

Baptist Covenant Theology – The Covenant of Grace

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The Covenant of Grace - Definition

Benjamin Keach on the Covenant of Grace

- a. It was first decreed in past eternity
- b. It was secondly revealed to man after the Fall of Adam and Eve
- c. It was executed and confirmed by Christ in his death and resurrection
- d. It becomes effective for its members when they are joined in Christ through faith.

Part 1: The Covenant of Grace was first decreed in past eternity

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as **he chose us in him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before him. (Eph 1:3-4)

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and **grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began**, and which **now has been manifested** through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, (2Ti 1:8-10)

Part 2: The progressive revelation of the Covenant of Grace

The Covenant of Grace was revealed in the garden:

The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." (Gen 3:14-15)

The Covenant of Grace was promised to Abraham:

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Gen 12:1-3)

The Covenant of Grace was prophesied by Jeremiah:

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer 31:31-34)

John the Baptist's father confirms its fulfillment in Christ

And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; to show the mercy promised to our fathers **and to remember his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our father Abraham**, to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. (Luk 1:67-75)

Part 3: Executed and confirmed by Christ

Christ confirms its fulfillment in his death and resurrection

For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day." (Joh 6:38-40)

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mar 10:45)

And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. (Luk 22:20)

When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (Joh 17:1-3)

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (Joh 19:30)

Part 4: Effective through faith

This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, **but the children of the promise are counted as offspring**. For this is what the promise said: "About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son." And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad--in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls--she was told, "The older will serve the younger." (Rom 9:8-12)

Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain--if indeed it was in vain? Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith-- just as Abraham "believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"? **Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham**. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. (Gal 3:3-9)

He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (Joh 1:11-13)

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. (Joh 3:16-18)

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Eph 2:8-9)