



Covenant

Jeremiah 31:33 | Hebrews 8:1-6 | Ezekiel 36:27

Hosts - What a great day Sunday was having the opportunity to worship outside on a gorgeous day. A wonderful gift of God. Thanks for preparing each week and know that you are being prayed for by name.

Say, This past Sunday was an incredible day of worship. God gifted us with beautiful November weather and provided His very own creation as a backdrop to His glory and majesty. Michael spoke on covenant.

Ask, Does anyone have any top of mind ideas from Sunday that you want to share briefly as we begin. (Do not go deep here but allow time for participants to share any impressions from this past Sunday.)

Say, There are definitely differences between promises and covenant. Ask, Anyone care to share what you believe to be the differences between a promise and a covenant?

(Promises/contracts are easily broken but a covenant is an agreement where one party will always make good on the promise regardless of the other party's decisions or actions)

Ask, What are some promises that are easily broken? (deals with God; dr appts; diets; I have read and agreed to these conditions – digital apps or programs; etc.)

Say, let's review some of the covenants that God has made and are found in Scripture. (Assign these verses to different participants and allow them to read and report on what kind of covenant it is.)

- Gen 9:11 | Noah
- Gen. 17:2-4 | Abraham
- Ex 34:10 | Moses
- Psalm 89:3-4 | David

Say, God keeps His promises even if we break them. (God can be always trusted.)

Have someone read this focal verse - "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Jeremiah 31:33

Ask, why is this such an important characteristic/aspect of God? (without this being true, God could never be trusted. This is just one of the many things that is true of our loving and just God.)

Say, Jesus is the mediator of the new covenant between God and His people, the church.

Read or have someone read Hebrews 8:1-6

"Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly

things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain." But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises."

Hebrews 8:1-6

Explain the unique perspective of both the old and new covenant.

(In the Old covenant - God sets the expectation - if, then – and it is conditional on one's own behavior. In the New covenant - God creates the faith and obedience we need on top of the expectation - He fulfills the expectation through Christ Himself.)

Say, God set forth an expectation that once man sinned could never be achieved by any human exertion or effort. There was a constant need of sacrifice and blood but in the person of Jesus Christ, God made it a once and for all sacrifice of Jesus Christ to satisfy God's expectation. We/humankind, could not do enough good works to satisfy God's demands so He took it upon Himself to provide the payment for our sin. Christ came to fulfill that requirement, not excuse it.

Say, God provides us the strength and power through His Holy Spirit to live obediently.

Read, Ezekiel 36:27 "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules." Ezekiel 36:27

Ask, how have you seen God work through your life in the last couple of weeks? (Direct participants to focus on the Holy Spirit at work in their lives. Many times believers fail to see that God is at work in their lives through circumstances. You may need to "prime the pump" so to speak and help them see how God is at work in, around and through them. Emphasis on GOD AT WORK in them and not just a "soldiering through hard times" mentality.)

Say, Michael mentioned that Christ-followers can model this covenant in two practical ways.

1. For all of us, through being a member of a local body of believers
2. For some, through marriage (and we will talk about this one more next week.)

Ask, How is being a member of a local body of believers a picture or model of living in covenant?

(Possible answers and direction -

- We shut down gossip.
- We choose to love one another
- We confess our sins
- We set aside our preferences and focus on His glory.

Close your time in prayer encouraging one another to remember that Christ is our mediator and we now have direct access to God because of the sacrifice of Christ.