



# Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant





# Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant



- **Marriage is a “Covenant.”**  
*Malachi 2:14; Proverbs 2:16-17*
- **Definition of the Hebrew word.**  
*“In the sense of cutting; a compact made by passing between pieces of flesh.”*  
**God’s covenant with Abraham**  
**(Genesis 15:10, 17-18)**



# Symbolism of the Covenant in a Wedding Ceremony



- Seating of the family & guests on opposite sides of auditorium/center aisle. Why?  
**Covenant setting... “Living sacrifices.”**
- Why is there often a white runner?  
**Represents “holy ground.”**
- Groom enters first – why?  
**He is to *initiate* the covenant, and has the greater responsibility.**



# Symbolism of the Covenant In a Wedding Ceremony



- **Rings** – *“a token of covenant.”*



**Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant**

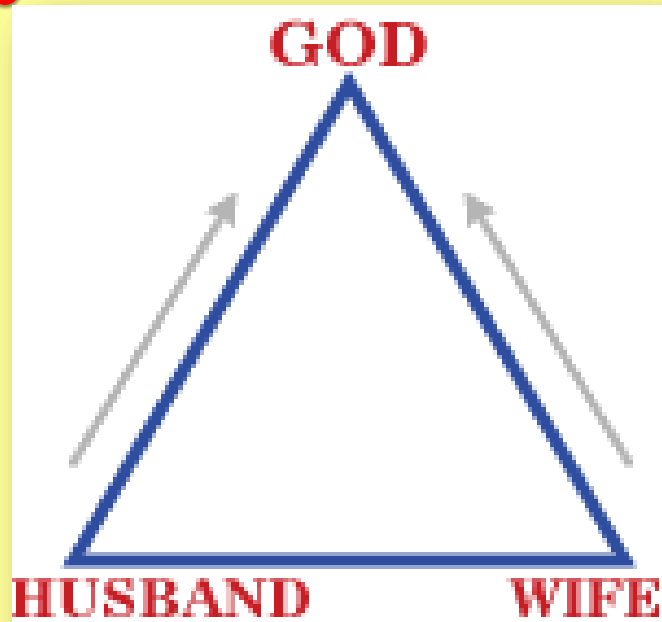


# Covenant vs. Contract



**The MARRIAGE COVENANT is sacred.**

- **Matthew 19:6 – “Joined in Heaven.”**
- ***A holy triune not a human duet.***



**Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant**



# Covenant vs. Contract



## Solomon in Proverbs 20:25

- “It is a snare to rashly say ‘it is holy’ and then later make inquiry.” NASV
- “It is a danger to a man to say without thought, ‘It is holy,’ and after taking his vows, to be questioning if it is necessary to keep them. BBE
- “An impulsive vow is a trap; later you'll wish you could get out of it.” *The Message*

**Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant**



## Genesis 2: 24-25



**24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.**

**25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. NASU**

**Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant**



## Genesis 2: 24-25



24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. NASU

**Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant**





# The Four Pillars



**Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant**



# The Four Pillars

## MARRIAGE

“a man shall leave his father and his mother.”

#1: Severance

Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant



# The Four Pillars

## MARRIAGE

**“be joined to his  
wife”**

**#2: Permanence**

**Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant**



# The Four Pillars

**MARRIAGE**

***"become one  
flesh."***

**#3: Unity**

**Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant**



# The Four Pillars

## MARRIAGE

**“both naked and were not  
ashamed.”**

**#4: Intimacy**

**Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant**



# Covenant vs. Contract

## A 3-Way Divine Covenant:

- **TRUST**
- **UNLIMITED RESPONSIBILITY**
- **LIFE LONG –  
NOT TO BE  
BROKEN**

## A 2-Way Human Contract:

- **DISTRUST**
- **LIMITING ONE'S LIABILITY**
- **VOIDED BY  
MUTUAL  
CONSENT**

**Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant**



# Covenant vs. Contract



## A Contract says:

- “I take thee for me.”
- “You had better do it.”
- “What do I get?”
- “I’ll meet you half way.”
- “I have to.”

## A Covenant says:

- “I give myself to thee.”
- “How may I serve you?”
- “What can I give?”
- “I’ll give you 100% plus.”
- “I want to.”

**Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant**



# Keeping of Vows is a Serious Matter



**Our society has undervalued the  
keeping of our word.**







# Keeping of Vows is a Serious Matter.



## The scriptures value it highly:

- “Pay that which thou...” (Eccl 5: 2-7).
- The Zion dweller-- (Ps 15:4)!
- “Shall not break word” (Num. 30:2).

I PROMISE TO  
I PROMISE TO  
I PROMISE TO  
I PROMISE TO  
I PROMISE TO

I PROMISE TO  
I PROMISE TO  
I PROMISE TO  
I PROMISE TO  
I PROMISE TO



# Commitment and Vows in Marriage



**“COMMITMENT** ... is what transforms a promise into reality. It is the words that speak boldly of your intentions. It is the actions that speak louder than words. It is making the time when there is none, coming through time after time, year after year. Commitment is the stuff character is made of, the power to change the face of things. It is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism.”



# Commitment and Vows in Marriage



- Couples utter heavy duty vows in elaborate weddings. Problem?
  - Treated ***superficially***.
  - Do not ***give forethought***.
  - Do not ***personalize***.
  - Do not give proper ***emphasis***.
  - Often uttered once without ***reflection***.



# Commitment and Vows in Marriage



We need a thorough and insightful understanding of Six **Marital Promises**.

1. Love you as long as we both shall live  
(*Kindness, sacrifice*).

2. Cherish and honor you...  
(*Thoughtfulness*).

3. I will be what a husband and wife owes  
to their spouse  
(*Meet your needs*).



# Commitment and Vows in Marriage



We need a thorough and insightful understanding of Six **Marital Promises**.

4. I will take you *as you are* ..

- (*Acceptance*).

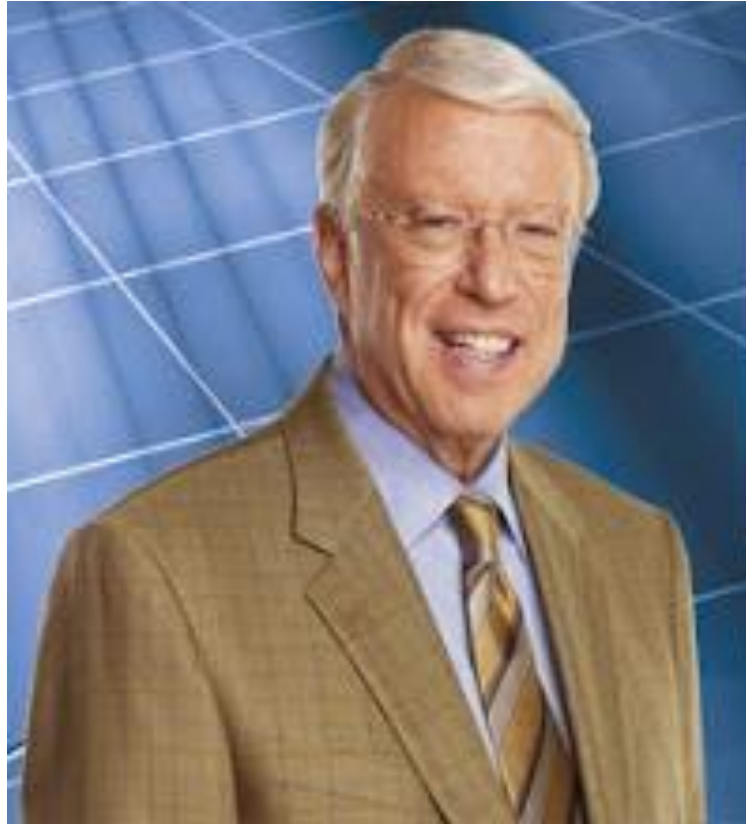
5. I will **forsake** all others ...

- (*Be Faithful*).

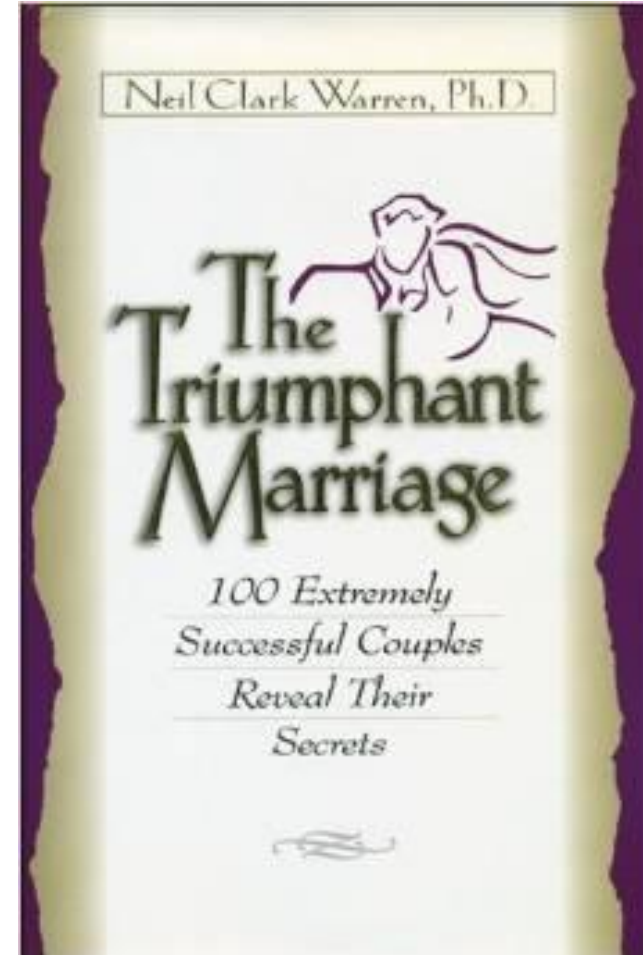
6. I will do all these things for **better or for worse, in sickness & health.**

- (*Unconditionally serve you*).

# A Couple Must Make Their Vows a Part of Them!



**Dr. Neil Clark Warren, PhD**





## Renewal of vows--Brent to Gail



I promise I will do everything in my power to **help you to get to heaven**; to **accept you** and to **remain loyal** to you **always**.

I promise to put **you and our marriage second only to God**; to be **open and honest with you** always as we strive for oneness.

I promise to **cherish, honor, and support you in good times and bad**; and strive to love you **selflessly, like Christ loves the church**; as I meet your **deepest needs**.

**I promise to pilot, provide, and protect you** and our family; and to do these things **unconditionally** until death do us part, so help me God!!



# Marriage: A Spiritual Covenant

