

Thinking Biblically Living Covenantally

In order to think Biblically and live covenantally, we must start with our foundations. Foundations are meant to be solid. Without firm foundations, a house cannot withstand a storm.

A. Non-Negotiables

We have four foundational statements that must be non-negotiable to us:

- 1. God is our Reference Point**
- 2. His Word is our Authority**
- 3. His Glory is our Purpose**
- 4. His Presence is His Promise**

Christians in different churches/denominations often have differences of opinion on areas of theology. We call these things secondary issues, but the four statements above come directly from scripture and are not things we can negotiate or falter from in order to truly think biblically.

So let's dive deeper and see the biblical basis for each of these statements.

1. God is our Reference Point

- a. What is a reference point? One definition calls a reference point an object or background that stays in place in relation to a moving object.
 - i. Think of a compass drawing tool. It has a hinge that is in the center of what will be your circle and it remains planted in that spot as the pencil moves in a circle around it.

As the Creator of all that is, and the only one who is perfect and unchangeable, we should primarily look to Him in all issues of life.

- God is our creator
 - Genesis 1:1
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
 - Isaiah 40:28
*Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.*
- He is perfect
 - 2 Samuel 22:31
This God—his way is perfect; the word of the LORD proves true; he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him.
- He is unchangeable
 - Job 23:13
But he is unchangeable, and who can turn him back? What he desires, that he does.

- Malachi 3:6

For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.

- If God is the creator of everything that exists, perfect and cannot change, shouldn't we tether ourselves to Him and process all of life through who He is?
- What do people use as their reference point aside from God? Do these other reference points seem like a firm or shaky foundation?

2. His Word is Our Authority

- a. What does authority mean? In the US, we use the word *authorities* to refer to law enforcement officials. Authority refers to power, control or expertise. We see the word *author* in it. What does it mean that the Word of God is our authority?
- b. Because God (our creator and sustainer) is our ultimate authority – we seek His guidance. His Word reveals who He is, who we are, and how we should live.

It is our only rule as to how we may glorify and enjoy him.

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

- What are ways that we try to look to something else as our authority instead of the Word?

Example: During the COVID-19 pandemic, I was very fearful of getting sick or causing someone else to become sick and because it was an unknown, many people were looking to earthly authorities for guidance – not that submitting to earthly authorities is wrong (Romans 13:1-7), but I was only looking to earthly authorities and seeking control of my life and health rather than seeking wisdom from our living and active God who is sovereign over everything and ultimately in control of my life and health.

3. His Glory is our Purpose

- a. What do people look to in our world/culture to find purpose? (marriage, children, singleness, success)
- b. How does our life look differently when God's glory is our purpose?

Our chief end is to glorify and enjoy Him forever.

- 1 Corinthians 10:31

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

- Revelation 4:11
*“Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created.”*
- Revelation 5:13
*And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth
and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying,
“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”*

4. His Presence is His Promise

- a. Have you ever been sick and had someone visit you to care for you? Or been upset and had a friend come offer you a shoulder to cry on?
 - i. *Example: There was a time in my life when I was having a hard time with a roommate I had and I felt hurt and rejected and upset. I don't remember if I called my friend or if she called me, but what I do remember was that in a short time, she was at my front door and picked me up and took me to get something to eat and we sat in her car and ate and she listened to me talk about this situation and she was there for me. Over eight years later, I still remember that as one of the most important moments in our friendship and we're better friends now than we were then.*
- b. There's something about having someone with you, especially during difficult times that is special and important.

Christianity is unique among all world religions in that it speaks of a God who redeems and dwells with His people.

- John 1:14
And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the father full of grace and truth.
- Matthew 1:23
*“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel”
(which means, God with us).*
- Acts 1:8
But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
- 2 Corinthians 4:6

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

- c. All of scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, shows us that we have a God who loved us and who continually was with us as He fulfills His plan of being with us forever.
 - i. God dwelt with Adam and Eve in the garden. (Genesis 3:8)
 - ii. He was with the Israelites as they traveled through the wilderness. (Exodus 13:21-22)
 - iii. He was with the prophets. (1 Kings 19:4-8)
 - iv. He was with His people during the exile. (Daniel 3:19-27)
 - v. He sent Jesus to be born in human flesh. (Matthew 1:18-24)
 - vi. He granted His Holy Spirit to come upon His people. (Acts 1:8)
 - vii. He has promised us that we will dwell with Him again in eternity. (Revelation 21:1-4)

B. Being Transformed Rather Than Being Conformed

- a. What does it mean to be conformed?
 - 1. to behave according to the usual standards of behaviour that are expected by a group or society (Cambridge English Dictionary)
- b. What does it mean to be transformed?
 - 1. to change completely the appearance or character of something or someone, especially so that that thing or person is improved (Cambridge English Dictionary)
- c. *Example: I remember when I was a child when I would connect with another kid and they became my friend, I spent as much time with them as I could and (without always intentionally trying) I would notice myself picking up their mannerisms and using similar words. I was being conformed to them.*

1. By thinking biblically and living covenantally, we will be transformed by the Word (God's truth) and the Holy Spirit rather than being conformed by the world.

- a. Let's read Romans 11:33-12:2:
 - i. Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. **Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the**

renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

1. For from him and through him and to him are all things - God is the reference point.
2. which is your spiritual worship - the word *spiritual* here can be translated “logical”
3. by testing - a logical testing like the way a diamond is tested
4. you may discern what is the will of God - the Word is our authority

2. We WILL BE conformed to the WORLD unless we are transformed by the WORD!

C. What is Worldview?

- a. A way of looking at the world that answers three sets of questions:
 1. **How did it all begin? Where did we come from?**
 2. **What went wrong? What is the source of evil and suffering?**
 3. **What can be done about it? How can the world be set right again?**
 - i. The world/culture has a lot to say on these issues, but where are we looking for our answers to these questions? Who are we listening to?
 - ii. It's important to be intentional to know what we believe in regards to these things because if we're listening to the culture, it's easy to be caught off guard if the culture has been slowly whispering in our ears.

D. What is the Kingdom of God?

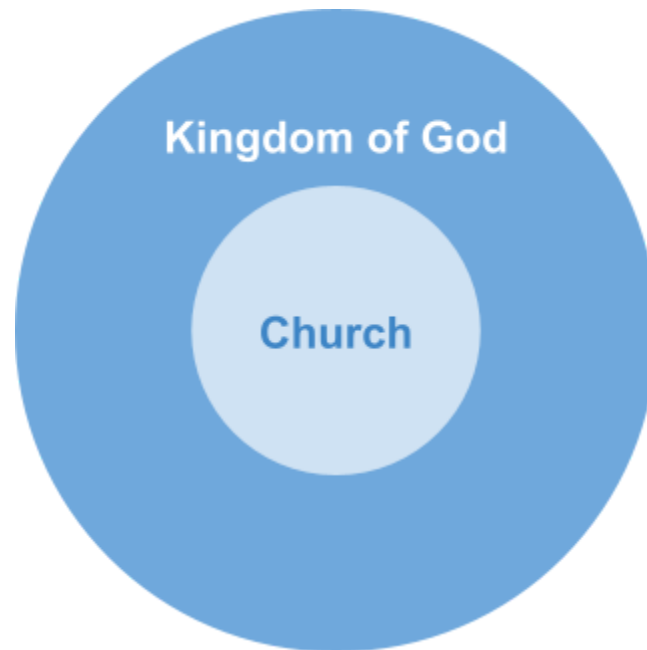
- a. A kingdom is defined as a territory, state, people, or community ruled or reigned over by a king or queen

1. The Kingdom of God is where God is King! Where He rules and reigns.

- i. Psalm 103: 19
*The LORD has established his throne in the heavens,
and his kingdom rules over all.*
- ii. Colossians 1:16-19
For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he

is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell

2. God's kingdom is in heaven and on earth



E. What is Kingdom discipleship?

- a. **Discipleship seeks to intentionally develop the knowledge and behavior of a disciple through one on one or group relationships. Kingdom discipleship seeks to understand, and apply God's Word to every aspect of life. The Kingdom focus begins with growing in the knowledge of God, and godly behavior, but goes beyond that to building an entire world-and-life-view that brings our every thought about every area of life captive to Christ.**

1. Exodus 3:1-6

Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." And he said, "I am the God of your father, the

God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

- i. Moses took off his shoes because he was on Holy ground – not because of the ground, but because of God’s presence.
 - ii. I walk on Holy ground every day because I have His presence.
- b. All of life is sacred because it’s lived in His presence. There is no separation.

F. Foundational Biblical Principles

- a. In alphabetical order: Church, Covenant, Kingdom Discipleship, Womanhood, Women’s Ministry
 - 1. How would you place them in priority order? (1-5, beginning with which is more foundational to the others)
 - 2. What would you say is the overall purpose of women’s ministry in your church?

G. Foundations Discussion Questions

Answer the following questions: 1, 3, 6, 7, 12