

# *The Book Gather My Apostles*

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## Chapter Eight

# The Covenant

by

Cary Goodwin

One of the things that fills me with awe, concerning my salvation, is that the Almighty God, Creator of all things, All Powerful, Omnipotent God, King of Kings and Lord of Lords should not only reveal Himself to me, but come to someone such as I. It is beyond our earthly comprehension, yet it is true. Almighty God has committed Himself to us, through His Covenant, through His SON. Is it too much to ask that we should be totally committed to Him? Deuteronomy 6:5, *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

I have experienced the things of this world. I have experienced sin. There is nothing better in all the world than the hand of God reaching into the very depths of your soul and setting you free from every devil, every sin, and then through His Everlasting Love and Resurrection Power, birthing in you a new creature, born again after the image of Jesus Christ the Messiah, then baptizing you in His Holy Spirit. There is no greater human experience. **It is the Ultimate Human Experience.** If you haven't truly experienced this, keep pressing in; keep calling on the Name of the Lord. Let no man hinder you.

It is really a wonderful thing that the Lord has made His Covenant of Salvation available to us. It cannot be taken lightly. Here is a definition of Covenant: 1.) Verb -- to promise solemnly. Synonyms: Vow, Pledge, Plight, Swear, promise, Assert, Declare. 2.) Noun-- A usually legally enforceable arrangement between two or more parties...

The synonyms: Contract, Agreement, Bargain, Bond, Compact, Convention, Pact, and Transaction.

*In 2 Peter 1:3-4, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

So His covenant, which He has extended to us, has given us ALL THINGS THAT PERTAIN TO LIFE AND GODLINESS. What else is there? Only death and destruction. His Covenant extended to us, makes a way of escape for us. It is His Salvation.

It is not my intention here to write about all the exceeding great and precious promises of the Covenant. There are many books written on this subject.

Every time that I have experienced the Glory of God, I mean His Glory manifested in my presence, was during a time of committing myself to Him; the times that I have vowed to serve Him in whatever He asked me to do and wherever He wanted me to do it. And in times of redirection, when I understood what He was asking and then solemnly vowed to perform it. From experience, **I would tell you that the more you commit to the Lord and His Covenant, the more you will experience of the Lord and His Greatness.**

This exceeding great covenant is not one sided. As we see in the definition above it is between two or more parties. In Deuteronomy 10:12: *And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul.* This scripture needs to be taught and voiced much more among the children of God to keep us mindful of who we are and who He is.

The Love of God towards us has written and confirmed His covenant to us. We cannot understand the great Love that the Lord has for each of us. But we know that He will surely hold up His side of the Covenant to us. The Lord is Faithful in all things. We need to aspire to be as faithful, as diligent as He is.

It is good to take your Bible and search through it for promises you can stand on. But you should also search through the Scriptures looking to find your part of the Covenant and perform it.

Too often commitment and responsibility are not taught in the Church because too many have itchy ears and only want to hear what they want to hear. They will not sit still for too much talk about commitment. This is a shame. We lose when we don't

hear the whole counsel of God. And if we refuse to hear Him, He will stop talking to us.

If we embrace only the precious promises of His Covenant to us, are we fulfilling our part of this covenant? When we enter into contracts in the earthly realm isn't there a requirement for both parties to perform? So it is with the Lord. It is true, our salvation is a free gift, it is not of works lest any man should boast. But as a citizen of the Kingdom of God entering into Covenant with the Most High God, we have to take it seriously and seek to perform our part. Psalms 50:5 ***Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.***

Galatians 3:15 ***Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.*** Here, the Apostle Paul is writing that even in a covenant between men you do not add to the covenant or cancel any part thereof. We must embrace every issue of the New Testament in our own lives.

There are many things in the New Covenant that the Church chooses not to recognize or deal with. If we don't understand or don't know how to execute it, we have traditionally left it by the way side. We have already discussed ways that the covenant has been altered in the acts of the Church. This Covenant is also the Word of God. We have discussed how we make the word of God of none effect because of our traditions or wrong doctrine and we know that this is a very serious matter.

What of the issues we don't understand, or don't know how to execute, such as the New Birth, washing of feet, giving all that you have to be a disciple and Holy Communion? These are things we do as a performance of our part of the New Testament. Yet we take them too lightly or ignore them.

We all would like to see more miracles and healings and the very Glory of God manifest continually. Many of us don't pray for healing as much as we should because we don't always get the answer we thought we should get. As a result, our faith becomes weak. We have heard teachers describe using the principles of God as pushing the right buttons and pulling the right levers. The Covenant of God works by faith and obedience.

Many think obedience is not to commit adultery, they don't commit murder, they don't drink, they don't smoke and don't go with girls who do. They also don't seek to perform the Covenant of God. James 1:22 ***But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.***

Isn't that what happens when we pray for healing, for example, and don't receive? Don't we feel that we are deceiving ourselves? The Devil is usually quick to help here, "who do you think you are?" The truth is you are a saint of the Most High God and you are commanded to lay hands on the sick and you are told by the Lord Himself, that they shall recover. The problem, then, might be that we don't do everything that we are told to do in our covenant. Again, James 1:22 ***But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.***

If we are willing to perform some of the word and not all, then we have chosen to disannul the parts of the covenant that we do not understand or agree with or those things written that are inconvenient. In an earthly covenant, if you didn't perform the parts you didn't like, the parts you did like would not benefit you.

The greatest example of this is in the Gospel of John 6:53, ***Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. (54) Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. (55) For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. (56) He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. (57) As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. (58) This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever. In verse (60) Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? (66) From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?***

Those who heard Jesus speak of eating his flesh and drinking his blood were sure that He was talking cannibalism. They would have no part of that. Jesus could have defended His position with them but He did not. What strikes me here as so important, is the Lord did not in any way take away from the true meaning of Holy Communion. He could have said 'you don't understand, I am talking about a simple religious ritual that you will perform after I'm gone.' Instead, He let it stand with full meaning of eating His flesh and drinking His blood. So when we partake of Holy Communion, I believe the Lord sees it as actually eating His flesh and drinking His blood. He was definitely serious in this scripture. He was willing to let those disciples go away from him than to demean, in any way, what He had just spoken.

Look at the benefits of obeying this saying. In verse 53, we see that if you do, you have life. In verse 54, you have eternal life. In verse 55, He says that His body and His blood are meat and drink indeed. In verse 56, If you do, you dwell in Him and He dwells in you. In verse 57, As He lives by the Father, so shall you live by Him. In

verse 58, you shall live forever. John 15:17 *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.*

In Luke 22:19 *And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me...* If the benefits of acting on this part of our covenant are so great and we are told to do this to remember the Lord, why then, do we do it so seldom in the churches? This is meat indeed and drink indeed (Feed my Sheep). It was not intended to become just a religious ritual. I believe that this should be a daily activity for every believer and should be practiced in every gathering of the Saints. Acts 2:42 *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

It is not my intent in this chapter to deal with the fullness of God's covenant. If we choose to practice and obey only those things written that we want to, we are out of order. We, individually and as a Body, need to work to fulfill God's covenant in our lives.

Most Churches practice water baptism and are equipped to perform it. But what of the washing of feet? From time to time someone will perform the washing of feet. But this, too, is a performance of our Faith with promise.

John 13:8, *Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet, Jesus answered unto him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me...* This right here should be enough to cause us to perform the washing of feet. It is a likeness of the Lord washing away our sins. It shows the servant attitude of our Lord that we should adopt continually. If we wash someone's feet we are showing the desire to have the Lord wash that person. We are asking the Lord to wash that person. This is a very good example of intercession. It shows we are servants willing to contribute to their salvation. "If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me." It is possible, from reading that scripture, that this act binds the Body of Christ together in Jesus Christ.

John 13:13-16, *Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them...* According to the words of our Lord there is happiness in the performance of these things. Why do we not take this more seriously? If you know these things then you will be happy if you do them. Consider this; Matthew 25:48 *And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

When I first went to Thailand, it was my sincerest desire to take them the purest Gospel I could, void of religious traditions as much as possible. I had not taught on the washing of feet. One day, this woman, a new convert, showed up at my house insisting that she wash my feet. In Thailand, you don't even point your foot in their direction because you will offend them. Here was this woman of the village insisting that she wash my feet. I didn't think it was a good time or place because I figured it would offend some around us who were Buddhist. I wasn't sure that it would represent us properly to those who wouldn't understand. I tried to stop her. There was no stopping her. She had walked over a mile with a cloth and basin in her arms. She was already determined to carry out her mission. There I am, saying 'this is not a good time, please don't' and she is ignoring me and pulling at my socks. I found it was better to just give in.

I think in her mind she was honoring me for bringing the Lord Jesus to them. This is not what the washing of feet is for. But the very fact that this woman would bow at my feet and touch them, to wash them in front of other Thais who had not been converted, was a sign of real transformation in her life. She was born again. Several in her family were born again and she was very happy.

We must deal with the very-hard-to-understand sayings of the Lord. The best example of dealing with something that is hard to deal with, is this: Luke 14:33 ***So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.*** This is truly a hard saying; what can we do? This is why we must take this problem before the Lord and show ourselves truthfully willing to do as He tells us. But in doing this, you are dealing with it and not trying to avoid it. I have seen some, that clutching too tightly to what they have, lose everything. We must keep in mind always that Jesus is the object of our faith, not money. I don't really want to dwell on this subject, but from experience and watching others in the Body of Christ, I suggest you take this to the Lord without fail.

In my own life, I have spent all that I have doing what God has called me to do. But not all of us are called and directed by the Lord in this way. I never purposed to give all that I have. I can't take credit for it. But I am sure the Lord was performing His word in my life.

The greatest example of changing the covenant of God, is the Sabbath. Jesus did not do away with the Sabbath. None of the original Apostles canceled the Sabbath. This was done in the Church that Emperor Constantine founded, the Roman Catholic Church regulated by the government. I am not writing this to start an argument. We have discussed in previous chapters that it is Satan who works to change our doctrine to keep us from the power and blessings of God's Covenant. This subject of the

Sabbath brings fierce indignation, which leads me all the more to believe that Satan is afraid of us honoring the Sabbath.

Again, this is a performance of the Covenant with Promise. Isaiah 58:13-14 ***If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.***

Exodus 31:13-16 ***Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you; every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant.*** This means the Sabbath would not end. I believe the Lord will enforce it during the millenium as He Reigns on the Earth.

In following the ministry of our Lord Jesus, we see that He healed many on the Sabbath day. It was always a point of contention with the Pharisees. The Pharisees were too legalistic about the Sabbath. They didn't understand the Sabbath. It is just as legalistic in Israel today. Flipping a light switch could be considered breaking the Sabbath because God told them, in the book of Exodus, not to build a fire in their dwellings on the Sabbath. So we can see today, just how extreme men can make things. This is a strong subject, it shouldn't be. The Sabbath is mentioned one hundred and nineteen times in the Bible. Under the law, the penalty for breaking the Sabbath was death, but the promise of keeping the Sabbath was great. But then, the Sabbath was just another part of the Covenant.

In Mark Chapter 2:27, ***Jesus said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.*** If this day of the week is hallowed and blessed by God for man, could it be the reason that Jesus healed so many on the Sabbath? Therefore, the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath. In Israel, the Sabbath begins at sundown Friday and continues till sundown Saturday. The early church kept this part of the covenant. We are not to be too legalistic, however, we are not called to do away with the law or our covenant and be a lawless people.

Picture a small child sitting down to a banquet, left to his own will. He passes over all the meats, all the vegetables, all the fruit and goes directly for this large cake and

begins to scrape off the icing filling himself on the icing alone. Are we not like this when we receive only those parts of the covenant that are convenient, sweet and beautiful; with only what we want?

In John Chapter 15:10 *If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His Love.* In verse 12, the Lord says *This is my commandment, That ye love one another, AS I HAVE LOVED YOU. In verse 13, He tells us how to measure this love; Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

In the definition of covenant, we see that it is a usually legally enforceable arrangement between two or more parties. When the Lord gave this commandment, He was also establishing the covenant between the brethren, the Body of Christ. Your covenant is not just with the Lord but also with His Body, your brethren. This is one of the most important aspects of your covenant walk with our Lord, who gave His life for all.

Many churches are teaching and showing the examples of fulfilling this love by pretentious smiles and hugs. They will, in the context of having Church, pray for those in need, then ignore the needs. The Love of Christ among us is not proven or displayed by pretentious hugs and smiles. Even the world does this with no effort. Anyone can do it. But we are a special people and the Lord said, 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, If ye have love one to another.' **The Lord wants the world to know who His true disciples are and where they are.**

When I was overseas ministering and I was in need, the Lord always told me to go to His people. I tried to be obedient to this and I had no other choice. After all, if the people of God don't care and won't help take this Gospel to the world, who will? But as I sought to find those that He was telling me to go to, I found that they would pray for us and then just let us bleed to death in that need. I have gone on my knees many times asking God, "Where are Your People, Lord?" They were unable to recognize that the need was a God Ordained need for the work of the ministry to take the Love of God to a people who could not hear any other way. Or, they just didn't care. Faith has been taught that if you have faith, you should have no need of help from the brethren. This is wrong. It feels good to many because it seemingly releases them from any obligation to anyone. I've had many try to preach faith to me in answer to our needs. I use my own experience as only one example.

The Lord expects and commands His people to do the work and finance it. God will not do it any other way. He wants to share the inheritance with His people. **The blessings of Being the Blood Covenant Church of Jesus Christ far outweighs just having church only.**

Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists are as much a part of the New Testament, the Covenant of our Lord, as healing, miracles, prosperity or any other thing written therein. If we don't understand, we need to try to understand and accept it. This is the Will of God.

<http://www.apostles-gathering.com/>

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