

# Two Mountains: One Mandate

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]      our kids to children's ministry. And if you'll open your Bibles to the book of Exodus, we're in chapter 19 today, Exodus chapter 19. We are beginning this sort of mini-series in which we'll focus on the Ten Commandments over the next 10 weeks. And what we'll do today is look a little bit at the first commandment, but we really need to pay careful attention to the setting in which the law is given, in which the Ten Commandments are given.

There's a lot of attention in the text, actually, not just to the Ten Commandments themselves, but to the environment in which they were given, the scenery in which the Ten Commandments were given.

I read one part of that to you as we were standing together, this idea that the mountain was full of smoke. It said it smoked like a kiln. The fire of the Lord had descended on this mountain, and it was just this, there was lightning. Have you all seen those videos of a volcano where there's lightning coming out of the volcano? Something like that comes to mind. Something terrible, something gloomy, something very frightening, but also just glorious at the same time.

And the great concern of the text is tell the people not to draw near, because the Lord has descended on this mountain, and if they draw near, they'll die. We see again after the Ten Commandments are given, in verse 18 of Exodus 20, we see this. This is right after the commandments are given.

Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off and said to Moses, you speak to us and we will listen, but do not let God speak to us lest we die. Moses said to the people, do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.

[ 2 : 0 5 ]      The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was. And so I don't want to go too far into this conversation about the Ten Commandments without doing a bunch of work that sort of lays out sort of the fundamental scenery that's involved here. We've got this terrible, smoky, fiery, dangerous, deadly, trembling kind of scene set before us. And what do we do with that? Why does the Bible tell us about this? What do we do with it? What are we supposed to think about this? And so on and so forth. Well, we have a text, just like we did last week. We have a text in the New Testament that tells us how to think about this stuff. And we can look there in Hebrews 12, verse 18.

If you'll turn in your Bibles to Hebrews 12, 18, we've got a New Testament text that tells us how to think about this scenery that we're told about in Exodus 19 and 20. So look at Hebrews chapter 12, verse 18 and 24. In Hebrews chapter 12, verses 18 through 24, we have, for you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest and the sound of a trumpet. And the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. So here we have a New Testament commentary on this Old Testament moment that we read about just a moment ago. You have not come to the same kind of mountain that you came to before, that the Hebrews came to in the Exodus. You've not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the heavens beg that no further message, made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them for they could not endure the order that was given. If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned. Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, I tremble with fear.

So that's how the writer of Hebrews is summarizing what we just read in Exodus. Seems fair, seems accurate. It's the same thing we just read. But he says, you haven't come to that mountain if you're in Christ, you've come to a different mountain. Look at verse 22 of Hebrews chapter 12.

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. So what we've got here is throughout all of redemptive history, we've got two mountains put before us. And one is called Sinai. It is also sometimes called Horeb. And then the other mountain is called Zion, or sometimes called Jerusalem. So we've got two mountains, and they're both mountains that God has descended upon. All right? And we want to get a sense for why we're given the data we're given in Exodus 19. Why are we told about the smoke and the thunder and the lightning and everything else? And one of the answers to that is so that the writer of Hebrews could later say, there's a different mountain in this different covenant. And unlike the old mountain, this one is not terrifying. Okay? So do you see that? You've got two mountains in biblical history, Sinai, and you've got Zion, two mountains. Now let's look just at the meaning of these words, okay, first of all.

So we've got the old covenant, which is the law, represented with this one mountain, Mount Sinai. And the word Sinai means thorny. It can even mean hateful. It carries the idea of harshness.

[ 6 : 10 ] Okay? So Sinai means harshness, thorniness, hardness. The word Horeb, which is also sometimes used to describe this particular mountain where the Ten Commandments was given, is the word that means to be dried up, to lay waste, to devastate, something like that. So that's what Sinai means, thorny, hateful, dried up, devastated. Well, that's kind of what we just read. It was this terrible kind of experience for the people that were there. When they heard the voice of the Lord, they immediately said, no more. Please just talk to Moses and he'll let us know what you had to say.

We can't even bear to hear what you're saying. And that's representative of the old covenant, the law. And what does the new covenant have for us? Well, the word Zion means permanence, marker, monument. And then Jerusalem, the word Salem, it means peace. And so you've got these two different pictures of the program that God has set before the world. The first is the law, which is the place of trembling. It's the place of harshness. It's the place of trial and difficulty, where you stand before God's righteous requirements and you don't pass.

You don't measure up. And then the second mountain, Mount Zion or Mount Salem, is the place of permanence and peace. It can't be shaken because everything's been satisfied.

The second covenant is the covenant of satisfaction. Now, one of the things that we should understand is that you have to move from one mountain to the other. If you are a Christian, if you think you're a Christian and you've never actually been undone and utterly kind of stripped away of all of your righteousness and really trembled before the Lord and realized, I am not a good person and I have to, I cannot stand in the day of judgment on my own accord, then you haven't been to Mount Sinai.

And of course, in the story, which is a theological principle carrying through the story, you have to go through Sinai to get to Zion. Does that make sense? You have to, like in the story, you have to go, God's leading them home to the promised land, to the place of grace. The promised land is typified by vineyards you did not plant, cities you did not build, so on and so forth. It's a place of unmerited favor. It's a place of peace. But to get to that place, you have to stop at Sinai and get your face peeled off with the law, right? Like that's, that's the, there's really no other way to do this. And what we've done, unfortunately, very often in modern evangelicalism is we've tried to offer people the peace of Salem without the terror of Sinai. And what happens in that sense is, is that people don't actually see a real need for Jesus. They simply see that Jesus is offered, kind of, sort of, to be their friend. They don't really see this, the reality of God is significantly holy, God is perfectly holy, and who could stand, who can climb the hill of the Lord? You know, only those with clean hands and a pure heart, which the law says to us, that ain't you.

[ 9 : 25 ] And so to get to the peace of Salem, which is the peace of the gospel, you have to go through the pain of the law. And this is just the way that God has set it up, but he's set it up wisely.

So what I would tell you, if you're exploring Christianity and considering, well, should I follow Jesus, like, and so on and so forth, I would tell you where it must begin is you must have an understanding, a very clear understanding, that fundamentally, you do not want to one day stand before God without something being done on your behalf that you could not do for yourself. Otherwise, you're going to stand in front of the the trembling mountain on the last day. But if you will stand before the trembling mountain today and realize that you need Christ, and then God will take you to the mountain of peace, the mountain of joy, and there you will remain, so that when you face God one day, the mountain you face is not the mountain of trembling and darkness and smoke, it's the mountain of God's grace and joy and festal angels and so on and so forth. So you have to go from Sinai to Salem, and you can't skip them. If you go to Salem without going to Sinai, you're not really going to understand what Salem is. So this is why we preach both law and gospel at Providence Community Church, and why we don't estrange the two, because they're both utterly necessary. And friends, this is, parents, this is why we raise our kids with the law, which Galatians says is the guardian that keeps them until they meet

Christ, and it teaches them about their need for Christ. And so we want our kids to understand right and wrong. We want our kids to know the Ten Commandments. We understand that until God saves them, they stand in condemnation for their sin. But until they see their need for Christ, what are they going to do? They're just going to become kind of, well, the worst version of a cultural Christian, which is, you know, just a very pharisaical sort of, while people are watching, I'm with this way, and while people aren't watching, I'm another way kind of a thing. So we want to take our kids to Sinai. We actually can't personally deliver them to Salem, but we can personally take them to Sinai and show them their need for Christ, and then let Christ's effective work through the gospel have its way. Now, fundamentally, when we're talking about these two different mountains, and we're asking, what makes the difference? One of the things I think is very important is to understand that one of the very first heresies that really caused problems for the early church was the heresy of a guy named Marcion. And Marcion's heresy was simply this. He was an apologist and an evangelist, so that's not what his heresy was. Sorry. Those are good things. But if you're not careful, a personality devoted to defending the faith and making it attractive to outsiders is often the personality most apt to make a theological compromise because of why?

Because of the 11th commandment. You guys know what the 11th commandment is? Thou shalt be nice. You know? And so using a strategy of winsomeness, it's not a new problem. It's been around all along.

Marcion is looking as he attempts to communicate the gospel to the world, and he looks to the Old Testament and says, that God is not the same God as the New Testament. That the God of the Old Testament is not like the God of the New Testament. The God of the Old Testament is angry and violent and harsh, and I like my New Testament God, and I like my New Testament mountain. And so Marcion's heresy was he actually said that these were two different gods, and that the God of the Old Testament was a demiurge, which is a Gnostic kind of thought, and that Jesus came to sort of clear the air and say, hey, that wasn't really God. You were worshiping this. I'm God. And so that's a real problem, of course. Now, I don't think anyone here is there. I don't think anyone here is a Marcionite. But I do think that there can be a tendency in the average Christian's life to prefer the God of the New Testament to the God of the Old Testament as if they were different.

[ 13 : 42 ] And I want you to understand it's just very important to know that God never changes, right? That he is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And that God didn't just lighten up as a consequence of turning the page, you know, from Malachi to Matthew. You know, God is the same God. The same God of the first mountain is the same God of the second mountain. So then you do have to explain, though, well, okay, they're the same God. Why are the mountains so different? Why is the one terrifying and the other glorious and beautiful and welcoming and peaceful? It's like, what accounts for that? If God didn't change, what did change? And the answer to that is, is not only do we have two different mountains, which represent two different covenants, but we also have two different mediators.

And the mediator of the first covenant is Moses, and he's just a dude. And so when a regular person stands between you and God, good luck, that's not really going to get you very far. And so the reason that the mountain was terrible and terrifying and thunder and lightning and so forth was because Moses was not fundamentally enough, righteous enough, holy enough to satisfy God's wrath against sin.

Moses was not fundamentally enough, but Jesus is. And so what you've got is the explanation for why are these mountains so different is because the mediators are so different. And Jesus Christ has come and fully satisfied the wrath of God against sin, and therefore allowed each one of us to gather to that mountain in a completely different way. And so you might ask, well, what is it fundamentally to be a Christian? Is it following a group of rules? Is it this or this? No, it's probably Romans 8.1.

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus. And what that means is, is that you have by faith recognized that Jesus is God, a very God, and that he lived a perfectly righteous life so that he could give his righteousness to you. Not just so that he could give you forgiveness, but that he could give you his actual righteousness as well. And what that winds up doing for you as you put on Jesus's righteousness is you're able to stand before the God of the Old Testament minus the trembling. In fact, Hebrews tells us that you're able to stand before that very same God and boldly approach the throne. Why? Because the throne is what now? It's a throne of grace.

Why is it a throne of grace? Because Jesus is a better mediator than Moses. So we have another mistake we have to identify here that we could make. And one is, is that we're trying to get to Salem without going to Sinai. That's like all gospel and no law. But the, the other problem would simply be like, you know, you've got to understand that the law has been in Christ satisfied and that if you have put on Christ by faith, you are his, you are his, and you don't need to tremble in the same way that you once would have had to. I think I talked about this last week when I just asked, why don't we pray more?

[ 16 : 51 ] It's just like, why don't we pray more? And, and, and I think one of the potential answers to that question is, I don't know that God actually likes me. It's like, I'm not sure that I'm going before the Salem mountain. I feel like I'm going before the Sinai mountain. Well, who's your mediator?

If your mediator is Moses, if your mediator is your own righteousness, if your mediator is your own behavior, sure. I completely understand why you're not praying very much because that's scary.

You don't, you're not, you don't have enough to satisfy the righteousness of God. But if your mediator is Jesus, you can boldly approach the throne of God. The Hebrews passage actually kind of explains it this way. If you'll look at verse 22 of Hebrews 12, but you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem and to innumerable angels and festal gathering and to the assembly of the firstborn who were enrolled in heaven and to God, the judge of all and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. This is another way that the Bible can talk about the superiority of Jesus over the Old Testament saints. So Abel was an Old Testament saint and he was obedient to God and provoked the vengeance and the jealousy of Cain and Cain killed him. And God goes to Cain and says, your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. So what is

Hebrews talking about here when it says that Jesus's blood speaks a better word than the blood of Abel? Well, the blood of Abel is just, you killed me. It's just the blood of accusation. You have violated the law. You have done bad. But the blood of Jesus is not the blood of accusation, it's the blood of accomplishment. So one blood, Abel's blood cries out for vengeance and Jesus's blood cries out for forgiveness. And so again, the reason why the mountain is better, the reason why the second covenant is better than the first is because Jesus is the mediator of it. Now, so that's just some similarities, some differences. Now, I want you to know that whether we're standing before Sinai or we're standing before Salem, we have different mountains, different mediators, but the same mandate. That's the third point, if you're keeping notes, the same mandate. Different mountains, different mediators, the same mandate. You've got these two different mountains, two different mediators, but let's be clear about this. Both mountains have the same mandate, the same requirement. Let's go back to Hebrews 12, verse 25. What does God want us to do at this mountain of

Salem? Verse 25. See that you do not refuse him who is speaking, for if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall if we escape, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven? At that time, his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens. Verse 27. This phrase, yet once more, indicates the removal of things that are shaken, that is, things that can have better. Let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and let us offer to God acceptable worship with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire. What is God requiring us at Mount Salem? That we worship him, that we serve him, that we worship him with acceptable reverence. What is God requiring of us at Mount Sinai? Exodus 20, verses 1-3.

[ 20 : 56 ] I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt and delivered you from slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. What's the mandate at both mountains? Only worship me. Only worship me. So the mountains are different, the mediators are different, the requirement is the same. You shall only worship me.

Now, let's be real careful that we take this moment to understand another possible mistake, and that is to somehow think that when we are in grace and in Christ, the requirements of God are reduced. Let's make a sure we don't fall for that. That's called antinomianism, and it was another heresy that emerged in the early church. Let's make sure we understand that the expectations God has for you as a follower of Jesus Christ are every bit as high as the expectations He had for those Hebrews in the desert. That has not changed. Puritan Thomas Shepard says it this way, the gospel requires believers to be holy and perfect.

The law and the gospel each require as much perfection as the other in matters of holiness. The Swiss reformer Johann Wallib said this way, and I think this has been very helpful over the years for people to understand, it is not that the law is strict and the gospel is lax. It is not that the law is strict and the gospel is lax. Rather, both law and gospel require perfect obedience. What does God want from you if you're if you're before Sinai? He wants you to worship Him only. What does God want from you if you're before Salem? He wants you to worship Him only. What does God want from you if you're in the first covenant?

He wants you to worship Him only. What does He want from you if you're in the second covenant? He wants you to worship Him only. The mountains are different. The mediators are different. The mandate's the same. We are just as responsible for giving God a fully devoted life and heart and mind and soul as anybody has ever been before or after Jesus Christ. We are just as on the hook for obedience. We are just as expected to love God only, to resist idols as anybody has ever been.

The mandate's never changed. Now, maybe you're not feeling so Salem-y right now. You're thinking, well, I don't love that. I feel like that's not reality for me. I feel like I am actually taking the grace of God for granted, and I'm using my freedom as an opportunity for the flesh.

[ 23 : 41 ] And I am actually using the righteousness of Jesus as a way to not follow him like I ought to, and I just get the free do-overs when I come to church and sing about the gospel, and I'm kind of content with that. It's like, well, just so you know, you've missed a fundamental thing that God has been saying to you all along. And obviously, you can understand why you'd miss it.

It certainly leads to an easier life, in your mind anyway, when you pretend that grace has lowered the standards. But it hasn't, okay? Grace hasn't lowered the standards at all. You are, in fact, just as, if not more, called to obey Jesus and to love him only and to get rid of all the other idols as anyone else has ever been. I would argue that you are actually more responsible than the Old Testament saints for that particular requirement, and I'll explain why in a moment. So you're thinking, well, that's not such great news. Chris, you've taken all the good news out of my gospel. Well, the gospel is not good news because it says you can go get what you want. That's not what, that's not why the gospel is good news. The gospel is not good news to give you a license to live the life you want to live. The gospel is good news because it enables you to draw near to God and enables you to obey the God of the universe who issues his commands as a consequence of fundamental reality. The gospel is good news because it helps you behave like a sane person rather than an insane person. What do I mean by that? Sanity is simply the ability to map onto reality. What is reality? There is one God.

He's made all things, including you. He controls every heartbeat that will ever come out of that little heart of yours, and he's in charge of you. That's sanity. And the gospel just gives you the opportunity to see that's the truth, and then it gives you something even better than that. What's that? Well, this is the fourth point. So we've got, what do we got here? Two mountains, two mediators, one mandate, number four, two shavuots. Shavuot, it's a Hebrew term that is used to describe what is known as the Feast of the Weeks. So a few weeks ago, we saw the first Passover, right? We saw the first Passover because we were in Exodus and saw the first Passover, and then we saw that that Passover was to be commemorated over and over and over again, and the Jews would worship and do that particular ceremony over and over and over again.

Well, what's the next festival? What's the next feast that comes after Passover? What's this one? It just means the Feast of Weeks. It's the word for seven, and it means that after seven weeks have passed from the Passover, you are to celebrate this particular feast, and this feast has to do with the receiving of the law. So in the Jewish world, you have the Passover, and you celebrate your deliverance from Egypt, and then the next thing you do seven weeks later, 49 days actually afterward, is you celebrate this feast, which is the one that remembers Moses receiving the law. Now, I think most of you understand that Jesus died during the Passover and was running parallel in theological meaning to the Passover. He was the Passover lamb, and he offered himself for the deliverance of your sins, and you out of your slavery to sin. But when does the Feast of Weeks appear in Christianity? What is the Feast of Weeks in Christianity? It's Pentecost. It's the Greek word for 50, which is just the signifying of the passing of the 49 days from Passover. I know I'm kind of losing you here, but just hang on.

Here's why this is such glorious news and worth getting into the weeds about. Pentecost is the second receiving of the law.

[ 27 : 48 ] Listen to Acts 2. When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place, and suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting, and divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

God has made his people into mountains, and he has descended on each one of them in this text with the fire that he has descended on Sinai. And he has not only given the people the law, but at Pentecost, the second giving of the law is he gives you the law by, you're the mountain.

And his spirit falls on you, and he puts his word where? His law where? In your heart. So the second Passover, which is part of the second covenant, is that Jesus is the Lamb, and he has died to make you free from sin. And the second Shavuot is that the law that was once given on the mountain and written on tablets of stone has now been given to each believer through the Holy Spirit and written on your heart. And so now we can say, yeah, the mandate is to love you with everything that I have, but I have a helper. This is all to fulfill what God said over and over again, almost immediately at the beginning of the time of Israel, is that one day he would write his law on their hearts. He would write his law on their hearts. Ezekiel 36, 22 is one such example.

Therefore say to the house of Israel, thus says the Lord God, it is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I'm about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God. When through you, I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.

And I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, from your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. And you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers and you shall be my people and I will be your God.

[ 30 : 43 ] So maybe there's actually three mountains in some respect. And maybe you're that middle mountain in some respect. When God saves an individual, he doesn't simply say, okay, good luck with obeying the mandate. He says, no, I'm going to put my eternal spirit in your heart and write my law onto your heart so that in a way that had never been possible under the old covenant, you may keep my law. You may obey my word. Now let's just close out by talking about how to apply some of this into the fundamental thing. And the fundamental thing is we're called to love God and serve him and worship him only. We're called to get rid of all the idols in our lives, all the other things we trust in, and we're called to just do what God says. We're called to just obey him and love him and honor him. So how do we do that?

Well, I think we all understand that even as God has given us his Holy Spirit to empower our obedience, we still have something to do on our side. We still have some will to exert. How do we, in walking with the Spirit, how do we actually get down to the business of really loving God and really serving him only? Well, I want to point you to the power of gratitude.

We see that in both of our texts. When God says in Exodus, I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt and delivered you from slavery. There's no therefore there, but the therefore is implied.

Therefore, you shall worship me. You shall have no other gods before me. What is God saying there? He's saying, look at all I've done for you, and out of that gratitude, allow that gratitude to stir up desire for obedience. In Hebrews 12, 28, it says it more explicitly. Therefore, let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship with reverence and awe. So maybe you're just like, one of the things that happens a lot in pastoral counseling is, is a lot of people come and they say, Chris, I don't think I'm a Christian.

And I say, well, okay, we could talk about that, but have you considered another possibility? Like, what is that? Like, that you're just a really bad Christian. And it's funny because people don't like to be bad at things, and so they would almost rather think they're not a Christian than just understand, no, you're just a really bad Christian.

[ 33 : 27 ] So maybe we could just talk about this for a minute. It's like, well, how can you be a bad Christian? And if you're looking for lessons, I could teach you on how to be a bad Christian. A bad Christian is an ungrateful person. A bad Christian has a bad memory. A bad Christian takes for granted that God would save them. A bad Christian forgets, Peter says this explicitly in 2 Peter, a bad Christian forgets that his sins were washed with the precious blood of Jesus Christ.



A bad Christian has become unfruitful. It's fundamentally what a bad Christian is, is someone who's, like, worshiping a bunch of other things and not giving their life completely to God and not, like, waking up every morning reporting for duty eagerly and saying, today is the day the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it. God, what do you have for me today? How can I obey you? How can I follow you? How can I avoid idolatry? Bad Christian, how do you, how, where do bad Christians come from? Bad Christians are forgetful, ungrateful Christians. That's, that's what's going on there. So if you're thinking, I, I don't love God like I should, you say, Chris, what's the, like, the, the five-minute solution that you can tell me right now to fix this thing? Like, I would tell you that universally in every area of your life and in every relationship, if you'll understand this maxim, it will be very helpful, and that is this. Gratitude fuels loyalty. Gratitude fuels loyalty. Ingratitude or grumbling fuels disloyalty. There you go. Like, how do I become a better, how do I get better at being a Christian?

That's, that's, that's what I would tell you. A grumbling person is a disloyal person. And it's, it's, it's, you're, you're really incentivizing disloyalty the more you grumble.

Whereas a person who is grateful, there's just this constant fuel for loyalty built into their gratitude. And so if I could pull all this together, I know we got in little weeds a little bit, and I, by the way, I count this as my birthday sermon. I'm a couple weeks. Once a year, I preach a Bible nerd sermon where I don't really care if you're entertained or interested. And so I'm, this is, this is that one. All right, I'll, I'll, I'll give you a more, less Bible nerdy sermon next week.

But this is for me. We, we, we get into these weeds and we understand, okay, there's a new covenant, there's an old covenant. The difference is not that God has changed, but that the mediator, Jesus is a better mediator. But we need to understand that, yes, it's a better covenant, but it, the requirement hasn't changed one iota. The requirement has always been to do the thing that is consistent with the nature of reality, and that is to treat God as he is, which is the fundamental and ultimate, and, and to live that way. So the mandate hasn't changed. It's like, one good news is that God actually has given you his spirit. And now we're asking, what does that spirit do that helps us obey in a way that the Hebrews did not? And I would say that as I study the spirit's work in the scriptures, I think that the one thing that we sleep on, we're all interested in like tongues and prophecy and healing and things like that. It's like the one thing we slip, sleep on, and I think this is probably fundamental, is the Holy Spirit is the rememberer in a human heart.

[ 37 : 00 ] The Holy Spirit is the rememberer. It's the power of godly memory. It's, it's the power of divine memory. It's, it, God, God has given you his memory in some respects. So you have this sort of, you have the Godhead living within you, it's crazy. What is the Godhead doing?

Amongst many things, he is stirring up by way of remembrance over and over and over and over again. And he's causing you to behold the works of God, to reckon the works of God, to be grateful for the works of God, and so on and so forth. And I could get into like proving this to you through scripture, but if you look at just at the end of the Pentecost story, what is it that they begin to do immediately when they're filled with the spirit? They declare the mighty works of God.

It's like, how do I become a better Christian? A better Christian being someone who, like, gives my whole life to God, reports for duty, gladly obeys, loves him. How do I do that? Well, the Holy Spirit's been given to you to help you with this. And what is the Holy Spirit going to do?

About, I would say the most fundamental thing is, is that the Holy Spirit stirs up consistent memory of God's past faithfulness, both in his word, in the ministry of Jesus, and in your own life. And the Holy Spirit, even when he reminds you, the Bible says he reminds you that you're a son or daughter. What is he doing there? He's reminding you of, that you were purchased.

He's reminding you that you were saved. So, how do I get better at being a Christian? I've got to shift from the disloyalty-fueling grumbling to the loyalty-fueling gratitude.

[ 38 : 42 ] And how can I become more grateful? The Holy Spirit will help you become more grateful. And how will the Holy Spirit help you become more grateful? He will help you to remember the works of the Lord, the works that you would be prone to forget just like the Hebrews would, were. And why did they keep stumbling, keep grumbling? Why did they never succeed? They were the most forgetful people in the history of the world. Why were they the most forgetful people in the history of the world?

They didn't have the Spirit in the way that the Spirit is being offered to you through the new covenant, through the better mediator, Jesus Christ. So, everything for us, in many respects, comes down to this adage. Gratitude fuels loyalty. Grumbling fuels disloyalty. How do I remain more loyal to my God? Gratitude. How do I become grateful? I remember God's mighty works.

And now we're just at a perfect place to talk about the Lord's table. Right? Because what's happening here? Do this in remembrance of me. For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread. When he had given thanks, he broke it and said, this is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way also, he took the cup after supper, saying, this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Let's pray.

Lord God, by the power of your Holy Spirit, would you, would you do a work in the hearts in this room to make the goodness of God very obvious to them?

Or they could look to your own care for them and their lives. They could, they could look to the beautiful world that you've made. They could look to church history and biblical history. They could look to all sorts of things. But at the end of the day, the best place to look is the cross of Jesus Christ in which you demonstrated free love for us. And while we were still sinners, you gave your son to die a crucifying death for our sake. And it's the reason why you pull us week after week, after week, back to the table so that we can taste and see that the Lord is good. And we can recount the wonderful works of our Lord, how you and your strong hand have worked salvation for us.

[ 41 : 11 ] So Lord, I pray for each heart here. I pray God that as the believers, the followers of Jesus come and partake of this table, they would indeed through your Holy Spirit, remember in a way that is only possible through your spirit. And Lord, I pray for anyone here who is considering whether or not they are in you. Lord, would you help them to see that there is, there is a two-step process here.

I admit my sin. I see my sin through the law. I have violated God's law. I don't deserve to stand in God's presence. I don't deserve to be with God. And Jesus has come and fulfilled God's law so that I could be brought to the second mountain, the mountain of peace with God. Would you, Lord, through your spirit of the power of your spirit, convict anyone here who needs that and bring them to newness of life? We pray for this time as we partake at your table that you would glorify your name. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.