

COVENANT MEMBERSHIP

Understanding the Nature of Our Relationship

Covenant membership means we have formally identified with one another, having committed ourselves to serve and love one another, agreeing to be accountable to one another under the shepherding oversight of our appointed leaders in the name of Christ.

1. The imagery and language of covenant relationships:
 - a. Family: “Bone of bone”, “flesh of flesh”.
Genesis 2:23; 2 Samuel 5:1; 19:13
 - b. Union: “One flesh”, “one man”.
Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5-6; Judges 20:11
 - c. Belonging:
 - i. A people: “I will be your God; and you will be My **people**.”
Genesis 17:7-8 (v 14); Exodus 6:7; Jeremiah 7:23
 - ii. A nation: Exodus 19:5-6
 - d. Commitment: “Forsaking” and “cleaving”.
Genesis 2:24; Deuteronomy 31:16; Daniel 11:30
 - e. Marriage and family; Body; Temple or house.
2. Our current relationship with God is covenantal.
 - a. Explicit References: Jeremiah 31:31-34 vs. Hebrews 8:8-13 and 9:15
(cf. Luke 22:20; 2 Cor. 3:6)
 - b. Language and images:
 - i. Family: John 1:12; Romans 8:15-17
 - ii. Union: Romans 6:3-5; Ephesians 1
 - iii. Belonging: Romans 9:23-25; 14:7-8; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
 - iv. Commitment: Philippians 1:27; 1 Peter 3:15
 - v. People, race, nation, body, temple, house, marriage.
3. Our current relationship **with each other** is covenantal.
 - a. Family: “Children of God”, “brother/sister” (too numerous)
 - b. Union: Romans 12 (v5); 1 Corinthians 12; Philippians 2:2, etc.
 - c. Belonging: Galatians 3:29; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Hebrews 8:10
 - d. Commitment: John 13:34; Romans 12:10; Galatians 6:10
 - e. People, race, nation, body, temple, house, marriage.

4. The formal pattern of these covenants:

Covenant relationships were never meant to be inferred merely from patterns of life together; they were entered into by explicit, formal means.

- a. By spoken word and oath: Exodus 24:3; Deuteronomy 29:12.
- b. By sacrifice: Psalm 50:5.
- c. By written document and seal: Nehemiah 9:38; Genesis 17:9–14.

5. Our New Covenant pattern ought to be formal identification with a particular church through covenant membership.

- a. For mutual love and edification.
- b. For mutual service and support.
- c. For mutual accountability and discipline.
- d. By formal recognition (written covenant/baptism).