

New Covenant - the Root of Sin - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

To enter into the New Covenant, we must turn around from the Kingdom of Earth and set our minds on the Kingdom of Heaven, recognizing the root of sin as our inherited nature from Adam.

Duration: 9:35

Scripture: Matthew 3:2, Matthew 3:9-10, Romans 8:5, Philippians 3:19, Colossians 3:2

Topics: "New Covenant", "Repentance"

Description

This sermon delves into the essence of the New Covenant as depicted in Matthew chapter 3, emphasizing the crucial act of turning from the Kingdom of Earth to the Kingdom of Heaven to truly embrace the New Covenant. It highlights the significance of setting our minds on heavenly things while engaging with earthly responsibilities, illustrating the analogy of a rubber band to depict this balance. The sermon also underscores the importance of having a clear goal in life that aligns with heavenly purposes to distinguish between living as a sinner or a saint.

Transcript

So in the last study, we were looking at Matthew chapter 3, trying to understand what the New Covenant is all about. Matthew 3, we read, we saw these words, repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. We saw how the preparation for entering into the New Covenant was turning around and turning away from the Kingdom of Earth to the Kingdom of Heaven.

So, turning around from the Kingdom of Earth to the Kingdom of Heaven. And if we don't do that turnaround, and we try to receive the message of the New Covenant, it will be exactly like putting a patch onto an old garment and the whole thing tears. And this is one of the main reasons why many Christians do not enter the New Covenant.

Because they're trying to receive it without turning around from the Kingdom of Earth. So, I mean, I have to make that very plain to you, that as long as your mind is set on earthly things, I'm not saying that we shouldn't think about earthly things, since Jesus thought about earthly things, what do you think he was thinking about when he was making chairs and tables in a carpenter shop? He had to earn his living, and he was in a poor home, a lot poorer than most of us. So, he had to think about earthly things, but his mind was not set on earthly things.

So, when I say we have to turn around, I'm not saying that we should never think about earthly things, we have to, for the sake of our work, for the sake of our home, family, so many things. But it must not be set. And I have often used this example in that connection, which I think is one of the best examples I have found, and that is the example of a rubber band.

If these are earthly things down here, and up here is the heavenly things, your rubber band must be tied here, and the heavenly things on top. And whenever you need to think about earthly things, it may be 8 hours a day, it may be 12 hours a day, and in some cases, maybe 15, 16 hours a day some days. We stretch it, and it's there for 16 hours, or 12 hours, or 8 hours, and once our work is over, we release it, it comes back here.

But with many Christians, it is exactly the opposite. The rubber band is tied, and the earthly things, stretched on Sunday morning, Wednesday evening, for heavenly things, and then back again, when it's released, it's back again. In other words, their mind is set on earthly things.

And occasionally, we think about heavenly things. Now there's a world of difference between such a brother and sister, and another brother and sister, whose mind is set on heavenly things, and who stretches it for maybe many hours a day to earthly things. So if you can understand that, you can know where your mind is set.

In other words, when you are released from the cares and burdens of earth, where does your mind go? We need to think about that. What is your primary goal? Like someone said, the way to determine whether somebody is a sinner, or a saint, is to find out what your goal in life is. Not what you do every day, no.

A lot of things that sinners and saints do every day may look very alike. If you had gone to Nazareth, and you'd seen the most sinful carpenter than Jesus, you'd be seeing both of them spending many, many hours on earthly things. But there's a world of difference between the two.

So, it's the goal for which you live, the goal for which you are living, is what determines whether you are a sinner or a saint. Not the church you go to, you read the Bible, whether you come to the meetings, but what is the goal for which you live. And if there is a difference between believers in the same church like this, it's because even though they do the same things, the goal is different.

See, it's not enough just to say, well, I don't commit certain sins. I think if you make a list of all the sins you don't commit, there'd probably be a few non-Christians at least, who don't commit those sins also. I'm sure.

And you may find some of those non-Christians that don't commit some sins that you commit. That's not what determines whether you are a sinner or a saint. It's a question of what is the goal for which you are living.

And I want to say this to those who want to rise up higher to a new covenant life. Decide that the goal for which you are living is going to change. Not just a few patches here and there.

And maybe this is the thing that's going to liberate you and explain why things have been going so slowly. So, that's what it means to turn around. The other thing that John the Baptist said here was in preparation for the coming of Christ, was in verse 10.

You know, they said, we've got Abraham for our father. And John the Baptist said in verse 9, don't suppose that you can say, we have Abraham for our father. That means nothing.

See, it's a very common mistake that a lot of Christians make to claim association with some respected man of God. That's the point here. We are associated with Abraham.

Or we are associated with so and so, who is respected. And John the Baptist says that doesn't mean anything. See, you can claim to be associated with a church which has some respect in society.

That's the point here. It doesn't mean a thing. Don't ever glory, John the Baptist is saying, in your associations.

You know somebody, you're associated with somebody, you go to some church, you listen to some preacher, it means absolutely nothing. Even if your father is somebody. We have Abraham for our father, so what? He said, you still go to hell.

Because God can raise up children from the stones. So he said, what you need is, verse 10, the axe to be laid to the root of the tree. There's a tree inside us which we can say, use another word, our nature.

What we have inherited from Adam. And all of us have it. And this flesh doesn't really go away when we are converted.

It's the old man that's gone away. The old man is the will to sin. That means I had a will to sin, to sin, to sin.

That is killed. If you're born again, you don't really want to sin. But the flesh, which has all sort of desires to sin, temptations, those temptations still are there.

They don't change. So it's a conflict between this new man who has no desire to sin and those temptations from the flesh. And this new man is in part by the Holy Spirit now when we are born again and go to the Holy Spirit and that is in conflict with this flesh.

But this nature is there.

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