

Husbands and Wives

- I. In the covenant of marriage there is a reuniting (of sorts) of that which God divided in the garden of Eden. **GEN 2:18, 21-24 c/w MAT 19:4-6.**
- A. cleave: To adhere to or cling to; to remain attached, devoted or faithful to.
 - B. Marriage characterizes Christ's love for His church. **EPH 5:25-32.**
 - C. Only in the intimacy of marriage has God sanctioned a state of existence that approximates the state of innocence before sin entered. **GEN 2:25 c/w HEB 13:4.**
 - D. Marriage is contractual in nature and *binds* man and woman together. **ROM 7:1-3.**
 - 1. Any other covenant made by men can be annulled if both parties agree to dissolve it. It is *their* covenant and *their* law that *they* established, therefore *they* can alter or abolish it if *they* decide to.
 - 2. Marriage is not so. It is unique in that it is enforced by God's law which is immutable. **HEB 6:17.**
 - 3. The only thing that dissolves the binding contract of marriage for *both* parties is death.
 - 4. Divorce at most releases *only one* party from the binding. **MAT 19:9; 1CO 7:15.**
 - 5. Couples experiencing the common "...trouble in the flesh..." (**1CO 7:28**) form of marital strife need to work to avoid the "easy out" of divorce since:
 - a. God hates divorce. **MAL 2:16.**
 - b. it does not dissolve the covenant and they are still forbidden from sexual connection with any other person.
 - c. it can be emotionally destructive for their children.
 - E. The *legal bond* of marriage is one thing. The bond which makes marriage the rich, satisfying blessing it was meant to be is *charity* (godly love), the same thing which makes for a rich church life. **COL 3:14; 1PE 4:8.**
 - 1. Couples should beware of a dynamic that can be created by an overemphasis on the "legal bond" of marriage.
 - 2. The conviction that you are bound together legally can become an occasion to take your partner and your duty to your partner for granted: "Well, what does it matter what I say or do, it's not like he/she can just divorce me."
 - a. Perhaps this may be described as the letter of the law killing the spirit of the relationship.
 - b. Be not deceived! It DOES matter what you say or do.
 - 3. A successful marriage will honor both the *legal bond* and the *charity bond*.
- II. Elapsed time can breed complacency which weakens the relationship. It becomes all too easy for spouses to take each other for granted. There is profit in reflecting upon some basic facts about human nature and relationships.
- A. Men and women differ:
 - 1. physically (Stature/strength/conformation).
 - 2. sexually (Different stimuli/response; he is a microwave oven, she is a crock-pot).
 - 3. biologically (Hormone/reproductive).
 - 4. emotionally (Men go out and slay dragons. Women worry about who will look after the dragon's babies).
 - B. The society which attempts to deny these differences or pervert them is a society in trouble. **JER 51:30; 1CO 6:9.**
 - C. The spouse that only considers these differences in their partner as flaws will never enjoy

the fulness that God intended for their relationship.

- III. Sober reflection upon the respective roles of husbands and wives should provide for a good tune-up in a marriage.
- A. It is vital to remember that a healthy marriage will not be cultivated by *only* doing what comes naturally.
1. Men, who by nature seek and relish dominion, need not be urged so much in that direction. Rather, they need to be urged in the areas of tender love and compassion. **EPH 5:28-29; COL 3:19.**
 2. Women, who by nature relish and exhibit compassion, need not be urged so much in that direction. Rather, they need to be urged toward submission and humility. **EPH 5:22.**
- B. Women need to remember what their husbands are *not*. He is *not* to be deemed as nothing more than:
1. a sugar-daddy.
 2. the necessary half of the equation to produce a child.
 3. the executioner to whom the child is turned over for discipline.
 4. a necessary evil which society requires for propriety's sake or for domestic support.
- C. Men need to remember what their wives are *not*. She is *not* to be deemed as nothing more than:
1. a robot.
 2. a doormat upon whom his frustrations are vented.
 3. a baby-factory.
 4. an inflatable doll only to be used and then put away until next time.
 5. a maid or "gopher."
 6. a personal chef who works cheaply.
- D. True love which promotes a healthy bond is self-sacrificing. **1CO 13:4-5.**
1. Overall, one of the most destructive forces in marriage is self-will, selfishness.
 2. This setting forth of charity is plain. Charity:
 - a. *suffereth long*. Like God, it is not hasty to enforce its right and destroy opposition to the same. **2PE 3:9.**
 - b. *is kind* (naturally well-disposed; having a gentle, sympathetic, or benevolent nature). Remember God's kindness to you. **EPH 4:32; 2CO 10:1.**
 - c. *vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up*. It does not boast of its own superiority to rub it in the face of the spouse's perceived inferiorities.
 - d. *doth not behave itself unseemly* (unbecomingly, indecently). It does not dirty itself or trash its spouse simply because it thinks it can do so with impunity.
 - e. *seeketh not her own*. It seeks the welfare of its object. This is how Christ loved us: sacrificing His interests for us. **EPH 5:25.**
 - f. *is not easily provoked*. It does not take umbrage at every little thing but it does take into consideration human frailty and distinguishes that from stubborn rebellion.
 - g. *thinketh no evil*. It does not conjure up unfounded dark speculations about another's fidelity or intentions, nor formulate destructive schemes to hurt another.
 - h. The foregoing is anything but self-centered, self-willed selfishness.

- IV. A good wife is a great blessing (**PRO 18:22; 19:14**). If a woman would please God and strive for excellence as a wife, she must remember her ordained role.
- A. She was created not for herself, her career or for her children, but for her man. **1CO 11:7-9; GEN 2:18.**
 - B. She was made second and therefore under her husband's headship. **1CO 11:3; 1TI 2:11-13.**
 - C. She should submit to her husband's headship and obey him in godly confines. **EPH 5:22-24; TIT 2:5; 1CO 9:5.**
 - D. Her submission is not conditioned upon the flawless obedience of her husband. **1PE 3:1-6.**
 1. Her submission, though, demands that he not rule her as a tyrant.
 2. amazement: The condition of being mentally paralyzed, mental stupefaction, frenzy.
 - E. She should reverence her husband. **1PE 3:6 c/w GEN 18:12; EPH 5:33.**
 1. reverence: Deep or due respect felt or shown towards a person on account of his or her position or relationship; deference.
 2. Mind that Sarah called Abraham "lord" in her heart.
 - F. Her husband has much less trouble giving her the affection and care she desires when he senses this respect towards himself.
 - G. Her duties are primarily of the house. **TIT 2:4-5; 1TI 5:14 c/w PRO 7:11.**
 1. keeper: One who has charge, care, or oversight of any person or thing; a guardian, warden, custodian.
 2. This is not limited to janitorial duty but also to the training of children.
 - H. She must be sober and discreet. **TIT 2:4.**
 1. sober: Moderate, temperate, avoiding excess in respect of the use of food and drink; not given to the indulgence of appetite.
 2. She should not "let herself go" for the sake of satisfying her own desires.
 3. discreet: Showing discernment or judgment in the guidance of one's own speech and action; judicious, prudent, circumspect, cautious; often, especially, that can be silent when speech would be inconvenient.
 - I. She must be chaste. **TIT 2:5.**
 1. chaste: Pure from unlawful sexual intercourse, continent, virtuous (of persons, their lives, conduct, etc.).
 2. This includes the thought-life. **MAT 5:28.**
 - J. She should complement her husband. **GEN 2:18; PRO 12:4; 1CO 11:7.**
- V. If a man would please God and strive for excellence as a husband, he must remember his role.
- A. His authority is not to be wielded like a club. God carefully sets a foil to the husband's authority. **1CO 7:3-4; 11:8-12.**
 1. He may not violate her chastity by demanding her to do that which God's law or her conscience forbids.
 2. He may not rule her with such rigidity or fear so as to drive her to amazement.
 3. Authority is for edification (building up), not for destruction. **2CO 10:8.**
 - B. He must love his wife sacrificially, which will surely encourage her submission and devotion to him. **EPH 5:25; 1CO 7:33.**
 - C. He must love his wife not just for what she is, but for what he may help her become. **EPH 5:26-27.**
 - D. He must love her like his own body, providing for her needs in financial, spiritual, emotional, intellectual and recreational support. **EPH 5:28-30, 33; 1TI 5:8.**

1. nourish: To bring up, rear, nurture (a child or young person).
 2. nurture: To feed or nourish; to support and bring up to maturity, to rear.
 3. cherish: To hold dear, treat with tenderness and affection; to make much of.
- E. He should be aware of the nature and needs of his wife and act accordingly. **1PE 3:7.**
1. honour: High respect, esteem or reverence, accorded to exalted worth or rank; deferential admiration or approbation.
 2. She is the weaker vessel and should be respected as such. She should be defended from harmful influences, including his own.
 3. She thrives on praise and reward and should receive it. **PRO 31:28-31.**
 4. She needs to be told, shown and feel that she is loved.
 5. A wayward relationship interferes with prayer.
- F. His wife should be the object and fulfillment of his desires and she should be able to feel that. **PRO 5:18-19.**
- G. He should know that the more he gives, the more he gets back.
- VI. “Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun” (**ECC 9:9**)