

COVENANT MEMBERSHIP

UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP

1. We are in “bound” relationships with God and each other.
John 1:12; Romans 8:15-17
2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 4:25
2. Key differences between contracts and covenants:
 - Contracts generally involve the exchange of goods or services and are negotiated.
 - *Covenants involve the exchange of the individuals themselves and are initiated.*
 - Contracts bind legally.
 - *Covenants bind relationally.*
 - Contracts include stipulations that when broken free the other party from obligation.
 - *Covenants include stipulations that when broken do not sever the relationship but require the pursuit of reconciliation (which may include restitution).*
 - Compliance with the terms of a contract is guaranteed by threat of penalty (damages).
 - *Compliance with the terms of a covenant is guaranteed by personal integrity.*
 - Contracts are established upon legalities.
 - *Covenants are established upon loyalty.*
 - Contracts are generally entered into with a signature.
 - *Covenants are confirmed by signs.*
3. The language and images of covenant relationships:
 - a. “I will be your God; and you will be My people.” (Belonging)
Genesis 17:7-8; Exodus 6:7; Jeremiah 7:23; 31:33; Romans 9:25-26
 - b. “Forsaking” and “cleaving”. (Commitment)
Genesis 2:24; Deuteronomy 31:16; Daniel 11:30
 - c. “Bone of bone”, “flesh of flesh”. (Relatives)
Genesis 2:23; 2 Samuel 5:1; 19:13
 - d. “One flesh”. (Union)
Genesis 2:24; John 17:11, 21, 23; Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12
 - e. People, race, nation; Marriage and family; Body; Temple or house.

4. Our relationship with God is clearly covenantal.

God's relationship to the church is by way of the "new covenant."

Jeremiah 31:31-34 vs. Hebrews 8:8-13 and 9:15

(cf. Luke 22:20; 2 Cor. 3:6)

5. Our relationship with each other is covenantal.

a. We are family.

"Children of God" (too numerous); "brother/sister" (too numerous)

b. We are one body.

Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; etc.

c. We are one nation/people/race.

1 Peter 2:9-10; Hebrews 8:10

d. We are one temple/house.

Ephesians 2:22; 1 Peter 2:4-5

e. We ratify our covenant with the sign of baptism.

f. We remember our covenant with communion.