

Theology Matters

FALL SEMESTER 2025



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11. Covenant Theology – Part 2

“The biblical covenants form the unifying thread of God’s saving action through Scripture, beginning explicitly with Noah and reaching fulfillment in the new covenant ratified through the blood of Jesus Christ.” — Paul R. Williamson

Brief review:

- There are several primary areas within doctrinal studies. Our Wednesday night class has addressed the following:
 - **The Doctrine of Scripture:** the nature of Scripture—authority, inspiration, inerrancy.
 - **The Doctrine of God:** the Divine attributes and the Trinity.
 - **The Doctrine of Man:** human origins and the image of God.
 - **The Doctrine of Sin:** the nature and consequences of sin.
 - **The Doctrine of Christ:** the person and works of Christ.
 - **The Doctrine of Salvation:** the beginning, continuation, and completion of salvation.
 - **The Doctrine of the Church:** the nature, role, polity, unity, and ordinances of the church.
 - **Covenant Theology:** “...views the Bible’s story from the perspective of three covenants: the covenant of redemption, the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace (Morgan and Peterson, 42–43).”
 - **Definition:** “an unchangeable, divinely imposed legal agreement between God and man that stipulates the conditions of their relationship”(Grudem, 515).
 - **Key Question:** Does the Bible tell a unified story about one covenant people? Or does the Bible speak of two covenant people: ethnic Israel and the church?

Big Idea: The person and work of Christ creates one covenant people.

Covenant theology is a helpful method of reading and interpreting Scripture for two reasons:

1. Covenant theology is based on scriptural evidence.
2. Covenant theology provides a logical explanation for the relationship between Israel and the church.

What are the covenants?

- **The Covenant of Redemption**

- "The Covenant of Redemption is a pact made between the persons of the Trinity to save humans through the work of the Son of God" (Morgan and Peterson, 43).

- **Father**

- In. 3:16-17: ¹⁶For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes [in] him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son [into] the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved [through] him.
- In. 17:1-2, 6: ²When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes [to] heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, ²since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him... ⁶I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me [out] of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

- **Son**

- In. 17:12: ¹²While I was [with] them, I kept them [in] your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one [of] them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.
- Phil. 2: 5-8: ⁶Have this mind [among] yourselves, which is yours [in] Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was [in] the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born [in] the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the [point] of death, even death on a cross.

- **Spirit**

- Matt. 3:16: ¹⁶And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up [from] the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest [on] him; ¹⁷and behold, a voice [from] heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, [with] whom I am well pleased."
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- John 14:16–17: ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be [with] you [forever], ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells [with] you and will be [in] you.

- **The Covenant of Works**

- “The covenant of works is an agreement between God and Adam, promising Adam and humanity, whom Adam represented, life for obedience and death for disobedience (Morgan and Peterson, 43).”
 - Gen. 2:16–17: And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’
 - Rom. 5:12–14: ¹² [Therefore], just as sin came [into] the world [through] one man, and death [through] sin, and so death spread [to] all men [because] all sinned— ¹³ for sin indeed was [in] the world [before] the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned [from] Adam [to] Moses, even [over] those whose sinning was not [like] the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

- **The Covenant of Grace**

- “God makes the covenant of grace with humanity fallen in Adam and promises eternal life to all who are saved by faith in the Mediator. It encompasses the biblical covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and the new covenant, which is fulfilled in Christ (Morgan and Peterson, 43).”
 - Covenant with Noah (Gen. 9:8–17)
 - Covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:1–3)
 - Covenant with Moses (Ex. 19:5–6)
 - Covenant with David (2 Sam. 7:12–16)
 - The New Covenant
 - Jer. 31:31–34: ³¹ “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³² 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, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. ³³ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”
 - Heb. 9:11–15: ¹¹ But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then [through] the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) ¹² he entered once for all [into] the holy places, not [by] means of the

blood of goats and calves but [by] means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify [for] the purification of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who [through] the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience [from] dead works [to] serve the living God. ¹⁵ [Therefore] he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred [that] redeems them from the transgressions committed [under] the first covenant.

- **One Covenant People**

- Rom. 3:21–31
- Eph. 2:11–22

Notes:
