

TBLC Lesson 2: Covenant

A covenant is a binding agreement. The covenant of grace is the sovereignly initiated arrangement in which fallen sinners, represented by Christ, are restored to a relationship with God. (1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 9:15)

The covenant thread is:

- Historical:
 - Before the beginning (Ephesians 1: 3-7, 13-14)
 - Creation (Genesis 1-2)
 - The Fall (Genesis 3-4): covenant breakers
 - Redemption (Genesis 3:15; 3:8, 9, 21; Ephesians 2:1-9)
 - Scripture thread: Genesis 17:7, Exodus 6:7, Leviticus 26:11-12, Deuteronomy 29:10, 12-13, Jeremiah 24:7, Jeremiah 31:33 and Hebrews 8:10, Ezekiel 36:25-28, Zechariah 8:7-8, Matthew 1:23, John 1:14, 2 Cor 6:16, Revelation 21:1-3
- Personal: at some point in the great history, we became a part of it.
- Global: People from every tribe, tongue, and nation.
- Local: We enter into a covenantal relationship with our local body of believers.

So, our approach to ministry must be covenantal. It must be a balance of both academic and relational components.

Characteristics of covenant:

- Sovereignly Initiated and Eternally Secure: In Genesis 12, God sovereignly initiated the covenant with Abram. Because the covenant is sovereignly initiated and sovereignly sustained (and we know who God is from the previous lesson), we can know that it is eternally secure. Therefore, we should have gratitude that desires God's glory above all else, humility that frees us to consider others, security to cast our cares on Him, and the ability to extend grace to others because of God's grace that was shown to us.
- Relational: In Genesis 17, God initiated a relationship with Abram. The God of heaven and earth is a personal God who enters into an intimate relationship with us. Therefore, our relational model is built on the character of God, not on felt needs or sentimentalism. Our relationships with each other are to mirror God's relationship with us. Women's ministry should offer opportunities for women to cultivate covenant relationships.
- Familial: In Genesis 17, God made it clear that this covenant was for Abraham and his family. From the beginning God has worked through families (Abraham and his seed). Therefore, we should prepare girls for familial responsibilities and privileges. All women should be taught that they are helpers and life givers (Genesis 3:20), and that support of her husband should be a prerequisite for married women's involvement in leadership.
- Corporate: In Exodus, we see emphasized the corporate aspect of the covenant that God has called a people unto Himself. God relates to us collectively. We are His holy nation, His royal priesthood, His bride, and His body. Therefore, we should teach women to love the church, to submit to the authority of the church, to rest in the protection of the church, to serve in the ministry of the church, and to cultivate community in the church.
- Generational: Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Titus 2:1-5. Each generation is to show and tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord and the wonders He has done.

Therefore, we should equip women to spiritually mother other women through intergenerational relationships. Women's ministry should connect the children's and youth ministries to enfold the girls in the church and train them in the ways of biblical womanhood.

- Compassionate: Exodus 34:6 and Ephesians 4:32. God is a God of compassion and we are to be a people of compassion. Therefore, we should be caring for women, teaching women how to care for others, and facilitating the church as a safe place for women.
- Integrative: Acts 17:28 and Romans 11:36. The covenantal framework of Scripture shows the purpose, harmony, and connections of scripture. Therefore, Scripture should be taught as a part of the whole and able to be integrated into all of life. We should evaluate how well we are equipping women to apply scripture to all areas of life.
- Exclusive: Exodus 20:3 and Deuteronomy 5:7. We are to have no other Gods before us. Therefore, we should be teaching women to recognize and demolish all idols.
- Inclusive: Matthew 28:18-20. We are to go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel. Therefore, we should be evangelistic and make up a welcoming and loving environment where unbelievers hear the gospel.