

A Three-Fold Witness – Part 3

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By way of review, three weeks ago during our evening devotions on election night our family discussed what we should look for in individuals when choosing who to support for leadership roles and responsibilities. The last couple weeks I have shared with you some thoughts about two of the three witnesses I have been led to look for in order to make wise choices in this matter, namely prayer and charity. Here are some thoughts about the third.

Such as Keep His Covenant: The third of these witnesses involves *covenant relationships*. The Lord blesses those who keep His covenants.

All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies. (Psalm 25:10)

... the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them. (Psalm 103:17,18)

He rebukes and chastens those who forget His covenants (cf. Deuteronomy 4:23,24 with Psalm 50:14-23 & Amos 1:9).

The apostle Paul included *covenant-breakers* in a list of the *ungodliness and unrighteousness of men*, things *the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against* (Romans 1:18,31). Paul further admonishes us to not be *partakers with them*, those who stir *the wrath of God* against themselves by committing such things, lest we bring the same condemnation upon ourselves (cf. Romans 1:32 with Ephesians 5:3-7 & I Corinthians 10:5-12).

What covenants might we review when considering potential leaders and whether or not they are *covenant keepers* or *covenant breakers*, and thus take care to not bring ourselves under condemnation? One of the most obvious to consider is the marriage covenant established by God in the beginning.

...from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father, and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh; so then they are no more twain but one flesh; what therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. (Mark 10:6,7)

This special covenant, the marriage covenant, is patterned after and gives expression to the covenant relationship between Jesus Christ and His bride, the church (Ephesians 5:25-33).

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband. (Ephesians 5:31-33)

Therefore, those who honor their marriage covenant honor the Lord and His people. Those who deal *treacherously against the wife of their youth*, for example, by not keeping their marriage covenant, or who do not uphold the Lord's covenant in policy or procedure, bring themselves under judgment, with the Lord no longer having regard for their offering of service and ministry (cf. Matthew 7:24-33 IV, 7:15-23 KJV with Romans 1:18-32 & Hebrews 8:9).

*[11] Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. [12] The Lord will cut off the man that doeth this, **the master and the scholar**, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the Lord of hosts. [13] And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering anymore, or receiveth it with good will at your hand. [14] Yet ye say, Wherefore? **Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously; yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.** [15] And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. **Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.** (Malachi 2:11-15)*

What constitutes such *treachery*? Examples include: adultery, either realized or imagined (e.g. via pornography, romance novels, etc.; Matthew 5:29-31 IV with D&C 63:5), unwarranted divorce (Matthew 19:7-9 & Mark 10:4-10), improper marital relations (II Timothy 3:1-9 & Jacob 2:32-66), cursing children and failing to support them (II Peter 2:14 & I Timothy 5:8), and taking pleasure in others who do such things, e.g. via the entertainment media, including shows, books, etc. (Romans 1:32).

Will not those who dishonor or disregard the Lord's covenants do the same with the public or corporate trust for which they would become responsible as elected officials? If a man does not honor his covenant with his wife, can I expect him to keep his *covenant* with me, a citizen he more than likely does not know?

Who then is worthy of our support? Ideally, it will be individuals who not only keep the covenants of the Lord, including marriage, but who delight themselves in doing so as did Nephi of old.

...my soul delighteth in the covenants of the Lord which he hath made to our fathers; Yea, my soul delighteth in his grace, and his justice, and power, and mercy, in the great and eternal plan of deliverance from death. And my soul delighteth in proving unto my people, that save Christ should come, all men must perish. For if there be no Christ, there be no God; and if there be no God, we are not, for there could have been no creation. But there is a God, and he is Christ; and he cometh in the fullness of his own time. (II Nephi 8:10-14)

May we so seek leaders together who rejoice in keeping the covenants of the Lord in their personal relationships as well as in their responsibilities to those they serve.

In the wondrous graciousness of Jesus Christ,

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