



*feeding...gathering...carrying...leading. (Isiah 40:11)*

Dear Church Family,

Os Guinness concluded his 3-message series, "Exodus and the Once and Future Character of Freedom" with "The Great Constitution". This message focused on God's covenant with Israel. Below are quotes from that message to remind you of some of what you heard.

- "Freedom requires a framework and Biblically the ultimate framework is covenant."
- "This [covenant] is unique, quite unlike the Hittites and the other covenants. For one thing, the Lord himself is a partner to the covenant. And then amazingly, compared with the other covenants, everyone is involved... and not just those there that day but as Moses says all of you who are alive since that day. It is intergenerational, it goes down the centuries ... it covers the whole of life."
- "There are three things in the Scriptures that put their stamp on history politically....We have got to judge where this is followed well and where it wasn't followed well."
  - "The first key thing you see in the covenant; it was a matter of feely chosen consent. The Lord of the universe is putting the covenant forward, but it is not a covenant until they freely choose to consent.... That is the first example in history of the consent of the governed....It assumes and involves the freedom of the human partners."
  - "The second is a morally binding pledge of love loyalty to the way of the Law.... Covenant gives you the structure, *hesed* is the love loyalty that makes the structure work and last".
  - "The third part is equally important, the reciprocal responsibility of all for all. We all know the famous saying in Leviticus, "You should love you neighbor as yourself." .... This reciprocal responsibility is not just love your neighbor as yourself. The love is triple. You start with the Lord himself, "you shall love the lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength"...Secondly, "love your neighbor as yourself", but the same chapter ends, "you shall love the stranger as yourself". So love of the Lord, love of your neighbor and love of the stranger, the alien, as yourself. And the Jews call this rightly the politics of love."
- "Follow through the ideas of the covenant and you can see all sorts of implications that this means."
- "The primacy of relationships and trust. It is all about how we deal with each other. ....Covenantalism is rich with relationships, it is all about relationships.... America has a profound crisis of relationships... Are we true to our understanding of the Scriptures in seeing that relationships are primary?... It is not the government that finally matters, it is the day to day relationships that at the end of the day are actually more important going right down to trust and promise keeping. "

- “The assumption of responsibility. Every Jew responsible for every Jew.... The responsibility of all for all and the responsibility comes before rights, obligations before entitlement....you can see how this touches justice and the poor.”
- “At its best, covenantalism brings together faith and freedom, brings together justice and power, brings together a high place for the individual and a high place at the same time for the community.”
- “A weakness... my freedom, I love it, but then I forget my limitation should be that I have to see that you are as free as I want to be free....Freedom for me has to be freedom for you and vice versa. And as you get more and more diverse, it is harder to figure out what freedom for all of us means..... When He made us free, the Lord limited Himself and He does not override our freedom. So mysteriously and most wonderfully there is a self-limitation even in the Lord's freedom. Which means we have to think of that. And when we want freedom, it means that we have to want other people to have the freedom that we want. There is an inbuilt self-limitation.”
- “Is it still possible to create communities that do justice to human dignity, justice to freedom for everybody and do justice to justice? Is it? We believe that in the Scriptures we have the truths to make that possible. So we will need to go beyond many of the things that have been done so far, learning from their mistakes and by God's grace and in small communities, maybe larger if He blesses us, living in ways that are creative expressions of His great truths.”

Pastorally Yours,  
Bo

Here are the prayer points that were presented on Sunday:

- ✓ That the Lord will help us clarify the confusions between the Bible and American history.  
**Romans 12:9** *Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.*
- ✓ That the church will clearly discern and live by the biblical way of freedom and justice, and not the world's way.
- ✓ That each of us and our families will enter into the full freedom for which Jesus has set us free, and so be agents of freedom and justice, shining His marvelous light into the darkness.