

## Marriage Is...

"What is marriage? To answer this question we must go to the Bible.

"Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' 5 and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." Matthew 19.4-6

Marriage is a divine relationship created by God. It did not evolve through societal evolution but was designed by our Creator. God in the Garden created Eve because Adam did not find a helper suitable for him. "And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to Him'" Genesis 2.18. Eve was created from one of Adam's ribs, from the very beginning she was different yet the same. She like Adam was created in the image of God. She possesses a soul, a spirit, a body of flesh, and free will. She was created to be his companion, his helper, one suitable for Adam. At the same time, she is different. 1 Peter 3.7 describes her as the "weaker vessel." Physically speaking she is different. Her body is to bear and nurse children, and tends to be smaller than a man's.

Marriage is a union between a man and a woman. A recent ruling by the Supreme Court leads one to believe that homosexual marriages will eventually be legal in this country. However, God stipulates who can enter into this relationship. In the Garden of Eden, we have one man and one woman. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2.24). A marriage cannot consist of more than one man and one woman. Two men or women cannot enter in to the divinely sanctioned relationship such is homosexuality. Two men and one woman cannot enter into

marriage, nor can two women and one man. Such would be adultery. Let me also stress that a boy or a girl should not get married but a man and a woman. Marriage requires two people who are willing to take on their responsibilities to each other. Many marriages fail due to immaturity.

Marriage is a lifetime commitment. "For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband" (Romans 7.2-3). Those entering into marriage should understand its permanence. Most wedding ceremonies ask both parties if they promise to love each other until death separates them. A list of conditions is given, such as, sickness or health, richer or poorer, etc. Both parties are promising to love each other unconditionally. If sometime in the future they should decide they are tired of each other or they did not know the other person, and wanted out of the marriage, they have no godly reason to break their marriage vows and get a divorce. Such is sin and if unrepented and unforgiven will cause them to be lost for eternity.

Marriage is a covenant or contractual relationship. The man and woman entering into marriage are bound by the law of God, "For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law" (Romans 7.2a). In this contract, there are three parties. First, there is God. The man and woman stand before God and promise to love each other until they die. The second and third parties are the man and woman. They are promising each other to do the same. God set the terms for this relationship, not the man or woman. I have heard of one or both parties deciding to leave out the words "till death do us part" and insert "as long as our love lasts," such is trying to weasel out of the commitment they are making before God.

Marriage is an honorable relationship, holy and blessed by God. "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13.4). Couples just "living

together" or "shacking up" are committing sexual immorality. They have no right to each other. A man and woman living together in marriage have authority from God and are blessed by Him.

Marriage is a leaving and cleaving. The man and woman are to leave their father and mother and cleave to each other. They are to create their own household and relationship. Their relationship with their parents, siblings, and friends will have changed. Many marriages have failed, due to outside influences. Parents meddle in their children's marriage, the man spends too much time hanging out with his friends, while his wife sits alone at home. The woman wants to run around with her girlfriends. Such leads to dissatisfaction and temptation. There is a place for friendships and parents but the first priority in the marriage should be to God and then to each other.

Marriage involves the blessing of the sexual union. This part of the relationship is the most intimate and personal. "Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does" (1 Corinthians 7.2-4). The husband and wife are to consider the needs of each other. The inspired writer warns us of the dangers in withholding sexual favors and calls it depriving one another in 1 Corinthians 7.5. Some translations use the word, defraud. Meaning to steal or rob. In marriage each party has the right to the body of the other. Genesis 2.24 uses the term "become one flesh." Verse 25 states, "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed."

- - Dennis Tucker