

Covenants: Our Bond with the Divine

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Education Week 2005

BYU

What is a covenant?

“a solemn agreement between two or more parties”

“a promise of God to His children”

“a solemn agreement between God and His children
containing His promises to us”

What does it mean “to covenant”?

karat be'rith = “to cut a bond”

What are the basic elements of a covenant?

introduction

historical context

stipulations (general/specific)

ritual act (symbolic ordinance)

rewards & punishments

witnesses (helpers)

perpetuation

What are the two common types of covenants?

vertical (between God and His children)

horizontal (between individuals or groups)

Five critical covenants that help us return to the Father:

Baptism: the gateway covenant

Sacrament: the renewal covenant

Priesthood: the service covenant

Endowment: the gift covenant

Sealing: the bonding covenant

What are the purposes of covenants?

Teachings and Guidelines

Incentives and Rewards

Gateways and Ordinances

Patterns and Measurements

Keeping covenants help us

Know

Do

Become

Key Words of Advice

Integrity

(before and after entering covenants)

Companionship

(now and forever; new and everlasting)

COVENANT "BELIEF STATEMENTS"

(Taken from Principles and Practices of the Restored Gospel, Deseret Book Co., 1992)

It's Your Choice -- The Nature of Agency

10. The divine gift of **AGENCY** is an eternal principle that permeates our relationship with the Almighty, and it requires identity, knowledge, freedom of choices, action, law, efficacy, and preservation to be in full operation.

Life's Perfect Way Through Christ's Atonement

13. **JESUS** of Nazareth lived a sinless life, taught eternal values, and became the **perfect way**—showing all people the path toward happiness, holiness and exaltation; his **atonement** satisfied both the demands of justice and the expectations of mercy, bringing salvation to God's children.

The Cleansing Covenant of Baptism

18. **BAPTISM** is a symbolic ordinance of cleansing and new life, and it is also the covenant gateway into Christ's church and God's celestial kingdom.

A Holy Day of Restful Service

25. Sunday is our **SABBATH**, a holy day when we should rest from our weekly labors, worship God, renew our sacramental covenants, and serve others in a spirit of reverence.

Sharing God's Power on Earth

32. The **PRIESTHOOD** is the power and authority to act for God, and with it and through various priesthood councils, Christ's church administers to all members. Worthy men have the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood conferred upon them, are ordained to offices in that priesthood, are organized into quorums, and are set apart and given keys to administer in certain callings.

Temples of Holiness

23. Latter-day Saints, like the ancient Israelites, are a covenant people who worship in **TEMPLES** where they learn about their relationship with God, make sacred commitments, receive key directions about returning to God's presence, and do ordinance work for their deceased relatives.

A Divine Mission

34. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has the **MISSION** to invite all to come unto Christ and receive his sanctifying grace as we: (1) **proclaim** the gospel to all peoples, (2) **perfect** the Saints in the household of faith; and (3) **perform** vicarious ordinances for the living spirits of the deceased.

God's Covenants **Teach:** to instruct, to provide with knowledge, to show how to do or achieve something.

God's Covenants **Empower:** to give power or authority to someone, to give ability or special gifts to a person or group.

God's Covenants **Sanctify:** to make holy or sacred (consecrated for divine purposes), to make productive of spiritual blessings.

Key Scriptures: Deut. 29:12-15; D&C 19:23; Mosiah 5; Moroni 10 (esp. vv 30-33); D&C 42:61; 84:19-22; 46:8-26; 2 Ne. 2:14-28; Matt. 25:21; D&C 98:1-18; Jer. 50:4-5; D&C 66:2

Eventually everyone bonds or identifies with good or evil, God or Satan, either formally (with specific covenants) or informally (with desires and actions). What is your choice of behavior?