



Sermon Series: Promises We Can Count On

To be used with Session 6: God's Promise of a New Covenant

Sermon Title Possibilities: "Made" To Restore

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:31-34

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the Bible study "Promises We Can Count On" this sermon In Jeremiah 31, the prophet Jeremiah receives uplifting news from God, a promise of restoration and renewal for a generation of people afflicted due to their sins. However, the way God communicates with Jeremiah in this instance differs from times past. This sermon will look into God's process for restoration, not only highlighting how He restored the children of Israel but also exploring how He can restore us into a right relationship with Him.

Introduction: Sitting on the curb with a deflated tire, the boy lamented the nail that had pierced through, causing the inner tube to rupture. As he began the walk home, his father drove by, lifting the bike into the trunk and offering the boy a ride. Overwhelmed with regret for the mistake he made riding over the nail, the boy wept in the front seat. Yet, instead of heading home, his father made a U-turn to a bike shop, where he purchased a sturdy new inner tube designed to withstand rough roads. With his bike restored, the boy rode with confidence once again, thanks to his father's loving care. Similarly, in the book of Jeremiah, the prophet expressed devastation over the destruction of Jerusalem. Jeremiah felt hopeless as the people who have turned away from God, faced the consequences of sin. However, word of restoration arrives in an unexpected manner, offering the promise of renewal and everlasting hope for God's people. The Lord guides Jeremiah through a process of healing and restoration, demonstrating to us how He restores us to our rightful place in His grace. This sermon highlights the various aspects of communications God conveys to Jeremiah and shows a pathway we can tread in finding our way back to Him renewed.

- **Rewind (Jeremiah 31:31-32).**

Jeremiah, often regarded as the weeping prophet, found himself in a challenging position. He carried the responsibility of conveying to the children of Israel the coming destruction due to

their failure to heed God's warnings. His tears, pain, and anguish persisted as God's people ignored his messages and disregarded the Lord's declarations. Amidst this despair, Jeremiah experienced a glimmer of hope in verse 31 when the Lord declared His intention to establish a new covenant with His people. This revelation served as a beacon of light amidst the darkness of Jeremiah's prophetic ministry. God continued to minister to him, reminding Jeremiah of past events and rewinding the broken covenant. While the announcement of God's restoration brought hope, the rewind of the children's actions underscored God's mercy. Similarly, in our lives, we may recognize areas where we have fallen short, yet God provides steps for renewal and restoration. Just as He offered a new covenant to the Israelites, God extends His mercy and grace to us, offering opportunities for transformation and renewal.

- **Reclaim (Jeremiah 31:33).**

The significance of God reclaiming the children of Israel cannot be overstated. Despite their consistent disregard for His grace and mercy, God chose not to abandon them but instead took a deeper step in sealing His everlasting covenant with them. This decision to inscribe His teachings within their hearts demonstrates God's unwavering commitment to His people, even in the face of their worship of other gods, complaints, and disobedience to His laws. By writing His teachings within their hearts, God removes all excuses for their lack of understanding. Furthermore, His declaration that He will be their God and they will be His people underscores His reclaiming of them. This act of divine mercy serves as an encouragement for us when we too stray from the path. God's gracious mercy extends beyond our faults to meet our needs. Let us be forever grateful and offer Him praise for His unfailing love and commitment to reclaiming His people.

- **Renew (Jeremiah 31:34).**

God's renewal is a model for us all to emulate. Jeremiah, tasked with communicating this message to God's people, brings them the news of a lifetime. Up to this point, Jeremiah has ministered pain, sorrow, heartache, disappointment, agony, despair, and even a sense of separation from God that can leave one feeling isolated and afraid. However, in this text, the good news of forgiveness and God's promise to "never again remember the sin" is not only worthy of praise but also reveals our unworthiness to be in God's presence. God declares that all will "know the Lord," indicating a personal experience with God for each individual. No longer will people know God through a mediator; they will have their own encounters and experiences with Him. In this passage, God goes the extra mile, promising to reveal Himself

through the circumstances of life. He assures that He will not be a stranger to His people. Through life's experiences, individuals will encounter God anew and be renewed.

Conclusion:

The wedding ended in chaos, with the cake toppling over, the bride stumbling down the aisle, and various mishaps disrupting the ceremony. Despite the evident disaster, when questioned about his thoughts on the day, a father declared it as the greatest day of his life. When asked to explain why, considering the apparent calamity, he simply stated, "Once you have a daughter, you'll understand." This sentiment reflects a deeper truth echoed in this passage of scripture. It can be challenging to comprehend why God extends so much love and grace to a people who continuously fail Him. Despite their disobedience and disregard for His commands, God's love remains steadfast. If we were to question God about His boundless love, He might respond, "If you have creation, you'll understand." God's love for us is unfathomable, and in return, we are called to love Him in the same manner. Just as the individual found joy amidst the chaos of the wedding day because of his love for his daughter, we too can find solace and understanding in God's love for His creation, us.

Author Bio

Dr. Mark Louis Johnson Sr. is an Assistant Professor of Evangelism and Pastoral Ministry and Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana. Additionally, he serves as the Interim Pastor of First Baptist Church of Kenner, Louisiana.