

The Christian Marriage Covenant

Believing that God, in His wisdom and providence, has ordained and establishes human marriage as a covenant relationship intended to reflect the eternal marriage covenant established through the death, burial, and Resurrection of His Son with His Church, and therefore believing that human marriage is a sacred and lifelong promise, reflecting our unconditional love for one another, and believing that God intends for the human marriage covenant to reflect His promise never to leave us or forsake us because of what He has done for us through His Son, Jesus Christ, we, the undersigned husband and wife, male and female, as an image of God, do hereby affirm and reaffirm our solemn pledge to fulfill our marriage vows, so help us God; we furthermore pledge to exalt the sacred nature, glory and permanence of God's eternal marriage covenant in His Son with the Church through our marriage, by calling others to honor and fulfill their marriage vows; and we, upon full and informed consent and with full knowledge and understanding of this covenant and with the intent to enter into and be bound by the terms of this covenant, hereby irrevocably covenant and consent to submit any marital dispute we may have that we cannot resolve and any question concerning whether our marriage should be dissolved to the peacemaking process, including non-binding Christian mediation and, if necessary, binding arbitration, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, a division of Peacemaker Ministries, and under the jurisdiction of our local church of which we are members, or if not members of a local church then under the jurisdiction of any church to which we can agree, but in any event if we cannot reach agreement as to a church for such purposes, then we consent and agree to submit to the peacemaking process as provided in the Rules of Procedure of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, a division of Peacemaker Ministries, to and including binding arbitration of all matters pertaining to our marriage and family, believing that any and all marital and family disputes and issues involve deeply important religious questions that should be resolved by Christians according to the standards set forth in the Holy Bible, and therefore we do both hereby agree to be bound by any arbitration decision as to any such dispute or issues concerning our marriage and family, which is made in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, a division of Peacemaker Ministries.

*In the presence of God and these
witnesses, and by a holy covenant, I,*

*In the presence of God and these
witnesses, and by a holy covenant, I,*

Husband's Name

Wife's Name

*joyfully receive you as God's perfect gift
for me, to have and to hold from this
day forward, for better, for worse, for
richer, for poorer, in sickness and in
health, to love you, to honor you, to
cherish you and protect you, forsaking
all others as long as we both shall live.*

*joyfully receive you as God's perfect gift
for me, to have and to hold from this
day forward, for better, for worse, for
richer, for poorer, in sickness and in
health, to love you, to honor you, to
respect you, forsaking all others as long
as we both shall live.*

Husband's Signature

Wife's Signature

Witnessed this _____ *day of* _____ , by

Witness

Witness

Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Psalm 127:1

Author's Caveat/Disclaimer:

Biblical Basis—We believe that the Bible provides thorough guidance and instruction for faith and life. Therefore, we base this proposal for a marriage covenant with a binding arbitration clause on scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. (For a description of the principles we embrace, see question 17 in Part I of the *Guidelines for Christian Conciliation* produced by the Institute for Christian Conciliation, a division of Peacemaker Ministries, www.HisPeace.org).

Not Legal Advice or Representation—Although this proposal for a marriage covenant with a binding arbitration clause may be used to resolve a legal dispute between as husband and wife, even so, reliance upon or utilization of the proposed covenant is not legal advice or legal advocacy one would receive if he/she hired a personal attorney. Therefore, if you are concerned about your legal rights, you should consult with an independent attorney who is competent and able to advise you in regard to use of the covenant. Laws related to the legal effect of arbitration clauses vary from state to state. Therefore, the proposed marriage covenant with binding arbitration clause might not satisfy the legal requirements in all states. Moreover, it is provided and proposed here with the understanding that neither the author nor the publisher is engaged in rendering legal or other professional advice. Therefore, before utilizing, proposing the use of, or executing any such covenant, you should consult with an attorney to see how the law in your state would apply to it and, if necessary, how it should be modified to comply with the law of your state.

This marriage clause was prepared by David A. Sims, J.D., M.A.T.S. Mr. Sims is licensed to practice law in the State of Florida and is manager of the biblical-theological content at FamilyLife (www.FamilyLife.com), and special assistant to Dennis Rainey, executive director of FamilyLife and radio host of “FamilyLife Today,” and Bob Lepine, director of broadcasting and communications of FamilyLife and radio co-host of “FamilyLife Today.” FamilyLife is the world’s leader in marriage conference ministry. Mr. Sims is currently engaged in research doctoral studies in theology at the University of Durham in Durham, England. His study at Durham is focused on the theology of the family, with a proposed thesis on the theology of children. Previously, Mr. Sims practiced domestic relations law and represented hundreds of Christians and their children both as legal counsel and as court appointed guardian ad litem in all types of family relations litigation. He earned a masters of arts in theological studies from Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida, in 1994, completed masters of divinity equivalency studies at Southern Seminary in May 2000 and was accepted into Southern’s research doctoral program in Fall 2000. He can be reached at dsims@familylife.com or (501) 228-2570. Please feel free to contact Mr. Sims should you have any questions about this marriage covenant.