



Treasuring the Church

WHAT IS A CHURCH COVENANT?



Here's a Definition

“A church covenant is a series of written pledges based on the Bible which church members voluntarily make to God and to one another regarding their basic moral and spiritual commitments and the practice of their faith”

Baptist Church Covenants
by Charles W. DeWeese.

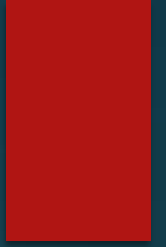
Quiz Time!

“A church covenant is a series of written _____ based on the _____ which church members voluntarily make to _____ and to _____ regarding their basic moral and spiritual commitments and the _____ of their faith”

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Naughty
or Nice?





Here's the Connection

Just as marriage vows express a couple's covenantal commitment to live faithfully with one another, a church covenant expresses the believers' covenantal commitment to live faithfully with one another as a body of believers.

The Similarities

- ▶ Both are covenantal, and not merely contractual.
- ▶ Both involve biblical promises.*
- ▶ Both create a strong sense of belonging.
- ▶ Both involve mutual responsibilities.
- ▶ Both require perseverance.
- ▶ Both speak to a mission in life.*
- ▶ Both are publicly recognized.
- ▶ Both carry the weight of being sacred and solemn.

Traditional Wedding Vows

The Man Says ... I take thee to my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I plight thee my troth (my solemn pledge and promise).

The Woman Says ... I take thee to my wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, cherish, and to obey, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I give thee my troth (my solemn pledge and promise).

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Christmas 1977

Dearest Greg,

I trust this Bible will be something which you will be able to use often as you seek to serve the Lord and as we strive together to build a Christian home grounded upon the truths found within it.

Psalm 37:3-5

All my love,
Carol

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The Bible



Doctrine
Statement

What do we
believe?



Church
Covenant

How will we live and
serve together in light
of what we believe?

Acts 2:41-42

⁴¹ So those who received his word (the gospel message proclaimed by Peter) were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. ⁴² And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

- ▶ Doctrine Part
- ▶ Record Keeping Part
- ▶ Covenantal Part

Hebrews 10:24-25

²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

- ▶ Doctrine Part
- ▶ Covenantal Part

The Reasons for a Church Covenant

- ▶ Defines our responsibilities to one another
- ▶ Expresses our relational commitment to one another
- ▶ Promotes unity and togetherness*
- ▶ Encourages holy and accountable living
- ▶ Establishes expectations should we stray*
- ▶ Supports the advancement of the gospel
- ▶ Provides a public expression of our shared convictions

Scripture (The Old and New Testament)



Doctrine
Statement

What do we
believe?

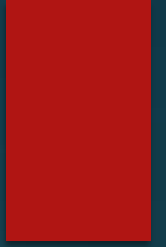


Church
Covenant

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Psalm 84:11-12

¹¹ For the LORD God is a sun and shield;
The LORD gives grace and glory;
No good thing does He withhold from those who
walk uprightly.

¹² O LORD of hosts,
How blessed is the man who trusts in You!

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RBC Church Covenant (Lines 1-5)

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most joyfully covenant with one another, as one body in Christ. (*Jn 1:12-13; 6:63; 16:7-11; Col 2:6; 1 Thess 1:6; 2:13; Acts 2:41-42; 8:38; Matt 28:19; 1 Cor 12:12-13*)

What Do We See?

- ▶ Holy Spirit leading to salvation
- ▶ A decision to receive Jesus Christ as Savior
- ▶ A public profession of faith in Jesus Christ
- ▶ Baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- ▶ The introduction of a solemn and public pledge
- ▶ Our entering into a most joyful covenant with one another as a united body of Christ.

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