

A Valentine's Gift to Each Other – A Covenant Marriage



A covenant marriage is intended by God to be a lifelong relationship exemplifying unconditional love, reconciliation, sexual purity, and growth. A covenant is an eternal commitment with God. People can negotiate out of contracts, but not out of a covenant. The heart of covenant marriage is “the steadfast love of the Lord,” which comes from the very heart of God and “never ceases” (Lam. 3:22, RSV).

What Elements make up a Covenant Marriage?

Covenants are the fruit of a loving, faithful relationship. The vows we exchange at our wedding reflect a relationship already bound by steadfast love and faithfulness.

Covenant partners take responsibility for their actions and are based on freedom of choice.

Covenant marriages are not built on coercion, deceit, and manipulation. Submission is freely given and grows from respect, not fear and manipulation. One chooses daily to love “as Christ loved the church.”

Covenants are rooted in actions based on choices, not feelings. Feelings are forever fluctuating. Therefore to build a covenant marriage on feelings is to build it on shifting sand, which cannot support the foundation of marriage.

Covenant partners nurture their relationship. Our marriage will grow as we build up one another in love. This takes place when we value our spouse more than ourselves. Through Christ covenant, partners administer unconditional love, forgiveness, and reconciliation while providing comfort and hope to their partner.



Covenants are based on commitments freely offered. A covenant is built on selfless love, freely given and freely received. As strange as it may sound, a covenant marriage is one in which the “tie that binds” the couple together is a commitment freely offered with no strings attached. Paul said it well: “Love never fails” (1 Corinthians 13:8).

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A Covenant Marriage is initiated for the benefit of one's spouse and is established to create oneness with each other and with our Heavenly Father. May our marriages reflect Christ's call to a covenant oneness.

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Pro-Family Action Steps

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According to research conducted by the Marriage and Religion Research Institute (MARRI), federal surveys clearly demonstrate that the intact married family that worships frequently (weekly or at least monthly) yields the most favorable social outcomes. Compared to the non-intact family that worships less than monthly or never, national data illustrates the superiority in:

Benefits for the Individual:

- Happiness: 50% more likely to be happy in a general sense.
- Performance: A third more likely to take pride in their work (34%).
- Health: Nearly a third more likely to rate their health excellent or very good (30%).

(From the *Case for Marriage*)



Benefits for the Couple:

- Marital Satisfaction: 25% happier in their relationship.
- Divorce or Separation: 50% less likely.
- Adultery: More than 4 times less likely (7.7% vs. 33.8%).
- Earned Income: As much as 5 times more annually (\$54K vs. \$9.4K).

Benefits for their Children:

- Average High School GPA (English and Math): Almost half a grade point higher (2.94 vs. 2.48).
- Expulsion or Suspension from School: Nearly 3 times less likely.
- Repeating a Grade: Nearly 6 times less likely (6% vs. 34%).
- Hard Drug Use: Nearly 2.5 times less likely (8.5% vs. 20.1%).
- Drunkenness: Nearly 2 times less likely (22.4% vs. 41.2%).
- Homosexual Activity: 3 times less likely (2.5% vs. 7.5%).
- Running Away from Home: Over 2.5 times less likely.
- Average Number of Sex Partners (Females): Over 3 times less likely (0.47 vs. 1.55).

Bottom Line: Enrich your marriage and family by participating in church!

Family Research Council

Visit: www.frc.org / www.cultureimpact.org / FRC Order Line: 1-800-225-4008

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