

jamie buckingham



The word is COVENANT. It is the word God

used when He established a relationship with Abraham. It is

the word Jesus used to talk about the new relationship we have with God.

A number of years ago, as a Baptist pastor, I used to ask people to sign "covenant cards." Actually they were pledge cards where people agreed to tithe their income.

But real covenant is far more than pledging, and it encompasses far more than our tithe. (Although that is part of it.) Covenant means relationship.

In the Satanic world there are "covens" of witches. These are creatures who have bound themselves into an unholy relationship--a covenant relationship--to bring people into death.

But the covenant we have with God, and should have with one another, is to bring people into LIFE.

When Jesus took the cup, He told His disciples the "new covenant" was in His blood. In dying, He opened the way for us to have fellowship--with God and with one another.

Thus John finds it impossible

to talk about walking in the light or having fellowship one with another except in the context of the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses us from all sin.

Sadly, however, too many have been content to have fellowship with God and have not dared go ahead to God's final purpose for His children and have fellowship with one another. Satan knows that he cannot keep people from responding to God--but he can keep the Body of Christ separated by preventing us from having a covenant relationship with each other. As a result, the Kingdom march has slowed to a struggling crawl.

For more than ten years some of us have been learning to "walk in the light." We have been learning to love, trust, and share with one another. This freedom, honesty, and generosity has been more than some could take, and they opted for the systems of this world rather than moving on into the Kingdom of God.

Others, though, have stood poised, with one foot off the ground, awaiting the order to go in and possess the land. The order has come. The word is COVENANT.

A NEW PERSPECTIVE...

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The world is hungry for encounters with supernatural powers. Everyone, it

seems, is reaching out to touch the world beyond.

But the realm of the heavenlies is not the only area where supernatural gifts abound. They are closely counterfeited by Satan in encounters of the third kind--the occult.

Today's citizen has looked in vain for spiritual reality. Having seen the failure of natural man to heal, predict the future, or bring inner peace; and having tasted the rigidity, legalism, or powerlessness of the dead institutional church--the world is turning to Satan. Yet his appeal is so attractive, and so subtle, that even the very elect of God are deceived.

When a group of Christian women in the Officers Wives Club (OWC) at Patrick Air Force Base protested the inclusion of a monthly astrology column in their Countdown magazine, the chaplains at PAFB ruled that "astrology is not a false religion" and was therefore out of their sphere of authority. Following this the OWC

invited occultist Jeanne Dixon as their guest on January 10.

Today newspaper printed the "predictions" of "Rev." Marnie Koski, who receives her information via ESP. Most will not come true but all excite the reader.

Last week I walked into the Brevard Funeral Home South. Hanging on the wall in the front room--the first thing to be seen when you enter--is a huge plaque bearing the Signs of the Zodiac.

The chaplains are deceived. Jeanne Dixon and Marnie Koski receive their information from unholy sources--much as the witch at Endor conjured up the image of dead Samuel. The funeral home, not wanting to offend anyone, has settled on blasphemy instead. Yet despite all these counterfeit gifts, there are genuine encounters with the supernatural power of God available for those willing to pay the cost. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are real. Angels are real. Miracles are real. All are available for those who hold to the Bible as their guide and submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

A NEW PERSPECTIVE...

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The call to spir- is a magnificent waterfall. itual maturity is Below are a series of smaller actually a call falls and deep pools of clear (or re-call) to running water. basics. It is a

call to tear down the false idols of sophistication and structure, to throw away our training wheels and walk before God in simplicity.

So often we think of spiritual maturity as moving into profundity: understanding the "deep" things of God such as the secrets of the Urim and Thummim, the hidden meanings of the Tabernacle, and the time of the rapture. Real maturity, however, has nothing to do with understanding. It is a call away from complexity to the simple life. It is giving priority to what Jesus called the "weightier matters of the law:" loving your neighbor, worshipping God in unadulterated joy and freedom, living a life of simple faith and constant forgiveness.

Our last day in the Sinai, after 9 days of intense hiking and camping in the rugged stone mountains, fighting burning sun in the day and near freezing temperatures at night, we came to the beautiful oasis at Ein Gedi. Located near the Dead Sea, Ein Gedi is a deep ravine almost two miles long where David wrote some of his most beautiful psalms. At the top

While the rest of the men went ahead, three of us stopped to swim in a secluded pool. We stripped down to nothing and frolicked in the icy water. Then, in an act of simplicity, we crawled up on a nearby rock, raised our hands in joyous praise, and worshiped him in "spiritual songs."

It may sound offensive to some--grown men standing naked in the sun, hands raised to God singing in the Spirit, voices echoing off the sheer rock walls of the deep ravine. But at the time I realized it was one of the most mature things I had ever done. I had stripped away all the masks and trappings, and was before him as I was.

I do not recommend it unless you can find your own secluded wadi. But if you desire to move toward maturity, be prepared to stand before him, stripped of all profundities and sophistication, back to the simple basics of one man walking with Him in the cool of the garden.

There's nothing like it!