



*Constructing
a Personal Covenant
with The Creator
and The Redeemer*

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*A tradition worthy of
our emulation.*

*A challenge to all those who are
willing to forsake the love of
this world and receive Christ as
their Saviour and King.*

It was a practice of some of the eminent saints of the centuries bygone to make a personal covenant with the blessed Godhead. Such a covenant was constructed as though it was a testament between God and man, with the latter accepting the free offer of the Gospel of the grace of God and imploring God to approve and to seal the acceptance. Although the saints wrote the covenant in such a way that it appeared that it was undertaken at the very point of conversion, in reality, many of them were writing deep in the process of their sanctification and far in their pilgrimage and trials.

Needless to say, such an exercise caters for the remembrance of one's consecration and dedication to God. The very recapitulation of it must instil and renew our devotion and allegiance to our Creator and Redeemer. Above all it evokes in us a sense of our sacred responsibilities and reminds us that we are to be constant and patient in our faithfulness to God. The covenant also serves as a platform to compactly express our prayers for the chiefest needs of our souls. Hence it is a forum for the voicing of our most vehement fears and most acute supplications. It is not difficult therefore to gauge why the covenant was treasured as a very precious personal instrument for the saints of the past and why they cherished it as though it was worth its weight in gold.

As it is a personal implement it is no surprise that the covenant varied from person to person, the only common denominator being the Addressee. However while each covenant was unique and different yet it may not be difficult to identify certain similarities

in style, content and structures in the constitution of the covenant. It is axiomatic that the premises in which the covenant is made is also identical. They must all rest on the Person and work of Christ.

I reckon that it is a good thing to promote this much beneficial act of formulating a covenant between God and man. It is a healthy custom. An exercise truly worthy of our emulation. However we are not to compose one unless we are entirely solemn and serious about it. This is no trifling matter. *"When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."* (Ecclesiastes 5:4,5). Enter not therefore into this solemn bond with the omniscient God until you are ready lest you be guilty of the infringement of the third commandment, *"Thou shalt not take the Name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."* (Exodus 20:7). However when you perceive that you are ready in the erection of it, remember as far as the Most High is concerned, it is no great deal, indeed it is solely by the multitude of His tender mercies which are in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, His eternal Son. It is but our reasonable service. In the design of it do not indulge in plagiarism, as some are wont to do, parroting another's words of consecration but let it flow from the sincerity and feelings of your own heart. While we may observe the basic principles and framework by which our godly forbears established their consecration and union with the blessed three Persons of the Godhead, even the Father, the Son and the

Holy Spirit, we ought to make our personal covenant reflect our own spiritual experience and disposition. It is freakish, to say the least, to manifest and express something which is borrowed from someone else's spiritual history.

Essentially a personal covenant constitutes of three principle categories. The first involves renunciation wherein we affirm our abandonment of our past earthly indulgences, even those desires, acts and habits which are contrary to the Word of God. Also herein we are to declare our forsaking of the love of the world, of all of Satan's domain and tempting offers, of the love of self and of those things that pertains to the promotion of our own glory. (*see Philippians 2:21*).

The second category comprises our acceptance of the offer of the Gospel of the grace of God. This is the positive response to the challenge "*For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved*" (*Joel 2:32; Romans 10:13*). In offering ourselves to God we are to do so on the premises of the Person and atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ and the sure promises of Scriptures. We are to especially to remember the offices of Christ and the vicarious and substitutionary nature of His death. We are also to remember that unless the Holy Spirit brings the merits and efficacy of the shed blood of Christ into our own lives, our profession would be in vain. "*Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*" (*John 1:13*). Affirm that Christ alone can be our Sacrifice and Saviour, our Surety and Mediator in the redemption of our soul. For Jesus alone is "*the way, the truth and the life:*

no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). Acknowledge that we are judicially justified in the sight of the righteous God because of the full obedience and the satisfaction of Christ; wherefore we come before Him altogether without any of our own merits and advantages; for "*all our righteousness are as filthy rags*" (Isaiah 64:6b). We come because of the power of Christ's precious blood avails for the vilest sinner who would but return in penitence.

The third aspect of the covenant involves our dedication and devotion. Herein we pledge our utmost loyalty and fidelity to the eternal God regardless of the circumstances and cost. We are to be faithful unto Him unto death. This must be practically spelt out, for consecration to God is not merely an oral exercise but a down to earth working out both in the public and private dimensions of the spectrum of our lives. When we make resolutions, vows and pledges here, we must be unequivocal and single-eyed albeit trusting upon the grace of Christ to enable us to fulfill what we have willed. It is perhaps good to elaborate here lest we tend to lapse into forgetfulness in the course of time the sacred responsibilities, duties and obligations. It may be judicious for us to identify those impediments and difficulties that could hamper the whole hearted performance of our obedience to the Word of God and then state, if necessary, those contingencies and preemptive measures to counter them.

Perhaps it may be fitting to end the covenant thanking God for all the covenantal blessings and the means of grace that we so

wonderfully enjoy. We do not rest assured in them but we ought to press these advantages to the salvation of our own souls. In a day where there is a famine of God's Word and when professors take the Name of God in vain and trifle with sacred things, derogating His authority and power, despising His servants, slighting His bride the church, it is good for us to let the words of our Lord work out in us a sense of trepidation and urgency, "*For many are called but few are chosen.*" (Matthew 22:14). Wherefore we must write out our covenant so that we may entreat the gracious God not only that we might not be just called but, by the multitude of His tender mercies and by His lovingkindness, we might be chosen as well. The whole covenant must therefore be constituted in the spirit of imploration. For all our renunciation, acceptance and dedication come to nought if the sovereign God would not consecrate and seal our covenant. For though God would reject us, yet still He is righteous and just. Wherefore let none be presumptuous as they undertake this most solemn project. Let him rather immerse himself in earnest prayer desiring God to be gracious to him.

May the blessing of God follow your response to this challenge. ♦

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