

PREPARATION FOR PREMARITAL COUNSELING

1. Make sure you receive a copy of the Premarital Counseling Covenant, the Premarital Pastoral Covenant (both included in this package), and two copies of the Family History Analysis (available at <http://www.121cc.com/premarital-counseling/>).
2. Once you have each completed the Family History Analysis—one for the bride and one for the groom—available on the counseling website, schedule your first session by emailing counseling@121cc.com.
3. Come to Session One prepared to discuss the Premarital Counseling Covenant (bring it with you) and to pay for your counseling. The cost for premarital counseling is \$300, which covers all sessions. As a gift to those regularly attending 121 Community Church, the church will subsidize half of this fee, leaving each couple responsible for \$150. Payment is due in full at your first appointment. Additionally, you will be responsible for the Prepare Assessment fee (\$29.95) and the cost of any books you are required to read as part of your marriage preparation.

REQUIRED BOOKS/CDS FOR PREMARITAL COUNSELING

Feldhahn, Shaunti. *For Women Only: What You Need to Know About the Inner Lives of Men*. Multnomah, 2004.

Feldhahn, Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn. *For Men Only: A Straightforward Guide to the Inner Lives of Women*. Multnomah, 2006.

Cloud, Henry and John Townsend. *Boundaries*. Zondervan, 1992. \$14.99.

Ingram, Chip. "House or Home? - Eight Essentials For Becoming a Close-Knit Family." On CD. (We will check these out to you when it's time to listen to them).

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING (subject to change as needed)

Session 1 - Getting to Know Each Other

Session 2 - Foundations of Marriage/Overview of Prepare Results

Session 3 – PREPARE Analysis (part 1)

Session 4 – PREPARE Analysis (part 2)

Session 5 – PREPARE Analysis (part 3)

Session 6 – Intimacy Issues

Spiritual, Emotional, and Physiological issues regarding sex

PRE-MARITAL PASTORAL COVENANT

121 Community Church

Marriage is an institution given to mankind by God and is therefore subject to God's design and intentions for marriage. A minister who takes upon himself the responsibility to perform a wedding ceremony is under obligation to ensure that God is honored not only in the ceremony, but also in the period of time in which he is involved helping the couple prepare for marriage. He must be faithful to Scriptural principles as well as maintain his personal convictions about marriage.

Pre-marital counseling, although not mandated by Scripture, is consistent with biblical injunctions to seek counsel in making life long decisions. As a result, it is my policy to require a period of counseling for any couple who requests my participation in performing their wedding ceremony. The couple is asked to read this covenant (or commitment) and to indicate their willingness to comply with the stipulations described. Agreement of the couple to this covenant is necessary before pre-marital counseling begins.

Qualifications

Spiritual:

1. Our ministers believe that Christ must be at the center of both marriage partners' lives in order for the marriage to be all that God desires. In light of this belief, ministers from 121 will not officiate a wedding ceremony with one partner who is a believer in Christ and one who is not.
2. Both must be free to marry (never before married, or divorced upon biblical grounds).

Note: In the case of divorced persons, we reserve the right, after discussion of relevant details, to determine whether or not we feel free to perform the wedding.

It is our policy to decline to perform a wedding when biblical principles are violated, or in cases where we are in doubt as to the permissibility of remarriage.

3. Both must understand and be committed to the biblical pattern of marriage.
4. Both must agree to abstain from any and all sexual activity from the time of this covenant until the marriage ceremony.

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PREMARITAL PASTORAL COVENANT

Emotional:

1. Both must be able to understand and accept the responsibility of marriage.
2. Both must be committed to growing in their ability to solve interpersonal problems biblically.
3. Both must have a realistic view of and an appreciation for the other person.

Commitment to Comply

Having prayerfully read the above guidelines, we commit ourselves to willingly comply with these stipulations. We desire our marriage to glorify God and consequently, are willing to prepare ourselves to that end.

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

PREMARITAL COUNSELING COVENANT

Marriage is an institution given to humanity by God and is therefore subject to God's design and intentions for marriage. Having been established before the Fall, marriage is intended to not only complete us (Gen 2:19), but to serve as a picture of Christ's love for the Church (Eph 5:22-32). As a Christian counselor working on behalf of 121 Community Church, I am firmly committed to supporting God's model of marriage. Additionally, it is my conviction that Scripture is the ultimate authority on how we should live our lives.

Pre-marital counseling, although not mandated by Scripture, is consistent with biblical injunctions to seek counsel in making lifelong decisions. Therefore, the bride and groom should understand that pre-marital counseling lays the foundation for a successful marriage. It is not a mere formality, but in some ways, the beginning of your new life as a married couple.

As a result, 121 Community Church requires Christian premarital counseling if your wedding is to be performed by one of its ministers. This covenant explains to you the requirements associated with that counseling. I ask you to read this covenant and to indicate your willingness to comply with the stipulations. Your agreement is necessary before counseling will begin.

Qualifications

1. Attendance at all sessions is mandatory for both parties. If you need to reschedule, please give at least 24 hours notice.
2. Both of you must understand and be committed to the biblical pattern of marriage, including the ability to solve interpersonal problems using a biblically sound process.
3. Each session has required preparation that must be completed in advance. Any session in which your preparation is not completed must be rescheduled (more than one rescheduled session for this reason will give me the option of postponing the counseling until both can be committed).
4. Both must be committed to actively participate in church. If you are members of 121 Community Church, that includes active involvement in a Life Group.
5. Both must agree to abstain from any and all sexual activity from the time of this covenant until the marriage ceremony. In addition, unsupervised overnight visitation is precluded regardless of sexual activity.

Note: Our God is a forgiving God, and forgets our sin when we honestly confess and repent. However, as humans we do not forget, and I am of the opinion that sex outside the covenant of marriage is one of the most emotionally damaging activities in which one can partake. If either of you have been sexually active prior to signing this covenant, it will be of utmost importance that we discuss this openly and honestly at the appropriate time, in order that you may better understand how those previous sexual experiences will likely affect your marriage.

Commitment to Comply

Having prayerfully read the above guidelines, we commit ourselves to willingly comply with these stipulations. We desire our marriage to glorify God and consequently, are willing to prepare ourselves to that end.

Signature

Date

Signature

Date