

BUILDING *to* LAST

SESSION 4 PROMISES MADE TO KEEP

The nature and importance of covenants

What is a covenant?

- *A solemn agreement (promises/vows pledged) that forms a mutually binding relationship.*

Why are they critical?

1. We are walking in God's way as he makes covenants and keeps them.

"...He has granted to us his precious and very great promises..." (2Pet. 1:4)

2. We are walking as fallen people in a fallen world which requires solemn arrangements

Vows: solemn promises pledged

***I, _____ take you, _____, as my wedded husband/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 do us part,
according to God's holy ordinance.
And thereto I pledge myself
truly with all my heart.***

1. I take you... to have and to hold, from this day forward
2. Better/worse, richer/poorer, sickness/health
3. To love and to cherish 'till death do us part
4. According to God's holy ordinance
(Genesis 1:26-28; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7, et al.)
5. Thereto I pledge myself

Case Study: Wife unloved, Husband unmoved.

Larry and Lucy are members of your caregroup. They have been members of the church for many years, and their kids are grown up and out of the home. They have been faithful to church and caregroup, but have always seemed a bit distant, never showing much attention to one another while around people.

Recently in a conversation with Lucy, she shared with you that she feels like separating from her husband, hoping that maybe “this will get his attention!” You were surprised by this statement and you asked her several questions and came to find that she has felt unloved and distant from her husband for the past 6 years since their last child left the home, and even before that when she came to think of it (seemed the kids were most of her focus during the child-raising years, kept her distracted from the marital stuff).

She has tried appealing to Larry and she even called a local Christian counselor with hopes that they could get some much-needed help – but Larry has been unresponsive to her appeals and defends himself that her expectations are way too high, and that she is ungrateful for all the efforts he has made over the years to provide and care for her and the kids.

1. How do you respond to Lucy and her idea to get Larry’s attention through separation?
2. What kind of interactions might be needed to help Larry to pick up his marital problems with love and cherish?
3. Why is repentance of highest importance for both Larry and Lucy if they are going to see their marriage improve?