



Writing a Covenant

This online resource is designed as a supplement to *Everyday Disciples: Covenant Discipleship with Youth*. This piece provides additional information and helps for writing covenants.

The Chief Cornerstone

Covenants are indeed the cornerstone of healthy Covenant Discipleship Groups. The Covenant is a document, both written and agreed to, by all members of the group. The covenant should be clear, easy to understand, and short enough that it can be read as a part of every group meeting. A group should write their covenant as the first thing done as a group. The covenant guides the actions of the group, and creates the ground rules that youth will hold each other accountable to during the life of the group.

Balance

Everyday Disciples explores the acts of compassion, justice, worship, and devotion in depth. Every covenant should contain activities that fall within each of these four categories. This encourages not only a variety of activities, but also a balance of solo (personal) and group (public) activities.

Revising, Signing, and Adding New Members

If a Covenant Discipleship group is ongoing, without an end date like a semester or school year, the covenant should be reviewed annually. Consider and incorporate any needed revisions, and feel free to mix in different activities if a new balance of behavior is desired.

Every member of a Covenant Discipleship group should have their own personal copy of the covenant, which they have signed. A copy of the covenant signed by all members of the group should also be created, and kept by the class leader (guide)

A Covenant Discipleship group can grow or shrink over time (ideally, a group is between 4-7 members). As new members are added, take time to review the covenant, make sure that new group members understand the clauses and the purpose of the group, then have them sign their own copy.

Wesley's 22 Questions

The regular check-ins and (ideally) weekly meetings should basically be filled with each group member reporting back to the group how they lived out the group covenant since they last met. The class leader (guide) leads the group and reads the covenant out loud, section by section, followed by group sharing. Sometimes, the discussions will be short, sometimes longer. Ideally the sharing should take less than an hour.

If you find yourself in situations where a group is hesitant to share about their experiences, or do not have much to share about their activities, consider using these twenty-two questions. They come from John Wesley's Holy Club. That group asked these questions of each other *every day* in their private devotions over 200 years ago!

1. Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I really am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
2. Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?
3. Do I confidentially pass on to another what was told to me in confidence?
4. Can I be trusted?
5. Am I a slave to dress, friends, work, or habits?
6. Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
7. Did the Bible live in me today?
8. Do I give it time to speak to me everyday?
9. Am I enjoying prayer?
10. When did I last speak to someone else about my faith?
11. Do I pray about the money I spend?
12. Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
13. Do I disobey God in anything?
14. Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
15. Am I defeated in any part of my life?
16. Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, or distrustful?
17. How do I spend my spare time?
18. Am I proud?
19. Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisees who despised the publican?
20. Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold a resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?
21. Do I grumble or complain constantly?
22. Is Christ real to me?