

Bootcamp Challenge #3 - Covenant vs. Contract Relationships
Covenant Relationship Worksheet

Ephesians 5:22-33

“22 Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.

24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,

27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;

29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church,

30 because we are members of His body.

31 For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.”

Covenants and Contracts

If you read this as a contract, both parties will not like it. Your initial emotional response will be: “that can’t be right....”

However! If you read it as a covenant, you will take it to heart.

First Transformation

A covenant changes your perspective from what your spouse is doing wrong to what you can do right.

A life observation that applies to Booming Economies like the Treasure Valley and teaches us to want Covenant Relationships

- When a place begins to boom, construction becomes a major part of the local economy.
- All the construction changes the tenor of the relationships in the community because millions and millions of dollars are on the line.
- With all that money on the line, there is another thing on the line – the social and living status of the people in the community shifts.
- Equity allows people to make moves up the ladder in living status and prestige while others miss out.
- In that process, four occupational segments of the construction industry and one private investment segment begin to drive the economy for a period during the boom:
 - Risk-based, large-scale Land Developers
 - General Contractors
 - Lawyers
 - Skilled Trades – Framers, Electricians, Plumbers, etc.
 - Individual Investors/Risk Takers looking to make money in the gaps left open by the “big players.”
- What often blows up the community is ... greed. In fact, greed blows up most relationships.
- The practical methods of Greed are – Blame and Shame others; Argue until you win.
- The practical methods of Covenant Relationships are different than those of contracts. (Genesis 12:1-3 and Genesis 15:18)

Seven Deadly Sins (Not in the Bible necessarily. A social term expressed in religious settings)

<u>Sin</u>	<u>The Arena of Selfishness</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
Greed	Monetary and Possession Selfishness	Possessions are more valuable than people
Lust	Physical and Sexual Selfishness	Love gives way to selfish lust
Envy	Jealousy-based Selfishness	Segments people as greater and lesser
Gluttony	Food and Drink Selfishness	Constant consumption controls you
Laziness	Wasteful Selfishness (often based on Fear)	Despises the achievements of others
Wrath	Hateful Relational Selfishness	Festers fear in the hearts of the vulnerable
Pride	Ego/Arrogant Selfishness	Mocks good and overestimates self

Second Transformation

A covenant changes your heart and changes your expectations.

If you're by nature a selfish person, raise your hand. (Note: Everyone should at some level raise their hand)

- Question: Where do I develop selfishness or unselfishness in this world? In your family of origin
Question: Where do individuals and families get help in learning unselfishness in this world? In the Bible
Question: Where is a great place to learn the truths and values of the Bible? In a Church setting (small or large)
Question: Where do you get to practice unselfishness? In smaller settings within the Church
Question: Where does the practice of unselfishness get real in a church setting? In Biblically based Core Groups within a church
Question: What's keeping you from moving down this list?

MARRIAGE – Covenant vs. Contract

Type of Relationship

First Level
Second Level
Third Level
Overriding Character Trait
Overriding Attitude
Commitment
Responsibilities
If/Then
Feelings

Covenant Relationships

Fulfill Commitments
Give Freely
Healthy Receiving Back
Unselfishness
Gratitude
I am committed
To God, You, Us, Me
I fulfill my vow to God and you
Commitment overrides Feelings

Contract Relationships

Fulfill Obligations
Demand a Return
Uses anger to get its way
Self Preservation
Entitlement
I am contracted
To Me, Us, You, maybe God
If you do, I will; if you don't, I won't
Feelings determine commitments

Biblical Overlay

Small Seismic Shift
Atomic Habit
Inclination 1
Inclination 2
Inclination 3
Inclination 4
Inclination 5

Love my neighbor as myself

God lead us and help us
Pray for them/us
Proactive
Biblical
Intentional
Unselfish
Process

Love myself first and mistake control for love

God help me get what I bargained for
Shame/Blame/Discredit them/us to get my way
Reactive
Secular
Intentional, Disorganized or Controlling
Selfish or Fearful
Impatient

Marriage Indicators:

- Does my marriage feel like a constant negotiation?
Have we lost the benefit of the doubt with each other?
Do we take each other for granted?

Biggest risk of Covenant Relationship living: You get taken advantage of by someone.

- In the dog eat dog world of contractual relationships, the whole goal is to not get taken advantage of.
- The goal of not getting taken advantage of is so important that people of integrity often begin to slip because they assume they will get abused so they prepare for it, or, if their fear is high enough, they will take advantage of another person first.

Third Transformation

Contracts put the emphasis on the missing parts, a covenant puts the emphasis on the blessed parts and looks to build new parts.

Fourth Transformation – Practice these actions steps every-day for 1 week.

Each day show me how I can build up, encourage, affirm, bless, and love my spouse.

Speak daily words of affirmation to each other.

Schedule emotional and relational deposits into your relationship.

Write down your disagreement process with the goal of reconciliation. Do you want to be reconciled or do you want to be right?

When we disagree, here is how we will disagree.

When we disagree, here is how we will work towards unity.

Pray this prayer and/or write your own.

“Lord Jesus, I have areas in my marriage where I have been treating my marriage like a contract. I am expecting things when I should be praying for and desiring things. I am withholding because I feel justified in withholding. Forgive me for treating my relationship with my spouse as a contract instead of a covenant. Show me how to change. Teach me what to do. Encourage me to follow through. Let you Divine presence, your precious Holy Spirit, inspire me to new places, and to experience new joy. Each day show me how I can build up, encourage, affirm, bless, and love my spouse.