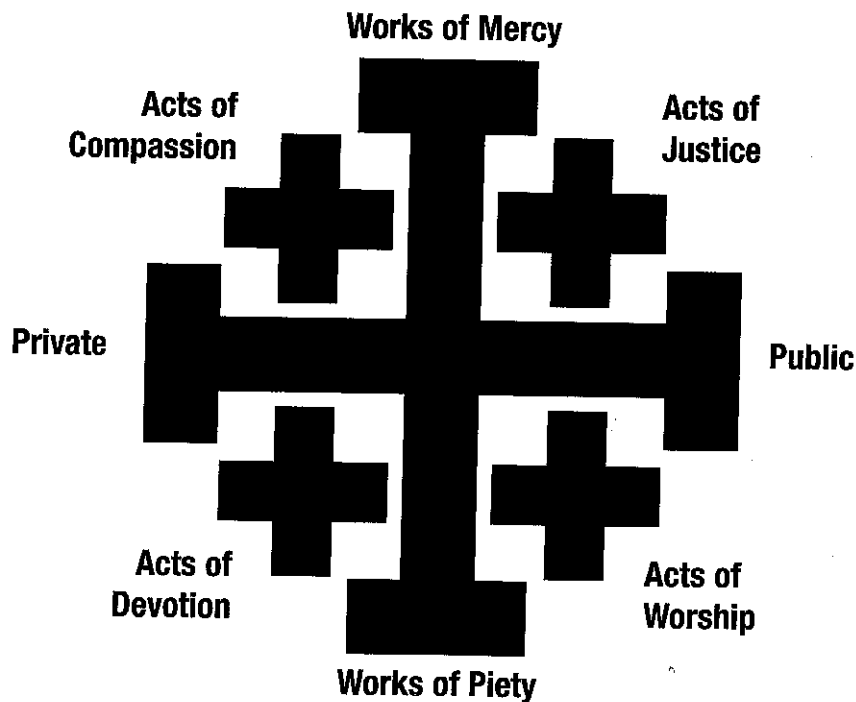


The General Rule of Discipleship

To witness to Jesus Christ
in the world, and to follow
his teachings through acts
of compassion, justice,
worship, and devotion,
under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.



Examples of Covenant Clauses

Acts of Compassion

- I will do all I can to help people in need.
- I will seek out people in need and do all I can to help them.
- We will strive to increase our service to others and graciously acknowledge others' service to us.
- I will go two miles for a sister or a brother who asks me to go one.
- I will spend one hour each week visiting a "hugless" person whom I would not ordinarily visit.
- I will spend at least one hour each day helping someone in need.
- I will spend four hours each month helping disadvantaged people in my community.
- I will spend four hours each week helping disadvantaged people in my community.
- We will balance the time we devote to school, church, work, family, and friends, including our own spiritual and recreational life.
- I will spend an hour each day with my children.
- I will spend some time each day in meaningful communication with each member of my family.
- We will practice listening to other people as a ministry of grace.
- I will express genuine appreciation to at least one person each day.
- We will engage in regular visits to local prisons.
- I will make weekly visits to local prisons.
- We will each establish a meaningful relationship with someone in prison, and, where possible, with their families.
- I will get to know at least one family that lives at the poverty level of income.
- I will offer friendship each day to someone of an ethnic background different from my own.
- We will encourage our congregation in its missional giving by our own personal example.
- I will seek to help a family in need somewhere else in the world.
- I will eat one less meal each day and give the money to feed the hungry.
- I will improve meaningful communications with my family.
- We will be alert for opportunities to reflect Christ to those with whom we come into contact.
- At least twice weekly I will seek to offer compassionate service and encouragement to those outside my normal circle of contacts.
- At least twice weekly I will seek to offer compassionate service and encouragement to those inside my normal circle of contacts.
- I will affirm the God-given gifts of others.

Acts of Justice

- I will endeavor to oppose injustice, in whatever form.
- When I am aware of injustices practiced in my church, my community, my nation, and the world, I will speak out.
- We will not be silent when confronted with social injustice; and we will witness for justice, inclusiveness, and equality and will encourage reconciliation wherever possible.
- I will stand up for those who are not present or able to stand up for themselves.
- I will actively support a movement for world peace.
- I will communicate regularly with my elected national representatives on issues of world peace.
- I will get to know at least one unemployed person.
- I will communicate regularly with my elected local representatives on issues of unemployment and economic justice.

- I will get to know at least one person of a different ethnic background at my place of work.
- We will become more aware of social situations through attention to the news (newspapers, television, magazines, radio).
- I will ask forgiveness of God each day for those who die of starvation, and I will work to alleviate world hunger.
- We will become an advocacy group for prisoners of religious and political conscience.
- As a group, we will speak out whenever God's justice is ignored by our leaders at work, at church, in our nation, and in the world.
- In the coming year our daily Bible study will include the prophets Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah.
- I will dissociate myself from racial slurs and jokes at my place of work.
- I will express disapproval of racial, social, and sexual prejudice among my relatives and friends.
- We will practice responsible stewardship of the world's resources in the context of our personal lives and communal commitments.
- I will strive for unconditional love and acceptance of all God's creations.
- We will acknowledge all people as God's creation regardless of socioeconomic or ethnic background.
- We will accept God's charge to exercise dominion over all the earth and will share this task of being God's stewards by practicing conservation of the earth's natural resources for the well-being of both current and future generations.
- We will take action at least once a month that directly affects individuals in a way that may have impact on a wider issue of justice or a root cause of injustice.
- I will pray every day for the coming of the reign of God.

Acts of Devotion

- We will practice daily devotions, including reading Scripture and praying for group members.
- I will pray each day, privately and publicly.
- I will spend at least one hour each day in the disciplines of praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition, intercession, and meditation.
- I will pray daily in solitude and with my family or friends. I will include all the members of my Covenant Discipleship Group in my daily prayers.
- I will keep a diary to plan my daily and weekly prayers.
- We will make the study of Scripture a central part of our daily devotions.
- We will read common daily Bible readings and share our insights as we give an account each week.
- I will record the spiritual insights of my daily Bible reading.
- I will read the Bible each day as a devotional exercise and not a study assignment.
- We will learn the discipline of journaling.
- We will each keep a spiritual journal and will devote time at the end of each day to enter our reflections as the Holy Spirit leads us.
- I will spend at least thirty minutes each day alone with God, of which fifteen minutes will be spent just listening to God.
- I will pray each day for my enemies.
- I will take the initiative each day in holding family devotions.
- I will read only those materials and watch only those programs that enhance my discipleship.
- I prayerfully pledge to practice responsible stewardship of my God-given resources: my body, artistic graces, and intellectual gifts.
- In order to care for our wholeness in body, mind, and spirit, we will schedule time each week for retreat, reflection, renewal, and fun.

- Knowing that my body is the temple of God, I will prayerfully plan my work and leisure time.
- I will seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in fasting.
- I will use traveling time for prayer and reflection.
- We will include our children in acts of devotion.
- I will memorize a verse of Scripture each day.
- We will contribute one tenth of all our income to church or charity.
- We will daily and thankfully practice the presence of God with us through prayer and meditation, seeking to grow in the knowledge and love of God.
- I will pray daily for a person in need and will keep a list of those whom I know to be in need.
- We will offer prayers of adoration and thanksgiving without asking anything of God.

Acts of Worship

- I will be faithful in attendance and participation in worship each Sunday.
- We will participate in weekly corporate worship, striving for true involvement.
- I will seek opportunities for worship at least once each week in addition to Sunday.
- I will receive the sacrament of Holy Communion each week.
- We will receive the sacrament of Holy Communion daily.
- We will prayerfully consider what resources we can contribute each week to the work of Christ in the world.
- I will return to Christ the first tenth of all that I receive.
- We will pray for those who lead us in worship each week, and especially for the preacher.
- We will pray for those who visit our worship service, that they will be touched by grace.

- We will pray for those who are baptized in our church, and we will visit the parents of baptized children.
- We will seek to experience forms of worship different from our own tradition.
- I will seek to cross racial boundaries in worship.

Spiritual Promptings and Warnings

- I will listen to the promptings of the Spirit as they affect others' well-being.
- I will witness to my faith in Christ at least once each day.
- I will remember that whatever I do—be it work, study, or recreation—is dedicated to God.
- I will be truthful to my Covenant Discipleship Group whenever I disobey a spiritual prompting or fail to heed a spiritual warning.
- I will set aside a specific time for personal spiritual renewal each week.
- As a group we will spend a day in retreat twice each year.
- We will be available to one another at all times for support and prayer in times of spiritual testing.
- I will not let the sun set on my anger.
- We will listen to that still small voice from God and seek to learn from God's mysterious presence in all of life.
- I will try to live each day in the knowledge that God's spirit is within me and available to me.
- Since our tongue is like the rudder of a ship, we will try to recognize the warnings of the Holy Spirit when our words should remain unspoken.

Sample Covenant

Preamble

In gratitude for the grace of Jesus Christ, in whose death we have died and in whose resurrection we have found new life, we pledge to be his disciples. We recognize that our time and talents are gifts from God, and we will use them to search out God's will for us and to obey. We will do our best not to compromise the will of God for human goals. We will serve both God and God's creation earnestly and lovingly. We respect and accept fully all group members, whose integrity and confidentiality we will uphold in all that we share. With God's grace and their help, we make our covenant.

Clauses

Acts of Compassion

I will spend four hours each month helping the poor people in my community.

Acts of Justice

When I am aware of injustice to others, I will not remain silent.

Acts of Devotion

I will pray each day, privately and with family or friends.

I will read and study the Scriptures each day.

I will prayerfully care for my body and for the world in which I live.

I will return to Christ the first tenth of all I receive.

Acts of Worship

I will worship each Sunday, unless prevented.

I will receive the sacrament of Holy Communion each week.

Spiritual Promptings and Warnings

I will obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit to serve God and my neighbor.

I will heed the warnings of the Holy Spirit not to sin against God and my neighbor.

Conclusion

I hereby make my commitment, trusting in the grace of God to give me the will and the strength to keep this covenant.

Signed: _____

Date: _____