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## Salvation pt. 7

We're still doing a series on the reality of salvation. This is part seven of that series. I don't have time to review our previous sessions in this series, only to mention what we have covered to refresh our memory.

We have looked at the reality that our salvation is a Person named "I Am". Salvation is not a thing that He gives you, but Him being given to you as your life. We then looked at the reality that salvation is an ending of one man and the partaking of Another. The destruction of one kind and the increase of another. That was the old and new man. Then we looked at the reality that salvation is the end of one realm, one place, one creation. And the translating of your soul into a new life, realm, place. That had to do with old and new creation. And then last week we began our discussion on the old and new covenant.

I want to pick up where we left off last week. If you'll recall, a covenant is the nature of a relationship. It is the understanding or agreement by which two parties walk as one. The Old Covenant was the nature or kind of relationship that God had with Israel. The New Covenant is the nature or kind of relationship that God has with those who are in Christ.

And the two relationships are entirely different from one another. Both of them are a people in relationship with God wherein Christ is made manifest. But in the one, Christ is made manifest through natural things, natural kingdom, natural priesthood, natural sacrifices, natural tabernacle, etc. In the other, Christ is made manifest through His very Spirit and Life expressed in and through a people.

Again, both are relationships that God established with people in order to bring forth an expression of His Son. But they are totally different in the way that that happens. In the Old Covenant, the expression of His Son was accomplished through a people in relationship with God doing things that gave testimony of the Son of God. In the New Covenant, the expression of His Son is accomplished through a people in union with that very Son, becoming the living witness of His life through their mortal flesh.

What a difference. The first is the testimony of the second. The second is the fulfillment, substance, experience, and reality of the first.

The first was material, natural, corruptible and temporal. It was a type and shadow of the second. The second was spiritual, incorruptible and everlasting. The first, as Hebrews says, was the natural copy of the second. The second was the very reality now living in you in the Person of Jesus Christ.

And Israel, incidentally, has the same purpose in both covenants. Israel is the people in relationship with God through whom God displays his Son, His glory. And in the old covenant, that display of glory, that display of Christ was through earthly,

carnal, natural things. But still, God said of Israel in Exodus 22:4 "Israel is My Son, even MY Firstborn."

In the New Covenant, the display of the glory of God is Christ now living in you, formed in you, and expressed through you. And as Paul says in Galatians 6 and elsewhere, you are the "Israel of God". All of those who are now in that Son. "Jew and Gentile, yet neither Jew or Gentile, but one new man in Christ" For in Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, Barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, male or female, but it is now Christ all and in all". Now, in us it is truly fulfilled "Israel is my Son, even my Firstborn". And so we are called the very body of Christ.

But in both cases, the relationship that God established (first with the natural seed, and then with the spiritual Seed) had to do with the experience and expression of Christ – who is made unto us salvation.

Now a lot of people hear this and know it is true, but then go on to say something like "ok, now that it is the manifestation of Christ in and through me....how do I do that?".

And that's always the big question for those who start to see the reality of full salvation. For those who see that you can't "do dog", but "dog" must be formed in you. That was certainly my first questions. And I know that there are many people here who have wrestled with that question and have come out of that wrestling match with understanding. But there are also some here this morning who are newer among us, or perhaps are just still wrestling there.

And nobody likes to hear this at first. It will become music to your ears eventually. But its simply not your "how", it is His "Who". Now that doesn't mean that it doesn't actually happen. That doesn't mean that it won't transform you. It will. Its just that the "how do I do it" question is a contradiction of the reality of this relationship. It is contrary to this covenant that we are in.

In the New Covenant, it is not something that you are supposed to do to be like Him. Like build this temple, kill this animal, and stop lying. That is the Old Covenant. In the New Covenant it is not something you do – period. That's the whole point! It is actually an escaping from all that you do, and all that you could never do. It is actually the reality of "not I, but Christ that lives in me". It is coming to live in and by the "one that mightily works within you".

We must understand that it is the Old Covenant that served the copy of Christ in the flesh. And it is the New Covenant that manifests the reality of Christ in Spirit and Truth. And at first, I know...that is offensive the natural mind. It is contrary to so much that Christian religion throws at you. 10 steps to being like Jesus...and all of that.

But this covenant is not an attempt to be like Jesus. Do you see that? That was the Old Covenant. Be like Jesus by putting on these white linen garments, killing a lamb, and going into this booth for 7 days. No...that covenant, as Hebrews 8 says, became obsolete in the coming of the new. This covenant isn't trying to be like Jesus. This covenant is Christ Himself living in you.

Yes you are conformed to His image. But that is as His very life is formed in you and has expression through your soul through the renewing of your mind. Yes you end

up looking and acting like Him, but that is because, as 2 Peter 1:4 says "you have become partakers of the divine nature", and that nature becomes the nature of your soul.

Can you see the difference here? This covenant has to do with the abiding in and exhibiting of Christ. And that is not a work done by human hands, but a living relationship that flows out of union with Him. It is not your work, it is the byproduct of his finished work, and you will experience it as that work is revealed in you.

So, again, this covenant is not a "how" to be like Him. It's a "Who" lives in you. Who is your life. And that is far more than just a difference in words. That is an altogether different relationship. It is a New Covenant. And it is a covenant, a relationship, that we must come to comprehend by His Spirit, or we will continue to live in the illusion of the old.

Most often when I teach on a subject I use either an actual picture up here on the white board, or a word picture or analogy that helps illustrate my point. The analogy that I often use when teaching on the New Covenant is the hand analogy. It is another analogy that is on the "Not I, but Christ" series. But I haven't done it here on a Sunday for probably a couple years. I actually tried to think of a new hip analogy, but I couldn't think of one that better illustrates the nature of the New Covenant.

So here's the hand analogy. If you've heard it before, let the Lord take you deeper with it. Think about your hand for a minute. You are obviously aware that you are experiencing a union of life with your hand. It doesn't even make sense for your hand to operate independently of your life and your will.

But lets just say, for the sake of this analogy, that my hand grew lips. And then it turned and said to me..."oh Jason, what I wouldn't give to be close to you. I just wish you would come visit with me and tell me what I could do to be like you."

I would turn to my hand and say "Hand, there's obviously been some misunderstanding. I really appreciate your heart in saying that, but if you saw clearly, you would understand that you are joined to me and I am joined to you. In fact, my very life is flowing through you. You don't have to try to be **like me**, you simply have to manifest my life."

And then the hand turns back to me and says "Jason, that's profound...but what do I have to do to get closer to you. I'd do anything. I'll fast, I'll pray, I'll do good deeds.." And I would again say, "Hand, you obviously don't comprehend something here. There's a lack of understanding about who you are, where you are, what you are. And that lack of comprehension is drastically affecting your sense of reality. You cannot do anything to get closer to me. You are joined to me by life. You just don't see our union."

And then the hand says "yes, that's all very nice. I've read about that in a book, but **lets get practical**. I want a prophetic word about how to do your will. I want to feel accepted. And I need something I can work with. Something that makes sense! Maybe a seven step program." And I would say "there's nothing more practical then you simply manifesting my life in all that you do. That's all that I want from you, Hand"

And then my hand says "ok, Jason...this is getting frustrating. You stay there, and I'm going to go and do a bunch of good works for you. Then maybe you'll listen to me." And then I say to my hand "you know, you can try to go and do a bunch of good things for me. But all that I want from you is that you simply become the manifestation of my life working in you. In fact, there is no such thing as a good work unless I'm the author of it. Apart from me, you can do nothing good because "goodness" is bound up with my life and will." (Doesn't that sound like something Jesus said?)

And then my sad hand drops its head in sorrow and says "can't anybody give me some practical instructions on how to fulfill my spiritual potential. Can't somebody tell me "what would Jason do?. This guy wont give me anything practical. He's speaking in riddles."

Can you see that, because of the relationship that I am in with my hand – one of union, one where my life is the life of the hand – that my hand is not supposed to be trying to "be like me". Its single purpose is to manifest my life in the world.

Maybe, if you use your imagination, you can picture a time when it wasn't joined to my body. Maybe then it had another purpose, another relationship with me. But now that its been joined to me in union, it no longer makes sense (except in the vanity of my hand's unrenewed mind) to imitate me or try to be like me or try to get close to me.

**Why do these things not make sense? Because of the relationship that we are in – my hand and I. The nature of the relationship. The covenant.**

What is wrong with the hand? That hand is in a relationship, a covenant, that it does not understand. The hand does not comprehend what it is, where it is, and to whom it has been joined. The hand doesn't understand "abiding in Jason" because it still sees itself as an independent life. The hand does not understand "living by the Jason" "Walking in the Jason", because it doesn't understand the covenant.

Its failure to operate according to covenant relationship was the result of a huge misunderstanding of that relationship. There wasn't an agreement between me and hand about how we moved as one. There was one body, but two minds. There wasn't a common foundational understanding that it was "no longer hand but Jason." The hand had been grafted into Jason, but still thought it was separate. The hand had died and its new life was hidden in Jason. But it still thought of itself alive separate from Jason. And so it acted out of its comprehension. It lived according to that comprehension. It related to me according to that comprehension.

**My hand was wanting to serve me as one separate and not live as one joined.** May I suggest to you that much of the church is in the same boat. And the primary reason is a major misunderstanding of the cross and our union with Christ. In other words, we misunderstand the nature and reality of the New Covenant.

It is absolutely essential for those of us who are in the New Covenant, to understand the covenant that God has with us. To comprehend the nature of our relationship with Him.

The hand analogy demonstrates the nature of the New Covenant. And I didn't come up with this analogy. Its an analogy that Paul used to describe the reality of

salvation. A body with many members. But we so often think of his words as having reference to the many functions of those members, rather than the fact that all members move in and by the life that fills them all.

In other words, we call ourselves the body of Christ, but we don't realize that apart from the movement of the one Life through each member, all you have is an independent muscle spasm. We like to think of ourselves with our natural giftings as so very important to the functioning of His body. But does it matter what gifting a hand has that does not manifest the life of the head?

I am not saying that God cannot or does not use natural gifting. But I am saying that natural gifting is just part of a vessel that is only as important or helpful to the body as its movement and activity come out from the head.

Anyway, the relationship that you have with God is called "being in Christ". You abide in Him. You are found in Him. You walk by His Spirit. You manifest the fruit of His Spirit. You strive according to His power working mightily in you. You make His life manifest through your mortal flesh. These are quotations from the New Testament. This is the reality of what is "now in Christ".

So, going back to something I said earlier, there are enumerable ways in which we have come out of the Old Covenant, but it has not come out of us. Ways in which we continue to completely misunderstand the nature of our relationship with God.

Some examples: my hand, in the analogy, kept trying to think of things that it could do to get closer to me. Can you see that that is an Old Covenant mindset? But churches are full of people who are seeking desperately to "get closer to God".

My hand, in the analogy, was praying for a visitation. That is an old covenant mindset. How many of us who have come from Pentecostal and Charismatic backgrounds have spent countless hours praying for a visitation from the very one who lives in your soul?

(I am not denying the reality of unusual demonstrations of the Spirit of God in meetings, but I am saying that that is not "God coming down for a visit")

My hand, in this analogy kept trying to please me through its own actions. That is an old covenant mindset because in this new relationship, this New Covenant, the way to please the head is to move with, live by, His life. John 15 "a branch cannot bear fruit apart from the Vine. Apart from me you can do nothing".

My hand wanted a practical instruction manual on how to live for me. That is an Old Covenant mindset because in the New Covenant it is no longer a matter of instructions on how to modify natural behavior to look like Christ, it is the actual manifestation of the nature of Christ resident in the soul of man.

My hand wanted to be accepted based on what it was or what it could do. But its acceptance had to do with the one to whom it was joined. It was accepted in me. Ephesians 1:6 "He has made us accepted in the Beloved".

We could go on and on, but I trust that the Spirit of God will make application in your own heart. And really, that is how you learn this covenant. I mentioned above

that this is not a "how" but a "who". That is true. And that is because it is the "Who" who is the nature and reality of your relationship with God.

How does the reality of the New Covenant become the reality of your heart. The reality that is working in you? How does the "Who" start to become your "how" in all things? Only when Christ, who is your salvation, who is your relationship with the Father, who is the very life of your soul, is unveiled by the Spirit of God to be all of these.

You don't need to worry about "how" you'll do anything. The knowing of the "Who" as the reality of life in your soul changes everything.

You see, this covenant is not written on stone or parchment to be studied and applied to your life. That is another Old Covenant reality. This covenant isn't even written on paper. Do you know that? This covenant is described by writings on paper, but it is written on human hearts. This isn't a natural agreement that can be carved out of a rock. The New Covenant is an understanding, an agreement, a knowing that it is no longer I but Christ. And it is given by God and written the only place where a relationship can be known – on the human heart.

Wouldn't it be weird if I handed you a book and said "hey, check this out. This book is my relationship with my wife." Well, that wouldn't make any sense. That book may *describe* my relationship with my wife. But my wife would be pretty irritated if our relationship existed on pages, but was not known, understood, and experienced in my heart.

The New Testament is not the New Covenant. The New Testament is the writings of men who had come to know the reality of the New Covenant. The New Testament describes, explains, testifies to this covenant, but to find the place where this covenant becomes substance, becomes a reality, you need to look on the human heart because that's where it was written.

And to learn this covenant, you cannot simply read a book. People can memorize the New Testament and come to know nothing of the New Covenant. But to walk in the New Covenant, it must be revealed by the Spirit where it is written.

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3 – "its not a ministry of the letter, it's a ministry of the Spirit, written on your heart by the finger of God", and the Spirit of God is the one that teaches you this Covenant. No person can teach you the New Covenant. A person can read you the New Testament. A person can teach you theology. But a person cannot teach you the new covenant in such a way that it becomes reality.

It is taught by the one in whom you have this relationship. It is taught by the one who knows the "deep things of God". It is taught by the one who has joined you to Himself. It is a work of the Spirit through the revealing of Christ. And so in this covenant it is not people teaching other people how to know God. In this covenant it is God revealing His Son in you.

And this is why Jeremiah, speaking of this covenant, so plainly says:

33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, **"I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it;** and I will be their God, and they shall be My

people. 34 **"They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,"**

This covenant cannot really be taught by man because it is a relationship of union with Christ in God. Its not words, it's a spiritual reality. Its not doctrines, its a Person who has become your life. If it were just doctrines, a man can teach it. But its a union of life. And thus the Spirit of truth must unveil this reality, this relationship, this Person, in us.

So to summarize: Salvation is the coming out of the Old and into the New Covenant, which is an altogether new relationship with God. The New Covenant is the new understanding or agreement by which God and man came into relationship on the basis of the Cross of Christ. The nature of that relationship is union. The understanding of the covenant is "not I, but Christ." The place where that covenant is described is the New Testament. But the place where the reality and substance of that covenant is written is the human heart. And the way that the covenant is learned, experienced, walked in is when Christ, who is your life, is revealed in you by the Holy Spirit.