

# *The Marriage Covenant*

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## **IN the beginning, Genesis—**

2:21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

2:22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

2:23 And Adam 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.

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

The marriage covenant between one man and one woman is under all out assault in this country and around the world. No longer is the covenant God instituted regarded as sacred with men and women jumping from one relationship to another in a hop scotch of perversions, male with female, same sex perversions, and ... well, you name it. Liberal society has abandoned the God ordained institution as the building block of a healthy society to it's eventual demise and destruction.

As noted in the above verse, God made one woman for one man, and a man for woman and blessed the union of the two being joined as one flesh. He made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Bruce. If Adam and Eve had not broken the commandment of God, nothing of the problems we have today would be present, but when Eve saw the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the wily old serpent we call Satan, lied to her and tempted her to fulfill her human desire of being "enlightened" to the ways of humanist desires to rule one's self and "do their own thing". When God questioned Adam and Eve and their sin was out in the open, God pronounced curses upon them. One of them is found in the following verses.

Genesis 3:16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

Thus, God is saying that a woman's desire would be to gain the upper hand over her husband, but because she is the weaker vessel, her husband would put her down by force, if need be. The curse is that, in the annals of history, women had lost the battle of the sexes. History bears this out. Until the advent of women's rights movements, women were virtually their husband's property, treated as heir-producing machines, given little freedom, and forced to serve their husband's every whim. In many cultures, men bought and sold women like cattle. Some cultures maintain this custom even today.

Only when true Christianity flourishes is there any real easing of this curse. Ephesians 5:22-33 teaches how we can decrease its effects within our marriages—by emulating the virtues of Christ's relationship with the church. Thus, wives are told to submit rather than contend, and husbands are commanded to love rather than dominate. Men and women have misunderstood for thousands of years what the relationship between a man and women actually encompasses and it takes God's Holy Spirit to reveal and at the same time, it takes conscious effort to overcome the evil, ingrained habits 6,000 years of misguided thinking has produced.

### **Ephesians 5:22-33**

5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; (emphasis mine)

5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

See the two-way act of giving pointed out by God's Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul in the above scripture quote? Both husband and wife put each other first, right behind their relationship to God Almighty who must be pre-eminent in your mind and your heart. The father is to be the priest of his family, teaching and supporting his family in godly conduct and pointing his children to Jesus Christ.

Our desires—whether it is husband and wife in marriage, or in business, or in politics among nations—keep crashing into one another, because we don't put God first in all relationships, or with our relationship to Him as our Master. Conflict will never end until everyone is keeping the traditions of God. That is why we are in the process of being sanctified. It is our responsibility to convert over to God's way so that we stop crashing into one another. We have to overcome this error in education and this attitude to gratify the self and look to God, the author and finisher of our faith.

Satan is ultimately the source of both of these errors. We have to recognize that we are still influenced and that we pick up on his broadcasts. It makes submitting so difficult. The adversary is still working and bringing about conflict. Anywhere Satan goes, conflict erupts. He is a master at producing it.

### **GOD'S RECIPE FOR SUCCESSFUL IN LIFE**

God gave us a recipe of successful living in relationship with God the Creator and with his fellow man, when He gave mankind the Ten Commandments. Of those commandments, the fifth commandment speaks directly to parents and children. It lays the foundation of responsibility that each has to the other. When children submit to their parents, and parents provide a loving environment to nurture their children in living according to the Word of God, the children and society directly benefit from being obedient to its precepts. The family is the cornerstone of national government, and when the home is right, the social structure follows. When marriage and family unity are held in high esteem and a fear of violating God's standards is instilled, sin can be held in check. When we follow God's commands, we reap blessings and when we violate His command, each of us receive discipline for breaking God's Word. For in discipline, Hebrews 12:11 declares, "Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it." When chastened and we repent then we are a better man or woman because of it. Those of us who have recovered what we lost, can relate to the pain of the trial endured by breaking God's commands, and those who do not learn continue to struggle from relationship to relationship. Can you say Kim Kardashian and other Hollywood starlets?

### **MARRIAGE COVENANT DESIGNED FOR THE CHILDREN**

God wants Godly children raised by Godly parents:

#### **II Timothy 3—**

3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

3:2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3:3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

3:4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

3:5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Family problems predicted for the end times in II Timothy stem from misguided or faulty childrearing practices. While researching for this message I found 7 benefits to proper child rearing. Because marriage is focused on the children of the next generation, we need to realize that:

- 1) God established the institutions of marriage and the family for the purpose of producing godly offspring.
- 2) We must learn to love and respect our children, realizing that, despite their relatively diminutive size and comparative inexperience, they are far from unimportant.
- 3) We must have vision from God's revelation in our childrearing practices, enabling them to fulfill their awesome potential.
- 4) We must guard against Satan's attempts to thwart or destroy them.
- 5) We must realize that our children have access to God through us.
- 6) We must see God as the model parent and emulate His practices.
- 7) We must see ourselves as the primary teachers preparing them to become responsible and productive members of God's coming Kingdom which we is fast approaching.

When you study the commandments of God, no less than three of the Ten Commandments—the fifth, seventh, and tenth—directly involve strengthening marriages and families and preserving their unity and sacredness. They are given to protect the institution of marriage from assaults from without and within. Of course, all of God's commands, if followed, will work to strengthen man's relationship with God and fellow man, but these three are aimed directly at securing these sacred bonds. When considering any of God's commands, we find that they are broad in scope and ordained, not just to regulate our physical relationships, but also our spiritual one with Jesus Christ.

## **DIVORCE AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FAMILY**

### **Matthew 19:3-9**

19:3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

19:4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

19:5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

19:6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

19:7 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

19:8 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

19:9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

Men, as well as women, put away their spouse because of convenience, or they are bored, or they don't feel completed, or they are blah, blah, blah, and the list goes on and on....just fill in the blanks. Now there are marriages that God gives authority to annul which include adultery and fraud, but not out of convenience or it's just too "hard" to work on.

Because marriage is a creation of God, it possesses a sacredness that no man-devised institution can ever have. This world is trying to exchange the sanctity of marriage for its complete opposite, the profane, but this secular approach will never produce a healthy society. See Romans 1:16-32 concerning homosexual unions and God abandoning them to reprobate minds.

Each of us are the temple of God and to abuse God's temple will result in severe retribution and discipline from our Creator God. As noted in 1st Corinthians:

6:15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.

6:16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

6:17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

6:18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

From God's perspective, marriage is a lesson in learning balance. Marriage is combining the godly characteristics of a man with the complementary godly characteristics of a woman to produce one flesh and one spirit. It is combining each spouse's efforts harmoniously, first

between themselves and later adding children to the mix. We can perceive it as though God has placed the husband on one side of the balance and the wife on the other, asking them to balance each other, not only alone but also when other factors are added, such as children. God desires us to do this, not just for the good of the marriage and each spouse's relationship with God, but also to display the proper example to the children and others.

**1st Peter—**

3:1 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

3:2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

3:3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

3:4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

3:5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

3:6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

I counsel men and women who have become disillusioned with the vows they took concerning “till death do us part” and the sacredness of their covenant relationship being the same as Jesus Christ loved His bride, the Church, that He gave His life’s blood for her on a Roman cross. How many men would die in the same way for their own flesh, namely their spouse? How many wives would esteem their husbands greater than themselves, even as we obey and press onward for the prize of our Husband of the Church, the bride of Jesus Christ our Savior? Anyone who feels defeated in their marriage has lost the commitment, the emotional connection, the God given sacredness of their union and need to re-examine why they loved each other in the first place. Let me be frank, there is a difference in love and lust. There is a difference of a lusty emotional bond found in sexual union and the bonds of the Spirit found in the marriage covenant. Not only are you making a commitment to love your spouse as yourself physically, but emotionally and spiritually....as you LOVE YOURSELF!! How many marriages would be strong and secure if each partner in that union gave 100% to the needs of the other? But we see marriages failing because of immature concepts of “it’s all about me”. What would be the divorce statistics if you followed this one rule? I would venture it would be cut in half or better. So I ask you, you wouldn’t stick a needle in your own eye, would you? So why would you do the same either physically, emotionally, or spiritually to the person who is of your own flesh, your husband or wife?

Further, understand one thing my reader, marriage is a warm up for what's coming. If you are faithful in your covenant here on earth, it is to prepare you for a greater and eternal covenant found in Jesus Christ for all eternity. Blessings come from learning here on earth, or curses if you do not learn it. I see both, but the curses way too often. Oh, I know what you're thinking. It takes two to tango and right you are. Both must be doing their part through God and their marriage for any of this to work. If one of them sits down on the job, verbally or physically abuses the other, then the marriage will fail even if it's contrary to God's law, because being mortal, each of are weak and prone to depression because of the stress of a bad situation. It takes two to make a good marriage and it only takes one to ruin it. God hates divorce as His Word says so, but when only one is trying to hold the marriage together, then the chances of success are slim to none.

### **SOCIETY CRUMBLES AS THE FAMILY CRUMBLES**

I shudder to think about the direction of this country, or this world is taking concerning the institution of marriage that God ordained from creation. In man's perverted mind, they have substituted whatever relationship they envision, contrary to the Word of God. The USA and the world battles with homosexual unions and wants to call them marriages (but God calls an abomination), or they want polygamy, they want sexual deviance on any level their evil minds can imagine. What's next? Sex with donkeys and other beast of the field? Reader take note that any, and I mean any deviation from the law of God and His institution of marriage, which was ordained and blessed from the beginning of time is doomed to failure and ruin. All you have to do is look at history and see what other ancient civilizations have trotted down this same wide path that leads to their own destruction and the demise of their society.

Think of it like this. Each person on this earth was born for one purpose, and one purpose only. What is that purpose? To be introduced and either accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and your Husband for all of eternity, or to reject Him for all eternity. Relationships define how it will all come about for us in that next life. Some learn the lessons of this life, through much suffering and pain. They may finally find happiness in a relationship built around God, but unless God is dead center, right in the middle of your relationship where you walk hand in hand following after the God of the Bible, Jesus Christ, the Lord, then according to statistics, you have as much chance of success in that marriage as ice not thawing on the beaches of Miami. Each of us must put Jesus Christ the center of our lives, our marriages, our family relationships, and our family unit. If not then your marriage, and by extension, this nation will go the way of Rome, and for that matter, the rest of the world, because marriage is the center of any culture, a godly couple raising godly children for the next generation coming up. Everything else is a perversion and distortion of God's Commandments, because marriage is a covenant relationship, as is our relationship to Jesus Christ, God of creation, either good or bad. It is a mirror reflection.

This is Pastor Mike Taylor, praying God be centered in your marriage relationship. If you need counseling, prayer, or just a listening ear, then email me at [realteam1999@sbcglobal.net](mailto:realteam1999@sbcglobal.net), or visit me online at [www.churchofgod-usa.org](http://www.churchofgod-usa.org). God bless you all, till we meet at Jesus Feet.