

First and Center
Pastor's Blog
April 30, 2019

"Behavioral Covenants" are in fashion these days. In churches, in schools, and other organizations, either boards and committees or entire groups are asked to develop and then agree to adhere to a common agreement for how people will behave with each other.

Sigh.

Having sat through a number of meetings over the years where I **wish** I could have reminded someone of a covenant they made about their behavior, I do understand why people think this is a good idea! It's nothing new. As you read the letters of Paul to the churches that were just forming through his missions, you see many examples he gives of Behavioral Covenants. Maybe we need to remind ourselves of what we have already been asked to uphold instead of reinventing the wheel.

"Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ has forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:29-32)

"As God's chosen ones, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another, and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other. Above all, clothe yourselves with love which binds everything together in perfect harmony....and **whatever** you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Colossians 3:12-17 selected).

Finally, "this is my commandment; that you love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

Let these be the covenants we keep.



~ Rev. Shelly Stackhouse
Transitional Minister