

# Deuteronomy 5:1-21

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, good morning. Would you turn with me in your Bibles to Deuteronomy chapter 5? It's found on page 150 in the Pew Bibles.

We'll be reading Deuteronomy chapter 5, verses 1 through 21 this morning. Deuteronomy chapter 5, I'll begin reading at verse 1.

Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the rules that I speak in your hearing today, and you shall learn them and be careful to do them.

The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. Not with our fathers did the Lord make this covenant, but with us who are all of us here alive today.

The Lord spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the midst of the fire while I stood between the Lord and you at that time to declare to you the word of the Lord, for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up into the mountain.

[ 1 : 10 ] He said, I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is on the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. Observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy as the Lord your God commanded you.

Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your ox or your donkey or any of your livestock or the sojourner who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.

You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore, the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

[ 2 : 40 ] Honor your father and your mother as the Lord your God commanded you that your days may be long and that it may go well with you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder and you shall not commit adultery and you shall not steal and you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor and you shall not covet your neighbor's wife and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field or his male servant or his female servant, his ox or his donkey or anything that is your neighbor's.

A little more than four years ago, I stood in this very spot not to preach a sermon, not to pray a prayer, not to give the announcements, not to read a scripture, but to answer one crucial question that would determine my future.

This is a question that I was asked. Before God and these witnesses, will you take this woman to be your wife? Will you love, comfort, honor, and keep her in sickness and in health and forsaking all others, keep yourself only unto her for as long as you both shall live?

And we both said, I will. And then I went on to say, I, Greg, take you, Jane, to be my wife, to have and to hold from this day forward for better or worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part.

More than any other day in my life, more than any other time I've stood before this congregation, that day and those words changed the course of my life. I entered the building as a single person,

unattached, and I left as a married man, bound by covenant to my wife.

[ 4 : 26 ] The book of Deuteronomy is about the covenant that God made with the people of Israel and how their lives were changed forever by their covenant relationship with God.

In chapter five, what we're looking at today is right at the heart of this book. So as we look at the book of Deuteronomy as a whole, and chapter five in particular, we're going to see three things. We're going to see what it means to have a covenant, what is a covenant relationship with God. Second, how do we enter into a covenant relationship with God?

And third, how do we live out of a covenant relationship with God? Now, there are some important differences between the covenant that God made with Israel and the Old Testament and the covenant, the God, the new covenant that God has extended to us in Jesus Christ.

And we'll see some of those differences as we study Deuteronomy, but we'll also see some important similarities because, you know, there's not two different gods that we're talking about. There's not one God of the Old Testament and one God of the New Testament.

[ 5 : 28 ] It's one and the same God. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who revealed himself to the people of Israel and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And through Christ we come into covenant relationship with God today. So first, what is a covenant relationship with God? Moses says in verse 2, the Lord your God made a covenant with you at Horeb.

Horeb is Mount Sinai. And we can understand this idea of a covenant relationship with God through two analogies. First, the marriage analogy. Several times in the Old Testament God particularly compares His relationship to His people to marriage, especially in the book of Hosea which we'll be studying this fall.

in the New Testament Paul says that Christian marriage represents the relationship between Christ and His people, the church. Now, we can think of several ways in which marriage represents or symbolizes what it means to have a covenant relationship with God.

So first, marriage is by definition an exclusive relationship. The marriage vow to speak of forsaking all others for the sake of one. and that's part of what makes the decision to get married so intimidating.

[ 6 : 42 ] But it's essential so that both partners can feel secure to know that there's no one else who's going to take your place. And in a similar way, a covenant relationship with God is a relationship of exclusive loyalty.

Marriage is also life-altering and all-consuming. It's not just something that you do as a hobby for a couple hours every weekend. It becomes part of the framework in which you live your entire life. It affects every decision you make. It shapes your emotions and your desires and your thoughts. And in the same way, that's the kind of life-altering and consuming relationship that God desires with His people.

Marriage is also a union with someone who is other than yourself. This is something that you learn more and more as marriage goes on. You get to know this person better and better and you realize how different they are from you.

And you realize that even though you probably know them better than anyone else on earth, you will never fully comprehend them. And they will never fully comprehend you. And the more deeply you get to know God, the more you will realize that He is absolutely other than us.

[ 8 : 01 ] And finally, marriage is a union with someone who is always present. I don't know if everyone who is married feels this way, but I think there is a sense in which in marriage your spouse is always present with you.

Even if they are not physically beside you, they are never far from your mind. Even if you are just tired of being with everyone and you just want to go and be alone, there is a sense in which your spouse never leaves.

You see something and you think, oh, I know that my wife would like that. Or you hear someone say something and you think, I know that my husband would not agree with what they are saying. Even if, and in the same way, so it is with the Lord, our ever-present God, our ever-present lover.

So marriage is an exclusive, all-consuming relationship with someone who is, with an ever-present other. And in all those ways, marriage represents the nature of a covenant relationship with the living God.

But there are some differences too. One important difference is that marriage, especially in our modern Western culture, is basically a covenant between two equals. Even though a husband and wife may take on different roles, marriage is a mutual agreement between two people, equally created in God's image.

[ 9 : 26 ] But God's covenant with his people is not an agreement between equals. God has no equal. God is far superior in every respect. So it's helpful to think of a second analogy, to understand a covenant relationship with God.

So think about a business deal, or an international treaty between two parties of vastly different status. Think of an acquisition between Google and a bankrupt startup company. In the year 2011, Google had 38 billion in revenues, and they acquired more than 50 other companies. Or think of a treaty between a military superpower and a country that is so poor or so small that they have no military force at all.

You don't come into that kind of deal on equal footing. One party is completely self-sufficient, and the other is liable to be wiped out at any moment.

And so in a sense, the fate of the bankrupt startup company is in the hands of Google, or Microsoft, or Apple, or choose your large conglomerate. The fate of the small country is in the hands of the larger.

[ 10 : 44 ] Now the book of Deuteronomy actually compares Israel's covenant relationship with God to a treaty. It actually uses this metaphor. We have several records of treaties from the ancient world between a powerful, victorious king and a weak, dependent king.

They're called suzerain-vassal treaties. The suzerain is the powerful, victorious king, self-sufficient. And the vassal is the weak, vulnerable, dependent king. And the book of Deuteronomy is actually written in the structure of one of these ancient treaties to convey this idea of what it means to come into a relationship with God.

Let me show you. Let me show you the structure of these ancient Near Eastern treaties. They had a common structure. We'll put it up on the screen. They always started with a preamble, brief introduction. These are the words of so-and-so.

And then there was what's called a historical prologue, where the suzerain, the powerful nation, would tell about all the good things they had done for the vassal in the past. They'd say, well, your father served me and I took care of him.

Your grandfather served me and I took care of him. I administered the laws with justice. It was a way of trying to inspire confidence and gratitude and awe from the weaker nation to the more powerful nation.

[ 12 : 00 ] And then this led up to the third section, what we call the covenant stipulations, the terms of the agreement, exactly what the vassal was required to do. And the most common requirement was you be loyal to me and don't go making any treaties with anybody else.

And then there'd be blessings and curses, threats of death and darkness and destruction if the vassal was disloyal, but promises of life and joy and peace if they were loyal.

And then they would always end with a list of witnesses. Usually they'd make a list of pagan gods and sort of call on them to be witnesses to the treaty. And at the end they'd make, they'd have succession arrangements or provisions for the future.

So they'd say things like, we'll make two copies of this treaty and we'll each keep one and we'll each read them once every year. Some way of making sure you wouldn't forget. And they'd also make plans for what would happen when the vassal king died and who would succeed him, how the alliance would continue.

And if you look at the book of Deuteronomy, it has exactly this same structure. So we can show the verse numbers now. There's a preamble, first five verses of chapter one.

[ 13 : 17 ] There's historical prologue. If you've been here the last two weeks, that's what we've been looking at. God recounting his steadfast love for the people of Israel, all the things that he's done for them already, how he's brought them out of Egypt, how he's brought them through the wilderness despite their unfaithfulness at times.

And then the covenant stipulations, that's the longest section. The heart of the agreement and the Ten Commandments headed off. The Ten Commandments are really the heart of what it means for Israel to be loyal to God.

And the first commandment, don't have any gods before me. In other words, don't go making any treaties with anybody else. Don't go making any alliances, any promises to anyone else above me. And then blessings and curses, we'll see those at the end of Deuteronomy. And a list of witnesses. Of course, in the Bible, there's not going to be a list of pagan gods because there's only one God. But God calls upon heaven and earth, the whole creation, to witness his covenant relationship with Israel.

And he also describes the Song of Moses as a witness to Israel's covenant with God. And then at the end, succession arrangements. Moses prepares to die and arranges for Joshua to lead the people into the land.

[14:29] So why am I telling you all this about the structure of Deuteronomy? The point is, it's structured like one of these ancient treaties to communicate to anyone who would read it, that God, the great king of heaven and earth, had entered into a covenant relationship with Israel.

That he had brought them under his wing. That he had promised to become their protector, their lord, their savior. They've become his chosen, dearly loved people.

And in response, they have a responsibility to be loyal to him above all else. And to be obedient to his commands. So this is the big picture. This is what we're looking at, the big picture of Deuteronomy this summer.

And chapter 5 is almost the whole book in a nutshell. Verse 1 is sort of like a preamble. Verse 2 through 6 is a historical prologue, all that God's already done for Israel. Verses 7 through 21, the Ten Commandments are the stipulations.

There's blessings and curses mixed in. It's almost the whole book in one chapter. And so we see that God's covenant with his people is like marriage, an exclusive, all-consuming relationship with an ever-present other, or like a treaty where a weak and vulnerable nation comes under the protection of a strong and self-sufficient one.

[15:52] That's what it means to have a covenant relationship with God. Now, how do we enter into a covenant relationship with God? This passage tells us in particular in verse 6.

Verse 6 says, I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. The verse tells us that we enter into a covenant relationship with God not by obeying the law, but only by God's rescuing grace.

Before God gives him the Ten Commandments, he says to them, I've already become your Savior. I've already entered into a covenant relationship with you. I've already delivered you from bondage. He repeats that again in verse 14.

Now, Deuteronomy wasn't the beginning of God's relationship with Israel. It had started way back in Genesis when God called Abraham and made promises to bless him and his descendants. And then in Exodus, which tells a story of how God led the children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt. And in Numbers, God was faithful, leading them through the wilderness for 40 years. So Deuteronomy is a covenant renewal. It's a sort of renewal of marriage vows, if you want to think of it that way, for a new generation as they prepare to head into the promised land.

[17:10] And God reminds them, before he tells them what they need to do, he says, I came and rescued you when you were helpless and hopeless. That's how it all began. Don't ever forget that.

Interestingly, in the Jewish tradition, verse 6 is seen as the first of the Ten Commandments. And with good reason, I think, because if you ignore verse 6, you can completely miss the point of the rest of the commandments.

Verse 6 is very important. So let me put it another way. You can't get into the kingdom of God by obeying the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are not a way to earn God's favor. However, the Bible does not say if you obey the Ten Commandments, then God will accept you and reward you with eternal life. It doesn't say that in the Old Testament, and it doesn't say that in the New Testament. The only way to enter into a covenant relationship with God is by Him reaching down to us and rescuing us by His grace.

That's why Jesus came into the world and died on the cross. So we see this both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. In Ephesians chapter 2, it says, for by grace you have been saved through faith.

[18:22] This is not your own doing. It's the gift of God, not a result of works so that no one may boast. And that's the same message we see here in verse 6 in the Old Testament. Salvation by grace.

That's the basis of our relationship with God. Now, if you come to this church regularly, you might feel like you hear this message over and over and over and over again. And maybe you wonder, why do we keep preaching this same message over and over and over again about grace? Well, first of all, because it's a consistent message that runs through all of Scripture. And so, regardless of where we are in the Scripture, you're going to hit this message pretty quickly. But second, because our hearts, our human hearts, always gravitate towards something else. We constantly, we're like a computer that every time you start it, it defaults to a certain mode. And then you have to keep resetting the mode to put it in the right mode so that it can work. We gravitate to some kind of performance or merit-based approach to our relationship with God. Every week I go to the Columbus House, which is a homeless shelter here in New Haven. There's a group of us that go and we build relationships with people, talk to them. And many times I've invited someone to come to church.

[ 19 : 34 ] And many times people have responded something like this. I need to get my life together first, and then I'll come to church. And, you know, usually it's not always wise to get in an argument with people, so usually I don't push it.

But sometimes if I've been talking to the person for a while, if we've known each other, I'll say, you know, that's exactly the reason why you should come to church. Because Jesus said that His church is for people who don't have it all together.

Jesus said, those who are well have no need of a doctor. But those who are sick, I came not to call the righteous, the people who think they have it all together, but sinners. People who recognize that they need God.

But, you know, this isn't just a problem for people who don't come to church. It's also a problem for those of us who do come to church. Right? We can feel like we're more righteous because we come to church and those people don't, which is sometimes part of the reason why people stay away from church because they feel that way.

It becomes an endless cycle of self-righteousness on both sides. And so we need to hear the same message.

[ 20 : 52 ] It's not because of who we are or what we've done. It's only by God's rescuing grace. Only by Jesus Christ ultimately dying on the cross for our sins that you or I or anyone else can be accepted before God.

Can enter into a covenant relationship with God. So we enter into a covenant relationship with God by His grace. But the second, the third thing this passage tells us is how to live out of a covenant relationship with God.

And in particular, we see that God gives us His commands to shape and order our lives as His covenant people. You know, the Ten Commandments are not primarily a legal code, an impersonal legal code.

And they're not primarily an abstract ethical ideal. That's not really their purpose. In the Old Testament, they're given in the context of a personal covenant relationship with God.

You can only really understand the Ten Commandments if you understand who this God is. The Ten Commandments show us how to express our love and loyalty to the God who so graciously rescued us and brought us into covenant relationship with Himself.

[ 22 : 23 ] And we can see that God gives us His commands not in order to restrict our freedom, but in order to maintain our freedom, to sustain it.

When the people of Israel lived in Egypt, they were slaves. They had to work seven days a week under the rule of harsh masters. And the people, they lived in a society which was devoted to many gods.

So in Egypt, there was the sun god, there was the storm god, there was the Nile River god, the fertility god, the childbirth god, all these different gods that you had to go around trying to make them all happy.

But the people of Israel were never allowed to go and worship the true and living God who had created all things. And God says, I don't ever want you to live under that kind of slavery again. I don't ever want you to work seven days a week without any rest. I don't ever want you to make your household servants, your employees, work seven days every week without any rest.

[ 23 : 32 ] Every day you must set aside one day a week to remember that you were slaves under a harsh master, but I came to set you free.

And God says, I don't ever want you to worship idols. I don't ever want you to worship created things because I'm the creator. I am the great king of heaven and earth. I made the sun and the moon.

I control the weather. I control the Nile River and all the other rivers and crops and childbirth and everything else. So don't go back and forth trying to please all these different masters.

I am your only rightful master and lord. I'm the only God worthy of your worship. See, everything that God prohibits in the Ten Commandments is a form of slavery.

So that's why in Psalm 119, it says, I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free. I walk about in freedom, for I've sought out your precepts.

[ 24 : 35 ] God gives us his commands to teach us how to live in the freedom that he's bought for us. Freedom from idols. Freedom from sin. Freedom from death.

Freedom to love and live in covenant relationship with him. It's a little bit like learning how to be married. You know, getting married reshapes and reorders your life.

Some of that happens immediately. And even more of it happens over time as you learn what it means to live as one flesh, as two people united as one in a covenant relationship.

And in a similar way, God gives us his commands to shape and order our lives in relationship with him. Now, if we look at the Ten Commandments, we can see that they themselves have an order, a shape.

The first four, you may have heard this before, the first four are primarily about loving God. No other gods. No graven images. No idols. Don't take God's name in vain.

[ 25 : 38 ] Don't use it in an empty way. Keep the Sabbath. Jesus said in Matthew 22, the greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with your heart and soul and mind and strength.

And then he said the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself. And the last six commandments, five through ten, primarily relate to loving our neighbors. Honor your parents.

Don't murder. Commit adultery. Steal. Lie. Or covet. So there's the order of the Ten Commandments. In some ways, they can be reduced down to those two.

Loving God and loving neighbor. But even those two aren't totally separate. There's also a unity to all ten of the commandments. So take the Sabbath command.

I'd observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy. It seems to be primarily about loving God. Setting aside regular time to remember and worship Him. But then verse 14, as we've already seen, says observe the Sabbath so that your servants may rest as well as you, so that the most vulnerable workers in society would get a regular day off.

[ 26 : 46 ] And you know, there's no other nation in the ancient world that had a law like that. It was a unique law to the people of Israel. In most other nations, if you were a menial worker, you would be working seven days a week without a break.

You might get some holidays off randomly. But the Sabbath was an expression of love for God and neighbor. Now you might wonder, how does the Sabbath apply under the New Testament?

As we said, there are some changes that happen with the coming of Christ. And the New Testament doesn't say that Christians must observe the Sabbath in the same way that the Israelites did.

But it does call us to set aside time every week to rest and renew our relationship with God and with others. Jesus said the Sabbath was made for human beings. It was a gift from God.

You know, there's lots of studies today about how stressed people are. And you wonder, is it connected to our always-on, 24-7, always-connected society?

[ 27 : 51 ] And the Sabbath speaks an important word to that. But more than that, it's a gift from God. It's to remind us that God is God and we are not. When we rest from our works.

When we remember who He is. It's a reminder that we are creatures. He's the Creator. He saved us by His grace and not by our work.

It's sort of a reminder all over again of verse 6. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt. Out of slavery. It's a reminder that Jesus Christ died on the cross for us while we are still sinners.

And it's a reminder to love our fellow human beings by letting them rest as well. Now, at the same time, so we see the Sabbath command is both about loving God and loving neighbor.

But at the same time, the last six commands, which we might think are mostly about loving our neighbors, are also about loving God as well. So take the eighth commandment. You shall not

steal.

[ 28 : 59 ] Right? Many of us might think, well, that's about the right to private property. Which the Bible does affirm. The importance of private property. But it also places limits on that.

Actually, later in Deuteronomy, in chapter 23, verse 24, God says, if you're walking through your neighbor's vineyard, you can feel free to eat as many grapes as you want. But you can't put them in a basket and take them with you and go sell them somewhere.

So there was a concern both for private property but also for the common good. Providing a way for people who had no other way to eat. To be able to go and get something.

But even more than that, the underlying principle behind don't steal is that God owns everything. Everything we have belongs to God. Everything in the world belongs to God.

God says in Leviticus 25, 23, he says, the land is mine. You're just my tenants. In other words, I'm the landlord. You're the renters.

[ 30 : 05 ] You're just managers. I'm the owner of everything. And so God commands us not only to not steal, but also, he says, commandment 10, don't covet.

Right? Now, if you're just thinking, well, how do we make an ethical code that will prevent other people from being harmed? Well, really, you can covet all you want.

You just have to not let your neighbor know that you're coveting. And you just have to not follow through on your covetous desire for whatever they have. But you can be as envious and jealous as you want under a sort of radical libertarian ethic.

But God's saying, no, it's not just about not harming your neighbor. That's only the beginning. It's about loving me. First of all, it's about living out of a covenant relationship with your Lord.

About being not covetous, but content. So that's why Paul can say in the New Testament, I've learned the secret of being content in plenty or in want.

[ 31 : 17 ] Because I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. See, when you look into all the commandments, God is always at the center of the picture.

He's saying, I brought you out of Egypt. I carried you through the wilderness. And I will carry you and be with you into the future. Whatever you may face, I am all that you need.

So fix your eyes on me and be content. God desires to shape and order not only our words and actions, but also our thoughts and desires.

He wants our heart. He wants to capture our heart. He wants our undivided loyalty. And so the first commandment, in some sense, is the foundation of all the rest.

I'll go back to that one again. Don't have any other gods before me. Now, we could easily take a whole sermon on each of the Ten Commandments. I realize there are a lot of things that I won't have covered in this sermon.

[ 32 : 23 ] But let me conclude by briefly considering the first command. What it meant for Israel and what it might look like for us. To have no other gods but the true and living God.

Now, think about it. Moses is speaking these words to Israel as they're about to enter the promised land. For the last 40 years, they've been wandering through the desert, living as nomads.

And before that, they were in Egypt as slaves. They were making bricks. Seems like many of them, if not all of them, were manual laborers. But now they're about to enter the promised land.

Where for the first time in many generations, they'll own land. They'll plant gardens. They'll raise crops. For the first time in many generations.

And so they'll have to learn how to live an agricultural lifestyle. They'll have to learn how to be good farmers. But when they go into the land of Canaan, agriculture or farming and religion were closely connected.

[ 33 : 30 ] And so if you ask a Canaanite farmer, how do you be a good farmer? He'll say, well, you use these tools and you plant your crops. And then you go to the fertility god temple and pray.

And then in the middle of the summer, when it's storm season, you offer a sacrifice to the storm god to prevent the storms from destroying your crops. And then after the harvest, you go celebrate in another fertility god temple or in the crop god temple.

See, religion and the practice of farming, the pagan religion, were just tied up all together. And of course, to most of us, we think, well, of course you can separate those two.

Of course, you don't need to go to a pagan god's temple to be a good farmer. But back then, it wasn't so obvious. So let me ask, what are the idols that, what are the resonant idols in the world that you inhabit?

What are the idols that become intertwined with legitimate pursuits and important work like your job or what you're studying? Or raising a family?

[ 34 : 41 ] What are the idols that get all connected with what it means to be a good parent or successful worker?

They might not be as obvious to us as Canaanite fertility shrines, but they're probably there. A couple of years ago, my wife and I were talking with one of her friends whose name is Gloria. And Gloria had recently started a PhD program up at Harvard. And she told us, she was studying history, and she told us about one of her professors who had spoken to the incoming class. And he was speaking about the importance of studying history and the greatness of their program. And he said, we want to send you out into the world as missionaries of history. He literally used that phrase, missionaries of history. And she thought, somehow, for this professor, it's not just an academic program anymore.

[ 35 : 44 ] This has become his religion. This has become a life-defining identity, an all-consuming passion, or in biblical terms, an idol.

Now, of course, to most, if not all of us, the professor's words sound silly and pretentious. But think about your own career field, or whatever the work is that you're doing, whatever your ambitions and hopes are.

What are the idolatrous ambitions, the pretensions that have become entangled with good and important work? What would it look like for you to inhabit your workplace, or to live in your neighborhood, or to raise your family, without getting sucked into the prevalent patterns of idol worship, disentangling those things, and living into the calling that God has placed on your life, in the framework of a covenant relationship with him, where your loyalty is to him, and not to the other things?

You know, this is a big question. And I encourage you, discuss this this week in your small groups. Or discuss it downstairs after service. Because it'll look differently for everyone, depending on where you are. But consider what that would look like.

What are the idols that inhabit your world? And what would it look like for you to live in loyalty to the God who's rescued you in Christ? You shall have no other gods before me.

[ 37 : 20 ] In Jesus Christ, God has brought us under his wing. He has called us to be his bride, and to live in an eternal covenant relationship with him. He offers that relationship to every one of you, if you will turn to him and simply trust and accept and believe in him.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for these words, for your covenant with the people of Israel.

We thank you for your grace, how we see your rescuing grace. That brought them to yourself. Lord, we thank you that you have not stopped being a God of rescuing grace.

And we see that even more in Jesus Christ. We thank you for how he has rescued us. By his sacrifice on the cross, by his resurrection.

As we sang earlier in that song, that Christ is risen from the dead. And we are one with him. Come awake. Lord, we pray that you would teach us how to live as your covenant people.

[ 38 : 35 ] That you would be ordering our lives around our first and foremost, our loyalty to you. And that you would enable us to love our neighbors by the power of your Holy Spirit.

We pray this all in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.