

GOD'S GIFT OF MARRIAGE

Assorted Scriptures

INTRODUCTION

Mark 10:2 – “And *some* Pharisees came up to Him, testing Him, and *began* to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife.”

Divorce was a volatile issue among the Jews. Everybody knew about it and divorce was very common. Women were treated as if they had no privileges at all. And the Pharisees were leaders in this, not only by what they taught but by the example of their lives.

There was a raging debate between rabbinical schools – Hillel and Shammai.

- Shammai held the conservative position on divorce.
- Hillel's view was the popular view. He taught that you could divorce your wife for any reason.

The Pharisees held to the liberal school of Hillel on the issue of divorce because of their perversion. They were rigid legalists when it came to protecting their power base. However, they were liberal when it came time to accommodate their perversion.

Since this was the case back then with the sober, Jewish world in which they lived, how much more will the magnificence of marriage in the mind of God seem unintelligible to the world we live in? Where the main idol is self, its main doctrine is autonomy, and its central act of worship is being entertained.

There never has been a generation whose view of marriage is high enough. The chasm between the biblical vision of marriage and the human vision is, and has always been, huge.

When we understand the Divine foundation of marriage, when we understand how God views marriage and think God's thought after Him regarding marriage, we can rightly uphold and exalt marriage.

God created marriage.

God looked at man in his singleness and said not good.

God created man male and female.

Song of Solomon 4: 1-10

God sets the standard that marriage is a good and beautiful thing

- the most sacred of institutions at the human level

Marriage is a gift from God.

Marriage is a commitment – made with God and made with each other

From Gen 1:28 - which are the first words from God to man - to Rev 21:2 - the Word of God brings out the beauty of marriage.

Song of Solomon 8:7 “Many waters cannot quench love, Nor will rivers overflow it”

- Song of Solomon is a whole book devoted to marriage

Gen 29:1-20 – “So Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her.”

Proposition: 2 Beautiful Truths: Your Marriage is:

I. A Doing of God by the Grace of God

II. A Display of God for the Glory of God

I. A Doing of God by the Grace of God

Point – Beloved, we are supposed to live hour by hour by the forgiving, justifying, all-supplying grace of God, and then reflect it out to all the others in our life → especially in marriage.

C.S. Lewis – “*Love...is a deep unity ... reinforced by the grace which both partners ... receive from God...On this love the engine of marriage is run.*”

Four dimensions that God is the doing of God:

A. God is the Builder of Marriage

Proof – Building a marriage is not an event...it's a process. A man and a woman begin to build a life together as husband and wife...and the years they spend together allows them to knit closer to one another as they continue to build the marriage relationship.

The **foundation** of the building of a marriage is God, and God is ultimately the Builder.

Proof – **Psa 127:1 – “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it.”**

The point is this: builders work on a house. A husband and wife work on a marriage, but unless the Lord builds it, it is in vain.

God is the Foundation of marriage. And He uses love as the building material.

Application – Even though marriages are made in heaven, we are responsible for the maintenance.

God says, I make marriages. And you better not take them apart.

B. God is the Witness to Marriage

Proof – **Mal 2:14 – “the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth.”**

C. Marriage is a Gift from God

Proof – **Eccl 9:9 – “Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life, and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun.”**

Marriage is a gift from God → for your joy

D. Marriage is Precious to God

Heb 13:4 – “Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled”

“**honor**” – more commonly means “precious” in the New Testament

1 Cor 3:12 – “gold, silver, precious stones”

1 Pet 1:19 – “with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ”

2 Pet 1:4 – “He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises”

Illustration – Marriage is an ocean of deep unseen wonders. Yet, many people today treat it like a backyard swimming pool for lounging around as long as we feel like it.

How sad that so many do not treat marriage like an ocean of wonders, but are mentally wading in a mudpool.

Application – We understand marriage is not to be touched quickly, handled casually, or treated commonly. Marriage is precious in the sight of God.

Illustration – Our forefathers did not craft wedding vows with their heads in the sand. Their eyes were wide open to reality:

“to have and to hold from this day forward, for better *for worse*, for richer *for poorer*, in *sickness* and in health, to love, honor, and cherish, ‘til death do us part, I pledge you my faithfulness.”

Application - For marriage counselling, discipling, confronting sin, the perfect place to land is to bring them to the mind of God, to show them, unfold for them, the divine perspective on the sacred bond of marriage. Homework may have a place, in-depth diagnostic questions may be necessary sometimes, but the best

place to start in any area is to ask the question: What is God's view? What is God's perspective?

Marriage is a doing of God by His grace.

II. A Display of God for the Glory of God

Point – Jesus says that all of our lives are a showcase of God's glory → Matt 5:16 – “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

God designed marriage to be a *unique* display of His glory because unlike all other human relationships, the husband and wife are bound by covenant into the closest possible relationship for life.

Proof – We are created in the image of God for the glory of God

Gen 1:26-28a - “Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Point – The husband-wife relationship pictures the relationship of Christ to the church.

Proof – Rev 19:7-9 – “Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” ⁸It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. ⁹Then he said to me, ‘Write, “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of

the Lamb.”“ And he said to me, “These are true words of God.””

- the bride is the church and the groom is Christ
- the unique institution of marriage was given by God to picture deep, eternal truths that tie in to the very nature of God Himself, that tie into redemption.

Application – If we want to understand God’s meaning for marriage, we have to grasp that we are dealing with a copy and an original, a metaphor and a reality, a parable and a truth. The original, the reality, the truth is the image of God, who rescues a group of people and molds them into an image of Himself and will spend an eternity receiving the praise of His redeemed sons and daughters.

Application – Understanding that marriage is a model of Christ and the church lifts marriage out of the sitcom sewer and elevates it into the bright, clear sky of God’s glory where it was meant to be.

Application – Your marriage is a testimony to the relationship between Christ and His bride, the church. Your marriage will either tell the truth about that relationship, or it will tell a lie. What testimony does your marriage give?

What is your marriage saying to the watching world? If you walk in the power of the Spirit, submit to His Word, God will bless you abundantly and glorify His Son through your marriage.

Illustration – **A braid** appears to contain only two strands of hair. But, it is impossible to create a braid with only two strands. If the two could be put together at all, they would quickly unravel. What looks like two strands require a third. The third strand, though not immediately evident, keeps the strands tightly woven.

Application – In the same way, God’s presence in a Christian marriage, like the third strand in a braid, holds husband and wife together.

Tertullian – one of the early Church Fathers - *“What kind of yoke is that of two believers who share one hope, one desire, one discipline, one service? They enjoy kinship in spirit and in flesh. They are mutual servants with no discrepancy of interests. Truly they are “two in one flesh.” Where the flesh is one, the spirit is one as well. Together they pray, together bow down, mutually teaching, mutually entreating, mutually upholding. In the church of God they hold an equal place. They stand equally at the banquet of God, equally in crises, equally facing persecution, and equally in refreshments. Neither hides anything from the other. Neither neglects the other. Neither is troublesome to the other.”*

When both of you, husband and wife, are focused on God; as you grow closer to God, you will grow closer to each other.

- **Physically**
- **Emotionally**
- **Spiritually** ➔ One Wife. One Husband. For Life.

CONCLUSION

A Marriage Charge To The Husband - and future husbands....

Husband, you have seen and known the blessing of God in your life. As you have sought to walk with the Lord in His ways in the past, so I charge you to continue to walk with Him in the future. You must not only be concerned with your own spiritual growth, but the Lord calls you to lead your wife to a more intimate relationship with Him.

You are to devote yourself to the Bible’s teaching in all areas; and gladly submit to it as you put into practice the treasures of wisdom you find there.

You are to love your wife and serve her as Christ loved and gave His life for the sake of His own bride, the Church. You are to protect her and guard her from evil and harm, as Jesus protects and sanctifies the church.

You have responsibility for the spiritual, emotional, physical, and financial condition of your household.

Husband, you have been given a wonderful treasure in your wife. And, just as silver sparkles brightest when shined with great attention, I want to encourage you that the way to keep her as the treasure she is today for the rest of your days is continue to give her great attention.

A Marriage Charge To the Wife - and future wives...

Proverbs 31 says:

vv. 10-12 - “An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.”

vv. 25-26 - “Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she smiles at the future. She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue”

Wife, you have found in your husband a friend, a protector, a leader. He is a gift from God for you.

Wife, you too will be able to treasure the love you have for your husband all the days of your life by giving great attention to him. He looks to you in times of trials. He looks to you for support and encouragement and to help him complete what is lacking in him.

Marriage Vows

Husband and wife are now going to give rings to one another as a seal of this holy covenant.

Wife, place the ring on your husband’s finger and state “I do” after each vow.

The Apostle Paul writes in **Ephesians 5:22-23**

“Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body.”

Wife, do you promise to trust your husband’s leadership?

Do you promise to love your husband and to provide an atmosphere in which he can grow and mature in his Christian walk?

Wife, do you promise to support and encourage your husband, and to do him good and not evil all the days of your married life?

Husband, place the ring on your wife’s finger and state “I do” after each vow.

Paul wrote to the husband this way in **Ephesians 5:25**

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;”

Husband, do you promise to love your wife sacrificially, to aggressively give yourself to her, and to cling to your wife with the same sacrificial love as Jesus?

Paul continues - “that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. So husbands ought to also to love their own wives as their own bodies.”

Husband, do you promise to extend a purifying love to your wife and to protect and guard your wife?

Paul also said, “He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church.”

Husband, do you promise to nourish and cherish your wife and to provide for her needs.

Do you promise to provide warm and tender affection, to give her comfort and security as the Bible commands you?

Peter writes, “You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way”

Husband, do you promise to spend the rest of your life learning your wife’s likes and dislikes with the intent of learning how you can help her to grow in her faith in Christ?

Marriage is a gift from God. It begins with God and ends with God.

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