

Covenant Question: How binding is the covenant? What if we (i.e. the church) want to get out of it in a year?

FLCOG Ministries does not want to discuss the legally binding nature of a covenant. A biblical covenant is not a legally binding agreement; rather it is a morally binding agreement. The scripture is clear about letting your yes be yes and your no be no. Both the Old Testament and New Testament are replete with admonitions and examples of covenants, which simply are not meant to be broken.

If the church is without a pastor, then the covenant calls for FLCOG Ministries to have a significant role in selecting a new pastor. In previous situations we have spoken with quality candidates who have said they would consider coming **if** the covenant is adopted. We do not feel like it would be appropriate or ethical for a church to sign the covenant and then have a pastor accept a call only to have the church back out a year later. As is the case with a marriage covenant, it is not just a legal document but it is also a moral commitment, though Christians do not always see it that way.

If someone in the church would approve the covenant and wants to reserve the right to break it in a year or so, then we would recommend they vote against the covenant. It is not always easy to keep a covenant – for FLCOG Ministries or the church. There have been tough times in all of our covenants for both sides, but the three years is binding because of it being made before God with our best judgments and highest intentions.

To be very honest, we do not know how legally binding a covenant would be. It was not written with this in mind. The courts would have to decide that issue and different courts could very well decide differently based on process and attorneys. Based upon admonition from the scriptures, we would not take a church to court over it (not taking your brother to court), but there would be implications with the credentials committee's view of their Church of God standing. Please do not hear that as a threat. Being in good standing as a Church of God congregation includes keeping commitments made.