

April 20, 2009

SERMONS FOR SUNDAY

April 26, 2009

a.m. *"The Beginning of the Gospel"*

Scripture: Mark 1:1-8

p.m. *"Perfection of Sorrow"*

Scripture: Lamentations 1:12-19

God Is A Covenant Keeping God

Don Hatch

One of the most commonly used words in the Bible is covenant. The covenants which God made with man are to show His almighty powers to make an agreement and keep it throughout the centuries. The promises of God are revealed in the Scriptures. These covenants are made with man for his welfare. From God's side a covenant cannot be broken. Men make covenants and frequently break them. God's word and promises are never broken. "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips" (Ps 89:34). Hence, a covenant is essentially a pledge which defines a relationship. These covenants include the parties committing to contract with each other, conditions imposed and that it can be unilaterally established by a Superior with lesser or between equals. It should be obvious that covenants which God makes between Himself and man are never between equals. In religion covenants made by God are God making agreements with His creation for their benefit.

Things agreed upon by two parties can be called a covenant. Often covenants have a third party who is the guardian of the covenant. God holds man to his word. Pledges and vows are not to be entered into lightly. Covenants can be between nations, cities, and the vanquished that have been spared, but must live under specific agreements. It is important to note that agreements can be verbal or written. Both are binding. The study of divine covenants is of great importance. They provide assurance for the soul, strengthen faith and affirm that mankind can live in peace with God and other men.

When innocence is obvious the covenant made between God and man is an alliance of friendship and promises of life with favor based upon the conditions of deference and faithfulness. God gave conditions for Adam and Eve to live in the garden. They were to maintain it and subdue the earth. The benevolent Creator blessed His created with wonderful benefits. When Adam and Eve broke the covenant they found that the glory of Eden turned into hardship and woes. Such is always the cost of breaking a covenant with God. To prevent man from becoming utterly corrupt God established His covenant with fallen mankind. It placed restraints and conditions on man, Satan and the entire universe. Man would work earning a living by the sweat of his brow, woman would hear of the sorrows of motherhood and the curse that governed the world. Included in God's covenant was benevolence with hope and an antecedent of a situation wherein in the future events would be foreknown in a forecast of redemption and salvation.

The covenant with Noah forecasted that God would never again destroy the world by flood (Gen 6-10). God guaranteed the stability of His natural laws and still remained as the Sovereign over heaven and earth. God demonstrated the sacredness of man and that he belonged to a loving God who would provide for His continuance. The conditions of this covenant were to keep God's agreement with sacred trust and God put a token called a rainbow in the sky for an assurance. This covenant carries with it an orderliness of the cycles of days, years and seasons as long as the earth remains.

The covenant God made with Abraham is crucial to man's salvation. God promised to bless all nations because of Abraham and that a seed would arise from his progeny who would bless Hebrew and Gentiles (Gen 12; 13; 15; 22; 26; 28; Gal 3). God's covenant with Abraham bestows spiritual blessings and promises an eternal dwelling place. Beginning with Abraham God created a chosen people whose seed line would eventually bring forth Christ the Savior.

Moses received a written covenant from God for the nation of Israel at Mt. Sinai (Ex 20; 34; Lev 26; Deut 5; 7; 8; Gal 3:17-24). This covenant was reaffirmed on the plains of Moab (Deut 29). It was frequently referred to in the Scriptures as having great importance. It was the constitution given to Israel which manifested God's immense graciousness, love and holiness. The tablets upon which God's own finger wrote the Ten Commandments were stored in the Ark of the Covenant (Deut 10:2-5). This and the written law were guardians of a pledge God had made and a tutor to lead Israel unto faith in Christ Jesus. The motivation behind this covenant was love. It revealed the holiness of God and reminded Israel that the law condemned and could not save. Therefore the coming of Jesus Christ was God's pledge to redeem.

The nation of Israel received the covenant at the foot of Mt. Sinai. It created a nation which would display Jehovah God as Creator and Sustainer. The Promised Land and all its benefits were to be a foretaste of heavenly blessings. The special relationship Israel sustained with Jehovah was remarkable. God promised to lovingly chastise them and they rebelled (Deut 28; 29; Heb 12:1-12).

The conclusion is that the covenants God made with mankind were and are agreements which teach the treacherous to beware and the holy to rejoice. The promised Messiah came, salvation has been granted and eternity beckons, awaiting those who are covenant keepers. The church has a firm covenant with God through Christ with the requirement of being faithful unto death (Rev 2:10). This covenant of mercy and grace is wonderful (Eph 2:1-10).

FAMILY CARE

A Message from Our Shepherds

Mission Printing is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. Plans are being made to set aside a Saturday for a time to remember and honor all those who have contributed their time, abilities and finances to make Mission Printing successful. Guy and Jessie Lee Caskey had a vision of spreading the Gospel throughout the world by the printed page. Their dream has come true with the help of hundreds of regular volunteers and thousands of donations by those who are truly interested in the Great Commission, Matthew 28:18-20. Darrel Allen and I are very proud to be members of the Mission Printing Board with Doug Jarvis, Calvin Hammons

and Tom Sarratt, Jr. Tom Garner is president of the Board and works each day at our facility in Arlington. Our Roy Thomas was also a board member and pressman for many years. All of us are volunteers to help Mission Printing spread God's Word. Alice Walker and Jessie Lee are still giving their time and abilities at 85+ years young. We publish scriptural tracts, by writing, editing, printing, collating, stapling, trimming, packaging and shipping, all for free. Our director, Vendall Dollarhide and Mary Carroll, our office manager, are the only two that receive compensation for their full time responsibilities. We rely on both of them very heavily. We have many congregations from different towns across Texas who are sending several volunteer workers each month to participate in the work. Belt Line is represented at the facility by the Walker's and Armstrong's (and probably by some whom I'm not aware). There are four congregations: Belt Line, Keller, Tyler and Emory who have created a work room in their buildings to collate and staple the thinner tracts. All three of our elders and their wives support and join many others to help collate and staple in the Jr. Auditorium. Please join us on Sundays at 4 pm. I have known about Mission Printing since its inception, and have been totally amazed by the amount work that is accomplished by so few, at very little cost. Shipping cost is always our largest expenditure. Donations are always appreciated. Our missionaries have received many of our tracts throughout the years. I have free sample boxes (about 80 tracts per box) that I would love for you to deliver to congregations that you visit or know. This could save us thousand of dollars in postage and give a small congregation the opportunity to spread the Gospel by the printed page without cost. There are not many things truly free in this world, but the Gospel will always be free!

"...Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water." Revelation 14:6-7

~ Richard L. Renfro

The Fruit Bearing Christian

"Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, rejoice. Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus...not that I seek for the gift; but I seek for the fruit that increaseth to your account..." (Phil 4: 3-7). The apostle Paul commends the church for her love, courage and support of the work in the vineyard of the Lord. They have found ways and means to provide considerably to Paul over many years. These gifts are life-giving fruit.

Genuine traits of Christian love are manifested in the fruit which is borne. An example of such is "...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law. And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lust thereof. If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk" (Gal 5:22-25). From within the Christian is manifested a deepening conviction that whatsoever is giving to the Lord and His work constitutes fruitful living. **Time, energy,**

resources and **life** are but a few of those things which constitute fruitful living. The Apostle Paul encourages the church to see how such actions are accumulative in their lives.

God is the ideal from which Christians can draw direction. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him give us freely all things" (Rom 8:32). Divine power will grant unto us all things which pertain unto life and godliness by His own glory and virtue (2 Pet 1:1-11). The charge Paul gives is that the church do good, be rich in good works, lay up good foundation against times to come and lay hold on life which is life indeed (1 Tim 6:17-19). The temporary nature of the physical world reminds Christians that the outward man is perishing but the inward renewal is daily and all must seek the things which are not seen, the eternal (2 Cor 4:16-18). Paul reminds Christians that they will one day shuffle off the mortal coil and be swallowed up in an eternal life. They are to have courage to walk by faith and not by sight. Moreover they are to seek to be well-pleasing to the Lord. All will be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ that each may receive the things done in the body, according to what has been done; be it good or bad (2 Cor 5:1-10).

The record of the faithful church in the New Testament describes her loving desire to bear fruit for the Lord. Modern contrivances can never match the Church and her giving. The fruit bearing Christian's example is one which must be turned to as the wholesome example of love and faith.

~ *Don Hatch*

GREETER ASSIGNMENTS

Sunday, April 26, 2009

Front foyer: Richard & Carolyn Renfro; Thomas Rathbun

Back foyer: Mike & Elizabeth Garrison

Sunday, May 3 2009

Front foyer: Stan & Doris Selby

Back foyer: BC & Grady Fowler

Family News:

MISSION PRINTING

Mission Printing will meet **Sunday** at 4:00 p.m. in the Jr. Auditorium.

There are boxes of free sample tracts for your use in spreading the Gospel in the front foyer.

MENS' GATHERING/DEVOTIONAL

The **Monday morning** gathering will meet at 6:00 a.m. in the Annex.

SINGING SESSION

The **Sunday afternoon** singing session will meet at 5:15 p.m. in room #116.

LADIES

The last Ladies' Bible Class is now suspended until the fall.

CAMP REGISTRATION

If you are in need of applications, please check with the office. Deadline to complete registration is **5/1/09**.

NEW SONG BOOKS

If interested, don't forget to sign up for a personal songbook. Hard back copies are \$10.50 & leather bound copies are \$35. The order will be placed on **Monday, April 27th**.

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

As well as our regular ways of bringing the Belt Line News to the congregation, we are beginning an additional newsletter called "The Quarterly". It will be published every 3 months & will include text & pictures of the activities in which we are involved, some current & some that are planned for the future. If you are on the email list to receive the weekly bulletin, you will also receive "The Quarterly" by email. Otherwise, there will be copies in both foyers for your convenience. The first edition is available today; check it out!

LADIES' DAY

If you would like to greet Polly Cline at the Blackeyed Pea on Belt Line on Friday, **April 24th** at 12:30 pm., please sign the sheet in the front foyer by Wednesday, April 23rd for seating purposes.

Ladies' ½ Day is **April 25th** with lessons on "Holiness in an Unholy World". Be sure to pick up invitations located in both foyers; sign-up sheets for salads are on the table in the front foyer.

A Ladies' class taught by Sister Cline will meet on Sunday, **April 26th** in the Annex from 4:30 pm until 5:30 pm.

IN APPRECIATION

The elders appreciate the efforts of Bill Matthews in helping decide on the proper songbook.

ANNEX

Be sure to check out the facelift done on our Annex.

CONGRATULATIONS

The Henry's great-granddaughter, **Maddie Galvin**, was baptized yesterday.

Also, their grandson, **Nathan Gavin**, graduated from the Naval School of Health & Science with a 99.18 grade point average with special honors.

JC & Dessie Ross welcomed their 5th great-great grandchild into the world on April 6th. Her name is **Lylah Denise Wiggins** & she weighed in at 7 pounds.

WITH SYMPATHY

BC Fowler lost her uncle & Grady lost his cousin, both last week.

Mark Luker (friend of the Henry's) passed away last Tuesday.

Darlene Rush, a friend of Nancy Pond, lost her husband, **Dick Rush**, to cancer last week.

PRAYER CONCERNS

- **Lotah Franklin** is suffering with arthritis.
- **Linda Matthews** will undergo surgery at MD Anderson tomorrow.
- **James Barnes** (Gladys' son) will undergo bypass surgery this Wednesday.
- **Erma Callejas** (the mother of Debra Alonzo's sister-in-law) was released from the hospital & is doing well.
- **Ronnie Vaughn** (Dessie's son) will undergo an echocardiogram next Monday.
- **John Veyon** (Ilene Ashworth's brother) will undergo heart catheterization on 4/29.

Continuing Prayer Concerns:

Gwen Bingham, Grady Fowler, Fauna Garrett, Billie Gilliam, Don & Judy Hancock, Garldean Latham, Everett Newton, Tom Prince, Roy Thomas, Thomas West, Brad Anderson (Bill Paschall's friend), Nancy Bauer (Scott Watson' mother), Charlie & Mary DiPalma (missionaries), Glen Elmore (elderly father of a friend of Garl Latham), Frank Garrett (Fauna's husband), Louise Gierling (former member Tom Gierling's mother), Scott Watson (Jeanene Heilman's friend), Ilya Yakimenko (missionaries in Russia), & our shut-ins.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Be sure and mark your calendar -

- April 26: Mission Printing in the Jr. Auditorium at 4:00 p.m.
- April 26: Singing session in room #116 at 5:15 p.m.
- April 24: Greet Polly Cline at Blackeyed Pea
- April 25: Ladies' ½ Day
- April 26: Ladies' Bible Class in the Annex at 4:30 p.m.
- June 3: Summertime Preaching
- June 15-17: Vacation Bible School
- July 5-9: Jr. Youth Camp
- July 19-24: Sr. Youth Camp

NURSERY ATTENDANTS

Sunday morning:

- Sandy Hall

Sunday evening:

- Betty Ruckman

LORD'S TABLE/MORNING

Front Table

- Mike Batot
- Thomas Rathbun
- James Gilliam
- Brandon Howard
- Rob Farmer
- Denzil Myers
- Glen Kelly
- Stan Selby

Rear Table

- JC Ross
- Robert Taylor
- Max Melton
- Keith Vaughn
- Bobby Bowen
- Jeremy Hardegree
- Roy Martin
- Derroll Allen

SUNDAY P.M. PRAYERS

- Marvin Brown
- Dean Webb

SUNDAY A.M. PRAYERS

- Richard Renfro
- Darrell Allen
- Jeremy Hardegree

A.M. SCRIPTURE READING

- Glen Kelly
Mark 1:1-8

A.M. SONG LEADER

- Garl Latham

P.M. SCRIPTURE READING

- Bill Paschall
Lamentations 1:12-19

P.M. SONG LEADER

- Jerry Baker (last song, Denzil Myers)

LORD'S TABLE/EVENING

- Darrell Allen
- Robert Ruckman

COMMUNION TO SHUT-INS

- Ty Harvey

FOR THE RECORD: WEEK ENDING ATTENDANCE & BUDGET

| | <u>Last Week</u> | <u>This Week</u> | <u>YTD Avg.</u> | <u>Goal</u> |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Sun. Class | 77 | 99 | 93 | 125 |
| A.M. Worship | 172 | 152 | 155 | 210 |
| P.M. Worship | 75 | 84 | 88 | 112 |
| Wed. Class | 86 | 74 | 82 | 110 |
| Ladies Bible Class | 21 | 25 | 38 | 35 |
| Contribution | \$4815 | \$5101 | \$5491 | \$5474 |

MISSIONS

- Charlie & Mary DiPalma - India
- Willie Gley – Ghana/Togo, Africa
- Roland & Rose Mohsen – France
- Gary & Nadya Workman – Ukraine
- Glen & KuinTattersall – Australia
- Oleg & Natasha Yakimenko - Russia
- Wil & Telanda Sadler – Military Missions
- Christ's Haven Children's Home - Keller, TX
- Foster's Home for Children – Stephenille, TX
- Bitragunta Church of Christ, Bitragunta, India
- Ian & Mabel McPherson – Tasmania Australia
- Wayne Jackson – Christian Courier on the Web
- Ted Lingren - Sisophon Bible School – Cambodia
- Mission Printing Worldwide Literature Distribution
- Terry & Pam Laurence – Bear Valley School of Preaching
- Dennis & Beth Johnson - Chennai Teacher Training School – India