

Marriage is ordained of God and it is good and honorable. Marriage is a type of our relationship with Christ...

⇒ **Typology:** In Christian theology, typology is the interpretation of some characters, themes and stories in the Old Testament as symbolic representations that foreshadow the New Testament...

- **(See Hebrews 10:1)** For the law having a shadow of good things to come, [and] not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.
- **Ephesians 5:25** Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it...

Let's turn to Ephesians 5:21-33

INTRODUCTION

- Marriage is a miracle
 - Each partner comes from a different families
 - They come from two different backgrounds
 - But God puts them into one unity
- Their differences become "the glue"
 - God matches the strengths of one
 - To meet the needs of the other
- Marriage is a wonderful plan from God
 - It brings mutual benefit to the marital partners

Marriage is God's Plan

1. It's Ordained of God
2. It's a Commitment for Life
3. And it Carries With It Much Responsibility

Marriage is **NOT** an institution invented by man; it's a union designed and made by God (*See Matthew 19:6*)

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

Marriage is Ordained of God

- In **Genesis 1** God said that each element of the creation was good.
- In **verse 31** he said that it was very good...
- But in **Genesis 2:18** He said *it is not good that man should be alone...*
- Adam named every creature
 - Each one of those creatures had a mate
 - **But for Adam there was not found an help for him...**
- God caused Adam to sleep
 - He took one of his ribs
 - And He made a woman for him... (WHOA-MAN!)
 - And she became his help meet (one who is a companion and a helper)
 - Imagine the awe and excitement that Adam had!
 - Here he is... he wakes up from his operation
 - And Adam has a companion for life...
- God did not give Adam another man!!!!
 - Adam did not need a duplicate
 - He needed someone to compliment him
 - **With** desires, insights, and feelings that were missing in him
 - Adam recognized her uniqueness
 - Adam recognized the intimate relationship that they would have
- God's plan for the family is that
 1. Man should leave his father and his mother
 2. And cleave unto his wife
 3. They shall be one flesh (**Genesis 2:24**)

The husband-wife relationship should be the strongest relationship after their relationship with God...

Marriage is a Life-long Commitment...

- It is an **EXCLUSIVE COMMITMENT**
- God's plan never included divorce (an American tragedy)
- Let's look at **Matthew 19:3-9**

Genesis 2:24

(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? (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, (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?** (6) Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. (7) They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? (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. (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.

What God has joined together...

- It is a covenant with each other
- But there is a third and most important partner – **it's a covenant with God**
- They make solemn promises to each other before their God
- And those who witness their marriage

Making an Oath is a Serious Matter...

- Malachi 2 reveals
 - God's disgust with Israel and Judah
 - For divorcing their wives
 - And marrying heathens
- God hates divorce
 - God called it treachery in Malachi 2
 - And compared the breaking of marriage vows with violence
 - In Matthew 19:7
 - Moses did not command divorcement
 - He only suffered or tolerated it...
 - It was because of the hardness of their hearts (Mat 19:8)

- The only Biblical reason for divorce is...
 - ***Fornication***
 - What is fornication
 - Human sexual intercourse
 - Other than between a husband and wife
 - **But is it broader than that...**
 - The Greek word for fornication – "*PORNEIA*"
 - The word pornography is derived from it
 - Also refers to all kinds of perverse behavior
 - Lewdness
 - Licentious behavior

- ***The acts of adultery & fornication are serious matters***
 - They shatter the spirit, faith and self-respect
 - Of both the guilty and the innocent partners
 - But as serious as it is...
 - God will forgive these tragic sins
 - Providing there is forgiveness sought
 - True repentance
 - Forsaking of **illicit acts** (un-licensed)

Not permitted,
Unlawful,
Not sanctioned by
custom or law

Divorce is not the best solution, for God can restore the partners and heal their relationship

There is Personal Responsibility in Marriage

- **A FIRE** in the fireplace is a thing of warmth and beauty
- But it is only a blessing as long as it remains in the appropriate place
 - That is the fireplace!
- **THE SAME FIRE...**
 - Placed in the middle of the living room floor
 - Becomes a force of destruction!
- **In the same sense...**
 - Sexual relations within the marriage is a beautiful relationship
 - Ordained of God
 - But outside of the marriage vows
 - Is sin
 - And it becomes a destructive force
- **Lust is a natural desire GONE OUT OF CONTROL!**
 - Lust is a term for unrestrained sex
 - Desire for sexual fulfillment is natural and God-given
 - But outside of marriage it becomes lust
- **Many Christians** have battled fleshly desires
 - They are trying to present their bodies a living sacrifice
 - Holy and acceptable unto God
 - The key to victory is found in **Romans 12:2**
 - The continual renewing of our mind
- **What a person thinks about...**
 - Is fulfilled in his body
 - What he thinks about depends upon what he feeds his mind
 - What he reads
 - What he views
 - Television is risky – COMPUTER CAN BE WORSE!
 - Constant stream of adultery and illicit relationships
 - Planting seeds of lust and sin in a persons heart
 - It's not wise to flirt with this type of entertainment
- **What is Pornography and How Does it Operate?**
 - Overt & Covert
 - Requires constant effort to avoid
 - It seeks you – you don't have to seek it...
 - You must do whatever necessary to avoid it
 - Sexually stimulating sights and media
 - Avoidance is the only way to control it...

Relationships in Marriage

1. Authority in Marriage
2. Provision in Marriage
3. Unity in Marriage

Authority in Marriage

- Defined Roles and Responsibilities
 - See **Ephesians 5**
 - His bride
 - A model for our own union in marriage
 - The man is at the head of the family
 - The wife is in the supporting role
 - These roles have nothing to do with worth
 - In God's eyes both are of equal value
 - See **Galatians 3:28**
 - Roles are for a smooth & complementing operation
 - Within the family

Provision in Marriage

The sexes are not the same... God made us each different (Wow!)

See Genesis 1:27... Each has strengths and needs that are brought into the marriage relationship...

The Strongest Need within a Man

- Respect and significance
- The need to be needed
- The wife should understand this innate drive with the husband
- She should make sure that he feels that he is **"king of his castle"**
- If a man does not feel respected by his own family...
 - He is likely to look outside of his family to find
 - A sense of value
 - A sense of worth
 - **See Proverbs 31:10-31** (about the wise lady)
 - Proud of her husband
 - That he was known in the gates (v. 23)
 - When he was sitting among the elders of the land (v. 23)

A Man Also Needs Companionship

- God recognized man's need of companionship
- He gave man the appropriate mate for his wife
- A man needs a home that is a sanctuary from pressures
- Within a loving marriage the wife provides for these needs

The Strongest Need of a Wife

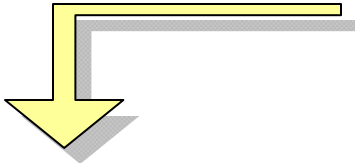
- A loving and intimate relationship
- With a strong husband and leader
 - A wise husband recognizes this important need
 - He gives the time and effort necessary
 - To show his love and interest in her
 - God has made him the lover
 - God has made her the receiver of this love
 - Unfortunately this role doesn't come naturally to the man
 - In modern culture the role has become distorted
 - God knows
 - She expects the husband to fulfill this need
 - It may not be easy for him
 - But he must do it if she is to be fulfilled
 - In the marriage relationship

A Wife Needs Companionship

- Courtship
 - It starts before the marriage
 - But it should continue into & throughout the marriage
 - Through the sharing
 - Intimate thoughts
 - Solving problems together
 - Reaching for hope
 - Settling fears
 - Through a vision for the future in the relationship
- Just like the husband
 - If she is not able to share these things with her husband...
 - Then she may seek fulfillment outside the marriage
 - This may not cause adultery... **BUT...**
 - It could open the door to temptation
 - Especially if from the opposite sex

A Wife Needs Security

- She needs to feel that her husband will protect her
- ***She cannot respect a man who will not provide for her***
 - There are fundamental needs
 - It takes right decision making
 - That is based on the Word of God
 - And a willingness to do his part
 - This will create a strong marriage
 - IT PRODUCES A STRONG UNITY
 - This is God's intended purpose for marriage



There must **UNITY** in Marriage

*The partners in a marriage are viewed by God as ONE ENTITY... (See Matthew 19)
Their bond is meant to be stronger than the parental bonds that they came from...
And they're NO LONGER two separate people – they are ONE FLESH*

The Making of a Marriage (Love & Respect)

1. Husband & Wife – Love
2. Husband & Wife – Respect

There are Three Greek Words for Love

- **Eros** – never used in scripture: this type of love brings emotion and feeling to a marriage. It is passionate love, with sensual desire and longing... The term *erotic* is derived from *eros*.
 - This type of love seeks sensual expression
 - Eros love is necessary
 - But if it exists alone it can destroy a marriage
 - It can become a selfish expression of love
 - A may become an end in an of itself
- **Philia** – This is a love of friendship, companionship and communication
 - Philadelphia – the “City of Brotherly Love”
 - This kind of love is necessary in marriage
 - There should be true friendship and communication in marriage

- **Agape** – this is the most important type of love
 - It is a deep, self-sacrificing love
 - It continues even when the partner is unlovable
 - It's the love that Christ has for the church
 - It motivated Jesus to give Himself for the church
 - It is the foundation for the "Love Chapter"
 - See 1 Corinthians 13

Respect and Commitment

- Deep, abiding respect for each other
- Mutual commitment
- These are essential elements in a healthy marriage
- There will be disagreements
 - But the couple can overcome...
 - Divorce should never be an option
 - Love needs the security of the marriage vows
 - More than marriage needs love
 - Love blossoms in the security of the covenant commitment

SUMMARY

1. It's important that each spouse understands his or her place in the marriage
2. God has established an order of authority
3. There are appropriate individual roles based on the Word of God
4. Respect and obedience for this God-given order produces strong unity
5. Then couples can truly become one flesh according to God's plan
6. Mutual love, respect, and commitment become an enduring source of:

- a. Joy in your life
- b. Strength for all that you do
- c. And Security and protection

Ps 19:14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.
Ps 28:7 The LORD [is] my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.