

The Real Deal – God’s Purposes for Marriage

Gen 2:18-25

You may or may not be familiar with the 1970’s TV sitcom – All in the Family
Showcased the interaction of Archie Bunker – hateful, sarcastic, demeaning husband
With Edith – his weak, non-confrontational wife who cow-towed to his every whim
It was the epitome of a dysfunctional marriage, contrary to God’s design

On the other hand, you have the functional side represented by Ward/June Cleaver on the
1950’s show – Leave it to Beaver
Their marriage was characterized by gingham table cloths, curtains to match, dinner on
the table by 5, and kids who obeyed the first time
I think most marriages are a cross between these two extremes, but far too often the norm
is toward the dysfunctional side of things, and the family is out of order

That describes some of your marriages because you’ve . . .

- Lost perspective
The perspective that your marriage is not about you
The perspective that the best marriages hurt some of the time, and the worst marriages
hurt all the time
Others of you have . . .
- Given up
You don’t care anymore; It’s too much work
You’ve lost sight of the fact that good marriages don’t just happen
They’re like gardens – left to themselves, they will eventually be over-run
But if cultivated and tended to, they will grow and flourish and bear fruit
You’ve long forgotten that God *requires* you to put your best into your marriage
A few of you are . . .
- Looking for advice in all the wrong places
You know what your . . .
Friends say about marriage; Your mother-in-law thinks
Hollywood portrays; Dr Phil’s opinion
But when it comes to knowing what *God* says, you’re severely lacking

It’s important to know what God says because marriage is his thing; He designed it
It’s not a convenient/clever invention of man designed to get tax break – it’s God’s idea
Which is why we’re going to the Bible to see what *he* thinks about –
Commitment and love; Communication and fighting fair
Finances and raising kids; What to look for in a spouse in the first place
Identify the biblical principles for marriage and relationships . . .
With the hope that you allow God to do a major work of repair or improvement in
your life, so that your marriage is no longer out of order

If you allow God to do that, it’s going to stir you up
You’re going to learn and be reminded of things about yourself, your spouse, your
marriage that you’d rather not face
Good things will be reinforced and refined; Bad things challenged and changed
There *will be* some pain and soul-searching
For those of you not yet married – strongly encourage you to soak this up
You’ll save yourself much heartache, you’ll save others, and gain much joy if you do

It’s all in the family, and I’m excited about what God’s going to do in our church
So let’s start at the beginning in **Gen 2:18-25** and discover God’s purposes for marriage

God designed from the beginning of time, that a man and woman should come together
and permanently join their lives
This is the final act of creation where God institutes what the Bible later refers to as
marriage . . . the exclusive union of a man and woman for life
He intends for marriage – your marriage and my marriage – to fulfill certain
purposes; the first of which is . . .

God intends for marriage to –

Purpose #1 – To satisfy your desire for companionship (v18)

18 – *It is not good that man should be alone*

Pretty obvious that Adam was alone – there was nobody else around

Up to that point, God looked on everything he had created, and *saw that it was good*
After creating light, heavens and earth, Sun and moon, plants, animals . . .

God saw that it was good

But when he created Adam, before Eve, he immediately said, “It is *not* good”

Because he had created him with a built-in desire for companionship

It’s self-evident to most of us – loneliness is for the birds

Doesn’t take too long to figure that one out; I hate it when Becky is gone

All you have to do is look at life of a hermit to see the ill-effects of no companionship

We need each other because God designed us that way

Sometimes our desire for companionship is satisfied through healthy friendships in the
body of Christ

Especially crucial for those who are single or divorced

But he designed marriage as the ultimate way of satisfying our desire for companionship
with the opposite sex

It’s not good for man to be alone

For those who are married, I want to give you 2 very simple assignments –

Tell your spouse this week – *I’m so thankful for you, and the companionship we share*

God intends for marriage to –

Purpose #2 – To meet your need for partnership (v18)

18 – *I will make a helper . . . for him*

Adam *needed* help

The animals were helpful and useful to a point, but they weren’t *partners*

He needed someone to take *ownership* and share the *responsibilities* of life with him

So he created Eve

Husbands – You need help; God created you with a built-in need for your wife

God uniquely designed you with built-in deficiencies (Women – Amen; Preach it)

The Hebrew word for *helper* means “to aid.”

Wives – God uniquely designed you to partner with your husband, and complete him

He designed you to aid or help your husband accomplish his roles as father, leader, and
worker

You know you're meeting your husband's need for a partner if . . .
You're actively sharing in the burdens and responsibilities of his roles
You're sharing in the ups and downs of life, family, work, and ministry
You're more concerned about him and your relationship than you are about your girlfriends, or the latest fashion in shoes, purses, or homes

Husbands, you know you're receiving the help you need if . . .
You're allowing her to share the responsibilities of home, family, and work; rather than keeping them from her, or isolating her
You're giving her ownership and empowering her to take care of things she's good at
You're talking with her about what's going on, and including her in decisions

God joins a husband and wife in marriage in order for them to accomplish *together*, what they can't do *separately*
Wives, help your husband; Husbands, admit your need and receive their help
It's the way God made it

Assignment #2
Wives – *How can I better help you?*
Husbands – *I need you. You complete me.*

God intends for marriage to –
Purpose #3 – To gratify your longing for relationship (v18-23)
18 – *I will make a helper fit for him*
Hebrew word means “comparable to or corresponding to”
Someone suitable for Adam; Someone like him

Again, the animals didn't fit that bill – they were lower than he was
Though he had a perfect, unbroken relationship with God, he wasn't comparable to him
There was no one mutually suitable – *there was not found a helper fit for him* (20)

So God forms Eve out of Adam's rib, brings her to him (22), and it's his response that indicates the longing he had for relationship –
This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh (23)
My search is over – finally, here's someone who is *like* me; suitable for *me*
Someone who is my equal in the sense of being spiritually alive and created in the image of God
And he probably didn't even know the half of it
That's similar to what I felt when I met Becky – Finally I've met someone who likes me as much as I like her; Remember telling my brother that she made me feel like no other person

God not only wired us to desire companionship and need partnership
But to long for *relationship*; a connection with someone
To long to be knit together emotionally, mentally, spiritually
That's the difference between companionship and relationship
Companionship can be satisfied by a person's *presence*
Relationship can only be satisfied with a fit; connection; meshing together of lives

We're going to spend the next 6 or 7 weeks talking about how we can best cultivate a God-honoring relationship in our marriages
But I'll tell you this now – it comes down to self-less love
Desiring/striving for *their* happiness, *their* joy, *their* contentment instead of your own
Selfless love is the means by which God gratifies your longing for relationship in your marriage

God intends for marriage to –
Purpose #4 – To fulfill your yearning for intimacy (v24-25)
24 – *Therefore* (because a husband and wife are suitable for one another; because they're a fit) . . . *they shall become one flesh*
Becoming one flesh means being knit together heart and soul
And the physical/sexual union of a husband and wife is both the *pinnacle* of that knitted-ness, and the *cement* of that bond

But one-flesh intimacy doesn't just happen – sex doesn't automatically lead to the intimacy we are created to yearn for
One-flesh intimacy requires you focus *all* your sexual energy and passion on your spouse
It requires that you make each other the sole focus of your desires
When you do, you will begin to experience the oneness/intimacy that God desires
A oneness that's off the charts; Exceeding all the 4th of July's you've ever experienced
That's how God designed it

Let me give you the other side of the coin
4 consequences of sex outside of marriage
Trying to fulfill your yearning for intimacy apart from God's design
1. You create a false sense of intimacy (bond is skin deep)
2. You cloud your judgment
(Rom 1:21-22 – Those who know God, but dishonor him . . . become *fools*)
3. You become hardened by the deceit of sin (Heb 3:13)
4. You incur God's wrath and judgment (1 Thess 4:6 – *The Lord is an avenger in all these things*; Heb 13:4 – *God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous*)
God intends to fulfill your yearnings for intimacy, exclusively in the bond of marriage
It's the only context where there's no shame attached to your intimacy
The only context where there is complete acceptance of the *whole* person, not just a desire for physical gratification

God intends for marriage to –
Purpose #5 – To show the relationship between Christ and the church (Eph 5:31-32)
This wasn't on Moses' radar screen when he recorded the creation account that God gave to him
But it's equally as big as the other purposes, and very clear in Eph 5:31-32

Eph 5:31-32 – *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.*

I'm saying that this marriage thing is analogous to – it shows, it illustrates, it's a picture of – Christ's relationship with us, his people

Did you realize that?

Your marriage is intended to be a mirror image of Christ's relationship with the church?

Husbands, you need to love your wife

To the extent you do, you show or display the love of Christ for his church

Wives, you need to respect your husband

To the extent you do, you show/display the love and respect of the church, for Christ

In either case, to the extent you fail, you shame Jesus, and the people he gave his life for

You either bring glory to God in your marriage, or you don't

Which means – your marriage is not just about you

There's more to it than two people trying to meet one another's needs . . .

God's reputation and image is at stake

And he intends for marriage to make it shine

Summary

Companionship, Partnership, Relationship, Intimacy, and Glorifying God –

That's the best of marriage; the real deal

If you want the best out of marriage (which God *desires*), then you have to put your

best into it (which God *requires*)

Close

Elders up front