

The New Covenant and Sacrificial Love: Jeremiah 31:31-34 | Hebrews 8:7-13

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we're dedicated to encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. Located in Ontario, Oregon, Pastor Patrick Daly preaches insightful sermons from the Word of God, offering practical applications for modern living.

We're delighted to share this sermon with you. I just want to say good morning, Ontario Community Church. It is great to be here this morning.

And as we're heading to our seats right now, we're going to go ahead and get started. We're continuing our sermon series, Sacred Journey from Death to Life.

This is our series that's going to take us to our time of Easter. And the title for our sermon is, The New Covenant and Sacrificial Love.

And it's going to be based off of Jeremiah chapter 31 verses 31 through 34. And as we're opening, I want you to think about this question.

[1 : 04] And it's the question of, what does the wording, new covenant, mean to you? I want you to think about that as we're going along this morning.

When we think about the gospel message, let us think of the idea of the new covenant. There was this transition from the continual sacrificial system of the old covenants to the new covenant that was established by Jesus' birth, His ministry, His life, His death, His burial and His resurrection.

The new covenant was a fulfillment of prophecy. And God was providing a way for salvation to no longer be for a select few number of people, but rather an invitation for all who believe.

It is Jesus Christ who is the savior of the world, and Christ is the fulfillment of the old covenant. It is Christ who is the cornerstone of our faith.

And let us realize that salvation, it is available for all who believe, and it came from this new covenant, which in turn came from the sacrificial love that God had for us by sending His Son, Jesus.

[2 : 31] Before we go any further, what I'd like us to do, I'd like for us to pray together, and let's pray that God will stir our hearts and provide clarity to have a relationship with Him, to grow in faith with Him, and to be moved to act.

Let us pray together, will you pray with me? And Heavenly Father, as we are gathered here today as the body of Christ, we ask that you are here with us today.

You God are the God of miracles. You are the God of life, light and truth. You made salvation possible through your Son, Jesus, the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And it is because of this sacrificial love that we are able to be saved by believing in you. We ask that you help us deepen our understanding about who you are, about the Word of God, and about our relationship with you.

May we be hungry for your Word in that relationship with you. It is your Word that brings light to our path.

[3 : 49] Guide us as we continue on this sacred journey this morning, Father, that we may live and love like you. It is in Jesus' holy name that we pray, and we all say together, amen.

So a question that I want you to think about is can you think of a time when someone sacrificed for you? Maybe it's a financial sacrifice.

Maybe it was a sacrifice of time when someone was busy. When we think of the type of love that requires sacrifice, we think of something that may inconvenience us, or it may be something that, well, we may not want to do something.

So think about that as we're going through, and I'd like to put this image on here. This is a photo of a man by the name of Maximilian Kolbe. In 1941, there was a man, we'll just call him Max, there was a man named Max who offered his life in the place of a stranger.

And the story goes that there was a prisoner who escaped the Auschwitz concentration camp in World War II. And because of this incident, what happened is the Germans, they decided that 10 people were to be starved to death as punishment.

[5 : 10] It was very unfortunate, and the stranger was chosen. So what you have is Maximilian who's offering his life for an unknown person.

Well, that person, his name is Franzisek, we'll call him Francis. He had a wife and children. And the story goes that Maximilian, he offered his life in place of the stranger.

When the Germans were selecting their 10 for who was to be punished, Maximilian stepped in and said, I'd like to go instead. Take me instead, this man has a wife and children.

And it was because of this sacrifice that Max made, he made that sacrifice so that Franzisek was able to live. And when we hear that story, that's a remarkable story to trade your life for someone else, it's remarkable.

And as we begin with our first reading, it's gonna be from the book of Hebrews, which is connected to Jeremiah. I want us to think, not just of sacrifices that have been made to you, or the sacrifice that was made in World War II, but let us think of the sacrifice that Jesus Christ made for us.

[6 : 35] Let us turn together. It's gonna be in Hebrews, chapter eight, verse seven through 13, on page 1192.

And the reason why I'm picking Hebrews and not Jeremiah is because what's happening here is that the Jeremiah passage is being referenced in Hebrews.

So there is a connection that we can find here. So page 1192. So it's gonna be Hebrews eight versus seven through 13.

So you see how there's the indentations and verse eight through 12. That is the quoting of Jeremiah. So just for your information.

So let's read from verse seven here. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second.

[7 : 52] For he finds fault with them when he says, let's read it together. Behold, the days are coming declares the Lord. When I will establish an old covenant or another covenant, a what?

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 brothers saying, no the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest.

[8 : 54] For I will be merciful toward their iniquities. And what's this part say? And I will remember their sins no more. Verse 13.

In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete is growing old and ready to vanish away.

When we're looking over our scripture reading, I'd like to put this chart on the screen here. You'll also find this in your notes. The law, the old covenant, it speaks of the old mosaic covenant.

It was given to God's people through the prophet through Moses. The law was limited as it did not, it didn't change hearts or minds.

There was no permanent solution for sin. And I'm speaking of the sacrificial system that existed.

With the law, there was always the need for continual sacrifices and this was a temporary solution.

[10 : 00] The old covenant proved that there was a need for a permanent sacrifice, the need for a savior, someone to forgive sins once and for all.

And so on this part of the charts, that first top part, you'll see Hebrews seven, which speaks of fault in the first covenant.

And in Hebrews eight seven, it says that for if the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second.

And in order for us to understand why this is, why is there the need for a second or a new covenant? Let's turn to, we'll put this on the screen.

Romans chapter eight, verse three. For God has done what the law, we can buy the flesh could not do.

[10:58] By sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh and it goes on with that. So the problem with the old covenant had to do with sin or the flesh.

And so this old covenant was not sustainable. It had to do with our sin as it says in this verse. And what God had in store was a better solution, a better plan for God's people, but also for the Gentiles.

The word becoming flesh, the permanent, the one time only sacrifice for our sins. And that second point in your notes, it's that because there is fault in the old covenant, there's a need for the new covenant.

The verses that you find in Hebrews chapter eight, verses eight through 12 is exactly what you'll find in Jeremiah 31, verses 31 through 34.

And this means that there is a connection. It's something that was foretold in the Old Testament is referenced here in the new as the fulfillment in Christ.

[12:18] When we're considering the context of Jeremiah, it speaks of prophecy concerning the restoration of Israel. In Jeremiah chapter 30 through 31, it's known as the book of consolation where God is speaking about hope for God's people.

And in the context of the Hebrew verses, it's using the Jeremiah passage. It's talking about how Christ is the high priest of the greater covenant.

And I want to take a moment to break down what the connection is with Hebrews and the Jeremiah passage. For what was once foretold from the law and the prophets of old, it has been fulfilled through Jesus Christ, the savior of the world.

And you'll see on your notes, I'll have this up here, is that in Hebrews 8, 8 and Jeremiah 31, 31, there will be a new everlasting covenant. You'll see in your notes, connecting verses.

We're not gonna go to all of them. But there's a need for a new everlasting covenant. Out of Egypt, the covenant was broken continually because of sin.

[13:33] The covenant then was written in our hearts. And then finally, all will be taught by God and God will forgive iniquity and remember sin no more.

So we start off with how the new covenant is speaking of the greater covenant that would come forth from Jesus Christ.

The Lord had Moses bring his people out of the land of Egypt and had established the old mosaic covenant, if you think of the stone tablets, right?

The establishment of the law. And within this old covenant, it was continually broken due to sin, due to the flesh as we have gone over.

There was the continual need to offer sacrifices and it was this cycle of disobedience and return that we saw with God's people.

[14:30] And in the new covenant, God would write the law in their hearts. This new law is much like how Christ provided the new commandment to love one another, right?

To love God and to love people. And under the new covenant, the knowledge of the Lord would become widely available. And what that means for us is that we could enter into a deeper relationship with the Lord.

This knowing it refers to that relationship that it doesn't just require knowledge about the law. You might have heard me before talk about the difference between head knowledge and heart knowledge.

I can know of you, but that's different than me knowing you personally. So it's the transition from knowing about the Lord to actually having that relationship with him.

And this, like I said, to know the Lord, and I'll repeat it again, to know the Lord is very much different than knowing about the Lord. It speaks of heart knowledge that we should incorporate.

[15:42] And towards the end, the new covenant from Christ, it speaks that God will forgive us of our sins. And this is the tie into the here and the now. It is God who had a plan for the forgiveness of sins through Christ.

And when we read Jeremiah, it foretells of how God will forgive sins by the one time sacrifice. A question I want you to think about as we're going through here is, how does knowing that God had

a plan for salvation for all, how does that affect your understanding of Christ?

Well, that should be an easy one, right? It's knowing that God had a plan for us all along, that just because there's sin and there's imperfection here on the earth, God has a better way.

And because of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, there is no longer a need for ongoing works of sacrifices. It is now about faith in Christ.

It is now about belief in Christ. It is focusing on what has been done rather than what we should continually do.

[16 : 57] Do you understand there is a difference between continuing every single day? You have to continue doing works as opposed to what Christ has done for you, what God has done for you.

It's a huge difference. And that takes us to this next part. The new covenant, it makes the old one obsolete. Let's keep in mind this final verse in Hebrews.

Again, it's this connection with Jeremiah. 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.

Do you realize that Christ came into the world to fulfill the law and not abolish it? That's Matthew chapter five, verse 17. Christ came and performed his earthly ministry.

He was living his purpose to save the world from sin, amen, Christ is the atoning sacrifice which does away with the old mosaic covenant and it paves the way for the new covenant in Christ, making salvation available for everyone, not just the Jew, but for the Gentile as well.

[18 : 15] And I want you to consider what second Corinthians, chapter five, verse 17, what does it say? Therefore, if some, if anyone is in Christ, he is a what?

He's a new creation. The old has passed away, behold, the new has come. And ask yourself this question. What old things have passed away in your former life and what new things have happened in your life?

If you are a Christian, it is you are a new creation, right? The old life is fading away or faded away. And for those of us who may not know the Lord, it's realizing that there is new life, there is purpose, there is so much that exists from the Lord.

It's being put on a trajectory of sanctification, becoming more like the Lord. It is having that eternal security in Christ and knowing that no matter what happens to you, in this life you are secure in the arms of the Father.

God loved us first and foremost. And he sent his son as the atoning sacrifice, the lamb that was slain. And he did all of this to make salvation available for everyone.

[19 : 41] Again, not just for the Jewish people, but for the Gentiles, that's us, right? We are the Gentiles, right?

And in this new covenant, God is more focused on that heart knowledge, on you believing in him, in you having that love for him, rather than that head knowledge.

And God had shown the greatest form of sacrificial love by sending his son, how grateful we should be to thank God for what he has done for us.

If you are a Christian and you are secure in salvation, what better opportunity than to thank God every day? For giving you another day in this life.

To say thank you, God. I got another sunrise and another sunset. And I know sometimes we miss an hour, right? Like the time change, right?

[20 : 42] But in all of that, we should thank God for what he has done. The sacrificial love that Christ has for us, it paved the way for the new covenant to begin.

It all begins with believing in the Lord and being saved. Let your mind, let it be changed to know that Jesus Christ loves you, and that God knew you before you were born.

Do you realize that God knows how many hairs that are on your head? I know, well, I don't see anyone who's bald here, right? But God knows how many hairs are on your head, right?

God knows how many sands are on the seashore, the planets in the sky. Have you tried counting that recently? Or have you tried counting the hairs on your head or the sands on the sea?

It's kind of hard to do. And I think you could have all the funding in the world and probably not get, because sand blows everywhere, right? Sometimes we get stressed out and we pull out our hair, right?

[21 : 48] How many did you lose there when you pulled it out, right? But God knows how much is in there. And God desires, His desire is for you to freely choose Him.

God is not going to force you to believe in Him, but God does call you. Will you respond to God's call for your life? Free-ly choose salvation for your life.

If you're on a spiritual journey, many of you may have heard that before. I'm on a spiritual journey. I'm trying to find truth. I'm reminded of Pontius Pilate when he asks the question, what is truth? And there's a lot of people out there that ask that question, what is truth? And they're on this spiritual journey of searching. Well, I know one thing for sure. It is Jesus who is the way, the truth and the life.

If you're on a spiritual journey, let it become, let it be towards knowing who Jesus Christ is and in knowing the Lord, in believing in Him, let your journey be walking with the Lord or following in the footsteps of Christ.

[22 : 57] Christ, remember, in believing in the Lord, it is not the end, it is the beginning. Let us remember that, know the Lord, grow in faith.

And upon that firm foundation, the solid rock that exists in Christ, be encouraged to go and do good in the name of Jesus Christ.

God shared sacrificial love to us and in seeing the love as what Christ did for us, it should encourage us to act.

First believe in the Lord, then act. And oh, what amazing and incredible things we can do in the name that is above all names.

Let us encourage to live out the new commandment, to love one another as Christ has loved us, which in turn, it comes from the new covenants.

[23 : 58] Let us spread the gospel message to others in sharing about the sacrificial love that God has for us. In believing in the Lord and knowing that you are secure, why wouldn't you want to share in what you believe in?

Why wouldn't you want to share in the gospel message? Or in sharing your testimony and how God is worked in and through your life? Or maybe for some of us, you might think, well, I don't really have a good testimony.

You can still share in the gospel message or you can share a wonderful story of how Christ has worked in someone's else's life. It all begins with believing in the Lord.

Let us spread that gospel message. Let us be motivated to live out the great commission to baptize and to make disciples of all people.

Let us embody this amazing love. Let us embody God's grace. Let us exhibit God's love in the things that we say and in the things that we do, how we live our life.

[25 : 12] The sacrificial love of Christ. We can live it out in service, in outreach, in evangelism and supporting those that are in need. And before we close off our message today, I want to go back to that story that I began with.

If you remember at the beginning of this message, the story of Maximilian who gave his life for Francis Zech the stranger. What happened?

He gave his life what happened afterwards. What's amazing is this is the stranger, Francis Zech. He survived the concentration camp.

He survived. He was able to return to his wife, but sadly his children did not make it. It is said that Francis Zech spent the rest of his life he spent the rest of his life, listen to this.

He promoted the story of the sacrifice that Maximilian made for him because his life was changed in realizing this man, I was about to die.

[26 : 25] And this man came and offered his life for me. That's what he spent his life doing, telling the story of this sacrifice that was made back in World War II.

It is even said that he did this to repay a debt, repay a debt that he could never really pay back, but he was doing it anyways.

He lived until 93 years old. When someone lays down their life for a stranger, society typically recognizes, we recognize it as selfless love, someone who lays down their life for their friends, but in this case it was a stranger, so someone who's laying down their life.

When Christ gave himself for the redemption of all people, we should recognize the sacrificial love that Christ has for us, for Christ is our redeemer.

And as we believe in Christ, let us walk in the footsteps of Christ. Let us embrace the truth of God's word, and let us display the sacrificial love in the new covenant.

[27 : 41] When we hear about these stories of these people who make these sacrifices, not only is that an encouraging story, it's a very deep story, but it reminds me of the sacrifice that Christ made for me.

Let this be a reminder of what Jesus has done in your life. Come to know the Lord, believe in the Lord and be saved, for our God is the God of transformation, and our God, he saves us.

All we need to do is believe, and upon believing, let us live for him. Let's close in prayer together.

And Father God, we thank you for giving us this time to open your word, for your word is living and it is active.

We thank you for helping us expand on what the new covenant is, and how your Son provided salvation through this sacrificial love for us.

Your love, it is everlasting and it endures forever. We know you're in control, even though we may not fully understand it. We know you are sovereign. And in the highs and lows of life, you are there for us, and you will never abandon us, and you will never forsake us.

[29 : 02] We ask that you are with us as we sing these songs or this closing song, and as we go forth from this place, may we fear not.

We ask that this message be heard, and we fear not. We ask that this message today will remain in our minds and written in our hearts.

May we live out this faith knowing that we are secure in salvation through belief. And may we be encouraged to share in the light of Christ and in the love of Christ.

May we be encouraged to live in love like Jesus Christ and all that we say and in all that we do. In the name of Jesus Christ, the name above all names.

Amen.