



Connection Group Questions

March 21, 2021

Series: *The King's Gambit*

Message: *The Winning Move*

***"The days are coming," declares the Lord,
"when I will make a new covenant
with the people of Israel
and with the people of Judah."
~ Jeremiah 31:31***

Open

Perhaps in your youth you talked about becoming "blood brothers" (or sisters) with a friend. To swear an oath to one another that made a bond stronger than birth. *How'd that work out for you?*

All of us have made and broken promises. Sometimes this has little pain or consequence. Other times, or for other people, it has been devastating. *Why is making promises so important? Why is breaking them so bad?*

Discuss

Read Jeremiah 31:31-34

God takes covenant seriously. Deadly seriously. Read or discuss the history of God's covenants:

- The Noahic Covenant, from Genesis 9
- The Abrahamic Covenant, from Genesis 12 and 15
- The Mosaic Covenant, from Exodus 19 and 24
- The Davidic Covenant, from 2 Samuel 7

What do these covenants tell us about God and the plan of salvation? What do we learn about God's character, God's will and God's sovereignty?

Jeremiah is often called the weeping prophet. And the first 29 chapters have a lot of doom and gloom. But chapter 29 begins to turn a corner and the promise of a new covenant is revealed. The new covenant outlined by God contains three promises:

- First, ***“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.”*** What is the blessing or the law, and what is the curse of the law? How does the law give both life and death? What is the significance of the law going from tablets of stone to hearts and minds?
- How is the New Covenant being fulfilled in Romans 12:1-2 ***“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”***
- Second, ***“I will be their God, and they will be any people.”*** There is continuity with this and the former covenants. It seems that God has been longing for a restored relationship with his people since the fall. Why is our identity as believers so important to God? What does it mean to know and be known by God, to know WHO you are and WHOSE you are?
- ***Discuss the Heidelberg Catechism Q&A #1: What is Thy only comfort in life and death?***
- *That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Savior Jesus Christ; who, with his precious blood, hath fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation, and therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready, henceforth, to live unto him.*
- Third, ***“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”*** Repentance means turning from our sin and turning to God. It means confessing our sin to Jesus and asking for forgiveness. How does repentance, confession and forgiveness work together? Will Christ forgive if we don’t confess? Do we need to understand the depths of our sin to appreciate or receive the gift of forgiveness?

Apply

Read Luke 22:14-23.

Jeremiah promises a coming day when God would make a new covenant unlike the one which Israel had broken. This coming day would bring forgiveness of sin, internal renewal of the heart, and intimate knowledge of God. On the night of Jesus’s Last Supper, Jesus takes the cup and declares that his death would be the inauguration of this new covenant.

These five covenants provide the skeletal framework and context for practically every page of the Bible. They are fundamental to understanding the Bible rightly. The Old Testament covenants establish promises that look forward to fulfillment. Much of the New Testament is concerned to show how Jesus Christ fulfills these covenant promises and what life should look like for a people living in the New Covenant inaugurated by his death and resurrection.

History shows us, and our life experience confirms for us, that we can never perfectly keep a covenant. But God can. So God makes the covenant, and fulfills the covenant through Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. The covenant is applied to us through the Holy Spirit. Amen!