

A Biblical View of Marriage



Marriage:

Foundation of the Home

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.” – Genesis 2:24

- A Home is created through marriage
- If it doesn't work in the marriage, it will be a greater challenge for it to work with children
- Marriage prepares us for church and vocation

The Genesis of Marriage

(1) Leave – *forsake, loose* – a new family

- a man *leaves*, a woman is *given* (wedding ceremony)
- Woman created from the rib – co-equal

(2) Cleave – *cling, keep close* – a covenantal union

- covenant, not a contract (temporary, satisfaction)
- The *vows* of the wedding ceremony
- The highest covenant till “death do us part”

(3) One Flesh – *to fall out, come to pass, become* – becoming one in every area of life

- one in beliefs, family values and sexual union
- the “kiss” at the wedding ceremony

The Place of the Marriage Covenant

- Individual's covenant with God can be revoked by blasphemy of the Holy Spirit
- Matthew 5:32 – *everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery...*
- Marriage – the highest horizontal bond beyond salvation, might also be broken by *abuse and abandonment* – 1st Cor. 7:15
- However, even in the above cases, *an effort to forgive and renew the covenant is in order*

A Path to Courtship

“Strangely, even in the midst of all the current concern about family values and the breakup of marriages, very little attention is being paid to what makes for marital success. Still less are we attending to the ways and mores of entering into marriage, that is, to wooing and courting... Today there are no socially prescribed forms of conduct that help guide young men and women into the direction of matrimony...”

Leon and Amy Kass, Wing to Wing: Oar to Oar

Covenant; the Key to Marriage

“...every advice book, every medical treatise, every sermon and religious homily of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries firmly rejected both romantic passion and lust as suitable bases for marriage... It was not, therefore, until the romantic movement and the rise of the novel, especially the pulp novel, in the nineteenth century, that society at large accepted a new idea...”

Leon and Amy Kass, Wing to Wing: Oar to Oar

Dating vs. Courtship:

which is a better preparation for marriage?

Courtship

(pairing up by covenant)

- Leaving (maturity measured at home)
- Cleaving (protection for passion)
- One Flesh (unity with responsibility)

Unrestricted Dating

(pairing up by passion)

- Taking (robbing parental honor)
- Spending (wasting stored treasure)
- Rejection (leaving unnecessary scars)

Biblical Boundaries for Sex

1st Corinthians 6:19 – 7:2

1. Your body is a temple

2. Your body is not your own

3. Arousing physical passion outside of marriage creates habits of fornication

Note: the word “touch” in 1st Corinthians 7:1 is *haptomai* – “to fasten, to make adhere, to kindle, set on fire” (to arouse sexual desire)

What about Singles?

- The average age of marriage is older today
 - Co-habitation before marriage is more common
 - Some can't find a mate who is equally yoked
- Matthew 9:11-12 – a word on “*eunuchs*”
 - Some are born unable to procreate
 - Some were made that way by men (Rome)
 - Some have a gift from God to remain single, giving their total devotion to be married to Christ – *making themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of heaven's sake...*

Why is Marriage the Foundation?

“This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.” – Ephesians 5:32

“...bring them (children) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” – Ephesians 6:4

- God introduces the family through marriage
- If it works in the marriage, works in the family
- God’s purpose for Marriage is two-fold
 - To manifest His relationship with the Church
 - To provide a multi-generational legacy for the advance of His Kingdom in the earth

A Biblical Narrative on the Lessons learned in Marriage

“This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church” – Ephesians 5:32

1. Love: authority and submission (5:21-25)
 2. Calling and Responsibility (5:26-27)
 3. Disciplines of Joint-Ownership (5:28-29)
 4. Communication (5:30-32)
 5. Honor and Respect (5:33)

Love and Marriage

“Love is an essential element of home. Without this we may have the form of a home, but not its spirit, its beating heart, its true motive power, and its sunshine. The inward stream would be gone, and home would not be the oneness of kindred souls....”

It flashes from parent to parent, and from parent to child, making up the sunshine and the loveliness of domestic life.”

The Christian Home, by Rev. S. Phillips, 1860

(1) Authority and Submission

Ephesians 5:21-25

- *Submitting* (stand under) to one another (a heart attitude of desiring to be under God)
- Wives, *submit* to your *own* husbands, this is within the home, a function of order
 - As Christ leads the Church, so the husband is to lead the wife (a submissive attitude toward him)
 - The Church is made of both male and female
- Husbands, *love your wife* as Christ loved the Church, willing to die (to self) for her...

(2) God's Purpose for Marriage

Ephesians 5:26-27

- To give an accurate picture of Christ and the Church to singles, couples, children, culture
 - Sanctify (to make holy) each other by example
 - Cleanse (make clean) to make clean (confess)
 - Washing (a bath) by the Word, grow to obey
- The husband (and wife) are to inspire each other to reflect the work of Christ without blemish (distinct from without blame, sin)

(3) The Disciplines of Priorities

Ephesians 5:28-29

- Husbands love wives as their own bodies (reciprocal) – as they love themselves
- Loving self here is not selfish, but a priority
 - Physically – sexual relations consensual
 - Financially – three sets of tithes, priorities
 - In time management – make time for the majors
- Psalm 119:100-104 delineates detours we must avoid so keep the majors in mind

(4) Communication

Ephesians 5:30-32

- We are members of each other – become one
(this is how the Church becomes like Christ)
- We must commit to communicate (covenant)
 - Spiritually – what is God saying to you?
 - Socially – plans together, resolve disagreements
 - Practically – schedules, family time, marital time
- Encouraging one another – give courage
 - Avoid critical “faultfinding” – critical spirit
 - Practice “good-finding” – build each other up

(5) Honor one Another

Ephesians 5:33

- Husbands love their wives “as themselves”
- Wives see that you respect your husband
- We protect one another in public places
 - Never speak ill of the other – but build respect
 - Be an Ephesians 5 husband – willing to *die*
 - Be a Proverbs 31 wife – willing to *live* (honor)
- “Pride” of husband is wife, wife the husband
 - Models for children/others Matthew 18 harmony
 - Models respecting others in spite of differences

So let's remember...

- Marriage is the foundation of a home
- Marriage is a covenant, not a contract
- We need to teach courtship to our children
- If it works in marriage, it works elsewhere
- The two-fold purpose of marriage
 - Relationally – Christ and the Church – submission, sanctification by example, keep priorities, communicate and resolve differences
 - Advance the Kingdom – honor, respect, encourage others by your respect for each other