

# Covenant

## Covenant Marriage

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(Matthew 19:3-8) Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning."

- ✓ Contract - Protecting our rights and limiting our responsibilities.
- ✓ Covenant - Surrendering our rights and assuming responsibilities.

## Surrendered Rights

1. Priority - I'm no longer doing what's best for me. I now live with your interest in mind.

(Mark 10:43-45) "Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant... For even I, the Messiah, am not here to be served, but to help others, and to give my life as a ransom for many."

2. Possession - I no longer own anything. We co-manage everything.

(Genesis 2:24) That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

3. Privacy - I have nothing hidden. I give you unlimited access to every part of my life.

(Luke 12:2) "Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known."

## Assumed Responsibilities

(Ephesians 5:22-33 MSG) Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another. Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ. The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to his church, not by domineering but by cherishing. So just as the church submits to Christ as he exercises such leadership, wives should likewise submit to their husbands. Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting. Christ's love makes the church whole. His words evoke her beauty. Everything he does and says is designed to bring the best out of her, dressing her in dazzling white silk, radiant with holiness. And that is how husbands ought to love their wives. They're really doing themselves a favor—since they're already "one" in marriage. No one abuses his own body, does he? No, he feeds and pampers it. That's how Christ treats us, the church, since we are part of his body. And this is why a man leaves father and mother and cherishes his wife. No longer two, they become "one flesh." This is a huge mystery, and I don't pretend to understand it all. What is clearest to me is the way Christ treats the church. And this provides a good picture of how each husband is to treat his wife, loving himself in loving her, and how each wife is to honor her husband.

1. Seek God together.
  - Pray together.
  - Discuss the spiritual together.
  - Attend church together.

(Psalm 127:1) Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain.

2. Love unconditionally.

(Romans 5:8) But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

3. Honor respectfully.

(1 Peter 3:5-7) For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master.

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

4. Submit mutually.

(Ephesians 5:21) Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.