

## Doctrine of Covenant Theology

1. Reformed Theology is often called Covenant Theology, because of the emphasis in Scripture on covenants.
2. Through various covenants God has revealed His divine plan. We speak, for example of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant, because the Bible uses this terminology.
  - *Jeremiah 31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:*
  - *Hebrews 8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:*
  - *Hebrews 8:13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*
  - *Hebrews 12:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*
3. Biblical revelation in Scripture is progressive. As history moves on God gives more and more revelation of Himself.
4. The new revelation is not corrective, for God does not need to correct Himself. But the new revelation is additional. God adds information for the benefit of humanity.
5. The basic structure that carries that divine information is the structure of the covenant.
6. What is a covenant? A covenant involves some type of an agreement.

### ***Special Note.***

Covenants are foundational to life.

**A Political Contract.** We are a United States based on the concept of a covenant which is an agreement between the government and the people. John Locke (August 29, 1632 – October 28, 1704) gave us the political theory of the Social Contract of government.

**An Industrial Contract.** When people go to work they may sign a contract setting for the obligations of management, and the responsibilities of the employee.

**Commercial (Consumer Contract).** When a credit card is used, the consumer enters into a contract to pay for whatever is purchased according to a fixed rate of interest, and on certain dates.

Marriage Contract. The marriage contract is a legal binding of two people to a relationship based on oaths, vows, and promises, with rights and privileges for each party. Any profound violation of the marriage contract can end in divorce, which nullifies, or dissolves the contract.

7. Each of the social covenants reflect Biblical covenants with this difference. Biblical covenants are established on the basis of divine sanction.
8. A Biblical covenant is made, not on the basis of equal parties, but upon the sovereignty of God. The promise of God is given, and thus the covenant is a religious contract.
9. The key element in redemptive history is the unity between promise and fulfillment. God has made promises to His people, and He has kept those promises.
10. Any relationship between God and people that exists is there because God is a God who keeps His covenant. Men are covenant breakers, but God is a covenant keeping God.
11. The covenants of God are without mutation. The divine covenants are everlasting promises that God commits Himself to.

***Special Note.***

When God made His covenant with Abraham to have a seed, the centuries past, but the promise of God stood firm. When Mary was with child she understood her place in redemptive history and in *The Magnificat* spoke of the covenant keeping God's promise "to Abraham, and to his seed forever."

Abraham. *Genesis 12:1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

Mary. *Luke 1:46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. 48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. 49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. 50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. 51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. 52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. 53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. 54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; 55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever.*

12. The hardest thing in the world is to live by faith, and not by sight. Christians have not seen God. We are not witnesses of the resurrection. The just shall live by faith.

***Special Note.***

It is one thing to be in God. That is an intellectual proposition. But it is another thing to believe God. To believe God is to believe His Word, and to embrace His covenants. Living faith is trusting the promises of God. It is foolish not to trust in the promises of God, for He has proven Himself to be trustworthy.

### **The Covenant of Redemption**

13. The first covenant was not made with man, but was a covenant made within the triune Godhead. Theologians call it the Covenant of Redemption.
14. Within the trinity, God the Father planned salvation, God the Son agreed to execute the Plan of Salvation, and God the Holy Spirit would execute what the Father planned, and the Son executed.
  - The Father's Plan. God sent His Son into the world in order to carry out His plan of redemption. *John 10:36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?*
  - The Son's Execution of the Father's Will. The Son was pleased to do the will of the Father, because they were in perfect agreement concerning the Plan of Salvation. *John 6:38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*
  - The Holy Spirit in Agreement. In the Plan of Redemption the Holy Spirit is in agreement and converts those who are to be the heirs of salvation. It is the Spirit who illuminates the Word of God to us. It is the Spirit who regenerates the soul. It is the Spirit who brings a person to the Son who reconciles us to God. *John 3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*
15. Redemption is a Trinitarian work. Redemption is not an afterthought in the mind of God. Before the foundation of the world, before He created the world, God had in mind an eternal plan of redemption. The Lamb was slain "*from the foundation of the world.*"
  - *Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*
16. The working out of the Covenant of Redemption involved the Perfect Active Obedience of the Son, whereby He came into the world as true humanity, as the Last Adam, to perfectly obey the Law, in order to be the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. As the Last Adam, Jesus fulfilled the works of the Law, reflected in honoring His parents as a child, and being baptized as an adult. In His Active Obedience Jesus achieved perfect righteousness.
  - *Luke 2:51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.*

- *Matthew 3:13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.*

17. The working out of the Covenant of Redemption involved the Perfect Passive Obedience of the Son voluntarily coming into the world to give His life a ransom for many.

- *John 10:17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*