

God's Faithfulness To His Covenant Part 1

Sermon Title: **God's Faithfulness To His Covenant Part 1**

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I would like to share just a little humor. An elderly woman was on the phone with her friend. She said I feel like my body has gotten totally out of shape. So I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, spinned around and perspired for over an hour. But by the time I got my leotard on the class was over.

Open your bible up. I would like to share some scriptures. We will look at a few different scriptures, but the first one is over in the book of Psalms in chapter 89. I wanted to go to 105, but we will go there next. Psalms 89, we will look at these first. We will look at some selected verses here in Psalms 89. We will look at verses 24, 28, 33 and 34. Let's begin with Psalms 89:24. *But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.* And verse 28: *My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.* And verse 33: *Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.* And verse 34: *My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.*

I just want to use as a subject God's Faithfulness To His Covenant. God's Faithfulness To His Covenant. Let's look at some other scriptures. Flip over to Psalms 105. Psalms 105 shares a similar thought. Let's read verses 8-10. Psalms 105:8-10. Notice what it says there: *He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham and his oath unto Isaac; And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant.* God's faithfulness to his covenant. He won't forget it. Notice in verse 8, he said he had to remember it. He will not forget his covenant.

He will not forget his covenant. This covenant here that he established with Abraham, same covenant he made with Abraham...flowed down to Isaac, flowed down to Jacob, and it flows down to us. Praise God! That same covenant. His covenant, God is faithful. God is ever faithful to his covenant. It's everlasting covenant, it is a covenant that won't quit. It won't give out, it won't cave in. But it's an everlasting covenant. He continues here in Psalms 105. He gives a little insight into God's dealing with the people of God; and how this covenant came into play and the effect it had in people's lives. If you'll notice in verse 10, Psalm 105:10, he puts a colon after that. He is talking about the covenant and how God established it with Abraham and with Isaac and with Jacob. He puts a colon there and he begins to say let me tell you...enumerate what this covenant did in the lives of God's people.

He goes on for the rest of Psalms 105; he goes on enumerating the effect of his covenant in the lives of his people. It was a very powerful covenant, and it made a powerful dramatic difference in the lives of his people when they came into

covenant with almighty God. When that covenant flowed down. He goes on just to enumerate some things. He says these people who were in covenant with me; there was not feeble person among them. There was no sickness among them. These people who kept the covenant...God's covenant to them. He had covenanted himself to them. They kept the covenant. There was not one feeble person among them. There were no miscarriages. No one was barren. No child died. No young person died under this covenant.

There was great protection under this covenant. There was great provision. These people were out in the desert. Out in the desert seemingly they would die because there would be no provision. In fact, some of them complained against Moses: "Have you brought us out here to die?" It was a death sentence...but no, God wanted to show his covenant. So right where they would have died, here God provides water out of a rock. He rains down quail and manna from Heaven. It is a covenant to show that I will provide for you when there seems like there is no way. I will provide for you when it seems like there is no way! If you will be in covenant with me; I am a covenant keeping God, and this is the effect of my covenant on my people. This covenant brought protection from enemies. No enemy could touch them. Brought provision. Brought divine health. Brought long life.

This is God's covenant. There was a pillar of cloud by day. Pillar of fire by night to lead them. To protect them. The cloud not only protected them, and not only gave them shelter from the Sun and so forth. But the cloud came between them and the Egyptians. The Egyptians couldn't find their way because of the cloud. This covenant was so powerful, and this is the covenant that God has with his people. This covenant is so powerful and sometimes today as Christians we live without walking in the full knowledge of the covenant. We live without walking in light of what God has provided us in this covenant. Folks this covenant is powerful and it belongs to us. The funny part about it...our covenant is so much better than the one they had. Our covenant is so much better!

If you study the Book of Hebrews, there is one word that characterizes the Book of Hebrews. It is the word "better". In Hebrews he keeps saying we have a better covenant. We have a better covenant established upon better promises. It is based on better promises. I just want to show you some differences. Under the old covenant the sign of the covenant was circumcision of the flesh, of the foreskin. That was the sign of the covenant. Under the new covenant, the sign of the covenant is circumcision of the heart. The new birth. We are new creatures in Christ. The Holy Spirit has come. Under the old covenant they had a temple for God to reside in. A temple. Under the new covenant we are the temple of the Holy Ghost. We are the temple!

Under their temple no one could really go back in the back room where God was. In their temple only the high priest could go in there once a year and it was very iffy

when he went in there. It was iffy. He was shaking when he went in there because he didn't know if he would come out. That was under the old covenant. But folks, he lives in us and abides in us all the time. All the time! Now you can just run right up into the throne and jump in your Father's lap. Oh man, that is a covenant we have under the new covenant. We have gained access under the new covenant. Under the old covenant sin was atoned for, and the word atone means to cover. Sin wasn't gone, it was just covered up. It was just covered up.

Under the new covenant, sin is completely eradicated. Sin is completely gone! It is not covered up any longer. It is gone. Sin is gone. The sin nature is gone. It is gone. We are no longer under the dominion of sin. We are no longer under the authority of sin. Sin has been completely removed. It has been completely eradicated. We are cleansed. Now, under the new covenant we are completely righteous, and we can stand in God's presence just as righteous as if Jesus himself stands in his presence. We stand with the same standing that Jesus himself stands with in the presence of God. That is under the new covenant. We are the righteousness of God under the new covenant. He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the very righteousness of God...in Christ Jesus.

That is the new covenant. We are the righteousness of God. Under the old covenant they were atoned for by the blood of animals, but under the new covenant we are made righteous by the blood of Jesus. By the blood of Jesus. Under the old covenant they had a very distant relationship with God, but under the new covenant we have been made one with him. There is a union. There is now a union. Flip over...in fact, this is Brother Ivan's favorite scripture. He already knows what it is. It is his favorite scripture. Flip over to Galatians 2:20. I hear Brother Ivan all the time; he will open up the choir rehearsal with this scripture or close out choir rehearsal. It has been his theme scripture for at least the last 20 years that I have known him. Which means that was already his scripture even before he arrived here. Here in Galatians 2, and now I understand why this is so powerful to him, it lets us know the oneness, the union we now have with Christ. They had a distant relationship with God under the old covenant, but under the new covenant...look at the union we have.

Galatians 2:20 *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.* So there is a union now. He says it is not me living, but Christ living in me. I died with him, I was crucified with him; Raised up together with him. So we have a union. We were raised up together with him. Seated together with him. Made alive with him. So we have union under this new covenant. Paul said to die is gain, and he said to live is Christ. To live is Christ. He was in such union with Christ! He had such a fellowship. That I might know the fellowship of his sufferings, and the glory of his resurrection. He identified himself

in all of Christ. Everything that Christ experienced he wanted to experience it. He had such a union with Christ.

He said in fact, I bury my body the very marks of Christ. There was no difference. So we have this union with Christ. This union with Christ. He is in me. He is in me all the time. He is in me, and I am in him. Jesus prayed that same prayer in John 17. He says: Father that I might be in you and you in me; that the world might know that I am in you, and you are in me. That they will be in me, and I will be in them and you in them and you in me; and I am in you and I am in them. It's a union there! We are all in it together. We are connected together. That's what we have under the new covenant. So the new covenant is so so powerful. The new covenant is so powerful...what we have. God's faithful...God is faithful. He is faithful to this covenant.

The term covenant literally represents an agreement. It is a mutual agreement. In modern times we would call it a contract. But it is much deeper than just a contract. It is kind of hard to really term the word covenant, because it is deeper than just a contract. Covenant is much deeper and it is much stronger. It is much deeper and it is much stronger. Honestly, westerners, we have a hard time really understanding covenant, because it hasn't really been part of our culture like some other parts of the world. In other parts of the world, they know exactly what covenant means and it is serious business. In other parts of the world covenants are never broken. If you break a covenant they will hunt you down for generations. Covenants won't break. In fact, your own family would turn you in if you broke the covenant.

Covenant is serious business, so in other parts of the world they understand the weightiness and the heaviness of it. Covenants are never broken in other parts of the world. They understand covenant, and that's why when God showed up to Abraham he started spouting off all of these promises to Abraham. Abraham said: How am I going to know that you are going to do all of these things? That is when God cut the covenant, because God knew he understood what covenant was. He understood the seriousness of covenant, because nobody in that part of the world ever broke covenant. So God says I will put it in terms you will be able to understand and identify with. I will cut a covenant with you.

When he cut that covenant with Abraham it solidified Abraham's faith. And that is why Abraham didn't have any problems believing God after that. He had no problem believing God after that covenant had been cut with him. That is why people want to know how could Abraham put his son on the altar. He understood the covenant. Here is what the covenant says: when two people enter into a covenant relationship, the covenant says I give you all that I am, all that I have...forever. Everything that I am...and everything that I have...I give it to you forever. And it will never be broken. That is what marriage was established on. That is where marriage comes from...the marriage covenant.

In fact, I teach this to all my new couples I counsel in pre-marital counseling. I let them know we have lost the seriousness of the marriage covenant. People who enter in it, they jump in it and they jump out of it. That wasn't the way it was designed. The marriage covenant, back in the old days there was no ring for the wedding. What we get the ring from...they cut a circle around that finger and it has been said that there is a vein that runs from that finger to the heart. Blood flows from that finger to signify the entering of a covenant. The covenant of marriage. In fact, one of the main Hebrew words for covenant, it means to cut. To cut...the covenant. So that was what they were really saying...the cut. So God said Abraham I am going to cut covenant with you. It means to cut and allow the blood to flow.

The place where the blood flows. And it becomes a blood covenant. It is a blood covenant. This blood covenant, the blood represents life. So blood has been shed. That lets you know the seriousness of it. This won't be broken. This is not a light thing. It is a blood covenant; it won't be broken. Blood has been shed; life has been shed for this covenant to come into force. When you began to understand the seriousness of covenant and origin of covenant. What God did when he cut covenant with us. That is why Abraham had no problem at all laying his son on the altar. He was in covenant. When God saw what Abraham did it did something to God. Because God said oh here is a man who has given all of himself, and all that he has in covenant with me. In turn God gave all that he is and all that he has back into Abraham, which is where we get Abraham's blessing from today. All because of that covenant.

We haven't even started yet. I'm saying Lord you have to help me with this covenant because I don't even know where to begin with this thing. Because it is so deep, and it is so powerful, and the effect of it when you grasp God's covenant. There are a lot of synonymous terms that we get for covenant. It means God's word, his commands; it means his statutes, his laws, testament, will. That is why we have the Old and the New Testament. Covenant is so central to the bible that the whole bible is divided up into two covenants. The whole theme of the bible is covenant. You have the Old Testament or the Old Covenant. New Testament or the New Covenant. The covenant has to do what God wanted to do with mankind. Bringing mankind into a covenant relationship to himself through Christ Jesus.

To release all that he is and all that he has in exchange with what we had. And we had nothing to offer. This is what is so powerful. Here is God in all of his might, and in all of his majesty, in all of his power, in all of his glory...willing to make an exchange with us who had nothing. When you understand the covenant, God's covenant was always intended for the benefit of others. He was doing it for us. I just wanted to introduce it today. It is going to take some time to dive into it, and dig into it. But when you get a hold of your covenant and find out what you can be

walking in today. I have been scratching the surface at it for a long time. I am praying God show me this covenant. Show me this covenant that we have.

The book of Hebrews 7:22 says: *Now Jesus guarantees the covenant.* He guarantees the covenant. This has been put in effect by the blood of Jesus. Whenever God made a covenant it always had to be a shedding of blood to put it in effect. His blood has been shed to put this covenant into effect. Praise God. This covenant is so good. I knew I wouldn't get far today, but I just wanted to introduce it. We are going to dig into it and look at it. I'm actually learning about it myself because it is so powerful. It is so powerful. This covenant is so powerful. God has covenanted himself to us. He has covenanted himself, all that he is and all that he has, all of Heaven and all of Earth, is at your disposal because of the covenant. Because of the covenant. Praise God. I am so excited. I am just trying to contain myself. I can prophesy to you that this is going to be good. This is going to be exciting. This is going to be some good stuff.

This material here will change your life. It will change your life. It will change your life when you understand you are in covenant with God. You are in covenant with God. Keep in mind what I said, when you are in covenant with someone it means everything that they are and all that they have now belongs to you. Getting hold of where I am going with this, we are in covenant with All Mighty God. We are in covenant with All Mighty God. It is so rich. It is so good. The love of God is revealed to us in his covenant. He has revealed himself in his covenant...his love. His love. Now, here is something I learned, I didn't know this myself, the word covenant is synonymous with the word love. It is a covenant of love.