

# God's Covenants

## Understanding Covenants

### Key idea:

A covenant is an oath defining the nature, promises, and consequences of a relationship.

### Key text:

Deuteronomy 29:9–15

Carefully follow the terms of this covenant, so that you may prosper in everything you do. <sup>10</sup> All of you are standing today in the presence of the Lord your God — your leaders and chief men, your elders and officials, and all the other men of Israel, <sup>11</sup> together with your children and your wives, and the aliens living in your camps who chop your wood and carry your water. <sup>12</sup> You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with the Lord your God, a covenant the Lord is making with you this day and sealing with an oath, <sup>13</sup> to confirm you this day as his people, that he may be your God as he promised you and as he swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. <sup>14</sup> I am making this covenant, with its oath, not only with you <sup>15</sup> who are standing here with us today in the presence of the Lord our God but also with those who are not here today.

### Key points:

1. The concept of 'covenant' is critically important in the Bible. Covenants structure the entire Bible and govern the relationship between God and humanity.
2. Covenants are solemn oaths that establish or confirm a relationship and which defines the nature, promises, and consequences of that relationship.
3. The goal of God's covenants is to create and redeem a people in whom He might dwell so they will glorify and enjoy Him forever.
4. The focus and fulfillment of all of God's covenants is Jesus Christ
5. The purpose of God's covenants is to be an anchor for our faith.

### **Questions for discussion/application:**

1. What part of Sunday's text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. Have I ever thought about the importance of covenant? Have I thought about how they structure all of Scripture and are woven into the fabric of my daily life?
3. Some people claim that the idea of 'covenant' is legal and therefore inherently not relational. Is this true? Can something be both legal and relational? Can I give some examples of this?
4. How important is the covenant motto "I will be your God and you will be my people"? When I consider that it appears in Genesis 17:7; Exodus 6:7; Leviticus 26:12; Deuteronomy 29:13; 2 Samuel 7:24; Jeremiah 32:38; Ezekiel 11:20; Zechariah 13:9; 2 Corinthians 6:16, Hebrews 8:10, and Revelation 21:3, what does this tell me about its importance? Is it the motto of one of God's covenants or all of them?
5. Am I surprised that the focus and fulfillment of all of God's covenants is Jesus? Is this how I have usually thought about some of God's covenants in the Old Testament?
6. If the covenant motto is the same in all of God's covenants and Jesus is the focus and fulfillment of all of God's covenants, what does this tell me about the unity of God's covenants? Are they essentially unified or essentially distinct? Do they replace one another, or are they more of an unfolding of God's single covenant with us?
7. How does Hebrews 6:16-20 indicate that God's covenants should work in my daily life and walk with God? How is His covenant an anchor for my soul?
8. How is our worship each Sunday covenantal? How are my daily responsibilities in family, church, and society covenantal?
9. Whom can I pray for, share what I have learned, and invite to church this week?

### **Preview of next week: The Covenant of Creation (Genesis 1:26-2:3; 2:15-17)**