

Friday, January 15, 2016

Covenant

Genesis 9-10

And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come. I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth."
Genesis 9:12-13

God made this covenant. It is a promise based upon His faithfulness that He will never again destroy the world by a flood. It is a reminder for Him—but also for me. When I see a rainbow, wherever that may be, I am reminded of the faithfulness of God. I am reminded that He has made a promise—initially to Noah, but all humanity is included. God will never again destroy all life by a flood. But also, I am reminded that God judges sin. God does not say that the rainbow is a reminder that He is no longer concerned about sin. Indeed, He is—so much so, that He sent His Son to take that penalty. God's promise reminds me that He values His created ones. By His grace and mercy, He reaches out to us. By His righteousness, holiness and justice, He requires repentance and obedience. The rainbow reminds me of both. The rainbow also calls me to remember that there will come a final day of judgment that will purify all creation. It impacts how I live. It is not a license to sin, which would be a misunderstanding of God's promise; rather, it is a reason for respect and awe.

Dear God, thank You for Your promise. Thank you for being a God who is trustworthy. Thank You for demanding holiness and for giving the means for that to happen. Amen

January 11-16, 2016

Saturday, January 16, 2016

Worship

Genesis 11-12

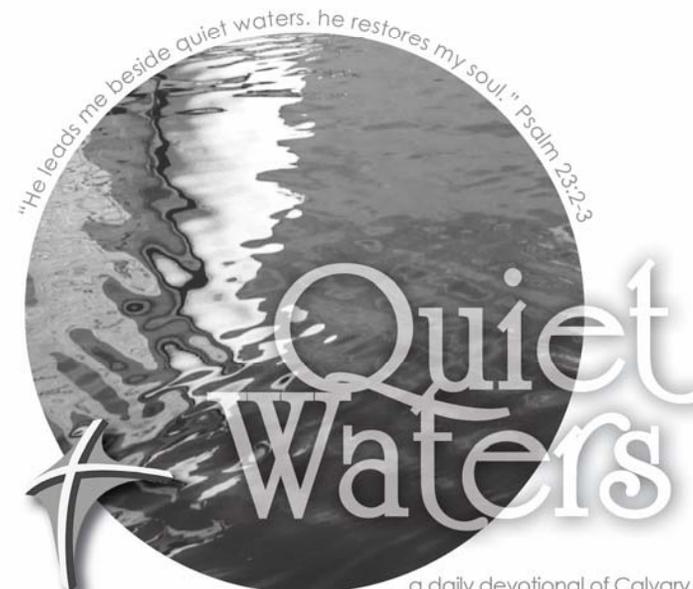
Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the earth.
Genesis 11:4

So, here is the issue of worship at its core. God calls me to worship Him and my flesh wants only to worship myself. The tower was being built to directly oppose the command of God. He had said that the people should spread out. They were building the tower so they would not have to obey. They were worshipping their own thoughts and desires.

How will I worship God? How will I worship Him alone? How many times have I started building a tower of my own thoughts that are actually in opposition to God. What are my towers of disobedience? I must tear them down so that I can worship my sweet, precious God in spirit and in truth and in obedience.

Dear Lord, please show me all the areas in my life that place me in opposition to You. Show me the towers of disobedience in my life and lead me to the beautiful adoration of You for which I have been designed. You alone are worthy of my praise and my worship. Amen


Pastor Chuck Cervenka



a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, January 11, 2016

Rested

Genesis 1-2

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. Genesis 2:2-3

In the beginning we get a glimpse of that which was undistorted by sin. Resting on the seventh day is part of that design. God sets a day apart and makes it holy. He creates a sanctuary in time in which men and women can come to worship Him. It is the Sabbath. That is the meaning of the word we translate as “rest.” It means to cease. God rested—not because He was weary—God rested to set aside a day for His children to rest. Eventually it would become a commandment, but first it was a gift (Exodus 16:29). Most people shrug off this gift and do not care to open it. It is a shame. Many people boast of their workload and how much they do. This exhibits a lack of self-control. God has designed us for rest. He has designed us to cease on the seventh day. How have you viewed the Sabbath? Is it a priority for you? Is it for me? This text calls us to worship God in this special sanctuary of time each week, as the Sabbath comes to remind us that we have been given permission to cease from the busyness of the world.

Dear Lord, please search me in this. Do I rest? Do I cease? How have I rationalized Sabbath out of my life? Help me open and value the gift of the Sabbath each week. Amen

Tuesday, January 12, 2016

Crafty

Genesis 3-4

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” Genesis 3:1

Revelation 12:9 tells us this serpent who is so very crafty is Satan. While he is crafty, his story really hasn’t changed all that much. It is very predictable and, as such, I should be much better at recognizing it and calling it what it is. But for some reason, his age-old lie still carries power, mainly because I give it power. I listen to the lying voice of the one who hates me instead of listening to the voice of truth spoken by the Lover of my soul—the One who created me for His pleasure.

The lie of the serpent that I so easily believe is that I should have something that God has lovingly revealed is harmful for me. And so, I sin. I choose to take that which I want even though I know that it is against God’s revealed best plan. I hold on to the thought that I am somehow better suited to choose what is best for me. And the crafty serpent wins yet again. I must remind myself often that God has not withheld His best from me. That is what Satan would have me believe. God has lavished me with every good thing I need. I must learn to be satisfied with His provision.

Dear Lord, please help me hear Your voice of truth and may it drown out the voice of the crafty liar. May I be satisfied with Your provision and not seek more. Amen.

Wednesday, January 13, 2016

Well-pleased

Genesis 5-6

Enoch walked with God; and then he was no more, because God took him away. Genesis 5:24

Enoch walked with God for 300 years. The Septuagint translates this as “well-pleasing.” For 300 years, Enoch was well-pleasing to God. The same is said of Noah in 6:9. Both of these men were recognized specially by God because they were well-pleasing to Him.

Enoch was so well-pleasing to God that God just took him away! We are given no indication whatsoever that Enoch or Noah had any sort of motive for being well-pleasing to God other than an understanding of who He is. They were well-pleasing to God in an era when that would require great faith. They stand as stellar examples for me. I long to be well-pleasing to God. I long to know Him well and to quickly serve Him when He leads. I want my life to be all about Him so that He is my every breath and thought. I want Him to know that He can count on me. If He needs me to stand for Him when no one else will, I will do everything just as God commands me (6:22). I wonder how many others have been “taken away” just because they were well-pleasing to God? Sometimes we have a hard time understanding the working of our mighty God, but I trust that He is caring deeply for each of His adopted children.

Lord, please help me live in such a way that I am well-pleasing to You. Please see the desire of my heart to be all that You have made me to be. Amen.

Thursday, January 14, 2016

Offerings

Genesis 7-8

Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it. The Lord smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: “Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood.” Genesis 8:20-21

The sacrifices that Noah offered moved the heart of God. Perhaps it would be better to say that the heart with which Noah offered the sacrifices moved the heart of God. God judges motive. The first thing we are told that Noah did when he left the ark was to build an altar and offer sacrifices to the LORD.

Romans 12:1-2 calls me to be a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. This is the offering I am called to bring—myself on the altar. It allows me to demonstrate that I trust myself fully to God. I recognize that He is in control. My heart belongs to Him. I give it to Him freely and fully. This is the type of offering I can bring that will move the heart of God. This is true worship. That is why many times, as I contemplate the privilege of bringing this offering, I burst into song of praise to my Rock and my Redeemer. He is exalted, the King is exalted on high. I will praise Him with my offering.

Dear LORD, how I praise you for your unfailing and never-changing love for the creation You have made. Thank you for considering my offerings as a sweet aroma. I pray that You find my heart given over fully to You in my offering of praise. Amen.