

Mediator Of A Better Covenant

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning, everybody. You guys doing well? It's been a good morning so far. Again, my name is Jesse, one of the pastors here, and my privilege to be able to bring the sermon today.

And those of us that aren't in the room but may be listening to this online later on in the week, what's up? Wish you were here. Glad that you're still able to listen in. If you have a Bible with you, go ahead and turn to Hebrews 8, if that's you. If you don't have a Bible, no worries. We're going to have the verses on the screen. You can read along with us. And so just by way of reminder, it's like, hey, we're preaching through this book of Hebrews. And chapter 8 is actually a continuation of a thought that we were preaching on last week. And so what we looked at last week is Jesus as our perfect high priest. And if you weren't here last week, just to refresh our memories, is that Jesus as high priest serves as our guarantor, right? When do you need a guarantor? Well, you need a guarantor when you don't have the capital or reputation to get what you need. You need a cosigner. You need somebody to say, like, I am able to do this for you and on behalf of you. And that's what it's saying about Jesus. Jesus has the reputation, right, and the spiritual capital that we need to be in relationship with God. And so what this chapter does, it continues and it further explains what that relationship with God is and what it looks like. And I'm guessing because you're here in church, you actually care about that or you're interested in some way about, like, what does it mean to be in relationship with God? And so this chapter, and I'm hoping that today's sermon is really going to help us all out with that. And so let's jump into it. Verse 1, it says this. 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, right, the tabernacle, he was instructed by God saying, see that you make everything in 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, everyone say covenant. The covenant he mediates is better since it is enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second. For he finds fault with them when he declares, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant.

And so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord, for this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, declares the Lord, I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach each one his neighbor and each one his brother saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more. In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete and what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. This is God's word.

So, you probably noticed the word covenant a few times, right? After reading that together, covenant is actually, so it's one of those like big important Bible words, right? Like it deserves a like a hearty marine oolah every time we come across or to hear it and read it. That's like, we know like that should be our response, kind of really important. Maybe we get really somber faced covenant. Yes, covenant, that's good. So, I grew up in church like knowing that where my dad was a pastor, I was like, should have been like covenant pro, right? But I grew up in the church hearing that word but not really fully understanding and I actually, often my association was kind of limited. It was

connected to the Ark of the Covenant, which for me, it was like the big bad battle box for Israel, right? So, every time Israel took the Ark of the Covenant out of the Holy of Holies, a special place no one was able to get into, they took it out and the priests like would carry it and they'd go out and face their enemies and they always won. They always won that battle, which if like you were the Israel general, it was like the easiest tactic for war. You didn't really have to think much about like that. It was just, hey, you know what? We got a battle coming up. Just let's bring out the Ark. Let it do its thing. We got this.

[5 : 12] But covenant isn't about being victorious in quarantine holy rooms in the temple. Covenant is about relationship. In fact, every important relationship you and I can have is bound in a covenant. So, one of the most obvious examples that we can relate to today is marriage. So, every time you attend a wedding or in your own wedding maybe, you heard that phrase, the covenant of marriage. Because it's two people taking their relationship to the next level. It's taking it out of casual dating and puppy love.

It's binding two people together. And it's binding them in love as one. It's knitting them together. And this is the great picture of what covenant is because it points to the fact that covenant is the place that actually cultivates intimacy because it is rooted in committed love. And it's not like romantic love, right? It is committed, faithful type of love. And we have to, when we look at the Bible, what it is always telling us is like sometimes it speaks against the cultural narratives of our day.

And one big one that we see a cultural narrative today, that intimacy is all wrapped up in sex. It's all wrapped up in that. And we have to reject that. And, you know, we have to see that like even like, okay, there's the covenant of marriage, but even outside of marriage, there are friendships, covenant friendships that are real possibilities. And we may see, really, how does that work? Well, it's a Bible category. Look at 1 Samuel 18 verse 1. And as soon as he had finished speaking to Saul, who was king of Israel at the time, the soul of Jonathan, Saul's son, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Now jump to verse 3. Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David and his armor and even his sword and his bow and his belt.

So what's going on here? Well, it's nothing erotic or romantic at all, right? What is happening here is two guys covenanting together in friendship? It's using covenant language, two souls being knit together, like two people becoming one in heart. That's what's going on. That's what covenant does. Covenant unites. It creates an unbreakable bond, and that's intimacy. It shares lives and robes and armor and swords and cars and your DeWalt hammer drill. Like whatever you have, it's like it does that. And when we welcome partners or members to One Harbor Church, we say like, hey, what's in my fridge is yours and what's in your fridge is mine. We're saying that because that's covenant language.

It's the language we see in the Bible. And it's how you and I are meant to belong to a church. It's more than just showing up on a Sunday, singing a few songs, putting some money in the bucket, and then just leaving. Now it's covenant. It's God taking us and knitting our hearts together as one, right? One heart, one faith, one baptism, one Lord. That's what the Bible talks about when it comes to church. And it's, you know, we didn't make up, man didn't make up this idea of covenant, right? It's not like something we use to like change the relationship game and just make it better.

[8 : 47] It's not like our own wisdom said like, you know what? Our relationships just aren't jiving. They're just not good enough. Maybe we can come up with something better. No. Covenant relationships exist because of God. Remember, He is a covenant community, right? He is three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And for eternity, they've existed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in covenant community. And because they're united in purpose. They're united in love for one another, right?

They're together. They're one. They're knitted together. So they're three, yet they're still one God. And that's what covenant, covenant fosters love and unity. And in that place, it creates this environment of rich blessing and joy. Your deepest friendships, your deepest relationships are covenant brothers and sisters because what? Covenant makes you family.

Now, we even thought like, well, then how does that work? Like family, you know, in my marriage, my marriage is my spouse. But man, when you look at the Song of Solomon, which is this great romance poem, he says, my sister, my bride, which is kind of a weird thing to say. But man, when I'm not saying we should marry our sisters. That's not what I'm getting at, right? But the language

there is like, your spouse, you are to be committed to her as your spouse. But also, man, she is your sister. And then for her looking at the husband, he is your brother. We are brothers and sisters in Christ.

There are bloodlines here that can never, ever, ever change because God, through Christ Jesus, has brought us into his family. All of God's relationships are built on covenant.

We see this constantly in the Bible from the very beginning. Adam and Eve, yeah, God made a covenant with them, right? What did it do? It said he blessed them, right? He gave them purpose. It says he blessed them and he said to them, fill the earth, multiply, subdue it, have dominion over this creation that I've put you in. And guess what, guys? I'm giving you all the food, all the energy, all the enjoyment of relationship that you have to go and do that.

[10:57] This was before sin. And then it says like, he came and he met with them, right? God comes and walks with them in the cool of the days. He comes and he dwells with them. But in that covenant, as good as that is, blessings, right? And God dwelling with them, in that covenant, he also placed a demand.

Like, all this stuff is yours. Just don't eat from one tree. One tree in the garden. Adam and Eve, you can have just this one thing, leave it alone. But that's the nature of God's covenants. Along with those blessings come demands, which might be why we avoid covenant relationships. Covenant blessings come with covenant demands. We see this again when God brought Israel out of Egypt, another big covenant in the Bible. He stops it like he brings them out of Egypt, delivers them, right? They were slaves in Egypt. He delivers them out, brings them through the Red Sea. They march on to Mount Sinai. They stop there. And then he makes a covenant with them. And this is the pattern we see. Man, this is God's mode of how he saves sinners and brings us into relationship with them. He delivers, he demands, and he dwells. God saves us before he dwells with us. He defines the relationship with covenant demands.

We don't just get saved and God's like, go part it, do whatever you want to do. I don't really care. No, no, no. Even in our relationship with Jesus, God brings us in. He saves us. But there's demands in there. And then he comes and dwells with us. So at Sinai, Mount Sinai, he covenants with his people, Israel he just saved. And how does he do that? He gives them the law in that moment, right? And the law is his demands, his rules, his expectations for the people of Israel. And because he gave it through Moses, who came down from the mountain, right? Moses was called up the mountain. God gave him the law and came down the mountain. Moses was the mediator of that covenant. And these laws, they gave specific instructions of what it meant to be God's covenant people, right? Moses didn't got, like, he wasn't up on the mountain with God. And God's like, well, what do you think about this? And Moses is like, well, that's pretty okay. But can we adjust that? Because that seems a little rough and a little hard. Can we rather do this instead? Because I think that's going to be better for us. No, man, Moses is there just receiving from God. This is what you should do. This is what you must do. This is how you're going to do this. That's how you're going to do that. God defines the covenant. He defines the covenant demands as well. That's how it works. And Hebrews 8 verse 3 picks up on this. It says, every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices. Thus, it is necessary for this priest also to have something to suffer. 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. According to the law. They serve a copy and a shadow of the heavenly thing. So when Moses, for when Moses was about to erect the tent, when he was about to build this tabernacle, this tent of meeting where God would dwell with Israel, he was instructed by God saying, see that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain. So we see that phrase according to repeated in this little section of verses. God gave his people a pattern and commands to follow, right? And there was a lot, man. Like Moses came down and there was like hundreds of rules that Israelites had to obey and how they had to worship and what they had to do and how they could like care for one another and what was off limits and what was on limits, all that kind of stuff. And man, it's so easy to like read those parts of the Bible and just get caught up in the rules that we forget why they were put in place in the first place.

God didn't give them because he was really hoping that we'd fail. His law was given to create an environment of love. And that love was meant to flow vertically between Israel, between God's people and him, but also horizontally, God's people between each other.

You know, later as rabbis of Israel studied the law more intensely and they began to grow and understand things, what began to emerge were these two major categories. Every law fit into one of

these two major categories. And Jesus even said this. He said, the first category is this, love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And the second one is like it, love your neighbor as yourself. He said, the law and the prophets, everything is summed up into those two things. So we see here the law wasn't about legalism. It was about love. And we often get that wrong because to be honest, we don't like demands being placed on us. Man, I want to be free to do what I want any old time. That's what we like. It really seems opposite to us in this day and age that that's what love is about. How, if you really love someone, can you put any kind of demand or expectation? That's going to kill the relationship, right? But that's a counterfeit version of love that our culture has created. I mean, let's think about our own relationships, our significant relationships. [16:20] When you get married, you put demands on yourself. You embrace them. You accept them. When I got married to Haley, you know what? The demands I put on myself, I'm not going to date other people anymore.

I'm devoted to her. Everyone else is getting cut out. Every other lady is getting cut out. I'm going to prioritize everyone. I'm not going to prioritize everyone else at the expense of Haley. I'm not going to put my hobbies before her so that she gets neglected. I'm not going to leave when things get tough and we have a bit of a blowout. I'm in this no matter what till death do us part. Now, you hear that, and who would say, oh, that sounds legalistic. That sounds horrible. Just, man, why would you put yourself under such scrupulous pressure? No, those aren't bad things. We look at those are good things, right? Don't they seem good and necessary to create a safe environment where our love can grow? See, that's a major difference between covenant and a contract.

[17:32] Covenant relationships, it pursues love at all costs, even to my own hurt. Covenant relationships, I'm placing those to man myself. I am pursuing as far as it is for me to love my wife till death do us part. It doesn't matter what she's doing till death do us part. Contract relationships, they provide a way out when it costs too much. And when you take relationships outside of covenant, you reduce it to a contract. And what happens? It becomes transactional in that moment. And when a relationship is transactional, there are no safeguards or commitment keeping you in it. It's like, okay, I have a relationship, you could say, with AT&T.; They provide me cell phone service. But that's a contract, that's a transactional relationship. Because if a better deal comes along, I'm gone.

I'm going somewhere else. If it starts costing me too much money, I'm gone. I'm not sticking with AT&T; till death do us part. When I saw that contract, I didn't look deep into the salesman eyes and was like, man, I am with you till the day that I die, buddy. Never shall another mobile provider come between us. No, man, it's a contract relationship. It's a transactional relationship. You're only in it while it still benefits you, which is why they start easy and they end easy. Now, let me just say this because I want us to realize, like, I don't want people, if you are in an abusive relationship and it's not ending and it's ongoing, that God isn't saying like, hey, you got to stay in that no matter what. There is safety within that as well. So, just a side disclaimer. But there is a big difference between contract and transactional relationships and covenant relationships.

They are different. They are entered into carefully and soberly. Like Elvis's song, Only Fools Rush In. The rest of the song, don't listen to you. But that line, that's got wisdom in it.

When it comes to relationships, the wise don't rush in. Now, we hear that and it's like, man, that doesn't sound right, right? That doesn't sound good because we've grown up in a culture that values romance over commitment and intensity over endurance. So, what we do is we tend to rush into relationship because our heart's pitter-pattering or think like, oh, this is what it's all about. This is the most important thing without counting the cost. We just rush into it without counting the cost. And you know what? Jesus isn't a big fan of that. Luke 14 verse 27, Jesus is saying this, Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower? Now, probably a lot of us can't relate to that. We don't have this big desire to build a tower. But just like put yourself in that place. Man, if you're going to build a significant structure, right? Like Ryan and Megan leading, like Ryan's here leading worship. He's been building a house for like, it seems like a decade. It hasn't been quite a year, but it seems like it's been going on a really long time, right? But when they sat down and figured, you know, we're going to move, we're going to build a new house, and that's what we're going to do. They didn't just be like, you know, this feels good to us. Our heart's like a little, you know, a flutter. Let's just go and do that. No, they sat down and they figured out like, okay, what's the house we want to build? How much is it going to cost us? Can we afford it? Looking at our finances, what did they, they counted the cost.

They figured out if they could pull it off.

[21 : 09] So again, which of you desiring to build a tower does not first sit down, count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it. Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish it, all who sees it begin to mock him. And I'm really bummed because when Ryan finishes his house, we're going to not be able to mock him anymore. You know, that's kind of the disappointing moment there. So saying this man began to build and was not able to finish. So Jesus, what he's doing, he is affirming the whole Bible and what the whole Bible says. A covenant relationship with God is the most important relationship you and I can have. It comes with the most incredible blessings and promises, but make no mistake, there are demands. And unfortunately, God doesn't make it as easy as possible. He doesn't lower his expectations of us because he's holy, right? He is perfect. He's perfect in righteousness and justice and goodness and love. And he wants us to be holy too, which makes his demands really, really good, but it also makes them really, really hard to keep.

See, good demands, God's demands, sorry, are good, but they're impossible to keep. And so when you and I fail at them, what do we typically do? Well, we like to shift the blame, right? That's what we do. It's a nice tactic, very common to the human experience. We do that blame shifting because it's a great way to avoid responsibility. Adam did that with thief, very first sin, very first sinners in the Bible, right? What did Adam do? God comes and said, Adam, what you've done? Whoops, ate the one tree. Remember what we're talking about? God said, don't eat that tree.

They ate it. And what does he do? He said, no, no, no, God, it was the woman you gave me. Don't blame me. It was the woman you gave me. It's the classic kind of like devil made me do it deflection that we like to use. I really enjoy watching my kids play group games and young kids playing group games because if one of them isn't doing well, or if there is a rule in the game that is causing them to lose, they will campaign to get it tossed out, right? Everything's going to stop. They're going to say, that's unfair. We need to cut it out. And then it just kind of is followed by like arguing and then it devolves into chaos and people getting angry and then the game just stops or it turns into Calvin Bowl or something. But what they're doing there is what we do best. They shift the blame.

I'm not the problem. It's that dang rule. Are we any different? I can't keep that rule or actually I don't want to keep that rule. I don't like that. That doesn't seem fair. Let's just get rid of it. Let's reset the boundaries God created for us to live in. We know better than him, obviously. And then what we do is we try to find fault in the rules when actually we're the problem. Verse 7 says this, And that's not like, whoa, whoa, whoa. It's God saying his commands were bad. No, let's continue reading. In verse 8, he says, He finds fault with them. Not it, them. He doesn't find fault with the covenant. He finds fault with the people in the covenant. He finds fault with Israel, his people. When he says, Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. Not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day that I took them by the hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant. They did not continue in my covenant. And so what did he do? I shed no concern for them, declares the Lord. Now, this is actually like God, this is a big thing we need to wrap our minds around. What's happening here is that God's talking about this old covenant and then this new covenant, right? And actually, the Bible itself is divided into two main sections. We have the Old

Testament and the New Testament. And that word testament is just a Latin rendering of the word covenant. It should really be old covenant and new covenant. That's what's happening here. The Old Testament is centered on the old covenant God made with Israel out Mount Sinai, the law of Moses.

[25 : 36] And the whole of the Old Testament story from then on is telling the history of God keeping that covenant faithfully, but his people Israel failing again and again and again. But God doesn't say, oh, I'm blaming the covenant. That's the problem. Now he finds fault with Israel. They could not continue in the covenant.

They couldn't keep its demands. And here's the thing. There were curses, not just blessings, connected with those demands. And God didn't put it in there because he just needed an excuse and a reason to like fly off the handle, let off some steam like some abusive dad when the children were behaving badly. Now he put those curses in because he knew like as Israel goes away from keeping my covenant, it's not going to be good for them. It's going to harm them. It's going to lead to all kinds of problems. And so he put those in there so he could grab their attention and say like, you

guys are drifting off over here. There's some consequences. Let me get your attention. Let me call you back to keeping the covenant. And actually you see this in all of the prophets in the Old Testament as well.

What they were doing is they were saying, Israel, you're not keeping the covenant. You're not keeping the covenant. Warning, warning, bad things are going to happen if you don't change and you don't repent. But the whole story of the prophets, we know that Israel, they didn't turn, they didn't turn, they didn't turn. God had to bring those cursings about to get their attention.

And so Israel, we look and we just see, man, over and over again, they were just so hard-headed. They couldn't, they couldn't keep it. They just kept breaking the covenant. And this isn't because something's wrong with Israel. This isn't because there's some like character flaw in their DNA that is just unique to them. It's meant to show us that on our own, we can't keep the covenant just like them. We have that DNA character flaw in us as well. And this is where God does find fault with the first covenant. As good and perfect as its laws are, it can't keep us in it. So God says, I'm going to fix it. I'm going to establish a new covenant to replace the old. Verse 10, for this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, declares the Lord, I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts. And I will be their God. They shall be my people. And they shall not teach each one his neighbor and each one his brother saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more. Here's the big difference, guys, between the old and the new covenants. We don't keep the new covenant. It keeps us.

See, in the old covenant, the law came down from Mount Sinai through Moses. Moses brought it down from the mountain, but it always existed outside of us. It was apart from us. Which is to say, when the law came down, the law didn't go into their hearts. It didn't change their hearts. All it could do is diagnose the heart problem. That's all it did. It could shine a light on the heart and say, oh, this is where it's bad. This is where it's wrong. It couldn't do anything else. It couldn't fix it. It couldn't heal it. It couldn't change it. And we have that same sinful heart. We have a heart that has a contrary will to God's laws, a contrary will to God's will and purpose.

[29 : 15] So we often, what we do is we disobey them. We go our own way. The common refrain of the book of Judges, and I feel like this is all of us, it says this, everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

That's what we start doing. That is at the heart of our sinful nature. We want to do what is right in our own eyes. So if your heart is so corrupted this way, it means it is beyond repair. So if it's beyond repair, what's your hope? If it is so broken and so rotten that no medicine is going to fix it, you can't put stints in it, you can't like, you know, put a pacemaker on there to like solve the problem. What is your only hope if you have a heart that that's bad, that it's that bad?

Well, you got to get a heart transplant. There's no other choice. You and I needed a heart transplant, and that's what God does when he saves us into the new covenant. You and I get a heart transplant courtesy of God, a whole new heart. And on this new heart is written God's good laws. This new heart is now informed and delighted in God's ways. You know, I like, I really like that imagery of God putting his law into our hearts, writing it on that, on it, right? It's like God is like permanently tattooing his good laws on us. Like we don't have to worry about like somehow they're going to, we're going to forget, they're going to get washed off. Now, I do want to say like, you know, disclaimer here, it doesn't mean you and I are suddenly perfect. We don't get saved and all of a sudden it's like, man, I don't want to sin anymore ever again. No, no, no, there's still temptation. There's still a proclivity to that. So then what is it? What's going on here? Help me understand this. Well, we are all on, as disciples, we're on a trajectory, right? We have his laws written on our hearts, but we're not yet perfected. One day we will be when we die or Jesus returns and like that, that the very presence of sin is no more. But now Jesus has broken the power of sin over us because we have these hearts that aren't just solely bent on, man, I actually want to go my own way and I really love it and I really want to do that. And we were just totally enslaved to that way of life.

But these new hearts, it opens us up, it sets us free. Now we're going a different way. We want new things. And so we're on this trajectory and it's day by day surrendering to God's will, right?

Surrendering our will to God's will. And when that happens, we surrender more of our ways and we step into more of God's laws that are written on our hearts, which means we're slowly being changed, right? And what are we slowly being changed to? People that love God more with all their

hearts and people who love our neighbors, people who love people with all their hearts. And we need to be reminded that this doesn't happen all at once because, man, if you take that on yourself, you're just going to disappoint yourself over and over and over again. This change is God's slow work over a lifetime.

[32 : 23] And our job isn't to force it to happen faster. We can't get impatient and be like, you know what, I'm going to speed this up. So what can I do? We get impatient. What we try to do is we try to amp up the intensity.

We're just like, man, if I could just change, but you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to add this in. I'm going to do this and I'm going to do that for God and blah, blah, blah. And we're hoping that like, man, if I do start doing all these things for God, like the intensity is going to like change me faster. No, no, we just have to be submitted, man, to the pace where God is transforming and changing us. It's the patient work of slow progress over our lives. And that's good for you to know about yourself. And you know what? It's good for you to realize that about each other. Because if we think and we look at each other and we're just like, my goodness, I wish that person would just change a lot faster. Slow your roll. What about you? Be a little humble. Realize like, you know what? God's dealing with me on the pace of change that he's, it's the patient work of slow progress. You realize that for other people. You empathize, you have a lot more grace, you give a lot more mercy for them.

Now, sometimes this work that God does in our hearts, this trajectory we're on, this transformation over our lifetime, it feels a little painful at times. It's actually like getting a tattoo.

But that's how God often works. It's in the trial and suffering that he tattoos some of his most beautiful truths on our hearts. And we come to realize that. And too often we, what we do is we, that pain, we're just like, oh, I don't, I don't like that. I don't want to be in that. And so we leave the tattoo chair. It's too painful. It's taking too long. We get out of it. But man, God's so patient with us. He's going to bring us back to that chair again and again and again. He's like, I'm going to finish writing that. I'm going to finish writing that. See, the new covenant keeps us because it changes our hearts and our minds. But even more than that, it's because Jesus is the mediator of this new covenant. In verse 6 of the text we were reading, it says, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old, as the covenant he mediates is better. Now, in those days, a mediator did much of what mediators today do, right? Mediators, we know they like stand on behalf of both parties. They're neutral parties. They want the best outcome for both. They're not making preference to one particular party. And a mediator's job is to reconcile and bring peace. And we could see that in Jesus's role in his ministry. But here's something that is really amazing. In that old world, a mediator had the power to do something else, they could guarantee the performance of all the terms stipulated in a covenant. Which is to say the mediator could take all the covenant obligations on himself on behalf of both parties and say, on behalf of both of them, this covenant has been satisfied. The terms of this covenant have been met. And that is how the new covenant keeps us.

Because Jesus is our mediator who does that. This is why we don't have to live in fear of losing our salvation when we sin. The new covenant isn't guaranteed on our performance. It's guaranteed on Jesus's performance. And when we sin, when we do sin, what happens? God's mercies never stop flowing toward us. He still washes them away. We get to come to him in repentance and be reconciled and loved and just as much. And he washes us clean in the blood of Jesus. God the Father, he looks at us through Jesus, our mediator. And he sees Jesus's righteousness. He sees us in Jesus's obedience. He sees us in Jesus's holiness. And all the covenant demands are perfectly kept in Jesus. And it's considered true for us.

[36 : 38] And on that guarantee, God comes to dwell with us in an unbreakable, faithful relationship built on his love. As Ryan comes up, I want us to give us a chance to respond.

And if we can just kind of bow our heads. I don't want you focusing on me. Here's the question I want to bring to you today. How is God leading you to respond right now? How is he leading you to respond right now? Maybe you're here. You aren't a Christian. You came kind of like having questions, checking out the faith. I just want to say, man, one, thank you for coming. We are so glad you're here. And I want to invite you and compel you that, man, coming into this new covenant isn't built on your performance. It's simply by faith in Jesus Christ and believing that he is the mediator who brings you in. He died on the cross for your sin and rose again. And actually, that's all the Bible says to do. Man, to come into this new covenant says, repent and believe. Repent of your sins.

Believe on Jesus as your Lord and Savior. And when I say, man, don't leave here without doing that. If you're here and you are a believer, you are a Christian, man, continue to put your faith in Jesus.

Put your hope in him, not yourself. He is the mediator and guarantor who keeps us in this new covenant.

He's the one that changes and transforms us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our soul, and all our strength. And I also want to challenge this, man. Think about this. As you go about your week as you have conversations for lunch or dinner or a community group this week, how are you doing in your covenant relationship with God? Where are you putting your hope? How are you doing in your covenant relationship with your spouse? How are you doing in your covenant relationship with friends? Maybe you actually need one, a covenant friendship, a covenant brother and sister.

[38 : 59] How are you doing in your covenant relationship to the church? So, Father, we come before you very humbly, realizing that we come with nothing to earn an audience with you, but because of what Jesus has done.

And we ask that you would so ground us in this truth, that your covenant keeps us. Jesus as our mediator. It's such a beautiful truth thing.

Lord, may that truth, may that reality of your covenant faithfulness and that covenant commitment that we see in this new covenant, may it affect all our relationships.

I pray that in your name. Amen. Amen. Amen. We're going to finally respond here with taking communion and then we're going to sing one final song.

And this is a reminder of the covenant that Jesus made, the new covenant. He created this covenant out of love for us and it cost him everything.

[40 : 16] His body broken, his blood shed for the forgiveness of our sins. And you know what I love about this is that we've been talking about covenant being a relationship built on love. This is the greatest act of love you could ever look at and see.

And as we look at this and as we partake of this, we are partaking of Jesus' suffering and being reminded that Jesus doesn't want to be separate from us. His truth and his grace and his mercy and his forgiveness and his laws as we eat them.

They're one with us. They're part of us. They're not separated from us. And so let's take it with that understanding and with that faith.

And let's give thanks for all that God has done for us. Let's eat the bread and drink together.