

**Faithfulness Is Important**  
Proverbs 5:15-23 (04/23/17)  
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One of our goals here at Faith Bible Church is to do all we can to help your marriage do well. We've done plenty of weddings over the years (I've done at least 30) and we want you young couples to thoroughly enjoy your marriages. In fact, we want all the marriages represented here to really sizzle and sing. How's your marriage going? Is there any sizzle and song in it? We certainly hope so. That's what we're going to look at this morning. By the way, this is premarital counseling for you singles. Most of you will marry, so listen up.

**First of all, let's get God's perspective on your marriage.** It all started long ago and far away in a Garden called Eden. God made a man to serve him and work the garden, but God knew that the man needed help. Lots of it. So God put the man under and pulled out one of his ribs and shaped that rib into the most beautiful creature the man ever laid eyes on! He said, "I'm Ish (man), but you are Ish-ah (woman - Genesis 2:23)! Where have you been all my life? I've been searching for a girl like you!" And that got it all started as far as marriage is concerned. Adam had a need and Eve met that need. His job was to work and her job was to work beside him, encouraging him and cheering him along. She loved her husband and brought him wonderful companionship and joy. I'm sure she freely confessed, "Adam, you're the most wonderful husband in the whole wide world." God designed marriage to provide companionship, joyful intimacy, and babies. He even told them, "Have lots of babies! Be fruitful and multiply." And while you're at it, be sure to enjoy the journey!

So they just had a wonderful time together, that is until Eve met up with a very attractive creature and decided to take matters into her own hands and Adam chose to join her in disobeying God by eating the forbidden fruit. Of course, God wasn't taken by surprise. His plan was to provide for their salvation through the seed of the woman, a Redeemer our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. After Adam chose to disobey, the typical sinful arguing and blaming began. Adam even blamed God for giving him this woman who gave him the fruit, "the woman you gave me, she gave me from the tree and I did eat."

The wonderful thing is that God didn't throw away the marriage relationship. He ordained it in the beginning of creation and He still blesses marriage and wants his people to thoroughly enjoy their relationship with one another! God's perspective on marriage is that you find in your spouse the greatest human joy and pleasure in this world. More pleasure than a tasty meal, a fast car, a 10 pound bass, your Glock, your job, a handsome house, even more joy and pleasure than children or even grandchildren. God wants you to really enjoy each other. How's your marriage going? Is it sizzling and singing?

In Deuteronomy 24:5 God commanded a new husband to stay home for a full year to bring happiness or pleasure to his wife. "When a man takes a new wife, he shall not go out with the army nor be charged with any duty; he shall be free at home one year and shall give **happiness** to his wife whom he has taken." The Hebrew word for happiness is "samach," used in Proverbs 5:18, and means to have a blast together. To brighten up, make merry, cause to shine and rejoice. Husbands who learn to treat their wives with great tenderness and appreciation can make them shine. One full year! Two sinners joining together to live the rest of their lives learning how to bring joy and pleasure to each other. That first year is crucial! You each married a person with 23 or so years of habits, many self-serving. To keep a marriage sizzling and singing means learning how to deny self, to humble yourself, and give and please and serve each other. Men, you have to learn to be lovers and leaders and especially learners, because you really don't know her all that well. And gals, you're going to have to be forbearing and overlook all the silly, dumb things he does, sometimes his snarky comments. You want to do all you can to keep the "samach," the happiness, the sizzle and song going for the glory of God!

By the way, God Himself says in Isaiah 62:5 "As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so your God will rejoice over you!" God's perspective on marriage is this, "I designed it from the get-go not just to be a way of having babies, but for the joy and pleasure of My people!"

Note Ecclesiastes 9:9, "Enjoy life with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun." That's God's perspective on marriage! It means live it up with that woman you love! Make her the happiest lady on the planet. She's more important than any other person in your life. Listen to her, look her in the eyes, tell her how beautiful she is to you, hold her hand, hug her, kiss her, and just delight in her! Don't dwell on her faults – that will never nurture loving, happy thoughts toward her. Think of all the good things about her. Remember why you wanted to marry her.

Know this. Every Christian marriage is a launching of a living example of Christ and His church. A good marriage requires the power of the Spirit because frankly, we're really selfish and get critical pretty easily. Most wives want the best for their marriages and love their husbands, even though it's a challenge sometimes. So men, you need Jesus and the power of the Spirit to help you be a really nice guy. Is there a wife here who doesn't want a husband who is loving, happy, contented, patient, kind, good, gentle, faithful, and self-controlled? What wife doesn't appreciate a husband who works hard to understand her fears, her joys, her strengths and weaknesses? A husband who treats her with the greatest respect and honor, opening doors, pulling out chairs, speaking kindly to her? A husband who listens to her concerns about the kids or the neighbors or her in-laws? A husband who cherishes her, esteems her above himself, is willing to deny himself for her? A husband who loves her enough to meet her needs just like Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her? What woman doesn't want that? What marriage won't sizzle and sing when that stuff is happening? How's your marriage?

Let's go to Proverbs 5:15-23. God gives every husband three clear directions for a marriage that honors Him, reflects Christ's love for His church, and brings maximum joy to your spouse.

**First, be faithful in your marriage – vss 15-17.**

*15 Drink water from your own cistern and fresh water from your own well. 16 Should your springs be dispersed abroad, streams of water in the streets? 17 Let them be yours alone and not for strangers with you.*

When God created man and woman, He put within them a strong desire to be with the opposite sex. That desire that most people feel is God-given. It's good. It's kept the human race rolling along. But it is also a trust. God unleashed us humans on this planet with this desire, but He expects us to keep that desire within the fence of marriage. So here in Proverbs the father urges his son to be faithful to his own wife. Will there be temptations to go over the fence and look for satisfaction in other fields? Yes, but that flies in the face of God's plan and denies the very nature of God's kind of love. Love is faithful.

God paints a beautiful and ugly picture here of marital faithfulness and unfaithfulness. Finding your pleasure and satisfaction at home is like drinking sparkling fresh water running underground, privately, filling your well. Going outside is like drinking from a scum pond or mud puddles out in the street. When you marry, you say hello to that lovely lady and goodbye to every other lady in the whole world, even when things aren't going so well at home, even when she's not as responsive to you or as fun to be with or even when she is sick or comes down with a life debilitating disease. Faithfulness to your spouse is the only acceptable position.

The passage may be speaking of going out and finding momentary pleasure that well may mess up your life and now you've got a whole deal on your hands that you wouldn't have if you'd been faithful to your wife. Drink that satisfying fresh water with your wife at home! Quit letting your mind wander into forbidden territory or sharing inappropriate conversation with that listening ear at work, which too soon will take you where you must not go! Those encouraging words you're not hearing at home, those daily close encounters cloaked as business discussions, that intense buzz from a passing touch – you'll be in the scum pond before you know it. You've already let your heart go where your body will want to follow! Jesus said don't even look at the forbidden territory.

God is all about pleasure, sizzle, and song, but it must take place within the boundaries of sacred marriage. Don't even think of going outside – either to real or virtual. That means you need to keep your

heart focused on God and that dear lady who entrusted her heart to you on the day when you both said, “I do.” Or as one feisty bride recently said, “Heck yeah, I do.” (You have to be ready for anything in weddings). God calls you to highly value her. You’ve got one steering wheel in your car and one wife by your side. Be faithful.

Now you men may be thinking, “Why are you just talking to us men? What about the ladies? They need some counsel here. I mean, if you really knew my wife!” John Piper in *This Momentary Marriage* writes, “If something is not working right at your house and Jesus comes knocking on the door, He may have an issue with your wife, but the first thing He’s going to say when she opens the door is, ‘Is the man of the house here?’” Be faithful. How’s your marriage? Any roaming hearts here this morning?”

### **Stay excited in your marriage – vss. 18- 19**

*18 Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. 19 As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; Be exhilarated always with her love.*

Now remember, God is pro-life, pro-heterosexual marriage, and pro-pleasure in marriage. It’s all His idea! Like Ed Wheat said in the title of his book, “Intended for Pleasure.” So what do we learn here? Have a blast while you last in your marriage. Your fountain is your marriage and God wants it to experience maximum blessing and happiness. Rejoice is the same as Deuteronomy 24:5, find great delight in your sweet wife, brighten her up, find the most wonderful joy and happiness in your marriage; more than in any other relationship in this world. Focus your heart on doing him or her good and not ill all the days of your life! Keep your heart focused on that lovely lady you married 20, 30, 40, 50 years ago. She has stuck with you, washed your clothes, put up with your tomfoolery all these years, patiently telling you for the hundredth time where the mustard is. Rejoice in her until one lays the other in the arms of Jesus! Be determined to stay excited in your marriage. Am I overdoing it? I don’t think so! Don’t be satisfied with a ho-hum marriage. Make it sizzle.

The Puritans were very big into the God-honoring pleasures of marriage. One wife went to the elders to deal with her husband who refused to have relations with her. They disciplined the unrepentant husband right out of the church! Matthew Henry is excellent on this passage, “Let him that is married take delight in his wife, and let him be very fond of her, not only because she is the wife that he himself has chosen...but because she is the wife that God in his providence appointed for him..... Think yourself very happy in her...mutual delight is the bond of mutual fidelity.” In other words, keep each other so happy that neither will ever want to go outside the fence of marriage. When you are stuffed after a thanksgiving dinner, you don’t go down and get a White Castle burger. Are you kidding me?

Verse 19 is interesting. First, that female you married is lovely to you. Her femininity is like a sleek middle-eastern doe or mountain goat with their bright black eyes and graceful limbs. God says your wife is attractive. She’s smooth, soft, warm, and alluring to you! God created women this way! The world, of course, totally perverts all this for sin and selfishness. But the fact is, that lady you married is for you the quintessence of feminine pulchritude. That’s one reason in the spring of your love you married her. You liked her. She looked good to you. She still does. She’s still the one. You don’t call men loving hinds and graceful does. We’re more like rhinoceroses or pitbulls. Ladies are ladies – God made them with the xx chromosomes. They look different from men, they walk differently, they hold themselves differently, they talk differently, they’re built differently, all on purpose, by God’s design.

Ladies, your husbands enjoy you. Of all the men and women in this world, your spouse is the only one you can snuggle up to romantically with a clear conscience and know that you are pleasing God by pleasing your spouse! That’s why in 1 Corinthians 7:5 God says stop depriving one another except for a season for fasting and prayer, and then come together again to avoid temptation.

What does God think about intimacy in marriage? He encourages you to get intoxicated with the love of your spouse! Verse 19 says slake and satisfy your thirst with your lovely lady to the point of going head over heels, intoxicated! That’s the idea in being exhilarated with her love. She’s driving you crazy! This is what God thinks of the pleasures of marriage! Have a blast while you last. How’s your marriage? You say,

"I thought marriage was more like a business deal. You just hold up your side of the deal and she holds up hers, have a couple of kids, and just trudge along till we die." Well, you thought wrong!

### **Don't be a straying fool – vss. 20-23**

*20 For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress and embrace the bosom of a foreigner? 21 For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, and He watches all his paths. 22 His own iniquities will capture the wicked, and he will be held with the cords of his sin. 23 He will die for lack of instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he will go astray.*

Only a fool goes and drinks out of a stinking sewer! When you drive into Evansville by the sewage treatment center on Veterans Memorial Parkway in the summer you get a strong smell of sewage. We'd pass it regularly when we went to the riverfront to hear Bryce preach and my granddaughter would say, "There's that old stink again!" Matthew Henry, "Let him consider what an absurdity it will be for him to be *ravished with a strange woman* ([Pro 5:20](#)), to be in love with a filthy harlot, and *embrace the bosom of a stranger*, which, if he had any sense of honor or virtue, he would loathe the thoughts of."

What should an adulterer or a fornicator or any immoral sinner keep clearly in mind? Don't be stupid! You may be sneaking around in the dark, lying to your wife, and trying to hide the evidences. But God both watches and ponders everything you do and everywhere you go. And God holds you accountable. There is no place where you are not under the eye of God. Colossians 3:6 says it is because of sexual immorality that the wrath of God will come on the sons of disobedience. Be sure your sin will find you out.

Not only that. But if you think you can quit at any time, beware! You are playing with a beast much bigger than you. Addictions never start as addictions. A little pleasure, a little more, than quitting, but the memory is there and a little more, and soon the beast has wrapped its tentacles around your heart and squeezes and you die in your sin, lost forever, just for the pleasure of sin for a season! To continue in the sin of immorality without repentance demonstrates an unregenerate heart. Hebrews 13:4 says the marriage bed is undefiled, but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. And all the while God had a plan for your pleasures. It's called marriage! Don't be a straying fool!

Here's the hope. Repent! The same power of the cross of Christ that redeemed the adulterers and fornicators in Corinth is still powerful to save today! You need Christ to deliver you from your folly. Be like David and cry out, "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow!" Turn now, give it up, and find forgiveness in the mercy of Jesus!

### **SO WHAT?**

What is God's perspective on your marriage? He wants you to find great joy and pleasure in your spouse. He wants you to please Him by pleasing your wife! Your wife is His gift to you. A good wife is not only worth more than rubies, but is a gift from God. He who finds a wife obtains favor, literally delight, from the Lord (Proverbs 18:22). When she came down the aisle to entrust her heart to you for a lifetime, God was waving an invisible banner over her for the groom, "My gift to you!" Love her, handle her with care, and be faithful to God by being faithful to her. Do all you can to make her the happiest lady in the world. And let me add this. Your children are your students, watching, listening, and learning. Let them go from home with the attitude that marriage is the most wonderful relationship in all the world.