

Title: The Power of Covenant
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Assumptions

1. God is into relationships
2. You want to do it right – the Godly way
3. You want to be the best possible husband / wife
4. Every relationship asks one question
5. Everybody is somebody's spouse
6. Your spouse can never fulfil you
7. The end goal of marriage is not to be married, it is to pursue the purposes of God together

God is into relationships

Genesis 2:18, 24

¹⁸And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him..." ²⁴Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Proverbs 18:22

²²He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the LORD.

Held in honor

Hebrews 13:4 (ESV)

⁴Let marriage be held in honor among all...

Marriage as covenant

Ephesians 5:31-32 (NLT)

³¹As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one." ³²This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one.

Covenant, what's that?

- Mediator – Christ
- Exchange of clothes – leaving father & mother / old families
- Exchange of belts – mutual strength & protection
- Sacrifice – Christ
- Mingling of blood – consummation
- Exchange of names – wife takes husband's name
- Memorial seal – ring
- Recital of terms – marriage vows
- Memorial meal – ceremony
- Erect a memorial – a new family

Broken covenant

Malachi 2:16

“¹⁶For the Lord God of Israel says that He hates divorce, for it covers one’s garment with violence,” says the Lord of hosts.

Matthew 19:6 (NLT)

⁶Since they are no longer two but one, let no one split apart what God has joined together.

Some stats

- 60 percent of marriages for couples between the ages of 20 and 25 end in divorce.
- 50 percent of all marriages in which the brides are 25 or older result in a failed marriage.
- 65 percent of altar-bound men and women live together before getting married.
- Research indicates that people who live together prior to getting married are up to 50% more likely to have marriages that end in divorce.
- Children of divorce have a higher risk of divorce when they marry, and an even higher risk if the person they marry comes from a divorced home. One study found that when the wife alone had experienced a parental divorce, her odds of divorce increased to 59 percent. When both spouses experienced parental divorce, the odds of divorce nearly tripled.
- Half of all American children will witness the breakup of a parent’s marriage. Of these, close to half will also see the breakup of a parent’s second marriage.

Broken covenant

- Studies in the early 1980’s showed that children in repeat divorces earned lower grades and their peers rated them as less pleasant to be around.
- Teenagers in single-parent families and in blended families are three times more likely to need psychological help within a given year.
- Compared to children from homes disrupted by death, children from divorced homes have more psychological problems.
- Children of divorce are at a greater risk to experience injury, asthma, headaches and speech defects than children whose parents have remained married.
- Following divorce, children are fifty percent more likely to develop health problems than two parent families.
- Children living with both biological parents are 20 to 35 percent more physically healthy than children from broken homes.
- A study of children six years after a parental marriage breakup revealed that even after all that time, these children tended to be “lonely, unhappy, anxious and insecure.”
- Seventy percent of long-term prison inmates grew up in broken homes.
- Children of divorce are four times more likely to report problems with peers and friends than children whose parents have kept their marriages intact.
- Children of divorce, particularly boys, tend to be more aggressive toward others than those children whose parents did not divorce.
- People who come from broken homes are almost twice as likely to attempt suicide than those who do not come from broken homes.
- Children of divorced parents are roughly two times more likely to drop out of high school than their peers who benefit from living with parents who did not divorce.