

**Encounter these verses today:**

*circle words that you identify with,  
underline phrases or sentences you'd  
like to remember, write questions about  
the passage out to the side ...*



**21st Century Wedding Pledges:**

Do you pledge to take [insert name] as your wife/husband, to live together in the covenant of faith, hope, and love according to the intention of God for your lives together in Jesus Christ? Will you listen to her/his inmost thoughts, be considerate and tender in your care of him/her, stand by her/him faithfully in sickness and in health, and keep yourself pure and only for him/her as long as you both shall live?

**21st Century Wedding Vows:**

I, [insert name] take you [insert name] to be my husband/wife, loving you with all my heart as you grow into all that God intends. I will love you when we are together and when we are apart; when our lives are at peace and when they are in turmoil; when I am proud of you and when I am disappointed in you. I will honor your goals and dreams and help you to fulfill them. I will seek to be open and honest with you. I say these things believing that God is in the midst of them all.



*Covenant means ...*

*What examples of "covenant" exist in the Bible?*

*How was the marriage covenant expressed in ancient days?*

*What do you think Jesus thought about covenant as it relates to marriage?*

*My personal "take aways" from today include ...*



# Digging Deeper

[Engage the message throughout the week]

## Monday: 9.26.2011

**Prayer Focus:** Your personal commitment to faith

**Passage:** Genesis 15:1-21; 17:1-16

**Insight:** *Today's passage looks at the covenant agreements between the Lord and Abram (later called Abraham). As strange as they seem, the actions in chapter 15 were familiar to Abram as acts of a lifelong commitment to these promises.*

**Questions for consideration:**

*What did God promise Abram in this covenant?*

*What signs show that God's promise was to be taken seriously?*

*How long was this covenant to last and who else was included?*

## Tuesday: 9.27.2011

**Prayer Focus:** A Friend who needs loved on today!

**Passage:** 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-7

**Insight:** *King Saul was the first King of Israel in their history but he quickly became more focused on his own wellbeing than that of the nation. David was an innocent shepherd boy whose faith eclipsed Saul's by a mile. Saul's son, Jonathan, quickly become tight friends with David and didn't realize just how difficult that would be to maintain.*

**Questions for consideration:**

*How does one respond when the other member of the covenant comes under attack (even by family)?*

*What impact could this kind of devotion have on our relationships?*

*For more on this relationship, you could read 1 Samuel 20.*

## Wednesday: 9.28.2011

**Prayer Focus:** Your family

**Passage:** Malachi 2:10-16

**Insight:** *Malachi is a prophet which has to speak to the people of Israel about their unfaithfulness to the Lord. His message can be difficult and he often uses tough language (verse 16). Notice the interconnection between Israel's relationship with the Lord and the relationship between a husband and wife.*

**Questions for consideration:**

*What role does God play in the covenant between husband and wife?*

*What do you think it means to "Guard yourself in spirit"?*

*How can we accomplish this?*

## Thursday: 9.29.2011

**Prayer Focus:** Our Community Leaders & Schools

**Passage:** Matthew 19:1-12

**Insight:** *Jesus had a gift of clarifying the Old Testament. Here he is asked to offer clarity to Moses' parameters of divorce. His words likely didn't help those who asked feel any better about their actions, but rather, helped them see that God is more interested in holy living than following rules.*

**Questions for consideration:**

*What is the relationship of a man and his wife in God's eyes?*

*What does Jesus' response to the question of divorce tell us about how seriously God take the marriage covenant?*

*Do you think that we often ignore this passage or agree with it?*

## Friday: 9.30.2011

**Prayer Focus:** Our church worship services (10/2)

**Passage:** 1 Corinthians 7:1-16

**Insight:** *The Apostle Paul is trying to help the church in Corinth understand the role of husbands and wives better. So often, we are trying to understand what God finds acceptable and what he finds detestable. Don't you wish there was such clarity today on this? Well actually there is! Paul says that when you enter a covenant marriage, two become one and they are committed to living that way forever. So make the best of it and love your spouse. Give them your best all the time!*

**Questions for consideration:**

*How does this idea affect our thinking about marital faithfulness?*

*What encouragement or help can be found in these verses for a Christian whose spouse is not a believer/follower of Jesus?*