

Exposed - The Intimacy Illusion

Covenant: God's Idea of Intimacy – 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

1 Corinthians 8:1-3 (Amplified Version)

"Now about food sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge [concerning this]. Knowledge [alone] makes [people self-righteously] arrogant, but love [that unselfishly seeks the best for others] builds up and encourages others to grow [in wisdom]."

² If anyone imagines that he knows *and* understands anything [of divine matters, without love], he has not yet known as he ought to know. ³ But if anyone loves God [with awe-filled reverence, obedience and gratitude], he is known by Him [as His very own and is greatly loved].

1 Corinthians 13:1-8a (NIV)

¹ If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, ... ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, ... but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ **Love [agape] never fails."**

Contract Relationships

- Nature
 - A contract is a formal, legal agreement between two or more parties where each party agrees to fulfill specific obligations in exchange for certain benefits.
- Characteristics:
 - Conditional: Performance-based and dependent on the fulfillment of specified terms.
 - Self-Interest: Primarily focused on personal gain or protection.
- Basis:
 - Reciprocal Exchange: Contracts are based on the principle of quid pro quo, meaning "something for something."
 - Conditions: The obligations are typically contingent upon the fulfillment of specified conditions.
- Enforcement:
 - Legal Recourse: Breach of a contract allows the aggrieved party to seek legal remedies, such as damages or specific performance.
 - Court Enforceable: Contracts can be enforced through the judicial system.
- Duration:
 - Term-Based: Contracts usually have a specified duration or termination point.
- Examples:
 - Employment agreements, sales contracts, service agreements, leases, etc.

Covenant Relationships

- Nature:
 - A covenant is a sacred, binding promise between two parties, often involving a commitment that transcends mere legal obligations and is rooted in mutual faithfulness, committed (*agape*) love and mutual spiritual commitment.
- Characteristics:
 - Self-Giving: Focused on the well-being and benefit of the other party.
 - Perpetual: Intended to last indefinitely, often lifelong.
- Basis:
 - Moral or Ethical Commitment: Covenants are often rooted in moral, ethical, or religious grounds rather than just legal.
 - Unconditional: Obligations in covenants are often not contingent upon the actions of the other party.
- Enforcement:
 - Self-Enforcing: Enforcement is often through personal or communal honor, trust, and moral responsibility rather than through legal systems.
- Duration:
 - Perpetual/Long-Term: Intended to last indefinitely, often lifelong, indefinitely.
- Examples:
 - Marriage vows, religious covenants (e.g., the Biblical covenant between God and the Israelites).

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Old Testament Covenant Making – Actions

Exodus 20 – The Ten Commandments (the last six shown)

- ³ You shall have no other gods before Me.
- ⁴ You shall not make idols.
- ⁷ You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
- ⁸⁻¹⁰ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
- ¹² Honor your father and your mother.
- ¹³ You shall not murder.
- ¹⁴ You shall not commit adultery.
- ¹⁵ You shall not steal.
- ¹⁶ You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
- ¹⁷ You shall not covet.

New Testament Covenant Making – Actions AND Attitudes that unwind selfishness and self-centeredness

1 Corinthians 13 – The Ten Characteristics of a Covenant life guided by a Jesus-Redeemed Heart

1. ⁴ Love is patient, *impatient, demanding, rude*
2. love is kind. *Self-seeking, life is a zero sum game, kindness is weakness*
3. It does not envy, *discontent, ungrateful, feel entitled*
4. it does not boast, *their stories ALWAYS one-up everyone else*
5. it is not proud. *arrogance, pride, talks predominantly about self*
6. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, *views others as less valuable than themselves*
7. it is not self-seeking, *self-focused to the socially acceptable level that people still tolerate them*
8. it is not easily angered, *hot-tempered, uses anger to control others*
9. it keeps no record of wrongs. *Has a mental, sometimes physical scoreboard in their relationships*
10. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. *Finds acceptable evils and rationalize your actions*

Unwinding Selfishness comes with the Benefits of keeping the “New Testament Ten Characteristics”

- ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (Protection/Trust/Hopefulness/Perseverance)
- ⁸ **Love [agape] never fails.** (Commitment {Covenant-keeping} never fails.)

Contract Relationships

- “I will ... if you will, but I won't if you won't!”
- Focuses on getting “my way”.
- Tend to judge/gauge things, people, circumstances constantly ... and live less.
- I must enforce to get what I deserve.
- Raise kids to be shrewd who don't get convicted.
- Parent with a coupling of grace and conscious or sub-conscious adherence to “my truth.”
- Have a near constant pursuit of loopholes and workarounds rather than simple obedience.
- Value compliance over obedience.
- Constantly negotiates their responsibilities and oversell/under-deliver.

Covenant Relationships

- “I will ... because of what Jesus did for both of us.”
- Focuses on making “OUR way”.
- Tend to live more and judge less.
 - I work hard and believe that God will govern and give me what I need.
- Raise kids to be shrewd who seek to be just.
- Parent with a coupling of grace and adherence to “the Truth.”
- Seek to learn how to do things the right way and understand why they do what they do.
- Values obedience over compliance.
- Constantly seeks to their best and undersell/over-deliver.

Malachi 2:16 (Amplified Bible)

¹⁶ “For I hate divorce,” says the Lord, the God of Israel, “and him who covers his garment with wrong *and* violence,” says the Lord of hosts. “Therefore keep watch on your spirit, so that you do not deal treacherously [with your wife].”