

..“1 Skin, 2 Skin, 3 Skin...”

(9th in our series, Jesus Everywhere)

1 Samuel 18:20-27; Col. 2:11-15; Isaiah 66:23-24; Job 19:25-26*

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March 4th, 2012

**All scriptures are ESV unless otherwise noted.*

Sermon

One night in October of 1981, I was little more than a teenager. I made a secret arrangement with Beverly Coleman to take her daughter Susan out for ice cream, leaving me alone with Susan’s father, Verne.

- Verne is now my father-in-law. He’s a great father-in-law...but at the time he terrified me.
- In college he was a football star nicknamed “Killer.” (I knew he could just beat the tar out of me if he wanted to and I figured he kind of wanted to. I had the “hots” for his youngest daughter.)
- He was a rocket scientist working for Martin Marietta, building stuff for the Cold War against the Soviets. (Stuff he still can’t tell us about to this day.)

Well, Susan and her mom left for ice cream, leaving me and Verne alone in the living room in the two Lazy Boy chairs watching *Chips* on the console TV. I waited for the commercial and I said “Uh...Mr. Coleman.”

“Yeah?”

“I’d like to ask you a question.”

“Yeah?”

“Uh...I’d like to ask for your daughter’s hand in marriage.”

And first thing he said “Well, how much do pastors make?”

It was a good question and I was suspect ‘cause religion can make you do strange things.

“How much do pastors make?”

I said “Well I think they do ok...” I paused and then said “Perhaps this would persuade you” and then I reached back behind the Lazy Boy where I had placed a gift – actually a steel bucket. I shooed the flies away as I lifted it in the air.

He said “What the hell is that?”

I said “This bucket contains the foreskins of 200 Soviet rocket scientists...Dad, hold out your hands – 1 skin, 2 skin, 3 skin.” I counted them out – 200 foreskins of his arch nemesis and then I said “Now can I marry your daughter?”

True Story. It really happened to me...up until the bucket part but the bucket part is true too. It just didn’t happen to me, it happened to David. (The man after God’s own heart.) This is the 9th sermon in our series “Jesus Everywhere.”

And in the past few weeks as we preached about David, Michal, Seed Fruit, and the Covenant, I couldn't stop thinking about this story: 1 Samuel 18 – Saul is king but he's jealous of David (a young man – probably a teenager in his army) and young David has the hots for Saul's daughter. As you know, David is a foreshadowing of Christ. In the Prophets (Ezekiel 34:23-24), he's even equated with Christ and we are Christ's Bride.

²⁰Now Saul's daughter Michal loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. ²¹Saul thought, "Let me give her to him, that she may be a snare for him and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David a second time, "You shall now be my son-in-law." ²²And Saul commanded his servants, "Speak to David in private and say, "Behold, the king has delight in you, and all his servants love you. Now then become the king's son-in-law. ²³And Saul's servants spoke those words in the ears of David. And David said, "Does it seem to you a little thing to become the king's son-in-law since I am a poor man and have no reputation?" ²⁴And the servants of Saul told him, "Thus and so did David speak." ²⁵Then Saul said, "Thus shall you say to David, "The king desires no bride-price except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that he may be avenged of the king's enemies." Now Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. ²⁶And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son-in-law. Before the time had expired, ²⁷David arose and went, along with his men, and killed two hundred of the Philistines. And David brought their foreskins, which were given in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. And Saul gave him his daughter Michal for a wife.

1 Samuel 18:20-27

David paid the "Bride-Price." In many cultures the bride pays the groom with a dowry. But in Scripture the groom pays the father of the bride with the "Bride-Price." David pays double.

The Law stipulated that stolen property must be paid back double (Exodus 20, Isaiah 40:2, Isaiah 61:1, and Zechariah 9:12). The Prophets prophesied that the Messiah (Son of David) would pay back double for sin, dishonor, and shame. Well David pays double the "Bride-Price" and the "Bride-Price" is the circumcision of the king's enemies.

Circumcision, like we talked about last time, we modern Christians are so sexually depraved and likewise sexually repressed that we have a hard time with concepts like communion, fertility seed, and fruit-bearing and certainly circumcision. We think it's a joke (an antiquated cultural anomaly) but the Bible takes it seriously. In the Bible, circumcision isn't a joke and yet that doesn't mean it isn't funny or embarrassing. Guys were guys 4,000 years ago.

You know when God told Abraham to circumcise himself, forming the Covenant or Sign of the Covenant, He doesn't really explain why – just tells him to do it. It's like something God wanted Abraham to feel and understand with his heart, 2,000 years before anyone would attempt to explain it with their brain. And that's why, even today, I suspect that comedians and teenage boys understand circumcision better than most theologians. So maybe, sometimes, God actually wants you to think with something other than your brain, as long as its circumcised.

Clip from Jim Gaffigan's comedy show:

Circumcision. But how did they even come up with the idea? Were there a bunch of religious leaders gathered and one guy was like, "Okay, how should we honor God?"

One guy was like, "I say we don't eat pork."

"I don't know I like bacon."

~~"Does anyone have anything else?"~~

"What if we cut off part of our penis?"

"Okay we'll go no pork – no pork. I want that man removed."

My wife told me that in the Bible, Abraham circumcised himself. Wow! I can't even get to the bank before it closes.

Those challenges in the Bible took a leap in difficulty there. It's like "Don't eat this apple," "Build me a boat" to "Cut off part of your penis."

"What about building two boats?"

How did Abraham even tell his wife? You know. Maybe he didn't and he was getting out of the shower and she said "What the hell have you done?"

"Honey I can explain. God told me to do it."

"If God told you to jump off a bridge; if God told you to sacrifice..."

"Actually I have to talk to you about that one."

Yeah, Abraham, he went through the ringer.

You know, its not like Jesus had a cake walk, though. You think Jesus ever tried to talk God out of some of that stuff. You know like "Hey Dad, you know Dad, that whole crucifixion thing."

"Yes, you're dying on the Cross for all mankind's sins."

"Yeah, yeah. Hear me out. What if instead of that, we did a big fundraiser."

Did you notice how his thinking went from circumcision to Isaac to Jesus?

You may remember that clip from 3 years ago when I preached on Abraham's circumcision in Genesis 17 (August 9, 2009). The sermon was titled *"Couldn't we just wear t-shirts?"* (You can listen to it on-line and it will help with this one.) In Genesis 17, God makes the Covenant with Abraham and his seed. Paul points out that the seed is singular and the seed is Christ. So, circumcision is a covenant between God the Father and God the Son and it's inscribed in Abraham's flesh. In fact, part of his flesh will be cut away, namely, the skin covering the most sensitive part of his body.

- The part where 2 become 1 flesh in the Covenant of Marriage; bearing fruit in the image of God.
- That part Adam immediately covered when he took the Knowledge of Good and Evil.
- That part where Abraham felt shame – the shame of not being able to produce the Promised Blessing.

They say that the quickest way to a man's heart is through his stomach. According to Scripture, that's not true. The quickest way to a man's heart is through that thing that Abraham is told to circumcise.

- The Bible talks about fruit trees being circumcised so the fruit will no longer be forbidden, but holy;
- and ears being circumcised so that people can hear;
- and lips being circumcised so Moses can speak;
- and hearts being circumcised so God's children can receive Love and Love in return.

But, this circumcision of the heart

will not be performed by doctors or Rabbis.

Deuteronomy 30, verse 6

And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

Deuteronomy 30:6

One day we'll think with a circumcised heart.

In Roman's 4, Paul teaches that Abraham's circumcision was a sign of the Covenant and a sign and seal of the righteousness of Faith. In Scripture, the opposite of Faith is sin.

So do you get the picture? Circumcision cuts away that substance, that skin,
that keeps a person from communion with God;
that keeps a person from experiencing and expressing *Hesed* – that's faithful covenant
love – that is God

And what is that skin? Well it's Flesh – it's sinful Flesh. Circumcision is literally Judgment (snip) upon your sinful Flesh.

Now in case you're a dude with an uncircumcised "basar" (Hebrew) – let me just say "*Your foreskin is not evil.*" In fact, Paul even commanded Gentiles to not be circumcised. Your foreskin is not evil – however, in the *Old Testament* at least, it is a sign of evil – a sign of "sin in the Flesh" – that which keeps a heart from the Faithful Covenant Love that is God.

So circumcision is the sign of the Covenant and circumcision is the Bride-Price. If you're a dad and some kid is asking for your daughter's hand in the marriage covenant, you want a sign of the covenant. You want to see a ring, a vow, some sign of that covenant. So circumcision is the Bride-Price given to the father and covering the bride. In the *Bible* only the groom is cut and yet the bride is covered. She is said to be "circumcised in the circumcision of her groom."

And the point of male circumcision is not decreased pleasure, like in female circumcision; the point is increased pleasure in communion, in a covenant bearing the fruit of Life. It's only after 99 year old Abraham is circumcised that Sarah gives birth to Isaac (which means laughter). He is laughter in the Place of Shame; but only after paying the Bride-Price.

In Genesis 34, a man named Shechem rapes Dinah, who is the sister of the sons of Israel. Rape is stolen pleasure (self-centered pleasure) rather than a communion of pleasure. So, in Genesis 34 Israel demands the "Bride-Price" from Shechem and his whole city. So the whole city of Shechem gets circumcised. CAN YOU IMAGINE? And on the third day (Genesis 34:27) when they were quote, "sore," two of the sons of Israel attack and kill them all.

Well circumcision is the Bride-Price.

I was present for my youngest son's circumcision. She was a lady doctor and as she was performing the circumcision, she told me how she had been recently divorced and she seemed a bit angry. I remember praying really hard for Coleman; I thought she might over-charge on the Bride-Price.

In Scripture,

before a groom can enter a bride,
before Israel can enter the Promised Land (Joshua 5:1-8),
before anyone can enter the New Jerusalem in the New Creation,

there must be a circumcision.

So circumcision is the Covenant, the Bride-Price, and your ticket to the New Creation.

Israelite boys were circumcised on the 8th day -

that's after the 7 days of Creation;

it represents the Finished Perfected Creation.

In other words, no one has foreskins in Heaven; no one has sinful flesh in Heaven. There is no unfaithfulness, separating Bride and Groom in Heaven. No foreskins in Heaven and yet we fellows were born with foreskins.

We must all be born with foreskins – that is uncircumcised hearts.

Was Adam born uncircumcised?

Fix It Comedy Show – Comedian Bengt Washburn

What's illogical about circumcision is if God wanted to look like that, why didn't He look like that at birth? Why don't we pop out of the hatch "no assembly, I mean disassembly required?"

Here's the theory, here's my theory, in the Bible Adam and Eve were the last thing God did.

The last thing He made was Man and Woman before His day off – the 7th day.

It's the last thing He did. It's Friday night at five. Nothing good ever happens Friday at five.

You're in a rush.

"Okay bring in Eve. Very nice, I like her better with the breasts on the front. That was a good idea. That's right. Now she can feed the baby, plus she can keep an eye on them. Very good work."

"Where's Adam? Adam, very nice. I like the useless nipples, matching thing.

Yuk! Yuk! That's not right. Who did this? Who is responsible for this little...pig in a blanket?

I said in My image. Did you even look at the photos?"

"Well now we're going to have to fix it later."

That comedian sees something most religious folks miss:

a Biblical understanding of original sin;

the reality that each of us is born unfinished;

we're each born with an uncircumcised heart;

that is a heart incapable of choosing the Good in Freedom

a heart incapable of Faithful Love in Freedom.

It must've been because of that skin around our hearts that we didn't trust God and took the fruit of Knowledge

trying to make ourselves in God's image;

trying to judge ourselves;

circumcise ourselves.

It is because of our uncircumcised hearts that we sin.

So, you see it's not like we were once upon a time perfected in God's image and then messed it up – so Jesus had to suffer and die. No, Jesus was crucified from the foundation of the world and God subjected Creation and us, to futility, so we could watch as He made us – in His image – through Christ crucified in His image – the image of Christ – perfect image of the invisible God.

In other words, "God consigned all men to disobedience." (God created all men with a skin around their hearts.) Romans 11:32 *"God consigned all men to disobedience, that He may have mercy on all."*

That He might cut away all our sinful flesh with His Mercy, and thereby makes us in His image (the image of Love) – “*We love because He first loved us.*” In other words we are literally living, and still being created, in the 6th day of Creation and we are not finished until we come to the Cross and hear Jesus cry “*It is finished,*” and enter His rest, God’s Sabbath rest, the 7th Day.

In other words, Jesus is the “Eschatos Adam”

- the first born of many brethren
- first born of all Creation

He is the first Man (first Adam) to be perfected. That is First Man to be born with a circumcised heart. And check this out, we are circumcised in Him.

We are His bride and He paid the Bride-Price.

Listen closely, Colossians 2:11-15

¹³In him (in Christ) also you (or you also) with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, [Literally “Through God’s powerful work of faith.”] who raised him from the dead. ¹³And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, [Dead in the uncircumcision of your flesh.] God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴by cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Colossians 2:11-15

Do you understand? He paid the Bride-Price by destroying your sinful flesh at the Cross. It’s your sinful flesh that makes you an enemy of God, imprisons you in death, and gives power to the Evil One. Jesus paid the Bride-Price.

And I hope you realize David didn’t pay the Bride-Price. His story was a distant foreshadowing of the Son of David, who did pay the Bride-Price. It turns out that the Philistines weren’t the real enemy of God. David’s own flesh, his own uncircumcised heart, was the real enemy of God.

So David wasn’t really circumcised and Michal wasn’t really circumcised. You’ll remember that she refused David’s naked dance and had no child to the day of her death. The woman who received David’s seed was Bathsheba; yet only as David’s heart was circumcised. Perhaps you remember how it happened:

David confessed his sin and the Son of David died bearing that sin to destruction,
and then in his place, a son of David rose,
as Bathsheba gave birth to Solomon, Prince of Peace.

Well anyway “sin in your flesh” is the real enemy of God. So sin isn’t a problem you can deal with by killing a few hundred Philistines or having a fundraiser. You can’t fix it with your willpower ‘cause it is your willpower – a hard heart and sinful flesh and that sinful flesh cannot inherit the “Kingdom of God.”

1 Corinthians 6:9

⁹*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,*
¹⁰*nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.*
I Corinthians 6:9-10

Now it fascinates me that most people immediately focus on the homosexual thing and then argue *"Homosexual sex is not sin because it's not a choice – it's a disposition in the flesh."*

It's like we don't even notice Paul also listed adultery and Jesus said *"if you lust after a woman, you've committed adultery in your heart."* And we say *"Well, yeah – that's only natural – it's biology – it's just flesh."*

And we don't even notice Paul listed the greedy - people who break the 10th Commandment – *"Don't covet."* It means don't want what isn't yours. Hello! This is American. I don't even know anyone that doesn't covet. And people will say *"That's not sin – it's just survival of the fittest. It's genetic. We're born this way – it's the way of the flesh."*

Exactly! Exactly! Exactly!

And that flesh cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.

You know I have several friends that struggle with homosexuality and I think they're probably closest to the Kingdom of God 'cause they understand – Sin is a problem in their flesh that can't be fixed by some law.

Most of my other lustful, covetous, and greedy friends don't even know they have a problem and so can't even seek a solution. And for some, even their so-called "Christianity," is a form of greed. It's coveting the Kingdom and not even knowing what it is. Like Scribes and Pharisees who steal the Kingdom by crucifying the King – King of Love.

I'm just saying sin is a problem that can't be fixed with your willpower 'cause it is your willpower; it is your uncircumcised heart:

Jesus said *"If your right hand causes you to sin, it's better to cut it off than to be thrown into Gehenna with it."* (Gehenna, where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.)

But here's the problem – it's not your right hand that causes you to sin. Jesus goes on to say *"it's your heart."*

So you can't fix sin with minor amputation – only lethal amputation. You need a new heart, even a new body. The problem is *"sin in your flesh."*

In Colossians 2:13, 15

¹³*And you who were dead in the trespasses and uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses...*¹⁵*He disarmed the rulers and authorities.*

Colossians 2:13-15

Romans 6:5-6, 10

⁵For if we have been united with him in death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

¹⁰For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8

⁸ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh [cut it off and threw it in the Valley of Gehenna] condemned sin in the flesh so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Romans 6:11-12

So you must consider yourselves dead to sin [because in reality you are] and alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Let not sin therefore [so that] reign in your [temporal] mortal body, to make you obey its passions.

You know when a Hebrew man was tempted to sexual sin; he'd look down at his "basar" (Hebrew for flesh and euphemism for penis) and see the sign of the Covenant and remember the Covenant and think "*This tells me who I am.*" When you're tempted to sin, look at the sign of the Covenant; remember the Covenant and think "*This Body broken and Blood shed.*" That tells me who I am; I've been bought with a price. My flesh has been destroyed at the Cross and I am a new person.

In other words, if you struggle with homosexual sin, or lust, drunkenness, slander, pride, covetousness, and greed, like me:

your strength is not in condemning yourself and trying harder;

your strength is the sign of the Covenant, the Cross of Christ where you see that your sin in the flesh has already been condemned in Christ.

So there's no point in condemning yourself with yourself; your flesh has already been cut away at the Cross. It is not who you are.

Satan wants you to identify with sin in your flesh, but don't! Don't say "*I'm a drunk;*" "*I'm an adulterer;*" "*I'm a liar;*" "*I'm a homosexual;*" "*I'm a self-centered and greedy man.*" Those may all be things you've done and that you still do and must confess, but that's not who you are because that's not who Jesus is. He is your life.

Satan wants you to think your sins are who you really are so if you surrender your sinful flesh, you'll die; but you won't die. You're already dead and imprisoned in a body of death. You won't die – you'll begin to live – like this.

Movie clip from *The Lord of the Rings*

Gandalf: *I release you from the spell.*

Saruman: *Ha, heh, ha, ha, ha, ha. You have no power here, Gandalf the Gray.*

Gandalf: (Throws off his cape) *I will draw you Saruman, as poison is drawn from our wound.*
 Saruman: *If I go, Arwen dies.*
 Gandalf: *You will not kill me. You will not kill him.*
 Saruman: *?? is mine.*
 Gandalf: *Be gone* (strikes Saruman with his scepter).
 Saruman is thrown back and Galadriel runs to him.
 Saruman: *I know your face. Arwen...Arwen. Gandalf?*
 Gandalf: *Breathe the free air again, my friend.*

Satan and his demons are like Saruman and they gain power through our self-centered flesh. Flesh doesn't simply mean physicality or meat. It means a body that only feels its own pain and pleasure; a body insensitive to other bodies and so imprisoned in itself – like an ear or a heart covered with a thick, unfeeling skin that cannot receive love nor give love.

Well Paul tells us that with the circumcision of Christ, the Principalities and Powers were disarmed. They inhabit and empower the sinful flesh. Satan wants you to believe that you are your sinful flesh so you'll condemn yourself with yourself (which is only more self). So
 that you'll feel so ashamed of being a drunk, you'll take another drink;
 that you'll feel so embarrassed about your lust, you'll soothe yourself with porn;
 that you'll feel so guilty about greed that you'll go shopping.

When all the while, Jesus is saying *"Look at me crucified for you – I tell you who you are."* See? If you're ashamed of yourself or proud of yourself, you're stuck on yourself. You haven't seen that your self has been destroyed and made new by Grace.

My Dad's old friend, Ray Stedman, used to tell about a princess in Europe with a rather large and deformed and bulbous nose. It made her look ugly to those around her and especially to herself. When people feel ugly, they often act ugly and she certainly did. When she was at the age to marry, her family arranged for plastic surgery. The doctor didn't call it this, but in effect, he circumcised her nose – cut off extra flesh – changed the contour. When they took the bandages off, everyone gasped. They saw that she was now a stunning beauty. The doctor took a mirror and held it up to her face; immediately she burst into tears. Sobbing, she cried *"Oh I knew it wouldn't work."* This doctor worked with her for 6 months, until finally she accepted the fact that she was beautiful and the beauty was a gift. Well, when she trusted that Grace, she not only was beautiful, everything she did was beautiful too.

Now I know what you're thinking – *"Nice story Peter, but she really had surgery. She really changed. I haven't had surgery; I haven't changed."* Well I'm telling you, you're wrong. The Bible says you're wrong. Actually you had the surgery 2,000 years ago in space and time and now, in Eternity, the real you is beautiful beyond description. In other words, Jesus paid the "Bride-Price" on the Cross; absorbed your sin and bore your flesh to destruction in the Valley of Gehenna. It's done. It's finished. The only question is how long it will take you to believe *"It's finished."*

Heaven is believing the surgery is finished;

Heaven is believing that Christ has paid the "Bride-Price;"

Heaven is believing that you are saved by Grace – from the top of your head to the tip of your toes;

Heaven is resting in the knowledge that you have been created in God's image by "Jesus

03.04.12_1 Skin, 2 Skin, 3 Skin...

Christ and Him Crucified;”

Heaven is Faithful Love because He has first loved you.

And so the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, within you, like Jesus said. And the consummated kingdom is that place where everyone believes...that is where everyone has a circumcised heart.

It's Isaiah (in Isaiah 52:1) who prophesies about the Lord's Bride (the city of Jerusalem), saying that *“one day the uncircumcised will no longer enter.”* But Isaiah ends with this incredible line in chapter 66, verse 23-24:

²³From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the Lord. [That's in Jerusalem. All flesh in Jerusalem.] ²⁴“And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.”

“The dead bodies; the corpses of the men who have rebelled against me.” Read Isaiah. It's absolutely clear – *“the men who have rebelled against God, are all men”* and Isaiah 53:12 *“The Messiah has numbered himself with the rebels – the transgressors.”*

The only way that I can make sense out of that amazing promise is that one day, that day, the edge of the eternal day we will all walk out of Jerusalem in new and glorified bodies and look down on these old sinful bodies (these old foreskins); being disposed of in the Valley of Gehenna. This old body of self-centeredness that only feels its own pain and pleasure. It's a foreskin and I'll look at bodies of righteousness. And we'll know it's all gift and our beauty is a gift and we witnessed the surgery accomplished here at the edge of the city, on the cross of Christ.

Jesus, our Bridegroom – Jesus, our Redeemer.

We will know it then, but we can even know it now by Faith.

Job 19:25 – from the ashes of despair, Job cries

²⁵For I know that my Redeemer lies, and at last he will stand upon the earth; ²⁶and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then from my flesh [In Hebrew, flesh “basar.”] I shall see God.

Well that's a lot to think about, but at least remember this:

You're the Bride and Jesus has paid the Bride-Price...It's finished.

So I actually didn't hand Susan's dad a bucket of foreskins, but imagine if I had said this

“Pastors do okay, but perhaps this would persuade you.”

“Mr. Coleman, your daughter is my greatest desire, but not to consume – to serve and create.”

“Mr. Coleman, I'll give everything I have and everything I am to your daughter.”

“Mr. Coleman, I'm utterly incapable of not loving your daughter; even if she grows ugly, mean and hateful; even if she nails me to a cross and stands back to watch me die.”

“I'll absorb her sin into the very flesh of my body and bear her sins to destruction and pay her double for the pain.”

“Mr. Coleman, I will always forgive her and redeem her; making her beautiful with the sacrifice of my love. This is my Covenant; this is my vow and this I will pay.”

Well as a dad; let me say that's a pretty good Bride-Price.

And that's the price that God the Son has paid God the Father for you.

Communion

For on the night that we betrayed Him, He took bread and He broke it saying *"This is my body given to you. Take and eat and do it in remembrance of me."* And in the same way, after supper and having given thanks, He took the cup and He said *"This is the Covenant, in my blood; poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you, and do it in remembrance of me."* And so He calls His bride to the Table saying *"Believe it. I have paid the price. Breathe the free air; even here."* You can do it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Benediction and Prayer

So He said *"Blessed is he that is not offended with me."* Do you understand why He said that? Not because He's bad or because He's mean or He wants to hurt you or beat you; it's because you are the Bride and He's preparing you for the honeymoon and He doesn't want you to be offended with Him.

Now the Evil One will do all that he can to make you offended with Him; make you ashamed and frightened and terrified, but that's why you need to come to this place and present yourself. And actually He presents himself before you, body broken and blood shed and then this is what he says to you *"Don't you see? I paid the Bride-Price. How can I show you any more fully, any more completely, that I love you? And so blessed is he that is not offended with me."*

May that be true of you and may you breathe free air. Now and forevermore, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Disclaimer: The transcript is a compilation of Peter's notes and the audio of the sermon with the primary source being Peter's handwritten notes. As some of you may know, Peter's handwriting is interesting to decipher. Therefore, please do not hesitate to contact us regarding discrepancies or concerns about the transcript. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. Don't be shy about informing us of errors. Thanks, the Transcriptionist.