

Scripture: Isaiah 54:1-10 & John 1:1-14 CoF 17 (#2)
Singing: 170:1-3 -- 243:1-5 -- 342:3-4 – 125:1, 2, 6

Intro: *When does grace most look like grace?*

A. God's covenant of grace is all about God's glory

1. In His action of saving sinners through His Son: Ps. 89:3, 19, 20, 27, 36-37
2. In His action of saving sinners through His Spirit: Eph. 2:1-4; Ps. 110:3

God makes His people willing to enter into His covenant with Him!
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I. Do you realize God has come to all of you with an astounding commitment?

A. God entered into a covenant with us promising us 'eternal life' with Him

B. After the vilest breach of our trust, HE came back (Gen. 3)

1. Hear Him in Exodus 34:5-7 – John 3:17
2. Look what fallen men do: *John 1:10 (world) – John 1:11 (covenant people)*

C. The content of God's covenant of grace is indescribable:

1. No parties in a covenant were ever more *unequal*
2. No conditions in a covenant were more *lopsided*: Is. 55:1
3. No promises in a covenant were more exceeding: Is. 55:3; 54:9-10

D. The God of grace is committed to you (Ex. 20:1-2; Jer. 31:32) and seeks your personal commitment to Him: Prov. 23:26 *Give Me thine heart!*

II. Has God made your heart willing to receive Him or enter into His covenant?

A. John described our *covenanting* as the 'receiving (taking) Him' (John 1:12)

1. God extended His *covenant promise to be their Husband* (Is. 54:1-5; 55:5)
2. John described this *response of heart* as 'receiving Him' (John 1:12)
 - a. if your heart is willing and enabled to do this, God is the reason: vs. 13

B. Has the Almighty made your heart willing and inclined to covenant with Him?

III. Have you received Jesus Christ?

A. The earthly marriage is the picture of Christ and His Church (Eph. 5:32)

B. Spiritually, God has consented to you in His covenant promise: Ex. 20:1-2

1. His sign/seal in baptism *confirms* this

2. His work in your heart by His Spirit *completes* this: John 1:12

Examine: *Have you received Him? Have you covenanted with Him?*

Hellenbroek's Catechism: *A Specimen of Divine Truths* (Ch. 11)

1. How does the sinner enter this covenant?

God first comes to him when He kindly/beseechingly invites him/her - with much earnestness and uprightness and solves all his difficulties

2. What is the result of such an invitation?

He draws them w/ cords of love

3. What does the called sinner do from his side?

He accepts the Lord as His God and surrenders himself to God.

4. What are the characteristics of this consent?

The sinner does it calmly, willingly, humbly, faithfully, uprightly, with a full assenting of the demands as well as the promises of the covenant.

5. What are the consequences of this consenting?

God remembers His covenant forever, and the covenant people have the right to require everything necessary unto life and eternal salvation

Brake: *From God's side there is consent, for He is the One who offers and invites. If a man, who now correctly understands the conditions, has a heartfelt desire for them, believes the truth of the offer, turns away from all other things to God alone, and quietly, truthfully, and joyfully declares his consent in this covenant, surrendering himself thereby to God in Christ, then the covenant has thus been made and will eternally endure. Happy is he whose eyes have been opened by God, whose will have been inclined, and who has been brought to this earnest consent of heart! He may be assured of his present and future state of blessedness, even if he comes into much darkness, for his state is only secure in this covenant – not in his feelings, faith, or holiness. Those who merely contemplate these matters, however, considering them to be desirable but nevertheless have not heartily and truthfully had any dealings with God in Christ – never having become partakers of the fundamental fruit of this covenant, namely, renewal of heart – should not imagine this to be their portion.*

But all who make Jesus their choice, receive Him, look to Him, and yearn for Him, wait upon Him to receive the forgiveness of sin, peace, comfort, and strength for the way of sanctification – all those are truly entering into this covenant. It may be that due to lack of clear light and guidance, they do not perceive that in these things they have this covenant in view and are engaged in covenant transactions. The perception of this, however, should serve to the strengthening of the little ones in faith. (Volume 1, pages 443-443)