

# Marriage



## MARRIAGE PART 3 - COVENANT

The biblical pattern for relationship is Covenant.

This is a vertical covenant and a horizontal covenant. As we know the cross has 2 parts to it, but it's one cross.

Without the vertical covenant there is no horizontal covenant. The horizontal covenant receives its life from the vertical covenant and not the other way around.

When we try to live out the horizontal covenant without the divine empowerment of the vertical covenant, this is nothing short of a recipe for disaster.

It is essential as followers of Jesus Christ we know what this 'covenant' is, because we have entered into this covenant relationship with Jesus, if we have received Him as Lord and Savior.

We haven't entered into a contract or a written or verbal agreement. We have entered into a covenant and not any kind of covenant, but a covenant sealed in and by Christ's blood.

***Hebrews 9:15-18 For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood.***

***Hebrews 7:22 so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.***

***Hebrews 8:6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.***

The covenant Jesus has established comes with a number of conditions, and to not keep these conditions is to break the covenant with Him. It's important to note that He never ever breaks covenant with us, while it is fully possible for us to break covenant with Him, and more importantly, not even know we are doing this.

We see this in Hebrews 8:8-9

***For finding fault with them, He says, "Behold, days are coming," says the Lord, "When I will effect a***

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***new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers On the day when I took them by the hand To lead them out of the land of Egypt; For they did not continue in My covenant, And I did not care for them," says the Lord.***

This becomes extremely important and essential when viewing this breaking of covenant through the lens of a marriage.

I want to give us the comparisons between a Contract and a Covenant, so we get to see the seriousness of the eternal relationship we have been called into with Christ.

## **CONTRACT**

Legally binding and enforceable  
Agreement between parties  
Signed  
Can be broken/terminated  
Mutually benefiting two parties  
Exchange of something  
Dependent on everyone's part  
Limited responsibilities  
Parties rights/entitlements  
One is freed from a contract when one party is not fulfilling their part in the deal.

## **COVENANT**

Extralegal  
A pledge/promise  
Sealed  
Enduring promise or vow  
Vower fulfills  
Giving of oneself  
Strength to hold up one's promise  
Full accountability  
No rights  
Party not getting their needs met supports the failing party so that they can meet their obligations.

An amazing example of understanding the Covenant between Christ and ourselves, can be seen through the lens of David and Jonathan from 1 Samuel 18:1-4

***1 Samuel 18:1-4 Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself. Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house. Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt.***

## **1. THE FIRST ASPECT OF COVENANT IS: COUNTING THE COST**

Jonathan counted the cost and gave himself up and his royal position for David because he loved David as himself.



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**Q. Who else has sacrificed Himself and His royal position in perfection for us? Jesus!**

## **2. THE SECOND ASPECT OF COVENANT IS: COVENANT EXCHANGES**

**1 Samuel 18:4** Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armour, including his sword and his bow and his belt.

**3 things that Jonathan exchanged with David are massively significant**

**1ST EXCHANGE: HIS ROBE** - Jonathan's robe identified him as a prince of Israel - royalty. David's robe identified him as a shepherd - common

*Jesus exchanged robes with us - robe of righteousness/glory, for robes of rags.*

**2ND EXCHANGE: HIS BELT** - the belt is a symbol of strength. Jonathan gives David His warriors belt David gives Jonathan his tattered shepherds belt.

*Jesus gives us His power/strength to live this life as we surrender our strength.*

**3RD EXCHANGE: HIS WEAPONS** - Jonathan gave David his princely sword and received David's shepherds sling. This exchange symbolises an exchange of enemies. Your enemies are now my enemies. In other words I will stand with you and enter into the battle and fight with you, beside you till death.

*Jesus gives us His living Word to enter the battle, and now His enemies are now ours.*

## **3. THE THIRD ASPECT OF COVENANT IS: CUTTING COVENANT/THE SACRIFICE**

We use the phrase "make a covenant" but the Hebrews used the phrase "Cutting a Covenant."

***Covenant is a blood business.***

Jonathan and David would have taken an animal, just like God taught Abraham to do, and cut the animal into two pieces, as the sign of their blood Covenant with one another.

To not keep the Covenant, would be to say, may it be done to me, as it has been done to the animal.

***God has "Cut Covenant" with us by giving His Son as the Lamb that was slain. The blood of Jesus is the blood of the Covenant - God's wholehearted commitment to us.***

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## 4. THE FOURTH ASPECT OF COVENANT IS: THE COVENANT SIGN

As a sign of their Covenant David and Jonathan would have made a cut on the palm of their hands and rubbed ash into the cut, so when it healed there would be a permanent mark. The mark served like a wedding ring in a marriage, as a visible sign of Covenant.

***The marks on Jesus' hands serve as the Sign of His Covenant with us!***

His body was ripped apart and yet the only scars that would remain on His body would be the marks on His hands.

***Isaiah 49:15-16 "Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. "Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me."***

The mark on His hands are the only "man made" thing in Heaven!

Our Covenant sign involves a Cutting also. It's a cutting off of the flesh!

## THE 5TH ASPECT OF COVENANT IS: THE COVENANT MEAL

In the Hebrew culture the cutting of covenant concluded with a simple meal of bread and wine.

As the Covenant partners handed their partner the bread and the cup, they were saying - ***"I give myself to you"***

***Luke 22:14-20 When the hour had come, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes." And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is **My body** which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the **new covenant in My blood.**"***

### Jesus is Our Covenant Partner

1. He counted the cost for us.



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2. He made a covenant exchange.
3. He provided the covenant sacrifice.
4. He bears in His body the covenant sign.
5. He invites us to reaffirm covenant at a covenant meal.

The only question that remains is are we keeping our part in the covenant He has made with us because we can be assured He is.

## QUESTIONS

1. What to date has been your current understanding of a Covenant relationship with Christ?
2. Why is it vital we understand the Covenant we are in with Christ and what are the consequences if we don't?
3. What aspect of the David/Jonathan relationship has impacted you the most and why?
4. How does knowing Jesus has made this Covenant with us and is faithful to keep it, have an impact on your life?
5. How obedient and faithful are you being to your Covenant relationship with Christ?

Watch the accompanying You Tube videos here: <https://youtu.be/gLJP6if8hc>  
<https://youtu.be/9OP4r3Vjdyc>