

What did you expect?

(Review: Broken world, sinner married to sinner, God is able / The Commitments)

Commitment 1: We will give ourselves to a regular lifestyle of confession and forgiveness.

Commitment 2: We will make growth and change our daily agenda.

Commitment 3: We will work together to build a sturdy bond of trust.

Commitment 4: We will commit to building a relationship of love.

Commitment 5: We will deal with our differences with appreciation and grace.

Commitment 6: We will work to protect our marriage.

A New Way Forward

Grace Driven (getting and giving what is not deserved or earned)

All by Grace

- Ephesians 2:1-10 – As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ²in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.³All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh^[a] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Grace Driven Alignment

□ Proper Alignment

- Romans 12:1-2 – Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ²Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.
- *“When it comes to marriage struggles, worship is the problem and worship is the cur. Let me remind you again what this means. It is only when God is in his rightful place that other things will be in their rightful place. It is only when I love God above all else that I will love my spouse as I love myself. If love for God is not the practical driving force of my life, love of self will be. If God’s kingdom is not my reason for doing what I’m doing in my marriage, my kingdom will be. If I am not resting in God’s control, I will look to take control. If I don’t think that I am dependent on his grace, I probably won’t give my spouse grace. If I forget the call of his will, my responses will be directed by what I want, how I want it, where I want it, and when I want it.”* – page 269 – What did you expect?

□ Reverence and Submission

- Ephesians 5:21 – ²¹Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
- *“I’m convinced that many marriages, between people who name themselves as believers, have almost nothing to do with God at all, and this is where the trouble actually begins.”* - page 271 – What did you expect?

Grace Driven Assignment

□ Work In, Work Out

- Philippians 2:12-13 - ¹²Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

□ Serve Jesus

- Colossians 3:23-24 – ²³Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, ²⁴since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

□ Hard Times

- *“There will be moments when you are hurt, angry, exhausted, or discouraged, moments when you will be tempted to abandon the good work that God calls you to do that builds and maintains a beautiful marriage. There will be moments when you won’t feel like loving you husband or wife. There will be moments when the issues you face will seem too complicated or too big. There will be moments when it seems that nothing you are doing is making any difference whatsoever. There will be moments when you want to withdraw from your spouse rather than move toward him or her. There will be moments when you will want to strike back and hurt the other in the way that he or she has hurt you. There will be moments when you will want to go your own way. There will be moments when you’d rather scream and yell than listen and encourage. There will be moments when it will seem that you are caring more and working harder. There will be moments when vengeance looks more attractive than forgiveness. There will be moments when you just don’t feel like doing the work that every good marriage demands.*

It is in these hard moments that husbands and wives choose to do the hard work of love, and weak and immature marriages begin to become mature and good. It is in these moments that you need to get up, get active, and fight for your marriage. It is in these moments that you must determine that you will not allow hurt, anger, exhaustion, laziness, or hopelessness to destroy your marriage. It is in these moments that you must take seriously your calling as a husband or wife and stand together and do the labors of love that God has called you to do.” – pages 282-283 – What did you expect?

- Philippians 4:12-13 – ¹²I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³I can do all this through him who gives me strength.