

Covenant & Commitment

A four-week series
on Covenant Membership



Covenant & Commitment:

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1. Covenant: A Living, Breathing Thing
2. Covenanting with Christ & the Church
3. New Covenant, Renewed Vision
4. Covenant as Christian Discipleship



Covenanting with Christ & the Church

A Summary & Review

- *Covenant membership* in the local church is how the new covenant with Christ and his disciples is expressed
- Believer's baptism is the first step of obedience upon deciding to follow Jesus—marking entrance into covenant
- Communion (Lord's Supper) is a renewal of the baptismal vows you made when you first decided to follow Jesus
- In covenant we submit ourselves to one another (accountability), but it's the Spirit that convicts & corrects
- While we unashamedly confess the exclusivity of Christ, we covenant in grace and extend the invitation in love

Broken Covenants & Second Chances

The Messiness of Commitment

While God intends for his covenants to be permanent, human beings (his children) often make a mess of them.

- Gen 21:1-3, 8-20 – failure to be patient & believe
- Lev 6:2 – deceiving & cheating neighbor
- Joshua 7:11; Ezekiel 44:7 – disobedience & defiling holy things, polluting the sacred with the secular/pagan
- Jer 3:20; 11:10 – idolatry, worship & devotion to another
- Malachi 2:10 – unfaithful to God and each other
- Hosea 6:7 – unfaithfulness and betrayal of trust
(God is faithful, even to a prostitute!)

Hosea 3:1 NLT

Then the LORD said to me, “Go and love your wife again, even though she commits adultery with another lover. This will illustrate that the LORD still loves Israel, even though the people have turned to other gods and love to worship them.”

“Do you think their [Israel’s] faithlessness cancels out his faithfulness? Not on your life! Depend on it: God keeps his word even when the whole world is lying through its teeth.”

Paul, Romans 3:3-4 MSG

Paul, Romans 6:1-4 NIV

¹ What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Paul, Ephesians 2:1-5 NIV

¹ As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Ephesians 2:6-10 NIV

⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:19-22 NIV

¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

“The Church will only realize her unity when she realizes that she does not exist to propagate the point of view of any body of men (or women), but to give a home and a dwelling place where the Spirit of Christ can dwell, and where all who love Christ can meet in that Spirit.”

William Barclay, *Ephesians* (pg.139)

Paul, 1 Corinthians 1:7-9 NLT

⁷ Now you have every spiritual gift you need as you eagerly wait for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁸ He will keep you strong to the end so that you will be free from all blame on the day when our Lord Jesus Christ returns. ⁹ God will do this, for he is faithful to do what he says, and he has invited you into partnership with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead...”

Paul, Philippians 3:13 NIV

A New Covenant, A Renewed Vision

A Summary & Review

- Covenants are messy, and breaking them is possible, but we can be hopeful because God is always faithful
- God's faithfulness displayed in the new covenant should propel us forward in commitment to his church
- The grace of Jesus isn't a license to sin or slack off, but it motivates us to run harder and faster after him
- It is important to be intentional in our healing from bad experiences, broken commitments, and cynicism
- The Spirit is able to give us a renewed vision with a renewed commitment to Christ and his church

A wooden chalice stands on the left, and two slices of bread are on the right. The background is a warm, textured orange-brown.

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Sermon audio & slides in PDF can be downloaded at:
www.christiansburgmennonite.org