

Marriage Made in Heaven

Home and Family: Part 1

Introduction

1. Great assault on the institution of Marriage in today's society.
 - a. Our plastic society has turned marriage into a plastic institution: when you are through with it just throw it away.
 - b. As a result families are being destroyed, children are growing up in miserable situations and now more and more people are looking at the idea of marriage as useless to our society.
2. As with many of the ways of the world, this is a way of thinking that Christians must do all they can to avoid.
3. In marriage God has instituted a beautiful relationship that can be filled with love and harmony when treated with honor by those in such a relationship.
4. As we begin this study on the family and the home we must begin by looking at God's pattern for marriage, for as the marriage goes, so does the family.

Discussion

I. The Beauty of Marriage.

A. "What God has joined together."

1. Distinct from every other being in God's creation, men and women join together in what may be the most beautiful union known to man—marriage.
2. Contrary to popular claims that marriage is something that has evolved through our history, the Bible teaches us that it was ordained by God.
3. In the marriage relationship we are told in Gen. 2:24 that "*a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*"
4. Concerning this, Jesus brings us to the conclusion that it is not man who joins two people together in marriage, but God Himself. "*Therefore what God has joined together, let man separate*" (Matt. 19:6).
5. There are few things in this life as beautiful as when God joined a man and a woman together to become one flesh in the relationship of marriage.
6. But as we can see all around us, when we give way to the philosophies of the world, that beautiful relationship will be destroyed.
7. As a relationship made in heaven, we must follow God's instruction to keep such a union going strong.

B. Equality of Marriage.

1. One of the more beautiful aspects of this relationship is that God takes two people who are equal in every way and places them in a relationship where they are able to dwell with one another in perfect harmony.
2. "*Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord...Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her*" (Eph. 5:22-25).

3. When many read Eph. 5:22 they cringe when they hear that one forbidden word—*submit*.
 - a. In our culture submission has become such a bi-word that that who used it are considered domineering and cruel.
 - b. So what we have are marriages where the wives do not submit to the husband and the husband does not give his life for the wife resulting in a constant power-struggle, ultimately ending in a nasty battle.
4. But when we follow God’s pattern we find that two people, equal in value, are able to live together in perfect harmony.
5. How is this possible? LOVE!
 - a. The essential element that has been left out of the vast majority of marriages today.
 - b. We’re not talking *romantic* love or infatuation, we are talking the love of God, agape love—mature, selfless love.
6. When a marriage has this kind of love in it, then the beauty and wisdom of God’s plan can be clearly seen.
 - a. God shows us that husbands, as heads in the relationship, are not superior to the wives, rather they are to love them such that they give their lives for them.
 - b. Such a husband is not overbearing or domineering, nor does he seek to overlook the wife’s needs in order to fulfill his own selfish desires.
 - c. Husbands are responsible for the wellbeing of their families. As Christ cares for the church, it is the responsibility of the husbands to give their lives in order to ensure that their families receive such care.
 - d. On the other hand, godly wives are such that they allow the husbands to provide such care.
 - e. So what we find is not a power struggle—two people trying to get their own way—but rather husbands making sacrifices to care for their families and wives submitting to the leadership of their husbands so that they can fulfill their responsibilities.
 - f. We see that such submission does not diminish the wife, but rather exalts her as the husband strives to care for her needs.
7. Thus, “*Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands...Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered*” (1 Pet. 3:1, 7).
8. But if wives are not submissive and husbands do not have such sacrificial love then the whole relationship falls apart and we end up with what we see so often in the world.

C. Marriage and the Godhead: Divine organization.

1. This kind of relationship is not human in wisdom or in origin.
2. Rather, it reflects the same principles that we see in the Godhead.
3. The Word and the Father were (and are) equal (Phil. 2:6).
4. Yet the Word (Jesus) was obedient to the will of the Father in all submission.
5. At the same time the Father’s will is such that it only seeks good for those who love Him.

6. Even the relationship between Christ and His church reflects this, for as Christ died for the church, husbands are to give their lives for their wives (Eph. 5:22-28).

II. The Permanence of Marriage.

A. Gen. 2:24 (KJV) “Leave & cleave.”

1. Before marriage people may have close relationships with their parents.
2. But God shows us here a pattern that is so often neglected today is the cause for many failed marriages—“Leave.”
3. When two people are joined together, they become severed from every relationship that existed before their marriage, including the parent/child relationship.
4. Biologically they are still children of their parents, and there is still an emotional bond between them. This is good.
5. The problem is not in the friendship with the parents, but when one places the parents on a pedestal over their spouse.
 - a. If one does not agree with their spouse, the parents often become the deciding factor.
 - b. No longer is their submission; no longer is there sacrificial love of Christ.
 - c. Rather, “My parents think you should do it my way. If you don’t do it my way I’m going to stay with my mother.”
 - d. And so, that two never learn to dwell with one another in love and understanding.

B. Cleave means “to cling to, to grab or hold with firmness”

1. When two people are joined together there must be a sense of permanence to their marriage. This is God’s expectation.
2. When we “cleave” to our spouse it is for life!
3. When two Christians look at their marriage (whether they are already married or getting married) they must see a relationship ship so firmly and permanently joined that death alone can release its bond.
4. What makes the marriage bond so strong? “*What God has joined together...*” (Matt. 19:6).
 - a. No prenuptial agreements, no what if we get divorced, no “do it my way or I’ll divorce you.”
 - b. Except that we read it in the scriptures, the very idea of divorce must be so foreign to us that it never enters our minds.
 - c. This may no be the way of the world, but it is the way of God.
5. In our plastic society there few examples of commitment and faithfulness as two people who take to heart the promise, “till death do us part.”

C. “Choose your love and love your choice!” (Hunter)

1. For the most part, we make the choice as to who we marry.
2. Having such a great privilege, we need to consider how Adam and Eve (and many families throughout history) were able to make it, seeing that they did not have a choice.
3. If they were able to continue in there marriage for several centuries (Gen. 5:5), then surely we have spend our own lives with people who we get to choose to marry.
4. Love is a choice.

- a. “We fell out of love.”
 - b. “She wasn’t the one.”
 - c. “We didn’t click.”
 - d. “We had different goals.”
 - e. Whatever excuse people give for getting divorced is just an excuse.
 - f. We make the choice, therefore it is the responsibility of the married couple to follow God’s pattern, to climb back up when “fall out of love” fix it, to make the other person the one by give our lives for them, by make the relationship click, by changing goals so that they harmonize.
 - g. How? Love and Submission by both people. Just like Christ and the church.
5. Once the infatuation has subsided it is our responsibility to learn how to love our spouses-that is the love of God.
 6. “*Older women...teach the young women...to love their husbands, love their children...*” (Tit. 2:3-4).

Conclusion

1. God has given us a wonderful thing in marriage.
2. Many families are destroyed or are in danger because love, submission, and commitment are not learned when that family first began in the marriage to two people.
3. As Christians we need to be aware of God’s pattern, we need to learn to appreciate its beauty and wisdom, we need to follow it.
4. Marriage was created by God; certainly He is the best one to tell us how to succeed.
5. To help us accomplish this, in our next several lessons we will be discussing how each person can fulfill their God given role in the family: Men, women, and children.

References

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