

Sunday, August 12, 2012

Principles of Covenant Relationships
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1 Corinthians 10:16-17 (KJV)

¹⁶ The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

¹⁷ For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

The blood of Christ does not cover sins the blood of bulls and goats covered sin, but the blood of Christ blots it out, where there is NO remembrance of it.

In verse 17 Jesus is talking about how Christians make up the body, which Jesus is the head.

In relationship to the early church, in the latter part of Acts Chapter 2 it seemed the church had everything going in their favor. It was growing and had momentum. Then all of a sudden the adversary came in different ways to stir up problems to interrupt the unity and harmony the early church had.

In Acts chapter 5 Ananias and Sapphira his wife began to lie to the Holy Ghost over money and fell dead in church. Then in Acts chapter 6 there was squabbling over who was getting the most care and attention in the church. In Acts chapter 7 Stephen was martyred and in Acts chapter 8 a great persecution occurred via Saul. Then In Acts chapter 9 Saul gets saved and becomes Paul but the church didn't agree if he really was or not. There was always contention among them. In Acts chapter 12 James was beheaded and in Acts chapter 15 the early church almost split over circumcision.

All throughout the book of Acts are examples of the constant intrusion and trying to disrupt and interrupt the unity and peace that they had in the beginning. Many times when we come to know Jesus we have that time of bliss in the beginning. After the new wears off reality sets in and we must live and walk out our lives.

In speaking of a covenant relationship such as the one we have with Jesus whose blood was shed for us and it did seal the new covenant for us, however when we come to Jesus through him we come into a covenant relationship with one another. A covenant does not just know who we are in Jesus and what He has done for us, but it is beginning to walk out the reality of our salvation and the principles we find in the word of God.

Unfortunately, in church is one of the places that walking out differences with one another is going to occur. Normally the average person runs from that, but yet the church is where we

learn to walk in love, to bestow forgiveness, and learn to accept one another just as Jesus did you and I.

There are principles to follow to be in and walk out a covenant relationship with one another. If we are going to walk out a covenant relationship with many different members that make up the body of Christ we must know these principles that give us the understanding of the ways of God.

Principle One: We must learn to accept people the way they are, the way Jesus accepts.

The church is not all about making converts it's about discipling people and that is growing and developing them. In relationship to that the church sometimes falls short of accepting people the way they are. Jesus accepts us just the way we are. He begins to work with us and teach us and to develop us and ideally we are changed little by little into the image and character of Him then we will begin to produce the fruit of the spirit and have it manifest in our life.

Romans 15:7 (KJV)

⁷ Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

A challenge as it may be, when we learn to develop the characteristic of receiving one another it's going to bring glory to God because we are acting like Jesus would act. We are all familiar with conditional love but unconditional love is doing right whether anyone else is doing right or not. That attitude must not come out of arrogance, pride, defiance or rebellion. It must be done in the attitude of serving Jesus regardless of what anyone else does.

Unity and harmony must be walked out. The farther we go and become like Jesus that area of allowing selfishness to operate in our life gets smaller and smaller and smaller.

Pastor was led to add some info by the leading of the Holy Ghost for someone in service.

2 Thessalonians 3:5-6 (KJV)

⁵ And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

⁶ Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

There are some Christians in the body of Christ that are going to cause some difficulty and we shouldn't be associating with a trouble maker.

2 Thessalonians 3:13-15 (KJV)

¹³ But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

¹⁴ And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

¹⁵ Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Paul uses balance. Just don't write people off but stand up for what is right. Within covenant relationships in accepting one another we are to use common sense.

We are to learn to accept people the way they are for the sake of the local body because where there is unity and harmony that is where God commands his blessings.

The only way we can accept one another with the way we are is by allowing God's love to dominate us. The God kind of love that is unconditional.

Principle Two: We learn to treat people the way God treats us.

To treat is to actually do something. We can sit back and say we accept someone but to treat is going to require acts of kindness. Now that is challenging. We don't stiff arm them and hold them at arm's length. We don't hold things against them. If you are in a covenant relationship we will treat others the way Jesus actually treats us. First Corinthians one shows how Paul is viewing the Corinthian church and how he sees them in position with Jesus and how they are seen through Jesus.

1 Corinthians 1:1-7 (KJV)

1 Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's:

3 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

In the beginning of the book of Corinthians Paul is building them up even though they were not acting or behaving so much like Christians should. Then he corrects them for what they have fallen into because they are in a covenant relationship.

You can't bring correction to someone out of arrogance and treating them as if you are better than they are.

Galatians 6:1 (KJV)

6 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

A mark of being a spiritual person is that when someone makes a mistake, you have in mind restoration for that person and for the glory of the kingdom of God.

Meekness means you are teachable, controllable, and coachable. It is strength in control. When we learn to treat others the way Jesus would it's going to take the strength you have in control because your strength can destroy or build up. When we treat others the way Jesus would we will have a spirit of meekness.

You can't play God and treat others the way Jesus would treat you and I because we are in covenant with one another because of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Principle Three: Covenant never marks a person by their past.

You can't mark and write people off by their past or you will write off much talent and ability. The church needs them. That is why Jesus came because of the past and so that we don't have to pay for it because Jesus did.

Psalm 130:3 (KJV)

³ If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

If we start judging someone by their past we might ought to look in the mirror. Thank God for the blood of Christ.

God's covenant is based on God's provision or actually the blood that Jesus shed. There are times when we start treating others the way Jesus would treat them and then we will start exhibiting and manifesting the character of the Lord Jesus Christ.

These principles are a learned process and there is progression in them.

Ephesians 4:16 (KJV)

¹⁶ From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Everyone that is a part of a local church has a supply or gift that will cause the church to be complete, and without that there is a little incompleteness or gap.

Ephesians 4:1-3 (AMP)

4 I therefore, the prisoner for the Lord, appeal to and beg you to walk (lead a life) worthy of the [divine] calling to which you have been called [with behavior that is a credit to the summons to God's service,

² Living as becomes you] with complete lowliness of mind (humility) and meekness (unselfishness, gentleness, mildness), with patience, bearing with one another and making allowances because you love one another.

³ Be eager and strive earnestly to guard and keep the harmony and oneness of [and produced by] the Spirit in the binding power of peace.

Paul always said he was a prisoner for the Lord and not his circumstances or adversity. Circumstances never kept him bound to how he would react. When god's love is in you, you will make allowances for others. In a covenant relationship you will have to make an effort to keep the peace.

Ephesians 4:32 (AMP)

³² And become useful and helpful and kind to one another, tenderhearted (compassionate, understanding, loving-hearted), forgiving one another [readily and freely], as God in Christ forgave you.

God does not forgive us because we deserve it. He forgives because of the price his son paid for our redemption. So we forgive the same way because Jesus paid the price for our redemption.

Pastor gave an invitation of salvation, recommitment and to pray for those who were being challenged in the area of walking in love towards one another.