

## Man as Covenanted Creature

*Man as Imago Dei* – Part Two

Genesis 2:7-9, 15-17, Deuteronomy 30:15-20

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### I. The Image of God

As God's image bearers, we are responsible agents. While Satan marred God's image, *he could not have done so without our culpability*. As God's image bearers, all human beings are in relationship with God, we are, Scripture teaches, *in \_\_\_\_\_ with God*; we are *covenantal creatures*.

### II. God's Covenant with Mankind

<sup>7</sup>And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. <sup>8</sup>The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. <sup>9</sup>And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil... <sup>15</sup>Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. <sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; <sup>17</sup>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." (Genesis 2:7–9, 15-17)

*A \_\_\_\_\_ is a binding relationship between two or more persons with privileges and responsibilities*. God breathed into man the breath of life, thus making man a living, responsible creature (7). God established His *covenant of life* with Adam (man) and gave him various *privileges* (16) and *responsibilities* (17). *Adam was bound to God; in covenant with God*. The two trees served as signs of this covenant. God's covenant with Adam was a covenant of \_\_\_\_\_ and death.

### III. Covenantal Principles

#### A. Covenants Image the Triune God (Gen 1:26-28; 2:21-24; Jn 17:20-26)

First, covenants image the Triune God. A covenant takes separate parties and unites them as "\_\_\_\_\_"; this is another way we image *Yahweh* (7,8,9,15,16). So, for example, the marriage covenant takes a man and a woman and makes them "*one flesh*" (2:24).

#### B. God's Covenants Originate in Grace

Second, God's covenants with human beings always originate in His grace. Adam was given life; he didn't earn it. Life came to him as a free gift from a generous Creator. Adam was then summoned to preserve that life by being faithful to God. Whenever God *covenants* with His people, He \_\_\_\_\_, we respond.

#### C. Covenants Establish a Binding Relationship (Gen 2:23; Ezek 16:8)

Third, covenants establish a binding relationship. They take two parties who previously had no "*official*" bond with one another and bind them together. Covenants are typically accompanied by \_\_\_\_\_ in which the parties pledge their fidelity (cf. Gen 2:23; 2 Sam 5:1). Signs are often used to seal the covenant; they symbolize the bond between the parties. To despise the sign is to despise the oath.

#### D. Covenants Belong to God Himself (cf. Pr 2:17; Ez 17:19; Jer 34:8-20)

Because covenants image God's Triune nature, covenants belong to Him. When we make a covenant, when we swear an oath, God Himself is always present as witness (Pr 2:17; Ezek 17:19). Thus, He enforces their terms. He \_\_\_\_\_ those who fulfill their oaths, while He curses those who violate them. As Moses spoke to Israel:

*<sup>15</sup>“See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, <sup>16</sup>in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. <sup>17</sup>But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, <sup>18</sup>I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess. <sup>19</sup>I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; <sup>20</sup>that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.” (Deut 30:15-20)*

Note the stark contrast: to keep covenant is to *choose life*; to break covenant is to choose *death*. Why? Because God is our life and the length of our days (20 cf. Jn 1:4).

### IV. Covenantal Applications

#### A. Take heed that you do not deal treacherously! (Mal 2:13-16)

*<sup>13</sup>And this is the second thing you do: You cover the altar of the LORD with tears, With weeping and crying; So He does not regard the offering anymore, Nor receive it with goodwill from your hands. <sup>14</sup>Yet you say, “For what reason?” Because the LORD has been witness Between you and the wife of your youth, With whom you have dealt treacherously; Yet she is your companion And your wife by covenant. <sup>15</sup>But did He not make them one, Having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. “Therefore take heed to your spirit, And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth. <sup>16</sup>“For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one’s garment with violence,” Says the LORD of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously.” (Mal 2:13-16)*

While the Israelites were very “religious” (13), they were not truly righteous (14). The men were covenant breakers, acting *treacherously* toward their wives (14).

#### B. Beware lest you trample the blood of Christ underfoot (Heb 10:26ff)

As members of the new covenant, we are called to *covenant faithfulness*, hesed, *fidelity*. Like Israel, we are summoned to “*choose life*.” As we practice fidelity, God promises to bless us in innumerable ways (cf. Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21). Simultaneously, He warns us lest we prove unfaithful to the new covenant. For, like Israel of old, if we turn away from God, then He will visit the curses of the covenant upon us.

*<sup>26</sup>For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, <sup>27</sup>but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. <sup>28</sup>Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. <sup>29</sup>Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? <sup>30</sup>For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. And again, “The LORD will judge His people.” <sup>31</sup>It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb 10:26-31 cf. 1 Cor 10:1ff)*

### V. Conclusion