

COVENANT OVER CULTURE: HIGH SCHOOL EDITION

Conversation Scripts

Words for Hard Conversations

Based on Covenant Over Culture: High School Edition

covenant.community

City Hill Ministries · Josh Clark

These scripts come directly from the How to Talk About It sections in each chapter. You don't have to use them word-for-word — tweak them until they sound like you. The goal is simple: say something real instead of staying stuck in your head.

CH. 1

Who Are You When Nobody's Watching?

When You Need to Be Honest

- "I feel like I've been acting different depending on who I'm around."
- "I don't think I've been fully myself lately."
- "I've been trying really hard to look okay, but I'm kind of not."
- "I feel like I'm switching versions of myself all the time."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

You can't change what you won't name.

When You Need to Set a Boundary

- "I'm not doing that anymore."
- "I don't want to joke like that."
- "I'm trying to be more real, and that's not really me."
- "I don't feel good about that, so I'm out."
- Pushback: "You don't have to get it, but I'm still not doing it."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Boundaries protect the version of you that's growing.

When You Need Clarity

- "I'm trying to figure out why I act so different depending on where I am."
- "I don't always know which version of me is the real one."
- "I want to be honest about what's actually going on with me."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Clarity is how you stop drifting.

When You Need Help

- "Can I tell you something real without you making it weird?"

- "I feel like I've been fake in some parts of my life, and I don't know how to fix it."
- "I think I need help being more honest about what's actually going on with me."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Identity gets clearer in safe relationships.

When You Need to Step Away

- "I need a break from that group / that app / that situation."
- "That's not helping me be who I want to be."
- "I'm stepping back – not forever, just for now."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Some environments pull you away from who you're becoming.

CH. 2

You Are Not Your Likes

When You Need to Be Honest

- "I think I compare myself to people way more than I realized."
- "I care way too much about what people think of me."
- "I don't think I feel good about myself unless other people notice me."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Honesty brings the pressure into the light where it can actually change.

When You Need to Set a Boundary

- "I'm taking a break from this app for a bit."
- "I don't want to keep looking at stuff that makes me feel worse."
- "I'm trying not to check my phone every five minutes."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

If you don't set limits, the algorithm will.

When You Need Help

- "I feel stuck comparing myself to everyone."
- "I don't feel good about myself unless people respond to me."
- "Can you help me figure out how to not care so much about this?"

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Talking about it breaks the isolation.

CH. 3

When Your Family Is Complicated

When You Need to Be Honest

- "I think some stuff from my family still affects me more than I thought."
- "I've realized I react a certain way because of how I grew up."
- "I feel like I carry some things from my past into my relationships."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

You can't change patterns you don't recognize.

When You Need to Set a Boundary

- "I'm not okay with being treated like that."
- "I need some space right now."
- "That's not something I'm going to accept anymore."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Boundaries help you rewrite old patterns.

When You Need Help

- "I think some stuff from my past is affecting me, and I don't know what to do with it."
- "I feel like I keep repeating the same patterns."
- "Can I talk to you about something that might sound random but isn't?"

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Healing usually starts when you bring things into safe conversations.

CH. 4

Swipe Right on What, Exactly?

When You Need to Be Honest

- "I think most of what I believe about relationships came from what I watch."
- "I've been going along with what everyone says love is without questioning it."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

If you don't question what shaped you, it keeps shaping you.

When You Need to Push Back

- "Just because something's normal doesn't mean it's good."
- "That might be common, but I don't think it's healthy."
- "I'm trying to think about this differently."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Not everything popular is true.

CH. 5

What Porn Is Doing to Your Brain

When You Need to Be Honest

- "I've seen stuff online I wish I hadn't."
- "I think this has affected me more than I want to admit."
- "I feel stuck in something I don't really know how to stop."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Secrets grow in silence. The moment you bring something into the light, it starts to lose its control.

When You Need Help

- "I need to tell someone something I've been keeping to myself."
- "I don't know how to deal with this on my own."
- "Can I talk to you about something I've never said out loud before?"

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Freedom almost always starts with telling one safe person the truth.

When You Need to Interrupt the Pattern

- "I need to stop before this goes further."
- "I'm choosing something different right now."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Change happens in moments where you choose a different direction.

CH. 6

Talking Stages & Situationships

When You Need Clarity

- "What are we actually doing?"
- "Do you see this going anywhere?"

- "Are you serious about this or just keeping it casual?"
- If they avoid it: "If we can't define it, I'm going to step back."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Clarity protects you from confusion.

When You Need to Set a Boundary

- "I'm not okay with how inconsistent this feels."
- "I need more than random attention."
- "I'm not going to keep showing up if this isn't real."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Without boundaries, you end up accepting whatever they give — even if it's not enough.

When You Need to Walk Away

- "I don't think this is healthy for me."
- "I'm choosing to step back from this."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Walking away from confusion is not losing — it's choosing clarity.

CH. 7

Why God Invented Marriage

When You Need to Set a Standard

- "I want something more serious than that."
- "I'm not just looking for something casual."
- "I'm trying to be more intentional about relationships."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

If you don't set standards, you'll accept whatever shows up.

When You Need to Think Bigger

- "I don't want to practice using people."
- "I want to learn how to love people well, not just feel something."
- "I'm trying to grow into someone who's ready for something real."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

What you practice now shapes who you become later.

CH. 8

Character Over Chemistry

When You Need to Raise Your Standards

- "That's not something I'm okay with."
- "I'm looking for something more than just chemistry."
- "I want consistency, not just moments."
- Pushback: "I'm not asking for perfection — I just know what matters to me."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

If your standards are low, your experiences will be too.

When You Need to Evaluate Someone

- "How do they treat people who don't benefit them?"
- "Do their actions match what they say?"
- "Are they consistent, or just impressive at times?"

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Character is revealed over time, not in moments.

When You Need Perspective

- "Do you see anything I'm missing here?"
- "Be honest — does this seem healthy to you?"

WHY THIS MATTERS:

When you like someone, your perspective narrows. Other people can often see what you can't.

CH. 9

So You Actually Want to Date Someone

When You're Starting Something

- "I've been noticing you for a while and I'd like to get to know you better."
- "I like you. I wanted to say that out loud instead of hoping you'd figure it out."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Clarity at the start is kindness.

When You're Defining What You're Doing

- "What are you hoping this becomes?"
- "I'd like this to be an actual relationship, not a talking stage."
- "Can we be clear about what we are? I don't want to guess."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Named things are real. Unnamed things are just feelings with nowhere to land.

When You Need to Handle a Hard Moment

- "I think I said that wrong. Can we talk about it?"
- "Something you said bothered me. I want to tell you instead of just going quiet."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Two people who can say 'I got that wrong' can survive almost anything.

CH. 10

Boundaries Aren't the Enemy

When You Need to Be Clear Up Front

- "I've already decided what I'm okay with and what I'm not."
- "I want to be clear about this before it gets confusing."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Boundaries are strongest when they're decided before pressure shows up.

When You Need to Hold the Line

- "I said I'm not comfortable with that."
- "I'm not changing my mind on this."
- Pushback: "If you respect me, you'll respect this."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Holding the line builds self-respect and trust.

When You Need to Slow Things Down

- "This is moving faster than I want."
- "I need to take a step back."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Things rarely slow down on their own — say it.

When You Need to Walk Away

- "If this keeps going this direction, I'm out."
- "This isn't worth losing myself over."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

The strongest boundary is being willing to leave.

CH. 11

When Your Faith Feels Fake

When You Need to Be Honest

- "I don't know if I believe this the same way I used to."
- "I feel like I've been going through the motions more than actually believing."
- "I have questions I haven't really said out loud."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Pretending doesn't build real faith — honesty is where it starts to grow.

When You Need Help

- "Can I ask you something I'm unsure about?"
- "I need someone to talk to who won't shut this down."
- "I'm trying to figure this out, not walk away from it."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

The right conversations help you process instead of spiral.

When You Need to Stay Open

- "I'm not done figuring this out."
- "I don't have all the answers, but I'm not walking away."
- "I'm choosing to stay engaged even if it's messy."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Doubt can lead you somewhere deeper if you stay open.

CH. 12

Gender, Sexuality, and the Stories You're Being Told

When You Need to Stay Respectful

- "I don't agree with everything, but I still respect you."

- "I'm not trying to attack you — I'm just explaining what I believe."
- If tense: "I'd rather understand than just debate."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Tone matters as much as content.

When You Need to Hold Your Ground

- "This is what I believe, even if it's not popular."
- "I'm not trying to force this on anyone, but I'm not changing it either."
- "I'm okay being different on this."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Respect doesn't mean agreement. You can be kind and still stand firm.

When You Need to Lead with Care

- "I care about people more than just being right."
- "This isn't just a topic — it affects real people."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

People remember how you treat them more than what you say.

CH. 13

You Don't Have to Figure This Out Alone

When You Need to Reach Out

- "Can I talk to you about something real?"
- "I need someone to be honest with me."
- "Do you have time to talk about something important?"
- If awkward: "This might sound random, but it actually matters to me."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

The perfect moment doesn't exist — you create it.

When You Need Guidance

- "What would you do in my situation?"
- "I trust your perspective — can you be real with me?"

WHY THIS MATTERS:

You don't need more opinions — you need wise ones.

When You Need to Let Someone In

- "I've never really said this out loud before."
- "I trust you enough to be real about this."

WHY THIS MATTERS:

Being known is uncomfortable – but it's also where real freedom starts.

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