

**Life, Love and Family Daily Fact Sheet**  
**Dr. Tim Clinton**

*“The Meaning of Marriage”*

- **3 Characteristics of Covenant Marriage** (Clinton & Trent, 2009):
  - **A Covenant Marriage is Serious**— in Malachi, God identified marriage as a covenant that cannot be broken without serious consequences. God takes very seriously the breaking of the marriage covenant (Mal. 2:13-16). Most committed to this position believe the Bible tells us that God, on request, will set aside the covenant for only two reasons: adultery and death.
  - **A Covenant Marriage is Sacred**—it is a sacred act for a man and a woman to enter into a covenant relationship before God, family, and friends. God holds us accountable for the vows we make to each other on our wedding day. Promises made at the wedding altar allow entrance into a sacred covenant the terms of which are witnessed by God Himself. Christian marriage is a triangle—it takes three for two to become one.
  - **A Covenant Marriage is Sacrificial**—there is no such thing as covenant without sacrifice, and marriage is designed to be the most sacrificial of all relationships. Covenant represents total surrender and involves the merging of one’s life into another. Selfishness is usually the root cause of marital conflicts. The more unselfish we are, the happier we will be in our marriage.
- **Common Marriage Misconceptions:**
  - Marriage is a romantic party in which the couple has incredible chemistry.
  - If you find “The One” you never lose the chemistry.
  - I will always be attracted to my spouse.
  - Marriage is always fulfilling.
  - Marriage is simply sexual conquest.
  - When couples argue, it destroys the relationship.
  - The goal of marriage is for both partners to get exactly what they want.
  - My spouse’s purpose is to complete me.
- **Quotes:**
  - *“Chains do not hold a marriage together. It is threads, hundreds of tiny threads which sew people together through the years.”*—Simone Signoret
  - *“It is not a lack of love, but a lack of friendship that makes an unhappy marriage.”*—Friedrich Nietzsche
  - *“A happy marriage is a long conversation which always seems too short.”*—Andre Maurois

- *"The difficulty with marriage is that we fall in love with a personality, but must live with a character."*—Peter de Vries
- *"The only thing perfect about marriage is the airbrushed wedding photo."*—Unknown
- *"If your marriage has any value for God all hell will be against it."*—Tim Clinton
- **Key Thoughts** (Clinton & Trent, 2009):
  - Marriage was created by God to be a lifelong and exclusive covenant of love and dedication, leading to children and family if possible, between one man and one woman.
  - In marriage, people's commitment to each other comes out of God's commitment to us. God has promised to love, protect, cherish, and care for us forever, and that is a covenant that cannot be broken. Likewise, God has empowered husbands and wives to love, protect, cherish, and care for each other until death, and that is a covenant that should not be broken.
  - Covenant is the "invisible" foundation that makes long-term marriage possible. It is the secret to unlocking the mystery of "oneness" and the delight of fulfillment. The essence of covenant marriage is that two people become one. Covenant demands the death of two wills and the birth of one. "I" becomes "we," never to be separated again.
- **Verses:**
  - *"Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun."*—**Ecclesiastes 9:9**
  - *"Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."*—**1 Corinthians 13:4-7**
  - *"He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord."*—**Proverbs 18:22**
  - *"Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body...Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her."*—**Ephesians 5:22-23, 25**
  - *"For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."*—**Genesis 2:24**

**Endnotes**

Clinton, T. & Trent, J. (2009). The quick-reference guide to marriage & family counseling. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.