

Marriage, Divorce, & Remarriage

Lesson 2

MARRIAGE – Love & Companionship Designed By God

Introduction

Place yourself in the following scenario and think about how you would be personally affected:

You are all alone. You have no one to talk to, no one with whom to celebrate your successes or help support you in your defeats. No one is around who has similar thoughts, feelings, dreams, or aspirations. You are completely lonely, and this emptiness surrounds you...you cannot escape it no matter where you go or what you do.

How do you think you would survive in such a situation? Some might think they could survive, even rather well. To those who might have that opinion, we offer 2 well-known sayings –

- ♦ ***“No man is an island.”***
- ♦ ***“Denial is more than a river in Egypt.”***

The above scenario was not made up nor dramatized for emphasis. It really occurred. A long time ago it happened to a man named Adam, God’s first human creation. When quizzed about divorce, Jesus reminded His hearers about what happened “...from the beginning” (Mt. 19:8). That is the proper starting place to understand marriage. It is also where we will begin.

God’s 3 “Divine Institutions”

- 1) Name the 3 “institutions” brought into existence by God in order of their creation.

_____ (Gen. 2; Mt. 19:4, 6)

_____ (Gen. 14; Rom. 13:1-2)

_____ (Acts 2; Mt. 16:18)

- 2) ***Thought question:*** how does the first one created help the remaining two function?

Man’s Early Problems & God’s Solution

Quite often, when reading the creation account in Gen. 2, we start at v. 18 and then “jump ahead” to vv. 21-25 to study about family and the home. If this is our approach, we will miss an important point... a fact that emphasizes the significance of marriage and how it truly solves man’s problems of loneliness & companionship.

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- 3) What thoughts of God are recorded in v. 18? Define "meet" or "suitable."

- 4) What did God allow man to "experience" in vv. 19-20? Where would the answer to Adam's problem of loneliness *not* be found? How might this help "modern man" be more appreciative of being married to a woman? (cp. Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:7)

- 5) **Thought question:** do you see any significance to God putting Adam to sleep before He began to bring about the solution to Adam's problem? (v. 21)

- 6) What were Adam's thoughts about God's "solution?" (v. 23)

- 7) What must be done for this "relationship" to be successful? (v. 24a) Define "leave" & "cleave." Where else in the Scripture is this passage either used or cited?

- 8) What else results when a man marries a woman? (v. 24b) Comment on what you think "one flesh" means and what is involved?

- 9) Besides indicating their innocence before they committed sin (Gen. 3), what else might v. 25 suggest about the relationship between a man and his wife? (cp. 1 Cor. 7:2b-4)

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- 10) Would you agree **Gen. 2** “defines” marriage or family? Do you also agree that Jesus’ comments at **Mt. 19:4-5** further clarify this “definition?” If so, why would this be important, given certain “political movements” in our culture? What other passage(s) would you use to help defend the Biblical definition of marriage or family? Use either O.T. or N.T. passages.
- 11) How serious does God view marriage? (**Mal. 2:14**) What is His intention regarding the union a man forms with a woman? (**Mt. 19:6b, 8b**)

Preparing For Marriage

A relationship this serious must not be entered into without preparation. Sadly, we require more training for one trying to obtain a plumber’s license than we do for a couple desiring a marriage license (*no disrespect intended against plumbers!*).

Proper preparation on the part of both parents and young people is certainly in order for future marriages to be successful and for those unions to gain God’s approval.

- 12) What is recorded in **Gen. 24:1-4, 61-67**? What kind of marriage was this? What do you think would have been some of Abraham’s concerns?
- 13) Even though today’s parents cannot choose their child’s marriage partner, is there anything in the above passage to learn or apply on a *spiritual* level? As you answer, think about **1 Cor. 7:12-13** and **1 Pet. 3:1-2, 5**, as well as **Mt. 19:6a** (cp. **Jn. 10:30; 17:21**).
- 14) On a *physical* level, what else should parents be extremely diligent in? (**Song of Sol. 8:8-9**)

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Courtship or dating is also important. Eventually, boys are no longer “gross” and girls are no longer “icky.” Hormones finally “kick in” and members of the opposite sex become attractive. Dating and all its attendant activities present the final challenge to a mother and father before their son or daughter leaves home.

- 15) Up until a young person begins dating, what is the only kind of love they've really known?
- 16) What is the real purpose for dating or courtship? How has our society “cheapened” or diminished this necessary activity?
- 17) We believe the theme to the **Song of Solomon** is stated three times: **2:7**; **3:5**; and **8:4**. What do you think the phrase “...do not arouse or awaken love until it pleases” means?

Purpose For Marriage

Life's most important physical relationship has a stated purpose from the One who originated it. In His word, God reveals principled reasons why He desires man to be married.

- 18) In the blanks provided below, list the 3 Scriptural reasons for the purpose of marriage.

Gen. 1:28 _____

Gen. 2:18 _____

1 Cor. 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4 _____

Regulating Marriage

The same word that reveals the institution of marriage also reveals how married partners ought to behave towards each other. In any relationship, promises are made and all parties involved expect those promises to be kept. The marriage relationship is built upon promises made to both man and God. Marital conduct is like any other human behavior...it is subject to the judgment of Christ (**2 Cor. 5:10**). For most of the following questions, the focus will be on **Ephesians 5**.

- 19) In **Eph. 5**, what is Paul's real subject matter? (v. 32) What is the illustration? (vv. 22-33)

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- 20) In **Eph. 5:25a**, husbands are to “love” their wives. The Greek word is **agape** → the sacrificial love shown for the betterment or interests of others (**cp. Jn 3:16; Rom. 5:8**)
- In **Titus 2:4**, women are to “love” their husbands. The Greek word is **phileo** → the more emotional display or tender affection (**cp. Mt. 10:37; Jn. 11:36**)
- Do you see any significance in the different emphasis on “love” given for each marriage partner?
- 21) Who is the husband's example? (**v. 25**) How does a husband show love for his wife? (**v. 25b**) What will this “love” prevent him from doing? (**Col. 3:19**)
- 22) How did Jesus obtain the blessing of a “sanctified & cleansed, glorified, spotless, and wrinkle-free” bride? (**vv. 26-27**) What is the lesson for husbands? (**vv. 28-30**) To what O.T. passage does Paul refer to conclude his point? (**v. 31**)
- 23) What else are husbands required to do? (**1 Pet. 3:7**) To be successful in doing this, how must he view his wife? Are there any consequences for his failure to do so?
- 24) **Thought question:** do you find it interesting wives are not taught to “*understand their husbands?*” Does this suggest anything about wives and how they can use their strengths in contributing to the marital relationship?
- 25) What are wives taught to do? (**v. 22; cp. Col. 3:18**) For what reason? (**vv. 23-24**) Who is the wife's example? (**v. 24**)

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- 26) Some believe, based upon **Gen. 3:16**, women are to be submissive because of the first sin. Do you agree? Before answering, consider **1 Tim. 2:12-15** and **1 Cor. 11:3, 8-10**.
- 27) To summarize both the husband's & the wife's love, how might **1 Cor. 13:1-8a** offer help?
- 28) Outside of the Scripture, what "civil regulations" are imposed upon a man and a woman before they can be a husband and wife? What passage(s) do you think are relevant to this discussion? *[This will become important later in our discussions on divorce and remarriage.]*