

Discussing How To **Restore The Early Church**

Returning Intimacy and Power to the Father's Children

*"I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for,
it will be done for you by My Father in heaven.
For where two or three come together in My name, there am I with them."
(Matthew 18:19,20)*



SECTION 4 - LESSON 25

THE FATHER AND JESUS

Part 1. The Covenant Basis To The True Gospel:

- *Covenants Must Be Both Ratified And Consummated*
- *Intense Desire Needed To Enter Into Covenant*
 - *A Closer Look At A Covenant Ceremony*
 - *Covenants Are Renewed*
 - *Breaking A Covenant Means Death*
 - *Our Father's Covenant Ceremony*



Restoration Ministries International

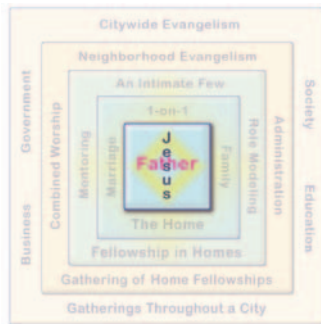
Mike & Sue Dowgiewicz

www.Restorationministries.org

Restoring The Early Church, THE FATHER AND JESUS

Part 1. The Covenant Basis To The True Gospel:

- ***Covenants Must Be Both Ratified And Consummated***
 - ***Intense Desire Needed To Enter Into Covenant***
 - ***A Closer Look At A Covenant Ceremony***
 - ***Covenants Are Renewed***
 - ***Breaking A Covenant Means Death***
 - ***Our Father's Covenant Ceremony***



THE FATHER AND JESUS

Part 1. The Covenant Basis to the True Gospel:

Covenants Must be Both Ratified and Consummated

“I will establish My covenant as an everlasting covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

This is My covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised” (Genesis 17:7,10).

Every biblical covenant requires **both ratification and consummation** to confirm that the conditions of the covenant have been accepted by both parties. When a covenant is *ratified*, it is confirmed and validated. For instance, during the wedding ceremony a couple ratifies the intent of the marriage as they

pledge from their hearts their vows, such as, *“For better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.”*

Pure motive is crucial in order for a biblical covenant to be ratified and come into existence. This element of *heart condition* differentiates covenants from contracts. Most contracts are signed with self-interest in mind. Whether you sign a contract for a home or a job, your motive is to get the best deal for yourself!

In contrast, the very nature of a covenant takes into account the benefit the *other* person will derive from the relationship as well. Consider Jonathan's motive when he established a covenant with David: *“And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself”* (1 Samuel 18:3). Both partners were blessed!

Isn't this the purity of devotion required of a prospective husband as he enters covenant union with his bride—the intent to bring *her* joy as well as fulfill his own desire? *“In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself”* (Ephesians 5:28).

Hopefully, the intended groom and bride have already demonstrated that they want each other with pure motives to fulfill their covenant responsibilities

to each other. If the groom was marrying the bride only for her money, the covenant framework could be nullified. Or if the woman wanted to get married only to escape a difficult home situation, her motives could be judged corrupt. In their *hearts*, these arrangements would mirror a contract rather than a covenant. In simplest terms, the focus in these examples is *self*, not *we*.

Our Father's motives by nature of His character are always pure. He longs for loving union with those who respond to Him according to the stipulations of His covenants. His covenant offers mutual joy in the relationship.

And those who do yield to His loving Lordship in Jesus are blessed beyond words! Jesus indeed paid the ransom for all to enter His Kingdom. Each person must come in, however, through the narrow gate of the true Gospel covenant. Our Father scrutinizes the heart motives of each one of us before entering into the Covenant—a relationship which *He* initiates. As Jesus confirmed, *no one* can come to Him unless the Father draws him or her (John 6:44). (We'll discuss in Lesson 27 our Father's stipulations for entering into Covenant with a person.)

The covenant of marriage is ratified at the ceremony. It is not *consummated*, however, until the couple shares their first intercourse. The ceremony ratifies the couple's intent to enter into the covenant of marriage, but *consummation* is the critical part that *seals the covenant*.

The seal is the physical sign that the covenant has been consummated. This applies to all of the covenants our Father has offered mankind. Each covenant evidences a seal or sign of consummation:

Covenant

Noah
Abraham
Moses
Jesus

Marriage

Sign of Consummation

rainbow in the sky
circumcision
sprinkling of blood
receiving the Holy Spirit
in spiritual union
breaking the hymen in
physical union

It's indicative of our sinful times that the sign of marital consummation, breaking the hymen during intercourse, occurs so often *before* the wedding ratification. Studies show how seriously pre-marital sex, both with the intended spouse as well as with previous partners, hinders experiencing true intimacy of heart when the person marries. And to the harm of their relationship, so many who become Christians *after* marriage fail to grasp the seriousness of their Covenant with our Father and how that pertains to their marriage covenant.

For those who marry, these two covenants are inseparably linked. Embracing the Covenant our Father offers and uniting in a marriage covenant are the two most important relationships people will ever share. No other person or activity should ever compete with either. Don't lose sight of this fact: *The marriage covenant is intended to be the physical representation of our spiritual Covenant with our Father.*

Through the myriad of counterfeit gospels and the rampant sexual promiscuity even within Christendom, misunderstanding of these covenants *disregards the holiness* our Father intended for them. If you gave way to sexual union prior to your marriage covenant, repent. Then earnestly seek *heart circumcision* by our Lord so that you and your spouse can experience the loving intimacy our Lord desires for you.

If you're married, did you consummate your relationship prior to the covenant ceremony? Yes or No? If yes, how did this hurt your relationship after you were married? If no, how has consummation *after* ratification helped your marriage?

If you answered yes above, have you and your spouse asked forgiveness from our Lord in order that you might undergo change in your hearts toward each other as covenant partners?

THE FATHER AND JESUS
Part 1. The Covenant Basis to the True Gospel:
Intense Devotion and Desire Needed To Enter Into A Covenant

“Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself... And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt” (1 Samuel 18:1,3,4).

As a sign that they had ratified their covenant, David and Jonathan exchanged valuable items. If people later saw David wearing that robe and bran-

dishing those weapons, they'd recognize that he was in covenant with Jonathan.

You can visualize our Father's perspective of the Covenant He offers through His Son as you observe the intense devotion these two young men shared. The intensity of David's loyalty to Jonathan pours forth in his lament after Jonathan's death: *“I grieve for you, Jonathan **my brother**; you were **very dear** to me. Your **love for me was wonderful**, more wonderful than that of women” (2 Samuel 1:26).*

As we discuss the manner in which a covenant is enacted and consummated, notice that the ceremony is not as important as the *deep yearning* to enter into a covenant relationship. Don't get hung up on ritual. *The ceremonial form only ratifies the **intense desire** that's already present in the heart.*

Devoted, sacrificial love is a key issue in covenants. David declares that the love relationship in his covenant with Jonathan surpasses that of his amorous encounters with women. A millennium later, Jesus voices from the Hebrew Scriptures the intense love that is required to embrace our Father's covenant: ***“Love the Lord your God with **all** your heart and with **all** your soul and with **all** your mind”*** (Matthew 22:37, from Deuteronomy 6:5).

The intensity of *commitment* our Father calls for in the “Greatest Commandment” is a condition for ratifying the Covenant in Jesus. The same intensity of relationship is enjoined in Matthew 10:37:

Whoever loves his father or mother **more than he loves Me** is not worthy of Me; anyone who loves his son or daughter **more than he loves Me** is not worthy of Me.

The example of cherishing your family is a physical arena most of us can relate to. Yet the intensity of devotion to which we're called in covenant union with our Lord stretches beyond that! To embrace the Covenant our Father offers demands complete forfeiture of everything on earth we hold dear, even our own lives: *"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends"* (John 15:13; see also Revelation 12:11).

Devotion To Your Covenant-Partner

[Mike]: Our wedding took place 36 years ago. I can tell you with all sincerity that the ceremony only ratified my heart's desire for Sue to be my wife:

- I wanted her.
- I wanted no other.
- I was in covenant with her in my heart first, before the ceremony ever took place.

The same process of unflinching devotion impels you in the Covenant offered by our Father through Jesus.

- **Do you really *want* Him?**
- **Do you want with all your heart to *live* as our Father's child?**
- **Are you willing to *forsake* all other goals or values that compete with your devotion to Him?**

Having become followers of Jesus in our eighth year of marriage, to each of these questions we both can *still* heartily respond, "Yes"!

A noted Christian writer admitted that until he had cancer, he'd always thought Jesus was #1 in his life. After being healed of his disease, however, he realized that Jesus had been #4. On a scale of 1 to 10, what is your level of love for our Lord? _____

Describe your love for Him.

To whom are you more emotionally and determinedly devoted than our Lord? Your parents? Spouse? Children? (Now, be honest. Your Father knows your heart anyway.) Why is this devotion greater than to God?

THE FATHER AND JESUS

Part 1. The Covenant Basis to the True Gospel:

A Closer Look At A Covenant Ceremony

"The men who have violated My covenant and have not fulfilled the terms of the covenant they made before Me, I will treat like the calf they cut in two and then walked between its pieces"

(Jeremiah 34:18).

"Cutting a covenant"—the actual biblical phrase for making a covenant with another party—is a practice with which most of us are totally unfamiliar. Fortunately for us today, both the Hebrew Bible and research into ancient customs illustrate the type of ceremony that David and Jonathan enacted to ratify and consummate their covenant.

As covenant partners, they would have cut an animal in two and placed

the halves between them as they faced each other, half on one side and half on the other. Then both men would have walked through the middle of the two pieces doing a figure “8” around each other. The blood of the animal would drench their feet—a visual reminder of the gravity of this action. It cost a life! The covenant was intended to last forever, and was ratified by the blood of the sacrifice.

Exchanging valued possessions was the physical sign which evidenced to others that a covenant existed between these men. Remember, there must always be a sign that a covenant exists. This is a vital point for later discussion of the Covenant with our Father that is made possible by the sacrifice of Jesus.

As you’ll see, *walking through the blood* is a key feature of embracing the Covenant our Father offers. And, as we’ll explore, entering into a covenant is a serious matter. Dire consequences confront those who break it.

Is this image of how covenants are entered into new to you? Yes or no? If yes, you’re beginning to understand how much is behind the word “covenant” when it appears in the Bible. What insights do you get about the shed blood of Jesus when you consider the blood of the calf through which the two men walked?

THE FATHER AND JESUS

Part 1. The Covenant Basis to the True Gospel: *Covenants Are Renewed*

“The two of them [renewed] their covenant before the LORD. Then Jonathan went home, but David remained at Horesh”

(1 Samuel 23:18).

At great personal danger, sometime after entering into a covenant with David, Jonathan sought his friend out again as he was hiding from Saul at Horesh (see 1 Samuel 23:18). There the two ***renewed their covenant*** to confirm that the conditions under which the covenant had been established were still viable. Nothing had changed between them in their relationship.

When a man has intercourse with his wife, they are ***renewing the covenant*** of marriage. The normal place of covenant renewal is their bed. Therefore the writer to the Hebrews could admonish, *“Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure [undefiled], for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral”* (13:4).

When you receive the body and blood of Jesus in communion, you are ***renewing your covenant*** with our Father. Covenant renewal isn’t to be taken lightly. The Corinthian believers were taking the body and blood without discernment, and Paul warned them, *“That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep [died]”* (1 Corinthians 11:30). Presuming upon God’s grace provokes consequences.

Communion is much more than bread and wine consumption, or spiritual commemoration of a historical event. Through this precious *covenant renewal*

with our Father, we are reaffirming the stipulations under which we entered the Covenant, and remembering that which Jesus has accomplished on our behalf until He returns for us as His Bride.

What is your current understanding of communion? How seriously do you consider your heart preparation when you partake?

Is this truth of *covenant renewal* both in communion and in marital intimacy new to you? Yes or no? If yes, how has your understanding of each covenant changed?

Have you ever experienced consequences from partaking of communion lightly or with known sin in your heart? Yes or no? If yes, what happened?

THE FATHER AND JESUS

Part 1. The Covenant Basis to the True Gospel:

Breaking a Covenant Means Death

*“Then he said to his servants,
‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come... Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are invited, but few are chosen’”*
(Matthew 22:8,13,14)

What wonderful promises are showered on those who embrace the Covenant our Father offers through Jesus! Thank Him again as you breathe in the joy of a right relationship with our Lord!

*Therefore, brothers, since we have **confidence** to enter the Most Holy Place by the **blood of Jesus**, by a **new and living way** opened for us through the curtain, that is, His body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us **draw near to God** with a sincere heart in **full assurance of faith**, having our **hearts sprinkled** to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us **hold unswervingly** to the hope we profess, for **He who promised is faithful** (Hebrews 10:19-23).*

Each of these commands offered by the writer is in a continuing sense: *keep* drawing near, *keep* holding unswervingly. That continuation is part of the ongoing nature of our covenant journey.

However, the passage continues with a warning to those who break the Covenant through intentional sin and

unrepentance. Think of how many people you know today who have no regard for God or His ways, and are zealously pursuing self-gratification as they violate God's Word. Yet they insist they're "saved" because of some words they repeated years ago.

*If we deliberately **keep on sinning after** we have received the knowledge of the truth, **no sacrifice for sins is left**, but only a fearful expectation of **judgment** and of **raging fire** that will consume the enemies of God (Hebrews 10:26,27).*

Entering into a covenant in ancient times was so serious that if a man broke a covenant, one of his own family members was obligated to kill him. Covenants were *permanent*, and covenant-breakers didn't deserve to live. The death of the sacrificed covenant animal should have reminded him of the penalty for violating his commitment!

Each of the covenants our Father establishes offers promises of blessing for those who keep their part of the covenant. However, covenants also contain judgment or curses for those who break the covenant.

The Older Testament is a powerful source for understanding our Father's dealings with covenant-breakers. Paul urged the Corinthian believers (and us as well) to pay heed to God's relationship with Israel. When they violated the stipulations of their covenant with Him, the penalties were severe:

*These things happened to them **as examples** and were written down as **warnings for us**, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come (1 Corinthians 10:11).*

Followers of Jesus serve the same God Who is so lucidly detailed in the Hebrew Scriptures. The examples and accounts in the Hebrew text encourage us that God keeps His promises. His holy nature hasn't changed, nor has His regard for the sanctity of covenants—particularly the eternal one sealed in His Son's blood! That's why grim consequences await covenant violators.

Solomon reiterated that people have an *ongoing obligation* when they enter into covenant with their Lord. The relationship is not one of convenience when you decide you might squeeze God in on occasion: "**You *keep covenant* with your servants and show them grace, *provided they live in your presence with all their heart***" (1 Kings 8:23).

Tragically, time and again the kingdoms of both Israel and Judah roused the anger of God by breaking their part of the covenant, paying the penalty of famine, plague, and banishment from the Land He'd set apart for them. They chose first to close the ears of their hearts to God, then rebelliously forsook the stipulations of His covenant:

*This happened because they **did not heed** the voice of the Lord their God, but **violated His covenant**, everything that Moses the servant of God had ordered them to do, and would **neither hear it nor do it** (2 Kings 18:12).*

The Older Testament ends with Malachi pronouncing the judgment of God on those who broke their marriage covenant through divorce. We today need to pay particular attention to the intensity of our Father's regard for the marriage covenant as it's intricately connected to understanding our covenant relationship with Jesus:

*The LORD is acting as the **witness** between you and the **wife of your youth**, because you have **broken faith** with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your **marriage covenant**. Has not the LORD **made them one** [to live in union]? In flesh and spirit **they are His**. And why one? Because He was seeking godly offspring. So **guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith** with the wife of your youth. **'I hate divorce,'** says the LORD God of Israel, **'and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment,'** says the LORD Almighty. So **guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith'**" (Malachi 2:14-16).*

Notice our Father's purpose for the marriage covenant: *"Because He was seeking godly offspring."* Every covenant initiated by our Father entails purposes for the person to fulfill who embraces the covenant. In the Covenant offered to us through Jesus, His purpose is emphasized in Ephesians 2:8-10:

*For you have been delivered by grace through trusting, and even this is not your accomplishment but God's gift. You were not delivered by your own actions; therefore no one should boast. For we are of God's making, created **in union with the Messiah [Jesus] for a life of good actions already prepared by God for us to do.***

In the Covenant with our Father, the blessings as well as the warning of judgment apply. The covenant is offered through Jesus. But, we can break this covenant with terrible consequences, just as our disobedient spiritual ancestors experienced.

Pay attention to the interconnection between the covenant-breakers of Moses' time and those who grieve the Holy Spirit by forsaking the Covenant through Jesus:

*Anyone who rejected the law of Moses **died without mercy** on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has **trampled the Son of God underfoot**, who has treated as an unholy thing the **blood of the covenant that sanctified him**, and who has **insulted the Spirit of grace**? For we know Him who said, **'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,'** and again, **'The Lord will judge His people.'** It is a **dreadful thing** to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10:28-31).*

Settle this in your mind if you're going to be found *called, chosen*, and most importantly, *faithful* at the Judgment Throne: You are capable of breaking the Covenant with your Father through ongoing unrepentance of habitual sin. Our Father's part of the Covenant will never be broken, but we, as the Old Testament has shown, are not always that faithful.

Consider these passages offered by New Testament writers as a warning to those who consider themselves "Christian":

Watch out, brothers, so that there will not be in any one of you an evil heart lacking trust, which could lead you to apostatize from the living God! Instead, keep exhorting each other every day [keep working out your salvation together], as long as it is called Today, so that none of you will become

hardened by the deceit of sin. For we have become sharers in the Messiah, provided, however, that we hold firmly to the conviction we began with, right through until the goal is reached” (Hebrews 3:12-14, JNT).

We as brothers and sisters in Jesus need relational encouragement and diligent daily alertness in our spiritual pilgrimage. Deceitful teachings and temptations could harden our hearts against the truth of the Living God.

Therefore, let us be terrified of the possibility that, even though the promise of entering His rest remains, any one of you might be judged to have fallen short of it; for Good News has been proclaimed to us, just as it was to them.

But the message they heard didn't do them any good, because those who heard it did not combine it with trust (Hebrews 4:1,2, JNT).

Sobering words, aren't they? Especially when contrasted with the “easy believism” of so many counterfeit gospels that excuse sin under the guise of “grace”. And if those warnings aren't enough, seriously consider this:

It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting Him to public disgrace (Hebrews 6:4-6).

How diligent each of us must be in a walk of obedient trust that is grounded in love so that we can withstand the temptations of the world, our own fleshly desires, and demonic assaults!

If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them (2 Peter 2:20,21).

Speaking to fellow Christians, Paul warns, “If you live according to your old nature, you will certainly die [spiritually, since everyone dies physically]; but if, by the Spirit, you keep putting to death the practices of the body, you will live” (Romans 8:13).

It's not our actions alone that count with our Lord, but our heart condition. Is our inner person filled with His Spirit so that our lives bring Him glory? Or, are we “doing holy works” in our religious practice so that others will notice and praise us?

Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from Me, you evildoers!’ (Matthew 7:22,23).

In this passage Jesus is turning away people who had walked in the prophetic,

cast out demons, and even performed miracles—from *man's* perspective sure signs of faithfulness. Yet in the midst of all this activity they failed to do what *His Father in heaven wanted* (Matthew 7:21). Jesus calls them evildoers.

Another word for “evildoer” is “**worker of lawlessness**”—someone who has no regard for keeping our God’s commands. Richard Wurmbbrand, a Jewish follower of Jesus who suffered for his faith for fourteen years in a Rumanian prison, wrote several years ago, “We live in the last days. Morality, laws, and the standards break down. The heresy of **antinomianism** [belief that God’s laws are invalid for today], of **lawlessness united with religiosity**, is very dangerous today. Let us beware of it.”

Yes, let’s beware so we can be found faithful when we see Him face to face! (See 2 Timothy 3:1-5.)

Do you believe a person can break his part of the New Covenant with our Father? Explain.

After reviewing the passages that deal with covenant breaking, what changes do you think God is calling you to make so you can walk diligently in obedient trust with Him?

THE FATHER AND JESUS

Part 1. The Covenant Basis to the True Gospel:

Our Father’s Covenant Ceremony

“This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many”
(Mark 14:24).

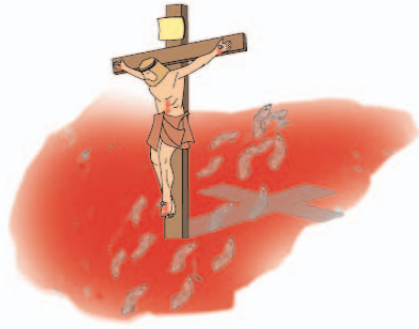
Perhaps now you can grasp the seriousness that surrounds embracing the Gospel our Father offers as a new Covenant. When you are baptized, you’re making a vow to our Father through your immersion. Your pledge through that action confirms your heart’s desire to walk in ongoing obedient trust.

[T]he water of immersion, which is not the removal of dirt from the body, but one’s pledge to keep a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus the Messiah (1 Peter 3:21, JNT).

Followers of Jesus serve a covenant-giving, covenant-keeping Father. And, He lovingly accepts covenant-keeping children. Through His blood of the *covenant*, Jesus is confirming far more than the self-serving motives of today’s so-called “gospels” offer.

The Covenant ratified in the blood of Jesus calls for entering into THE most important intimate relationship you can have because it has eternal consequences.

Your goal is to live in *covenant relationship* with our Father through His Spirit, that is, to lovingly obey *your* part of the Covenant since He is so faithful to fulfill *His* part.



Picture yourself spiritually ratifying and consummating the conditions of our Father's Covenant. Father God stands opposite you. You agree in your heart to the stipulations of the Covenant. When He sees the desire of your heart to want this relationship above all things, He walks through the blood of the sacrifice with you.

And Who is the sacrifice? Jesus. You and our Father spiritually walk a figure "8" in the blood of Jesus. This *ratifies* the Covenant through the blood of the Lamb. What *consummates* the Covenant? Our Father seals you with the *Holy Spirit*, guaranteeing that *if you do not break* the Covenant through ongoing, willful sin and unrepentance, you'll have redemption on the Last Day.

This Covenant is no small matter! You no longer belong to Satan. You've been adopted into our Father's family: "*Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father.'* So you are **no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir**" (Galatians 4:6,7). No longer being a *slave to sin* frees you to walk in obedient trust, that is, *in union with* your Father!

Keep in mind that receiving the Holy Spirit as a sign of consummation is vital to your ability to keep your part of the Covenant. Paul repeats several times that the *seal of the Holy Spirit* consummates

the Covenant.

*Moreover, it is God who sets both us and you in **firm union with** the Messiah; He has **anointed us, put His seal on us, and given us His Spirit in our hearts** as a guarantee for the future (2 Corinthians 1:21,22,CJB).*

The presence of the Spirit in our lives guarantees our Father's faithfulness to set His children apart for His purposes in His loving power. Our part is to walk in love-grounded, obedient trust so that we won't grieve His Spirit.

*Furthermore, you who heard the message of the truth, the Good News offering you deliverance, and **put your trust in the Messiah were sealed by Him with the promised Holy Spirit ...And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption** (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30).*

Our Father is *for* those He has marked with His seal! But He extends to us the same warning He gave to His people through the apostle Peter. Believers of the first century were bombarded with entangling temptations and distortions of the truth just as we are today. It's our responsibility to discern falsehood and guard against its intrusion into our lives and those of our families.

*Dear friends, since you **know this in advance, guard yourselves** so that you will not be **led away by the errors of the wicked and fall from your own secure position** (2 Peter 3:17, JNT).*

Noticeable signs are evident when you're indwelt by the Spirit. As much as the rainbow, circumcision, or David wearing Jonathan's robe are recognizable,

the Bible makes plain the signs that reveal that our Father's Covenant has been both ratified and consummated in you. [We'll discuss the consummation of the Holy Spirit in Lesson 28.]

What went through your mind as you pictured yourself and our Father walking through the blood of Jesus to ratify your covenant with Him?

How would you articulate the assurance God gives to those who trust in Jesus as they are "marked" by His seal?
