

“I do . . . I think! Wait, what??”

In my last blog, we explored the Lord’s Supper, focusing on the *covenant* Jesus’ sacrifice made possible. Because of the type or shadow we are fulfilling as God’s Bride through the Christ, I thought I’d continue the discussion using the pre-marital counseling component of this week’s lectures. After all, our covenant with God is meant to be no different than that of the human bond of marriage; pre-marital counseling can be critical to the success of the latter and can, therefore, apply to the former.

During pre-marital counseling and its interviews, we ask such questions as “*Why do you want to get married?*” and “*Do you understand the covenant of which you’re about to enter?*” We also explore finances and marital fidelity with the intent of assuring the spouses-to-be know what they’re getting into and that they’ve ‘counted the cost’ before agreeing to give their heart, mind, and soul to the other. Let’s take a brief look at each of these areas, which I also equate in some way to our covenant with God through Jesus.

The motivation for Entering the Covenant. People seek marriage for a variety of reasons including loneliness, rebellion, escape, remorse, or romance. Likewise, people will on a whim decide to ‘say the sinner’s prayer’ for similar reasons. Perhaps in desperation, they’ve decided that they need or want something from God not unlike the person who seeks marriage because they think their partner will ‘make them happy.’ Knowing about God, His desires, and His covenant will help ensure proper motivation and provide a way forward.

Understanding the Covenant. An individual initially knows little if anything about God or the covenant to which they may not realize they’re agreeing when seeking Him. The covenant of marriage with humans and as a type with God contains conditions – vows if you will – along with blessings and curses (e.g. the possibility of divorce for unfaithfulness). As a result, those entering into a human or Divine covenant must ‘count the cost’ (e.g. Luke 14:26-35); it’s decision-time.

Counting the Cost. A couple in pre-marital counseling must consider their motivation, obligations to the relationship, financial stability, and then commit to the marriage. The same holds true for anyone ‘seeking God.’ There are considerations in this “*I will be yours if you will be mine*” relationship. For instance, Jesus, Paul, and James explained that there would be hardships while we await the Groom’s return and that we must be obedient to our part of the covenant (e.g. John 3:36 & 13:34-35, Acts 5:32, James 2:17-26, etc.). God had to ‘divorce’ His bride Israel after she walked away from Him (cf. Jeremiah Chapter Three). There is a cost to following, consequences for unfaithfulness.

In conclusion, we counsel couples considering the marriage covenant to educate them and prepare them for a lifetime commitment. Should we do no less for a potential bride of God?

Blessings,

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