



# COVENANT

## PROMISE, PROVISION & PROGRESSIVE PURPOSE

DIGGING DEEPER, BUILDING STRONGER.

#ROOTED

# RECAP...

- Covenant is God's way with His people - He is a covenant-making, covenant-keeping, covenant-enabling God.
- Covenant is *first seen* in the Godhead; Father, Son and Spirit united in passion, purpose and plan...
- The heartbeat of the covenants is *relationship* and the lifeblood is *hesed* - covenant-love - God's 'stubborn steadfastness' and 'extraordinary persistence' in loving His people.
- The covenants reveal an *unfolding relationship* between God and His people; each is a contributory flowing into the ever-widening river of God's eternal purpose and the everlasting covenant designed to achieve it.
- God made covenants in Eden (establishing His purpose before the fall); then with Adam (after the fall), Noah (a fresh start after the flood) and Abraham (a promise of countless offspring). Then with Moses (to establish a holy nation for Himself) and David (declaring His desire for a Kingdom)...
- But all these covenants were broken, and all were ultimately only *foreshadows* of the **New Covenant in Christ**, by which God's longing would finally be fulfilled!
- The New Covenant is made in Christ's blood and empowered by Christ's Spirit and is a covenant for all nations. **Christ's worldwide CHURCH is God's new covenant community...**

# | COVENANT(S) FULFILLED!

- **Adam**: covenant with *created* man – desire for men in His image - fulfilled *in the church*: new creation people (2Co 5:17), “born from above” (Jn 3:3,7) and following Christ’s teaching (Mt 28:18-20).
- **Noah**: covenant with a *righteous* man – desire for family of righteous men - fulfilled *in the church*: a people “made righteous” (Ro 5:19, 2Co 5:21).
- **Abraham**: covenant with a *faithful* man – desire for faithful people - fulfilled *in the church*: a people “justified by faith” (Ro 5:1, Gal 2:16, 3:24).
- **Moses**: covenant with a *chosen nation* – desire for Holy Nation - fulfilled *in the church*: God’s “chosen people...a holy nation” (1Pe 2:9).
- **David**: covenant with a *worshipping* king – desire for Kingdom of Priests - fulfilled *in the church*: a “royal priesthood” (1Pe 2:9), a “kingdom of priests” (Rev 1:6, 5:10)...

# ETERNAL PURPOSE



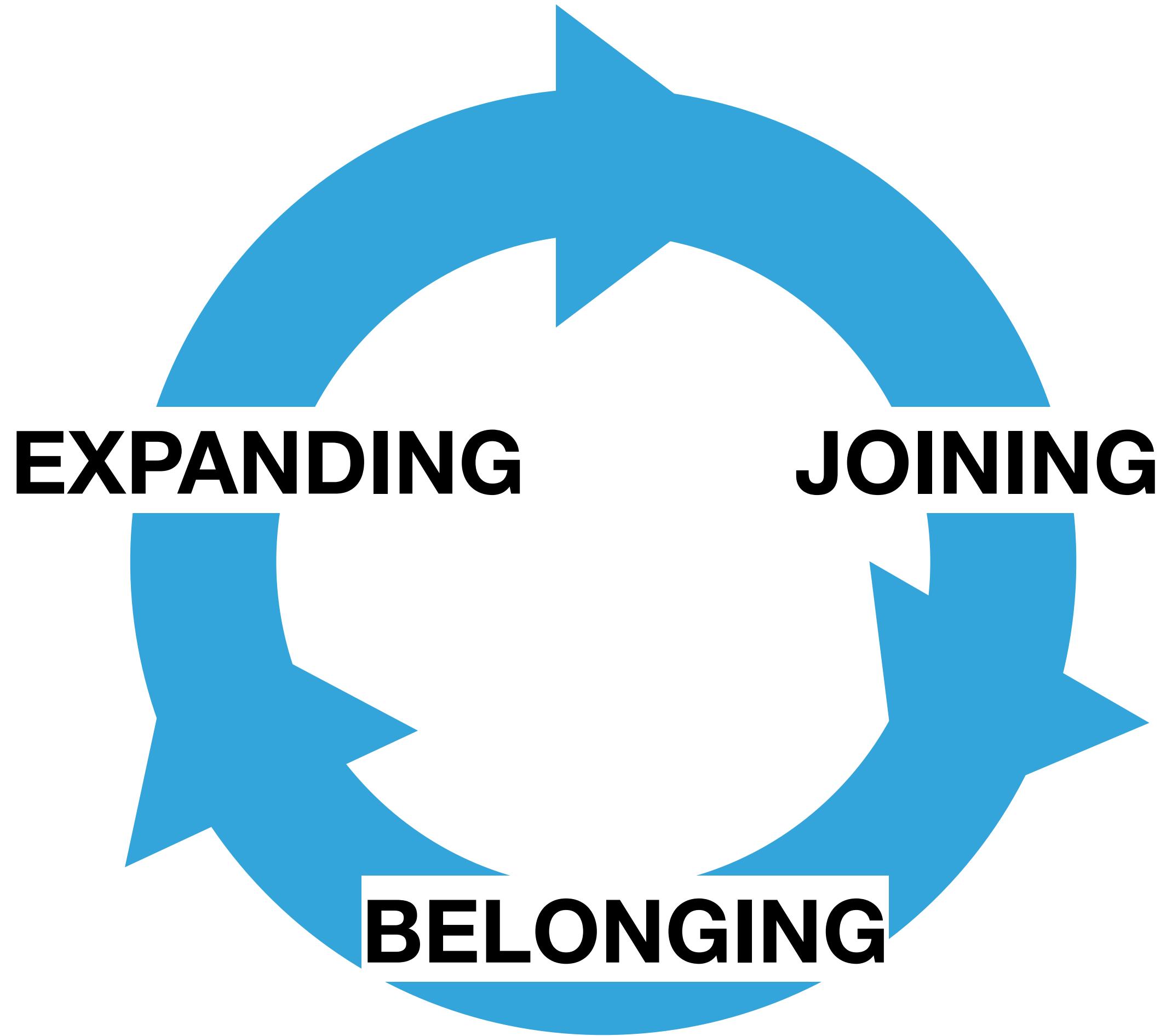
**Eph 3:10-11** His intent was that now, *through the church*, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to His **eternal purpose** that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

# NEW COVENANT COMMUNITY

**The church** is the New Covenant community and is the fulfilment of God's eternal purpose.

As such, all aspects of its composition, the basis of its life and leadership, and its commission to expand are of the utmost importance.

The NT leaves us in no doubt as to how we join, how we live-out our obligations and responsibilities, and how we fulfil our mission...



# I JESUS AND HIS CHURCH

First **mention** of the *ekklesia* - **Matthew 16:13-19**

**CRUCIAL  
QUESTION!**

WHO DO  
PEOPLE SAY  
THE SON OF  
MAN IS?

JOHN...  
ELIJAH...  
JEREMIAH...  
PROPHET...

WHO DO  
YOU SAY  
I AM?

YOU ARE  
THE  
MESSIAH,  
THE SON OF  
THE LIVING  
GOD!

BLESSED ARE  
YOU!  
MY FATHER  
REVEALED  
THIS TO YOU!

AND ON  
THIS ROCK  
I WILL BUILD  
MY  
EKKLESIA

THE FORCES  
OF DEATH WILL  
NOT  
OVERPOWER IT

I WILL GIVE  
YOU THE KEYS  
OF THE  
KINGDOM

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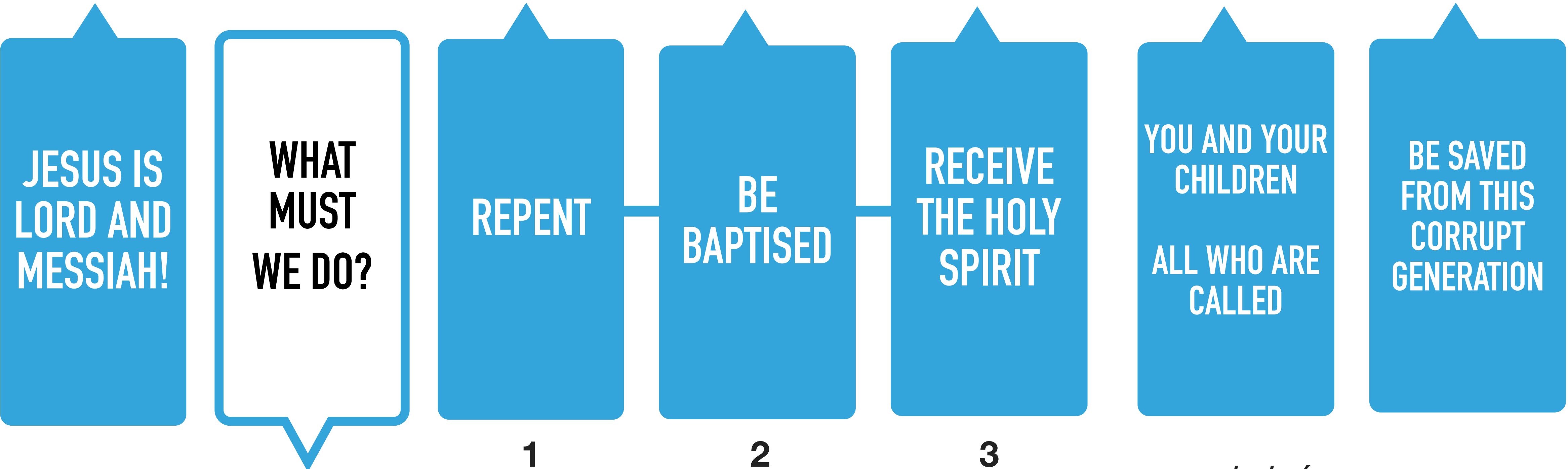
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Revelation

Response

# I PETER AND HIS REVELATION

First **massive movement/momentum** of the *ekklesia* - **Acts 2:36-40**



Revelation

**CRUCIAL  
QUESTION!**

Response

*proskaleó*  
(call to Himself)

DAVID LYON/ROOTED/COVENANT

# MEET THE CHURCH!...

SO THOSE WHO ACCEPTED HIS MESSAGE WERE BAPTISED, AND THAT DAY ABOUT 3,000 PEOPLE WERE ADDED TO THEM. (ACTS 2:41)

AND THEY DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO THE APOSTLES' TEACHING, TO THE FELLOWSHIP, TO THE BREAKING OF BREAD, AND TO THE PRAYERS [42]

THEN FEAR CAME OVER EVERYONE, AND MANY WONDERS AND SIGNS WERE BEING PERFORMED THROUGH THE APOSTLES. [43]

NOW ALL THE BELIEVERS WERE TOGETHER AND HELD ALL THINGS IN COMMON. THEY SOLD THEIR POSSESSIONS AND PROPERTY AND DISTRIBUTED THE PROCEEDS TO ALL, AS ANYONE HAD A NEED. EVERY DAY THEY DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO MEETING TOGETHER IN THE TEMPLE COMPLEX, AND BROKE BREAD FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE. THEY ATE THEIR FOOD WITH A JOYFUL AND HUMBLE ATTITUDE, PRAISING GOD AND HAVING FAVOUR WITH ALL THE PEOPLE. [44-47]

AND EVERY DAY THE LORD ADDED TO THEM THOSE WHO WERE BEING SAVED. [47]

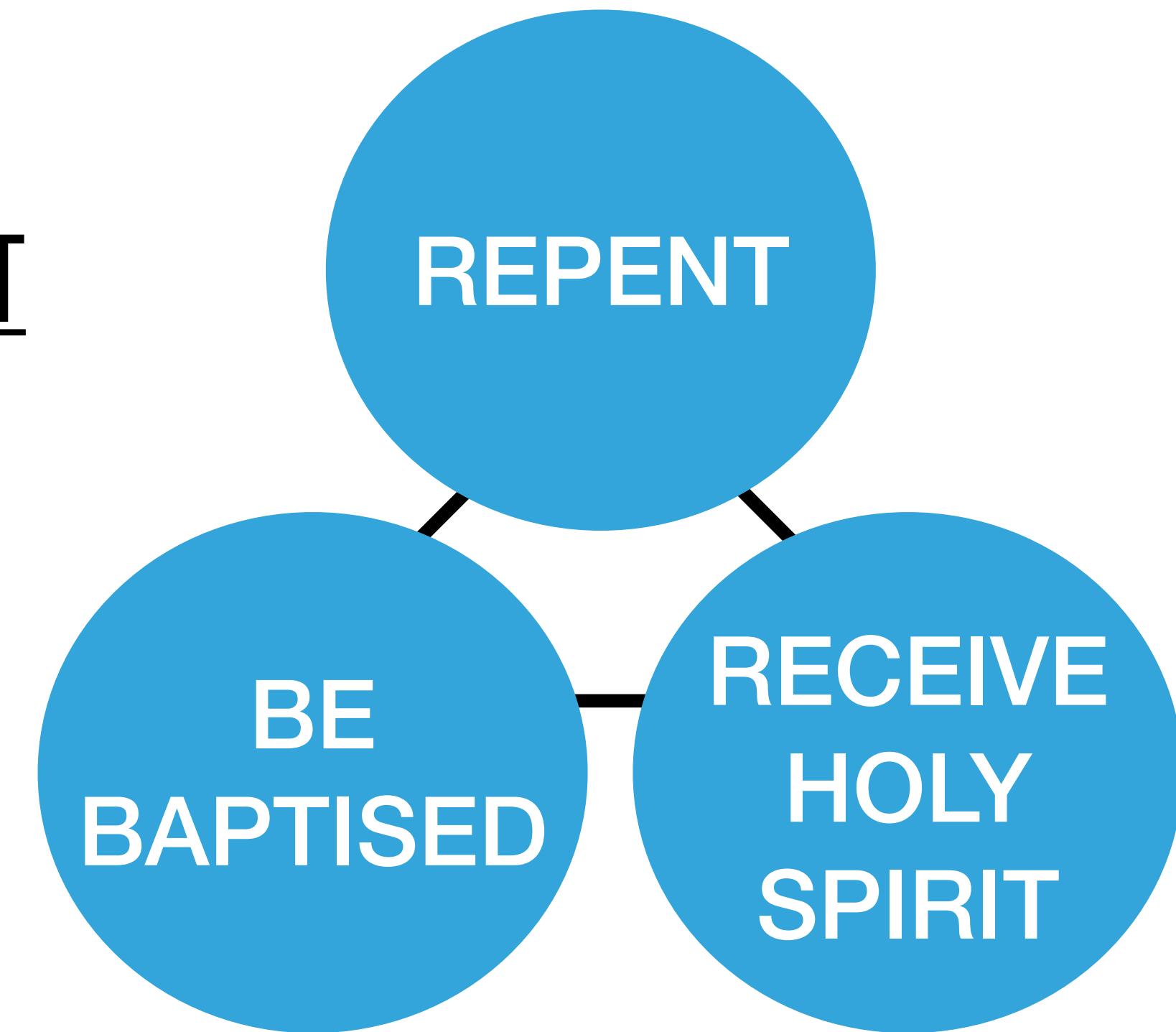
JOINING

BELONGING

EXPANDING

# VITAL FOUNDATIONS...

“BROTHERS, WHAT MUST  
WE DO?...” (ACTS 2:36)



Establishing these grounds of JOINING is the *first* outworking of [our] authority to use the “keys of the kingdom” to “bind and loose” (Mt 16:19) - cf. Ac 8:14-17, 10:47-48.

“REPENT,” PETER SAID TO  
THEM, “AND BE BAPTISED,  
EACH OF YOU, IN THE NAME OF  
JESUS CHRIST FOR THE  
FORGIVENESS OF YOUR SINS,  
AND YOU WILL RECEIVE THE  
GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.”  
(ACTS 2:38)

“THE FOUNDATION OF REPENTANCE  
FROM DEAD WORKS, FAITH IN GOD,  
TEACHING ABOUT RITUAL WASHINGS,  
LAYING ON OF HANDS....” (HEB 6:1)

# | ...WITH A VITAL 'ADDED' DIMENSION!

SO THOSE WHO  
ACCEPTED HIS MESSAGE  
WERE BAPTISED, AND  
THAT DAY ABOUT 3,000  
PEOPLE WERE ADDED  
TO THEM. (ACTS 2:41)



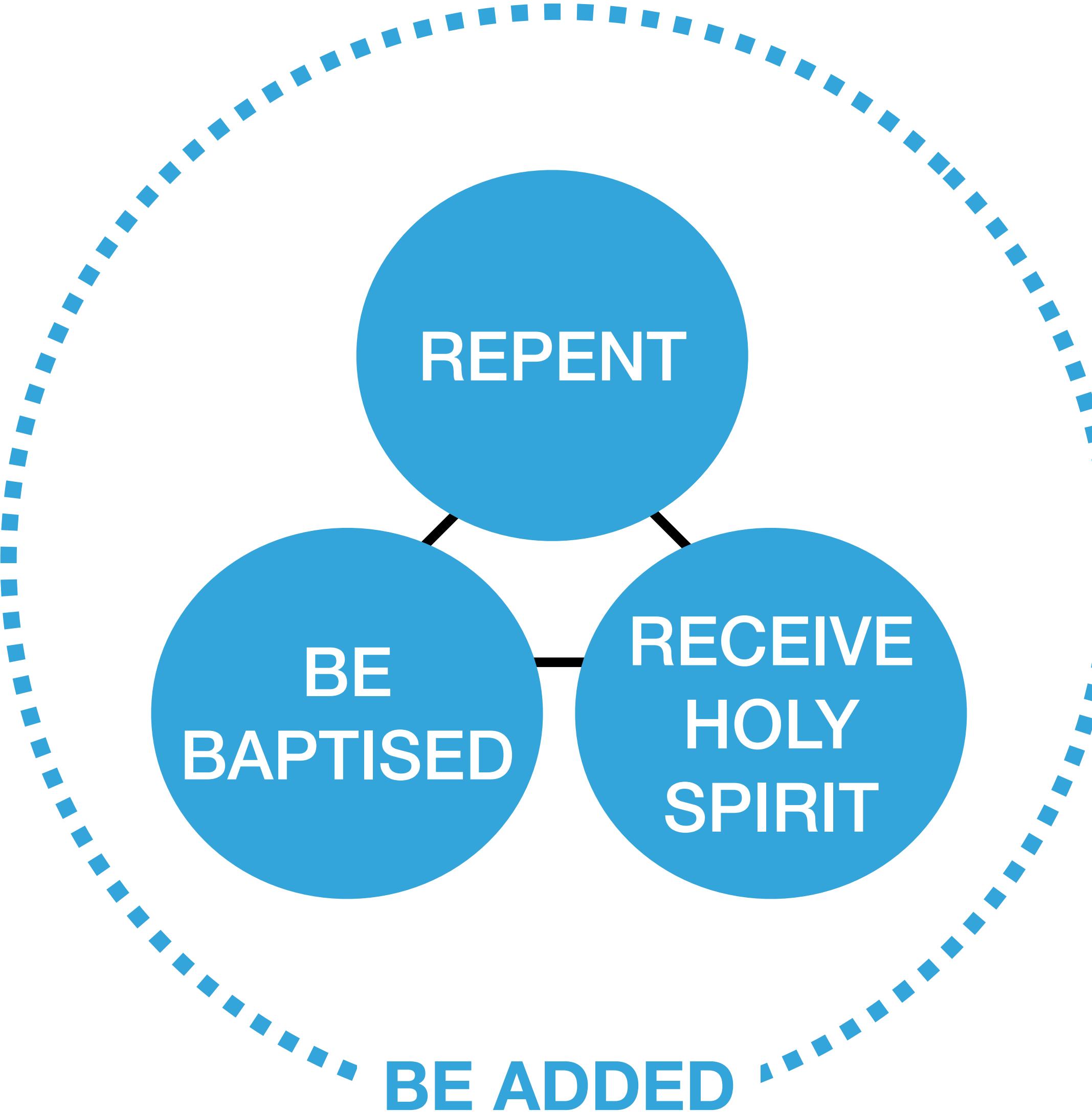
- *The Lord adds people to His Church (Ac 2:41,47). We're born from above; a work of the Spirit (Jn 3:3-7).*
- *This joining is made effective as we become part of a local expression of His covenant community... It's "not good" for God's people to be alone (Ge 2:18).*

# BAPTISM & THE NEW COVENANT

- The sign/seal of the Abrahamic covenant was circumcision (Ge 17:11-14, Ro 4:11); indeed, Stephen calls it the “covenant of circumcision” (Ac 7:8). From that time on, God’s OT people were marked by male circumcision.
- Baptism now fulfils this OT command - it’s a “circumcision done by Christ” in cutting-off the flesh-life (Col 2:11-12). Baptism is therefore a vital part of ‘joining’ the covenant community - and hence all followers of Jesus are commanded to be baptised (Mt 28:19-20, Mk 16:16, Ac 2:36, etc.) as He was (Mt 3:13-17).
- Baptism *always* accompanies repentance in the NT churches (Ac 2:41, 8:12, 9:18, 10:47-48, 16:14-15, 16:33, 18:18...) - it’s part-and-parcel of the new covenant.
- Note that Paul’s first questions to the Ephesian disciples concern *their baptism* (Ac 19:1-7) - and that when these foundations are properly laid there is no limit to the church that can be built and the impact it can have (19:10)!...

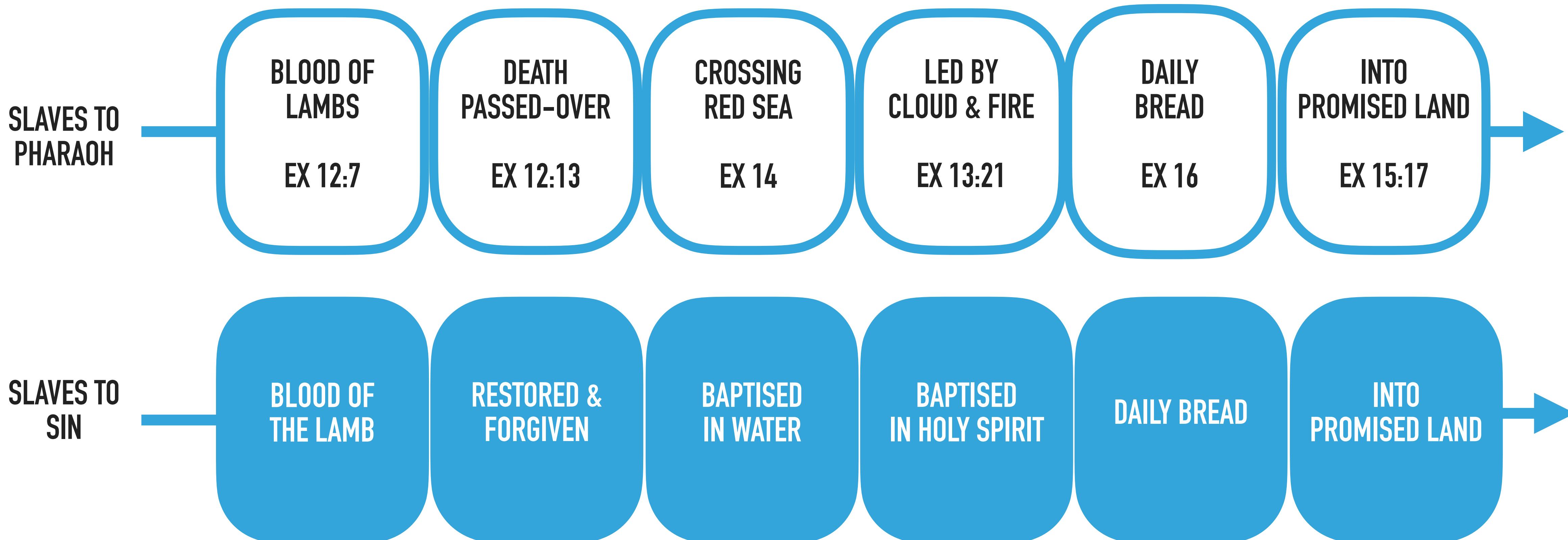
# ‘TOTAL SALVATION’

- **Repentance** saves us from eternal death - *forgiven*.
- **Baptism** saves us from the power of the past - *freed*.
- **Baptism in the Spirit** saves us powerlessness in the future - *filled*.
- **Being added** to His Church saves from being alone - *functioning*.
- He PICKS us up, CLEANS us up, FILLS us up, and JOINS us up!



THEREFORE HE  
IS ABLE TO  
**SAVE**  
**COMPLETELY**  
**THOSE WHO**  
**COME TO GOD**  
**THROUGH HIM...**  
**(HEB 7:25, NIV)**

# Covenant People, Set Free!



NOW I WANT YOU TO KNOW, BROTHERS, THAT OUR FATHERS WERE ALL UNDER THE CLOUD, ALL PASSED THROUGH THE SEA, AND ALL WERE BAPTISED INTO MOSES IN THE CLOUD AND IN THE SEA. THEY ALL ATE THE SAME SPIRITUAL FOOD, AND ALL DRANK THE SAME SPIRITUAL DRINK. FOR THEY DRANK FROM A SPIRITUAL ROCK THAT FOLLOWED THEM, AND THAT ROCK WAS CHRIST. 1CO 10:1-4



#ROOTED

## BREAKOUT GROUPS

—  
WHAT ARE THE HALLMARKS OF A  
NEW COVENANT COMMUNITY?  
WHAT SHOULD MARK US OUT?

# AGAPÉ

The New Covenant comes with a “new commandment” - that we “love one another” as Christ loved us (Jn 13:34, 15:12); such love is the primary hallmark of God’s new covenant people (Jn 13:35).

- The word is *agapé* (‘unconditional love, covenant-love’), and in many ways is the NT equivalent of *hesed*. [Though note: *agapé* is a distinctly NT word (with very little evidence of its use before the NT) and it is *e/eos* (‘mercy’) which is mostly used to translate *hesed* in the LXX.]
- *Agapé* is *known by its actions*, eg as described in 1Co 13:4-8. The root-motive of *agapé* is selfless and self-sacrificial (Jn 15:13).
- *Agapé* is the new way for all who are born again (1Pe 1:22-23) and fulfils the “entire law” (Gal 5:14, cf Ro 13:8). *Agapé* is “the characteristic word of Christianity” (Vine).

# AGAPÉ IN ACTION?...

How do we outwork our new covenant obligations and responsibilities? How do we make *agapé* practical, visible and tangible? Consider the many “one another” commands set out in the epistles:

- Live in harmony with one another (Ro 12:16)
- Be devoted to one another (Ro 12:10)
- Honour (prefer) one another (Ro 12:10)
- Accept one another (Ro 15:7)
- Admonish, teach or counsel one another (Col 3:16)
- Greet one another (Ro 16:16)
- Offer hospitality to one another (1Pe 4:9)
- Show care and concern for one another (1Co 12:25)

- Serve one another (Gal 5:13)
- Share one another's burdens (Gal 6:2)
- Be kind and compassionate to one another (Eph 4:32)
- Submit to one another (Eph 5:21)
- Encourage each other (1Th 4:18; Heb 10:24)
- Do not slander or complain about one another (Jas 4:11, 5:9)
- Confess your sins to one another (Jas 5:16)
- Forgive one another (Col 3:13)
- Act humbly towards one another (1Pe 5:5)

NB: These far-reaching obligations render many additional 'lateral' covenants unnecessary, though not prohibited (and of course vital for Marriages, Wills, Trust-forming, etc).

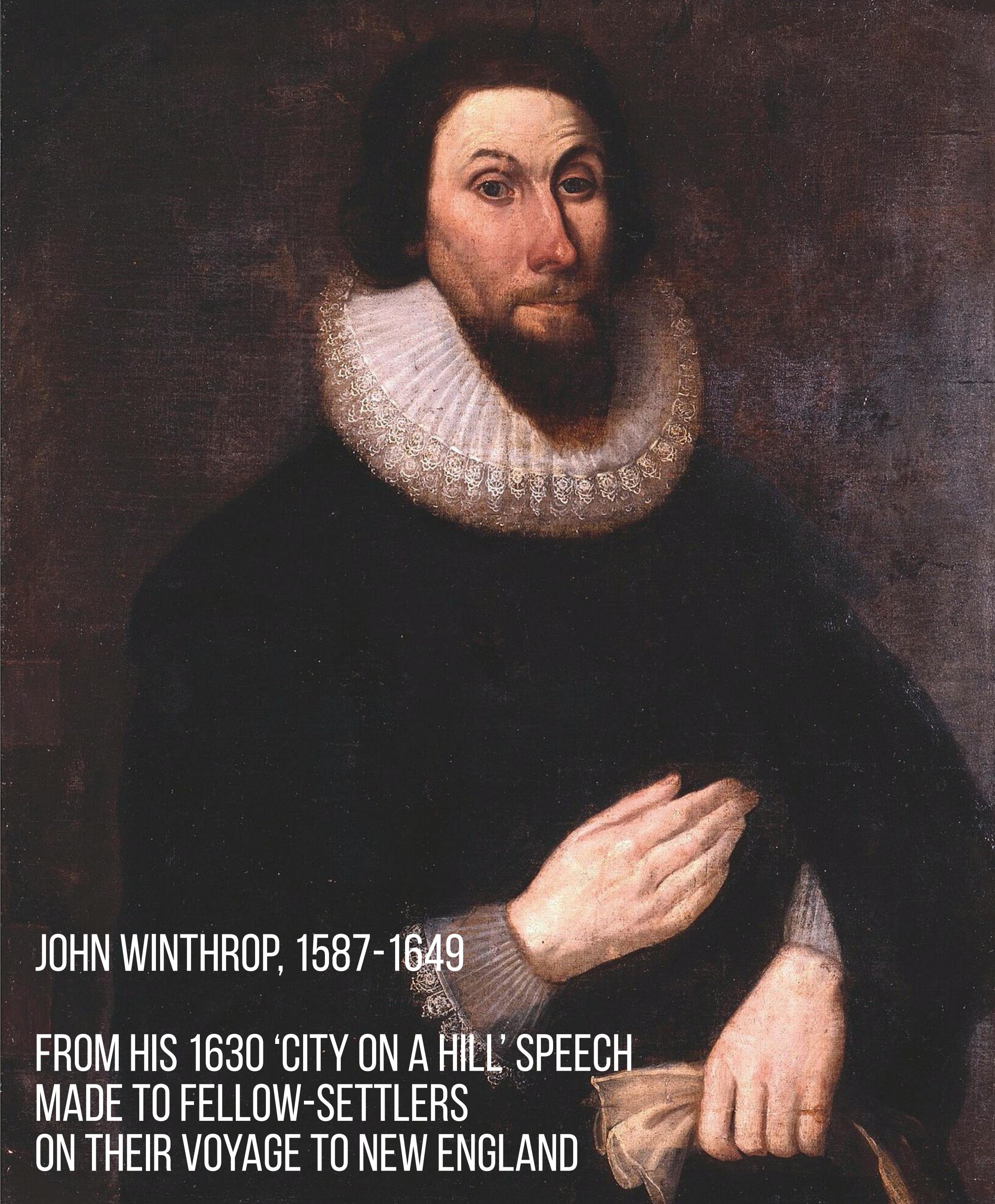
**As each one draws upon the Spirit to fulfil these responsibilities, the whole church stays holy and healthy - and the world sees that we are followers of Jesus.**

# I GOD'S PASSION FOR HIS PURPOSE

God's passion for His purpose, His honour, His Name and His glory means *He will act* to restore holiness amongst His covenant-people if He needs to. Thus, the NT gives:

1. Instructions re confronting one another over sin (Mt 18:15-20), including warnings intended to induce shame and repentance (2Th 3:14-15).
2. Conditions for the public rebuke of Elders who sin without repentance (1Ti 5:19-20)
3. Precedent for Apostles to exercise discipline where Elders fail to (1Co 5:3-5).
4. Grounds for exclusion - divisiveness (Ro 16:17, Tit 3:10), immorality (1Co 5:4-5, 13) or other unrepentant sin (Mt 18:17) - so the offender seeks to be restored (2Co 2:5-11).
5. The option for God to “remove [the] lampstand” of a church that abandons its agapé (Rev 2:4-5) - so its light/testimony ceases altogether.

NB: Establishing the obligations of BELONGING is the second outworking of the authority to “bind and loose” (Mt 18:18). A healthy “fear of the Lord” (respect/reverence, holy fear) in His Church (Ac 5:11) leads to great expansion (Ac 9:31)....



JOHN WINTHROP, 1587-1649

FROM HIS 1630 'CITY ON A HILL' SPEECH  
MADE TO FELLOW-SETTLERS  
ON THEIR VOYAGE TO NEW ENGLAND

# A CITY ON A HILL

Thus stands the cause between God and us. **We are entered into covenant** with Him for this work. We have taken out a commission... Now if the Lord shall please to hear us, and bring us in peace to the place we desire, then hath He ratified this covenant and sealed our commission, and will expect a strict performance of the articles contained in it...

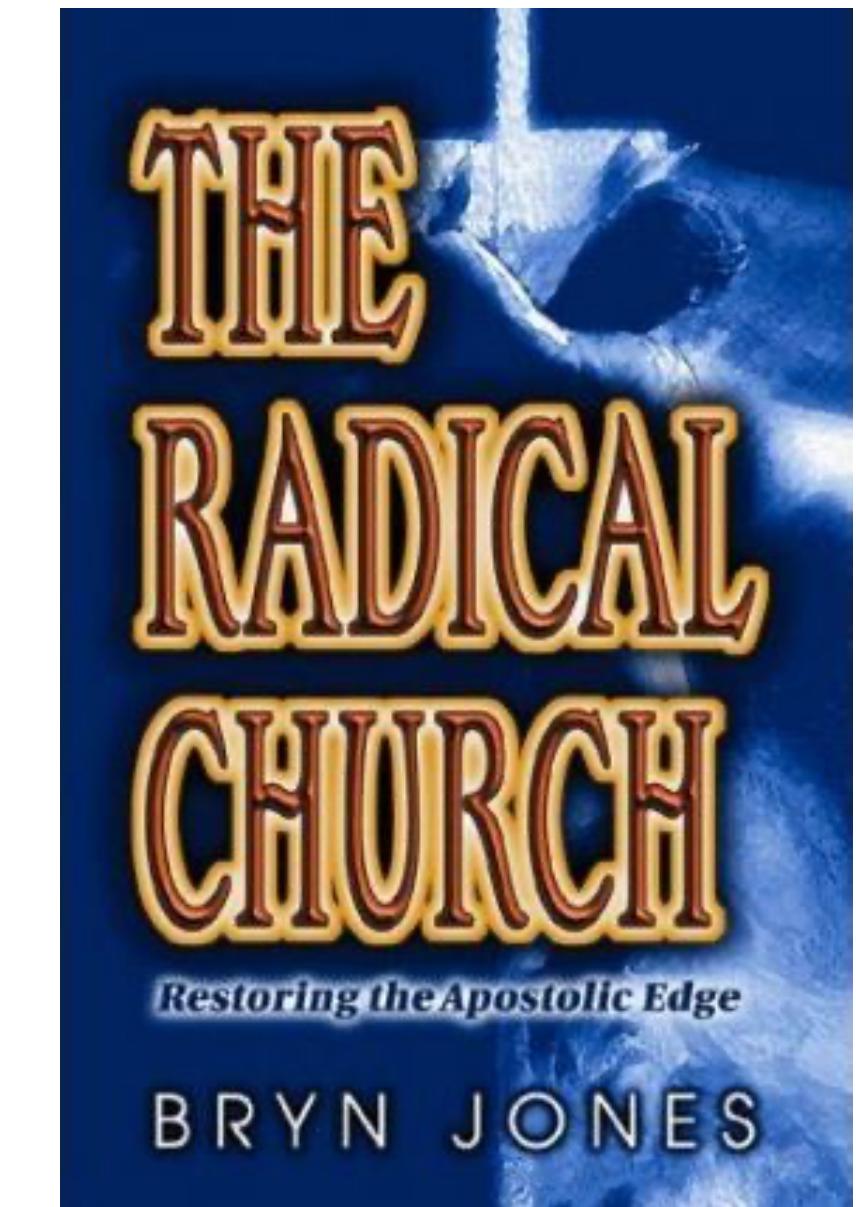
For this end, we must be knit together, in this work, as one man. We must entertain each other in brotherly affection. We must be willing to abridge ourselves of our superfluities, for the supply of others' necessities. We must uphold a familiar commerce together in all meekness, gentleness, patience and liberality. We must delight in each other; make others' conditions our own; rejoice together, mourn together, labour and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and community in the work, as members of the same body. So shall we keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace...

We shall find that the God of Israel is among us, when ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies; when He shall make us a praise and glory that men shall say of succeeding plantations, "may the Lord make it like that of New England." For we must consider that **we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us.**



“THE BONDING OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES WAS THE RESULT OF SOMETHING STRONGER THAN A SET OF COMMON BELIEFS; THEY WERE JOINED BY COVENANT TOGETHER... THE EARLY CHRISTIANS NEVER CONSIDERED LIFE OUTSIDE COVENANT. THE COMMITMENT TO CHRIST, TO ONE ANOTHER, AND TO GOD'S ULTIMATE PURPOSE FOR ALL THINGS WAS ROOTED IN THEIR RADICAL COMMITMENT TO LIVE COVENANTALLY.”

**BRYN JONES, THE RADICAL CHURCH, 102-106.**





#ROOTED

## FURTHER STUDY

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WRITE A PSALM THAT EXPRESSES  
YOUR GRATITUDE FOR GOD'S  
COVENANT-LOVE TOWARDS OUR  
CHURCH THIS YEAR.