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prayer for consecration, on: 2005/8/30 17:23

THE COVENANT

John Wesley drew upon the rich tradition of the Scriptures and Puritan literature when he prepared his Covenant Service .

Jeremiah 31:33-34, "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says 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. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'I know the Lord'; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more."

Dearly beloved, the Christian life to which we are called is a life in Christ, redeemed from sin by Him, and through Him consecrated to God. Upon this life we have entered, having been admitted into that New Covenant of which our Lord Jesus Christ is mediator, and which He sealed with His own blood, that it might stand forever.

On one side, the Covenant is God's promise that He will fulfill, in and through us, all that He declared in Jesus, who is the Author and Perfecter of our faith. That His promise still stands we are sure, for we have known His goodness, and proved His grace in our lives, day by day.

On the other side, we stand pledged to live no more unto ourselves, but to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, and has called us to serve Him that the purpose of His coming might be fulfilled.

From time to time, we renew our vows of consecration, especially when we gather at the Lord's Table, but on this day we meet expressly, as generations of our forbearers have met, that we may joyfully and solemnly renew the Covenant, which bound them and binds us to God.

Let us then, remembering the mercies of God, and the hope of His calling, examine ourselves by the light of His Spirit, that we may see wherein we have failed or fallen short in faith and practice, and considering all that this Covenant means, may we give ourselves anew to God.