

Marriage Part 1

A Divine Foundation for Marriage

Genesis 2:18-24

Marriage Is a Divine Idea

We live in a society today that has little regard for the honor and sanctity of marriage as God designed it.

We also live in a time of great marital discord and family disintegration.

Today's tragic marriage statistics are evidence that God's first institution - marriage - is in danger and must be patterned after His instructions or the tragedy will be even more catastrophic.

A lot of people are confused about marriage in today's more "liberated" "enlightened" culture.

Concept such as honor, trust, faithfulness, and commitment seem old fashioned and out of touch with modern society.

This confusion over marriage should not surprise us, considering the barrage of the worldly attitudes and philosophies that hit us at ever turn.

People today shop for relationships the way they shop for cloths.

***Is marriage is still viable in modern society? The answer is yes.**

Marriage is still the best idea because it is God's idea.

He created it, designed it, established it and define it parameters.

God Himself instituted and ordained marriage at the very beginning of human history.

God established marriage as a permanent relationship, the union of two separate people – a man and woman -In to "one flesh".

God established it as the first and most foundational and fundamental building block of society.

The Bible contains God's principles and plan for achieving quality and health in family life.

If we want to experience marriage the way it was designed to be, first of all we need a vital relationship with God and also we must take very seriously the Bible as it relates to the family.

Marriage Is Divine in Origin

According to Scripture marriage is ordained by God as an intimate and permanent partnership between a man and a woman in which the two become one in the whole of life.

Marriage is the sacred and lifelong union of a man and a woman giving themselves to each other in love and trust.

Beyond a shadow of a doubt Marriage is the most important affair in life.

Vast numbers of books, magazines and marriage counseling resources are dedicated to the subject of marriage preparation and marriage improvement.

A search of Amazon.com turned up more than 20,000 books on overcoming marital problems and improving communication in marriage.

But have you ever wondered what the original instruction manual (Bible) has to say about marriage?

A quick search reveals more than 500 Old and New Testament references to the words "marriage," "married," "husband," and "wife." Obviously, we can't cover all 500-plus verses, so we'll just look at a few key passages.

Here, **in Genesis we see the first marriage.**

In these verses we see that at the heart of God's design for marriage is companionship and intimacy.

God wants marriages to be strong. He wants them to last long.

He wants them to be a reflection of His relationship with His redeemed people.

Matthew 19:6. notice Jesus' words in regard to marriage. *"What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."* Why? Because...

Ø God created marriage as a loyal partnership between one man and one woman.

Ø Marriage is the firmest foundation for building a family and then society and Nation.

Ø God designed sexual expression to help married couples build intimacy and permanent bond.

Ø Marriage mirrors God's covenant relationship with His people.

Ø Marriage is the full expression and design of God's image in human beings.

Ø Marriage is created out of divine order, is based on a covenant relationship, reflects our relationship with God and truly has a greater impact in our lives than we understand

Ø Marriage – The Unity Of One Man & One Woman Joined Together By God

Ø Marriage Is A Platform To Practice The Same Qualities Or Characteristics Of Christ.

***Focus of marriage should not be whether our spouse meets all conditions perfectly, to provide an easy relationship to enjoy, rather we should focus on the opportunities God gives us in marriage to build up our character.**

You are married to a person who does not meet all the conditions, so that you might learn

unconditional love.

You are married to a person who needs mercy, so that you learn to give it.

***The main purpose of marriage is that through your marriage you become transformed to the image of Jesus Christ.**

This divine principle needs to be applied to the crumbling standards of the marital realm.

It is high time that the beautiful, expressive words of Ephesians 5:31-33 be a daily reminder in the hearts of every married couple: *"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great: but I am speaking concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband."*

Notice how Paul contrasted the nature and responsibilities of marriage back to the marriage of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:18-24) to substantiate what has always been true from the beginning.

Marriage Is Divine in Purpose

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5, Ephesians 5:31)

Marriage is a divine institution for companionship and intimacy.

Marriage partners are to leave all others and cleave to each other. (Genesis 2:18)

Marriage is the sacred and lifelong union of a man and a woman giving themselves to each other in love and trust.

It signifies the mystery of the union between Christ and the Church.

***Marriage is a gift from our heavenly Father given so that husband and wife may enrich and encourage each other in every area of their life together.**

It is ordained so that with delight and tenderness they may know each other in love, and through their physical union they may celebrate oneness and strengthen the union of their lives while glorifying God as a living testimony.

Marriage is given that children may be born and brought up in security and love, that home and family life may be strengthened, and that society may continue to multiply and stand upon firm moral foundations.

Marriage is a covenant between you and God and as such cannot be broken.

Marriage is a way of life which should be kept pure and the community is called upon to uphold and honor

(Heb. 13:4); it is not to be entered into lightly or selfishly, but responsibly and in the love of God.

***A question for all who are married: When was the first time you looked at your spouse and thought, "How in the world did I choose to marry this person?"**

Most of us who are married have asked that question at some point.

Oh, when we stand at the altar, although we know that most couples quarrel, and although we know that we have quarreled prior to marriage, many of us believe that ours will be the first marriage in the history of the world to be characterized exclusively by tenderness, respect, and love.

It usually does not take us too many weeks to discover that this seemingly perfect spouse, amazingly, has not escaped the stain of sin.

And we begin to wonder what we're in for.

I presume that of those who stay together, half are hanging on because of children, survival, finance support, or fear of society and loneliness.

Some are truly and consistently happy, out of a fortunate combination of circumstance, rather than any particular brand of wisdom and love.

Most of the remaining marriages, I think, are not about happiness or unhappiness, but accommodation, adjustment, compromise and negotiation.

Conflicts in marriage are inevitable, we live in a fallen world.

We are all still battling "the flesh, and the devil."

But when conflicts arise they should serve to remind us that, for the moment, we have ceased to realize we are one!

When we realize that we are one, we will put everything we have into pleasing each other, encouraging each other, helping each other, standing by each other, and, in general, simply loving each other.

***We have one purpose. We have one goal. We have one life together. We are one.**

There are some vital keys to marriage and they are all very difficult to forge.

The first is communication, it is often said that communication is the secret of a successful marriage.

Good communication requires pure heart, clear conscious, goodwill, discipline, practice and determination.

The second is respect, which in many ways is more important than love.

Love comes and goes, but respect endures, and provides the space for love to flow after the ebb, which is bound to come in all long marriages sooner or later.

The third is trust.

And this is the hardest of all, because if you have ever been let down – and we all have – reconstructing the trust is difficult.

This isn't only about infidelity, but many small matters – broken promises, unfaithfulness, bad intentions, and frustrated hopes.

Forth key is "forgiveness" as opposed to bitterness and rebellious attitude and un-forgiveness.

You need to forget and forgive again about any perceived hurts and mistreatment.

Dragging the weight of the past behind you will drag you down in the end.

Marriage Is Divine In Its Formation (Genesis 2:22-24)

Let us consider the first wedding in the history, solemnized by God Himself and the first married couples in the beautiful Garden of Eden.

And the first Honeymoon, a delightful times.

The term honeymoon seems to have been coined to convey the idea that the first moon, or first month, of marriage is the sweetest and most satisfying.

But that's not exactly the way it ought to be.

God would be pleased for our marriages to get better as time passes.

Every new month should be sweeter and more satisfying than the one before.

Consider it for a moment. If ever a marriage was made in heaven, this one was.

It was perfectly planned and perfectly performed by a perfect God.

First he sculptured Adam (Gen 2:7). Molded by the Master Maker, Adam doubtless had a flawless physique and ruggedly handsome features.

And he was made in God's own image (Gen 1:27).

That means he had a Godlike personality—perfect intellect, emotions, and will.

He possessed a brilliant mind, undiminished by sin.

He had faultless emotions, including tender and totally unselfish love, the love of God Himself.

And he had a will that was in complete harmony with the purposes of his creator.

But let us also think about Eve Bible says *"So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh at that place. And the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man"*.

Adam must have gazed at Eve with awe and appreciation.

This was God's creative genius at its best, unblemished grace and beauty, pure loveliness of face and form.

Fashioned by the hand of God Himself, Eve had to be the most gorgeous creature who ever walked the face of the earth.

And like Adam, she was made in God's image.

Her mind, emotions, and will were unaffected by sin.

What man wouldn't go for a woman like that?

Adam immediately recognized her similarity to himself. He said, *"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man"*.

It seems that without any special revelation from God, Adam instinctively knew that Eve was made from him; she was part of him; she was his equal; she was his complement and counterpart.

He called her woman, "female man."

He drew her to himself in tender love.

She ended his biting loneliness and filled his life with happiness.

She was just exactly what he needed.

And nothing brought her more satisfaction than the assurance that her husband needed her so very much.

What intense and indescribable pleasure they found in each other's company!

How they loved one another!

Their home was located in Eden, the perfect place (Gen 2:8). The word Eden means "delight," and delightful it was.

Well-watered at the fountainhead of four rivers, Eden was a luscious green paradise, blanketed with every beautiful and edible growing thing (Gen 2:9,10).

They cultivated the ground, but as they had no thistles or weeds to contend with, their work was totally effortless and enjoyable.

Side by side they lived in perfect harmony, sharing a sense of mutual interdependence, enjoying a freedom of communion and communication, possessing a deep-flowing affection that bound their

spirits to each other.

The Word of God says, *“And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed”* (Gen 2:25).

It was a relationship of perfect purity and innocence.

There was no sin in them. There was no strife between them.

They were at peace with God, at peace with themselves, and at peace with each other.

This was truly the perfect marriage. This was paradise.

But something happened - the entrance of sin.

There is no doubt that the subtle tempter who approached Eve in this episode was Satan using the body of a serpent as his instrument (Rev 12:9).

His first approach was to question the Word of God. *“Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’”* (Gen 3:1).

After he questioned God’s Word, he flatly denied it: *“You surely shall not die!”* he dogmatically declared (Gen 3:4).

Finally, he ridiculed God and brazenly distorted His Word: *“For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil”* (Gen 3:5).

They would know evil all right, but they would not be as God.

In reality the very opposite would be true.

The likeness to God they did enjoy would be scarred and spoiled.

Satan’s methods have not changed much through the centuries.

We know them well—the doubts, the distortions, the denials.

Yet we too fall prey to them. We can identify with Eve in her moment of weakness.

We know what it is to yield to temptation.

Satan used the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to do his sinister work.

God had placed that tree in the garden to be the symbol of Adam and Eve’s submission to Him (Gen 2:17), but **Satan sometimes uses even good things to lure us from God’s will.**

“When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate” (Gen 3:6).

Have you noticed that Eve was tempted in all three major areas listed in 1 John 2:16?

(1) The lust of the flesh—“good for food.”

(2) The lust of the eyes—“a delight to the eyes.”

(3) The pride of life—“to make one wise.”

These are the same major areas Satan uses to get us out of sorts with God and with each other—the desire to gratify our physical senses, the desire to have material things, and the desire to impress people with our importance.

Instead of fleeing from temptation, Eve flirted with it.

She had everything a person could want in life, but she stood there and allowed her mind to meditate on the one thing she did not have until it became an obsession with her and brought her happy married life to an unhappy termination.

Eve did not flee. *“She took from its fruit and ate”* (Gen 3:6). *“gave also to her husband with her”*

We have no idea why he did not try to stop her, or why he did not refuse to follow her in her sin.

But we do know that he failed her woefully on this occasion.

He neglected to provide the spiritual leadership God wanted him to provide, and instead he let her lead him into sin.

God gave Eve to Adam to be his helper, but her covetous heart destroyed him.

Together they waited for the new delights of divine wisdom Satan had promised them.

Instead, a horrid sense of guilt and shame crept over them.

Their spirits died at that very moment (Gen 2:17), and their physical bodies began the slow process of decay that would mar God’s beautiful handiwork and end ultimately in physical death.

The Apostle Paul was speaking of physical death when he said, *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned”* (Rom 5:12).

That’s the way it is with sin. It promises so much and delivers so little.

It promises freedom, wisdom, and pleasure, but it delivers bondage, guilt, shame, and death.

Suddenly their nakedness became symbolic of their sin (Gen 3:7).

It exposed them openly to the penetrating eyes of the most holy God.

They tried to cover their bodies with fig leaves, but it was not acceptable.

God would later reveal that the only adequate covering for sin would involve the shedding of blood (Gen 3:21; Lev.17:11; Heb.9:22).

That brings us, finally, to the painful aftermath.

***Sin is accompanied by disastrous consequences whether or not we are willing to accept the blame for it.**

Adam blamed his part of the tragedy on Eve and God: *"The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate"* (Gen 3:12).

Eve said the devil made her do it (Gen 3:13).

In much the same way, we may try to blame our marital problems on someone else.

But God held them both responsible, just as he holds each of us responsible for our part of the blame.

And there is usually some blame on both sides.

God wants us to face it squarely, not skirt around it.

God's love is revealed in creation, and it is also revealed in our salvation Bible says *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"*. (John 3:16NIV)

This desire and love in God's heart not only moved Him to create us.

It also urged Him to go through a process so that He could enter into us and make us His expression.

He, the infinite God, humbled Himself to become a finite human being named Jesus Christ.

In Him, all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt, and through Him, all the fullness of the Godhead was expressed.

Everything He did, said, and thought was a pure expression of God in humanity.

This brought the highest delight to God, for in Jesus Christ, His eternal purpose began to be fulfilled in that a man was fully expressing God.

Then the Lord Jesus allowed Himself to be crucified on a cross in order that through death, the God-expressing life that resided within Him could be released and made available to us.

Christ opened the way for us to receive His divine life that we might become the reproduction of Christ, bringing delight to God's heart by fulfilling His purpose.

***There is no hope for a marital relationship to become all it can be until both husband and wife have the assurance of forgiveness and acceptance by God.**

That assurance can only be experienced when we have acknowledged our sin and placed our trust in Jesus Christ's perfect sacrifice on Calvary for deliverance from the eternal condemnation which our sin deserves.

The new life in Jesus, frees us from the devastating hold and effects of sin, guilt and death (Rom. 8:1).

The resurrection power of Jesus provides us the Power and Grace to live an abundant and everlasting life filled with righteousness, joy, peace and happiness.

When you have made that decision, the way is clear for God to fill your heart with His tenderness and love, take away your selfishness and stubbornness, and give you a self-sacrificing concern for the needs of your mate.

And you may yet enjoy a little taste of paradise.

Marriage Is Divine in Discipline

"For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline." (2 Timothy 1:7).

Discipline is one of the main core of a healthy marriage.

Trust and truthfulness should be at its highest order.

Trust, takes a lot of time and effort to build up, yet it can be destroyed in an instant.

Being honest with each other and being able to speak the truth without fear is a crucial part of a true relationship.

You must be honest to your partner about things that you are feeling, thinking and doing.

Both partners need to accept responsibility.

Protecting each other from harm and not blaming each other when things don't go right.

You must treat your partner like no one else in the world matters to you except them.

***Love does not flourish by its self; you have to work hard for it and discipline it.**

If there is a gloomy side you have to enhance it, then it will blossom.

A good relationship is for better, for worse, for richer, or poorer, in sickness and in health.

Perhaps **the greatest ongoing challenge in life is to keep one's priorities in the biblical order.**

It is easy to let the good become the enemy of the best by making a career, money or material gain supremely important.

When this happens, we begin to neglect our marriage obligation

We should regularly remind ourselves of this order and examine the way we spend our time in light of it.

This may mean the elimination of unnecessary responsibilities and the limitation of outside activities.

Good marriages are the product of careful cultivation, and this requires time.

Remember in your married life you are married to a person who does not meet all the conditions, so that you might learn unconditional love.

You are married to a person who needs mercy, so that you learn to give it.

You are married to a person who does not deserve so that you learn to pour lavishly yourself out on a person who does not respond appropriately.

And thus you become like the God you worship.

GOD BLESS...