

**“The Heart of the Covenant”  
March 11, 2018**

**Hebrews 10:1-7**

**INTRO-**

The first few chapters of **Genesis** reveal **3 WAYS TO DEAL WITH SIN:**

- **COVER-UP** (*i.e., Adam*) **Hide, blame, shame, fear**
- **WORK IT OFF** (*i.e., Cain*) **Perform, earn, do your best**
- **RECEIVE COVENANT LOVE** (*i.e., Abel*) **Receive the blood sacrifice of another; trust His promises; rest in His love.** NOTE: Abel had already heard about blood covenant in action in the “animal skins” God made for his parents
  - **OT-** sin is **COVERED** (*not “covered-up” or ignored*)- **“To make a payment; defer a penalty”**
  - **NT-** sin is **CLEANSED** (1 John 1:7)
    - To remove the **root cause** (“*our iniquities*”- Isa. 53:5)
    - To **“pay in full”** (“*He took it away, nailing it to the Cross*” Col. 2:14)
    - To **fully release** from the **penalty and power of sin**
    - To **fully restore all that was “lost”** (*i.e., belonging, identity, joy, destiny*) NOTE: 17<sup>th</sup> Century believers called the GOSPEL “*the good, glad, merry news that makes a man or woman leap for joy*”! **The best news EVER! Immerse ourselves in this!**

**THE NEW COVENANT “GOSPEL” IN ONE SENTENCE: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21-**

**“God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.” (NKJV)**

**CORE- At the heart of the covenant is the heart of God...“welding” us to Him.**

**1. BRINGING US INTO THE ULTIMATE “SAFE PLACE”**

- **In covenant**—a **WEAKER TRIBE** was joined to a **STRONGER TRIBE**
- **Throughout history, COVENANTS** have been **SAFE HAVENS**—of **BELONGING, PROVISION, & PROTECTION** (*i.e., why people join gangs*)
- **“God is our safe place and our strength. He is always our help when we are in trouble...Be quiet and know that I am God...The Lord of All is with us. The God of Jacob is our strong place. (Psalm 46:1,10,11 NLT)**
- We become **like** the One we trust & worship. (Psalm 115:8- Those who make speechless, senseless idols become spiritually desensitized; **“Those who make them** (*i.e., graven images; reduced*) **will be like them”**)
- **In Him**—we live **FEARLESSLY** (*free from shame of past & dread of future*)

## 2. REVEALING HIS FERVENT, FAITHFUL, LIMITLESS LOVE

- **NO OTHER RELIGION** on the planet gets even close to the **HEART** of our **COVENANT-KEEPING GOD**
  - **Who IS Love**
  - **Who loves ALL** with passionate, unconditional love
  - **Who initiates covenant**
  - **Who freely gave His Son (and all He has)**
  - **Who gives the Holy Spirit “w/o measure” (John 3:34)**
  - **Who makes & keeps “sacred” (held to His heart) promises**
- **1 John 4:7-10-** This amazing LOVE is “OF God” because He “IS love.” (*i.e., His essence*)—“love” so amazing—a new word was created to describe it
- **EROS** was the common word for “love.” It means “*the love of the lovely*”; “*unable to love anyone beneath its standard.*” It’s a love that is earned and sustained by appearance and performance. Ultimately, it controls & conquers—reducing others to objects to be possessed & used.
- **AGAPE** is the new word to describe love that “*spontaneously arises from the heart of God—for all people.*” He loves because *its His nature to love—not because we are consistently “loveable.”*
  - **NOTE:** If we perceive God’s love as EROS—we will either be perpetually tormented with doubt & shame (*less than*) OR we will torment others with our perpetual pride (*better than*).
  - **True humility**—we’re all loved the same (*not I’m less or you’re less*)

### **Jesus contrasted EROS & AGAPE living in Luke 18:9-13-**

- **Pharisee:** “IF I perform religious duties perfectly—**then** God will accept me.”
- **Publican:** “**Because** God is love & mercy (hesed)—**therefore** I can call upon Him and receive mercy.”
- **QUOTE:** “*You are loved just because you are alive and breathing...To know that His love depends on Him and not on us is the **first step out of religious futility and despair.***” –Malcolm Smith, *The Power of the Blood Covenant*

### CLOSING THOUGHTS:

**As this revelation of His Covenant Love consumes you—you will begin to see it everywhere—and it will transform everything! It’s throughout the Bible:**

- “*I have loved you with an everlasting love; with lovingkindness (hesed) I have drawn you.*” **Jeremiah 31:3** [Limitless love—in His heart before anyone was created]
- “*(You were) formed in secret, intricately...wrought [as if embroidered with various colors].*” **Psalms 139:15 AMP** [Conceived into the love of God—despite the “natural” conditions of your arrival]
- **Luke 15 stories of lost sheep, lost coins, and lost sons—EACH was searched for as if they were the only one—sole object of Father’s love**