.

And what we do is we flatter one another and we comfort one another. We don't want to make anyone... That's not the reason you come to church, is it? But you know, if we rediscover God's concern for His own name, then we'll discover something. The new covenant He made in every provision He's made for life and godliness gives us the privilege of seeking to be filled with His Spirit, empowered by His grace to walk in such a way that every day on the job, every day at home, someone can see the actual, visible evidence that you've got power in you helping you to do what's right.

You don't do that to be saved. You do that to bring honor to the saved yard. You do that out of gratitude.

And you know what? That's the evidence that you've really been saved. I doubt the salvation of those who don't care about God's honor and their greatest concern is they get to go to heaven. It's not even why He made the new covenant.

His stated purpose in the new covenant was for, remember what He said, it's not for your sake. It's for My sake. Because the people of the first covenant, by their unfaithful conduct and their corrupt character, continually caused His name to have a bad testimony by those outside.

And here's what happened. With every person in the Bible who mourned for that, here's what God promises. I will give you, what? Beauty for ashes.

The oil of joy for mourning. The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Why? What are they mourning over? Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

But what are they mourning about? Are they mourning about their own... I've got a rough job. It is bad to have a rough boss. Or maybe your husband is not serving the Lord.

Or maybe your wife is not difficult to live with. And it's right to mourn about those things. Those things make it difficult.

But it says for those who mourn for Zion, He gives beauty for ashes. And the oil of joy for their mourning. Because their concern is His honor.

And their concern is His name. And for those... There's a promise. And it's Malachi chapter 3. And when you read it, it's beautiful.

And it says this, Then those who feared the Lord and honored His name spoke together. It's actually one verse that says they spoke often with one another. And a scroll of remembrance, like God began to take notes.

Who are these? A scroll of remembrance was written concerning those who feared the Lord and honored His name. And here's what He says to the prophet. They will be Mine in the day I make up My treasured possession.

I want to be in that group when God decides who He wants to be with Him. Oh, I know. Listen.

We all want to go to heaven. Doesn't every religion want to go to heaven? The Muslims want to go to heaven. They want to get their 70 virgins and have their life.

The Indians want to go to heaven. They want to go to the happy hunting ground and live happily ever after. What religion doesn't want to go to the afterlife and have it all better? That's no distinction of genuine faith.

You know what the most evidence of a real and dynamic faith is? Such a transformed life that shows evidence that you've been given a new heart. You've been given a new spirit. You've been circumcised in the old way.

Yet what you used to get from the old Adam has been replaced by the last Adam. And now Christ in you giving you this new heart and this new spirit is so dynamically at work in you that you don't do what you do now because of what Adam gave you. You are living the way you live now because of Christ in you.

That's evidence that you're in the new covenant. Because that kind of life by God at work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure, that kind of work in us demonstrates this. We become the light of the world.

The salt of the earth. And what happens? We can let our light so shine that men see what? What do men see? Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works. And what do they do when they see the evidence of good working? Of course it's God working in us enabling us to do it.

But when they see the visible manifestation this good work, what do they do? They glorify our Father in heaven so that rather than profaning His name we're actually bringing Him glory. See, it's by grace you are saved through faith, this not of yourselves, not of works, lest any man should boast, but you are saved unto good works. Unto these God appointed because God planned that by the dynamic transformation in your conduct that He brings about men glorify Him.

That's incredible. That's salvation. That's the new covenant.

And that needs to be rediscovered in our day. We need to mourn. We need to mourn when our lives are a contradiction instead of a confirmation.

I don't want my life to contradict what I say I believe. I want my actions to confirm my faith because, why? Actions, say it. You guys at school, look, it'd be better for you not to claim you're a Christian than to claim you're a Christian and live like the rest.

You grandmothers, you parents with older kids who are not serving the Lord, it would be better if you realize it'd probably be better if they're not serving the Lord that they didn't even claim to be a Christian. Don't comfort yourselves by saying at least they're a Christian, at least they're going to heaven. Because you know what? That's pretty selfish, isn't it? God's name gets profaned, they don't serve Him, they don't love Him, they're deceived, they cause His name to be drove through the mud, but you're glad that at least they're going to heaven.

That's not a godly concern. Now, you don't give hope, you don't give up on them, but you begin to sorrow and you begin to confess their sin. You begin to go to God and say, Lord, it's not right how they're living, but You're merciful.

You don't take delight in punishing anyone. You don't want to destroy them. Grant them repentance, whatever it takes to do in their life so that they will stop and turn around.

Do it, Lord, for Your name's sake. That's a prayer He'll listen to. You can pray all day long, well, at least just keep blessing them, Lord.

I know they're stubborn and familial, but just keep blessing them. See if He'll answer that. That's not our God.

We believe, don't we? What is Jesus going to do when He returns? He's going to take those who have loved Him and served Him and obeyed Him home, isn't He? And what's He going to do with the rest? It's uncomfortable, isn't it? Isn't it uncomfortable? But do you believe this? And He's going to do this because of this. There would be no hope of a new heaven and a new earth with no corruption and no pain and no sorrow unless He destroyed completely all opposition to His greatness. He's going to do it in His kindness and His wisdom.

And He's not going to do it with pleasure. He's going to do it with purpose. A purpose that He makes very clear that He's not going to do before everyone in the world has had a chance to hear the Good News and accept His forgiveness and be made right with Him.

And we need to live a serious life because of it. And may God have mercy on us. If we've so taken His grace for granted that we have lost the purpose that He actually had in making a new covenant.

And I just want to review and summarize. And I'm finished. The reason He decided the old covenant was not going to be any longer is because the people's character and conduct continually profaned His name.

And He said, I'm done with that. I'm going to make a new covenant. And I'm going to do such a dynamic work in the people that I bring to Myself that their lives are going to honor Me.

I'm going to show Myself holy through the way they live. When we accomplish that purpose, you know what happens? We're doing the will of the Father. And here's the beauty in that.

If we do the will of the Father, here's what Jesus says. Jesus said, not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of God. But He that does what? The will of My Father which is in Heaven.

I've just told you what God's very will in making a new covenant is. Bringing honor to His name. So if your life through the grace you're receiving from Him is actually bringing His name honor, you're going to be one of His.

When He makes up His own special treasure possession, you're going to live with Him. You're going to enter Heaven. Because that's what He made it for.

Heaven was created as a place of reward for His faithful disciples. Not just for people who give God lip service. Because you're the salt of the earth for a reason.

The reason we are the salt of the earth is to bring glory and honor to His name. But if the salt loses its saltiness, what's it good for? A salvation that doesn't give God glory, what's it good for? A Christianity that continues to profane God's name, what's it good for? It's good for nothing. But those who actually fulfill the purpose for which God made the new covenant, glory and honor will be theirs.

God's faithful. Let's pray. Father, have mercy upon us and help us deal with sometimes we love Your difficult dealing with us, we love Your chastening, as well as we love Your comfort.

Because we need it, Lord. You told us in Your Word that the father who spares the rod doesn't love his son enough. But You said that those that You love, You're careful to discipline them.

So deal with us in Your Word in any area in our lives that You're not pleased with. Help us recognize it first of all. And grant us repentance to turn from it.

We ask in Jesus' name. If you'll stand, I'd like you to stand and I'm just going to have Armando play. We know the words of this song.

We've probably sung it many times. Have Thine own way, Lord. But I want you to sing it with a little bit more understanding today.

When you're singing, Have Thine own way, Lord, I want you to reflect upon your life and in any area of your life that you know He is not being honored with. Give it to Him. Ask Him to turn your heart from it.

And I'm just going to be here at the front if you want to come and pray. Rededicate your life. If you can't, and I mean rededicate your life to the purpose that I will glorify God in my life.

I will glorify His Word. I will honor Him with my speech, with my conduct, at my job, before my wife, before my husband, before our children. I will show evidence that God's salvation and His Spirit in me is real.

If you want to sing, you can. If you want to pray, just pray. Have Thine own way.

Just a brief reminder. Our announcement about sharing and our love offering for our pastor and for Ken and others that spent an extra considerable amount of money on the youth camp. That was just one announcement for that week.

But it was to go on. So if you weren't prepared to give that day, please consider giving now and then the next few weeks. Because there's a great need there.

And we need to compensate and show our love and appreciation for what they did and what they sacrificed to give. Let's pray. Father, thank You for today.

We thank You for the new covenant that You've taught us how to live. Father, we fail so often to honor You. And we pray today that as Your Spirit and Your presence is here with us today, we pray that our lives would reflect and show a bright light and be an honor to You in all that we do and say.

Bless the offering. Bless those who give so generously and faithfully. Help us to honor You with every penny of it.

We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.

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