

BECOME ONE FLESH

We often do not describe our marriage relationship with the description: “One flesh” or “being one” with each other. We may describe ourselves as a “couple;” or “married;” and even “a team”. Some may describe their relationship as “friends.” Sadly, there are some who are married and they are not even friends. They may feel shackled to one another. One flesh or being one describes God’s intention for marriage and relationship with Him.

God’s Design for Marriage

God designed marriage. He created marriage on the sixth day of creation when He created Adam and Eve. We have read the creation story before but may never have read it in the context of marriage and God’s design for marriage. We will look at it through this lens to see God’s hand at work in our marriage; so we can understand what it means for a marriage to be **very good**. We hope to develop a healthy and awesome relationship with each other by understanding the following:

- 1. Marriage is a gift**
- 2. Marriage is a covenant**
- 3. Marriage is a sacrifice**
- 4. Marriage is a ministry**
- 5. Marriage is a “type” for our relationship with Jesus**

Marriage is a Gift

Most people enjoy receiving gifts. Some people love giving gifts even more. The best gifts are those we least expect, thoughtful, and what we really need. God is a gift giver. He blesses us with the things we need and at always at the right time. He is so good to us because He loves us and He wants the very best for us.

We often take for granted the gift of life. In the beginning, God breathed life into Adam. A new day of life for us should not be expected; but it should be valued and used for God’s purpose. We all have a purpose. We are created to worship and glorify God (Psalm 29:2) . He also created you to do good works (Ephesians 2:10). If we do these things properly, we can learn to understand what true love is about and give one another love God’s way. This is especially true in a marriage relationship.

God also created us for each other. We have various types of relationships: a relationship with our parents, our children, our friends, our co-workers, and people we may interact with. Next to our relationship with God, our most cherished and protected relationship should be with our spouse.

In the beginning, God made the heavens and the earth and all that was in it. God called it good. One thing was missing: mankind. God created mankind and then called His creation “very good”. In Genesis 1:26-30 we read that He created us in His image. We are not told what that means. If you read the Bible and seek God with all your heart, you will learn more about Him and how we relate to Him.

God made man a special being. Unlike the animals, He made man in His image. Man is made up of a body, a soul, and a spirit. There are physical, emotional, spiritual components innate to him. God gave man an intellect, a free will, a capacity to relate to others and love. God revealed Himself further to us through His Son Jesus.

We read in Genesis 1:27 that God made mankind *male and female*. God is purposeful in everything he does. The fact that He made them male and female is a clue to part of God’s design for marriage.

Marriage is a Sacrifice.

Sacrifice is *giving up something of importance or value to you*. The most important thing a person can offer to God and to each other is themselves.

God created man with a desire to know Him; but he also made him with a desire for companionship. Woman is the missing part of a man. He created them-male and female to become one flesh. He knew Adam would need a companion. He fashioned Eve from Adam so they would be one flesh instead of two individuals.

When we are married, we give up our identity to get a new one-a better one. We bring to the relationship the best part of us and together make an even better person. We learn from one another and build one another up out of love for each other. With God, we are a new creation. If we remain independent of one another or force our bad part of us on our spouse, we are selfish. We are not united. We are weaker and weaken each other instead of strengthening each other by being one flesh.

Adam came first and Eve came from Adam. Eve came from Adam’s side. They are equal before God and to one another; but have different roles. They are different in body and soul. Their spirit is the connection between God and man. That connection is what we have in common with our spouse. When we become intimate physically, emotionally, and spiritually with our spouse, that connection grows stronger. They become one flesh when their relationship with each other and God is right.

The order of the creation is God's plan to bring order, describe roles, and establish responsibilities. Submission to one another, just as we submit to God, is the key to a godly marriage. Love and respect are two needs and responsibilities that must be met with each other. It is a sacrifice of self for the other.

Our relationship with the Lord helps describe the quality or condition of our relationship with our spouse (or one another). If we are walking in the Spirit, we cannot help but walk in love towards each other. We exercise the fruit of the Spirit. If we do not walk with the Spirit, we move away from each other and toward isolation. It is disobedience and acting in selfishness when we walk away from each other. The Holy Spirit communicates with our spirit to be united. Our gift of a free will can draw us closer or farther from God and one another. We must learn to walk with God daily to experience His perfect will for us as one flesh.

God walked with Adam and Eve. God wants to spend time with us each day so we may know Him and His goodness. God already knows us, our thoughts, and even our plans. We have the opportunity to know Him and what it means to be created in His likeness even better when we spend time with Him. We are blessed if we do this and can help each other to be stronger together.

Marriage is a Covenant

Wedding vows typically describe the love for one another and what each would do for the other regardless of the circumstances. It is a promise to fulfill each responsibility until "death do us part."

God created marriage as a covenant. God fashioned Eve from Adam's side. We are not told if it was painful or not. It required that Adam be put under (sleep) to do it. The assumption by some commentators is that there was a spilling of blood when God took Adam's own flesh (side) and fashioned Eve for him. A covenant was an agreement that was typically sealed by the shedding of blood. The expectation in becoming one flesh is that there would be one woman and one man for the duration of their new life together:

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh". Genesis 2:24

Jesus was confronted by the Pharisees who questioned Him regarding the ease of divorce that Moses had provided to the people. Jesus knew God's desire for marriage. He quoted this verse; but He adds God's intention for marriage in verse 9 for us to grasp:

"Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate" Mark 10:9

We are joined together before God and by God. He must become the glue that binds a relationship together. If two married people are at odds with each other, they cannot get right until they deny themselves and submit to God and His authority.

Marriage is Your First Ministry.

Ministry is *giving of ourselves and our time, talents, and resources to bless and help others*. Our marriage should be our first ministry.

God created in Adam a desire for a companion. He created his help-mate (spouse), out of him. If you think about it, Adam is missing a part of him until he was reunited with Eve. He was attracted to her physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Without her, he is incomplete. The term “help-mate” is not derogatory but means helper. Man is missing the part that he needs in her and she is missing the part that she needs to be complete in him. They help one another become one flesh. Psalm 115:9 says that “the LORD (Yahweh) is our help and our shield.” If God is our helper and protector, there is nothing inferior about a helpmate or both being a help to one another.

God created us and directed us to take care of the things He has provided. He gave man dominion over His creation. That includes taking care of each other. That is a big task. We have roles and responsibilities to do this together. As image bearers, when we are obedient to do them to the best of our ability, we glorify Him. He helps us do the very best we can. We must help one another to do the things He has given us to do in His power.

Marriage is Our Relationship With Jesus

The Apostle Paul speaks about a mystery:

This is a profound mystery- but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Ephesians 5:32

Jesus is the bridegroom and we are the church. Jesus is the example that we look to when it comes to marriage. He is God’s gift to us. The gift is our salvation. It can only come through Him. Our relationship with Him is a ministry to love and serve one another. He loves the church so much that He lived a sinless life so He could sacrifice His body to provide eternal life to those who choose Him. His blood is the new covenant with mankind. He has done the work, but we must do the choosing, repent of our sin, and let Him rule and reign in our lives.

In the beginning, God commanded Adam and Eve to be *fruitful and multiply*. As a believer, we are commanded to do the same: be *purposeful with your lives and make disciples*. Jesus said to *make disciples of all nations.... and teach them everything I have taught you*. We can do this by loving each other. From our marriage example we can disciple and teach others with what He has blessed us with-our marriage. We can show the world what a marriage should look like. We can lead our children and others to Jesus by our words, actions, and prayers. A Christian marriage is most effective when it demonstrates the love between Christ and His church.

BE ONE FLESH OUTLINE

There are Five Things we can remember to becoming one flesh with each other.

Recognize your marriage to be:

1. Marriage is a gift.
2. Marriage is a covenant
3. Marriage is a sacrifice
4. Marriage is a ministry
5. Marriage represents our relationship with Jesus

1. Marriage is a gift

What do you do with the gifts God gives you?

- A. God is the gift giver.
- B. We all have a purpose and given responsibility.
- C. God also created us for each other.

2. Marriage is a covenant

Wedding vows are a promise to fulfill each responsibility until “death do us part.” God created marriage to be “very good”.

God created marriage as a covenant. A covenant was an agreement that was typically sealed by the shedding of blood.

- A. God fashioned Eve from Adam's side.
- B. Duration of the promise: “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh”. Genesis 2:24
- C. Not to Be separated. No “D word” in a marriage-Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate” (Mark 10:9)
- D. We are joined together before God and by God.
- E. God must become the glue that heals and binds a relationship together.

If two married people are at odds with each other, they cannot get right with each other until they deny themselves, submit to God, and then to each other in humility. (James 4:1-10)

3. Marriage is a sacrifice

Sacrifice is giving up something of importance or value to you. The most important thing a person can offer to God and to each other is themselves.

- A. God created man with a desire to know Him: once you know Him...don't forget about Him. Walk with Him daily
- B. Desire for human companionship: He also made him with a desire for companionship. We have friends, kids, coworkers, who are sometimes good to hang with. Woman is a missing part of him. He created them-male and female to become one flesh. Sacrifice your time with friends to be with your spouse.
- C. Identity: We give up our identity to get a new one-a better one.
- D. Needs: God should be that connection we have in common with our spouse. When we become intimate physically, emotionally, and spiritually with our spouse, that connection grows stronger. The couple becomes one flesh when their relationship with God and each other is right.
- E. Order: The order of the creation is God's plan to bring order, describe roles, and establish responsibilities. Submission to one another, just as we submit to God, is the key to a godly marriage.
- F. Man is to lead and in so doing he is to love and cherish his wife. Woman is to submit and respect her husband.

4. Marriage is a Ministry

Ministry is giving of ourselves and our time, talents, and resources to bless and help others.

- A. Our marriage should be our first ministry. Do we overcommit for the sake of helping others? We must have balance and the right priorities in life.
- B. God created Eve as a helper. God created us and directed us to take care of the things He has provided. Our gift of marriage should have the highest priority. He helps us do the very best we can if we ask Him. We must help one another to take care of one another.

5. Marriage is a “type” for our relationship with Jesus

The Apostle Paul speaks about a mystery: This is a profound mystery- but I am talking about Christ and the church. **Ephesians 5:32**

Jesus is the bridegroom and we are the bride. Jesus is the example that we look to when it comes to marriage.

- A. He is God's gift to us. The gift is our salvation. It can only come through Him.
- B. God Promises Us (Covenant). God keeps His promises. Follow His instructions and you will be blessed and able to bless others.

- C. His relationship to us reflects His ministry in us. Our relationship with Him should reflect our ministry to one another. He loves the church so much that He lived a sinless life so He could sacrifice His body to provide eternal life to those who choose Him.
- D. His sacrificed His life so we could live eternally. He gave His life we could also have life more abundantly. We must offer our bodies as living sacrifices to worship Him.
- E. God commanded Adam and Eve to be *fruitful and multiply*. As a believer, we are commanded to do the same: be *purposeful with your lives and make disciples*.
- F. Make disciples: We can do this by loving each other. From our marriage example we can disciple and teach others what He has blessed us with-our marriage. We can show the world what a marriage should look like.
- G. Lead your children: We can lead our children and others to Jesus by our words, actions, and prayers. A Christian marriage is most effective when it demonstrates the love between Christ and His church.