

The Covenantal Life
Week 3 - Making a Marriage (Part 1)
Genesis 29:16-30

- The Bible has no prescription for a marriage ceremony
 - We tend in our day to give more weight to spoken and written words; in the biblical context, physical act is just as, if not more, significant in effecting legal agreement
 - Words, vows, ceremony, symbols all are important in marriage, but none are specifically required or mandated in Scripture
- Covenant making act indicated throughout scripture is sexual union
 - Jacob's marriage with Leah was binding after he "went in" to her, even though he had presumed to be marrying Rachel
 - Deut. 21:10-13 - the sole absolutely necessary and instrumental element for making a marriage covenant is consensual one flesh union
 - Gen. 2:24 - clearly has reference to the physical act in conjunction with the real, familial, spiritual bond established in marriage
 - Matt. 19:3-9 - "Become one flesh" appealed to as instrumental in the ceasing of two individual lives into one new family unit
 - 1 Cor. 6:15-20 - Overt connection between the act of sex, one flesh reality, and covenant union
 - Even the most transactional sex is connected to the one flesh union of Gen. 2
 - By analogy connects to our covenant union with Christ
 - Covenant curses apply - self-harm, self-destruction
 - Sex has an objective meaning - by definition, it establishes a covenantal, familial, one flesh relationship
- Sex can and does occur sinfully, outside of and in rebellion against the covenantal parameters
 - First recognize that we have done something objectively true and real - entered into covenant with another
 - This recognition enables more accurate, biblical repentance and restitution
 - First resort is to fulfill covenant obligations - to actually live as one flesh, i.e. formalize marriage
 - This is the pattern of Scripture, the assumption of biblical law, and an acknowledgement of God's binding design
 - This may not always be possible, and when it isn't, our consciences ought not to be bound - we repent and make restitution to the best of our ability, and we are incapable of doing so perfectly