

# THE DESIGN OF MARRIAGE

## INTRODUCTION

Cultural perspectives vs. Biblical perspective

“Marriage is to be honored by all and the marriage bed kept undefiled, because God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers” (Heb. 13:4).

1. **Marriage must be prized: Our regard of marriage must be right.**
2. **Marriage must be kept pure: Our enjoyment of marriage must be undefiled.**

## THE PRECIOUSNESS OF GOD’S DESIGN FOR MARRIAGE

“Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him.” 19 The Lord God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky and brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every wild animal; but for the man no helper was found corresponding to him. 21 So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. 22 Then the Lord God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 And the man said:

This one, at last, is bone of my bone  
and flesh of my flesh;  
this one will be called “woman,”  
for she was taken from man.

24 This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh. 25 Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame” (Gen. 2:18–25).

# Biblical Marriage

## Lesson 2

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**1. Marriage is precious in its origin: a God-designed, God-defined relationship and institution.**

**2. Marriage is precious in its design: a beneficial companionship and partnership.**

“A man who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord” (Prov. 18:22).

“It is a mercy to have a faithful friend that loves you entirely . . . to whom you may open your mind and communicate your affairs . . . And it is a mercy to have so near a friend to be a helper to your soul and . . . to stir up in you the grace of God” (Richard Baxter).

“There is no more lovely, friendly and charming relationship, communion or company than a good marriage” (Martin Luther).

**3. Marriage is precious in its character: an intimate communion between a man and a woman.**

“Monogamous heterosexual marriage was always viewed as the divine norm from the outset of creation” (Kenneth Matthews).

“It is the profound fusion of two lives into one shared life together, by the mutual consent and covenant of marriage. It is the complete and permanent giving over of oneself into a new circle of shared experience with one’s partner” (Ray Ortlund, Jr.).

**4. Marriage is precious in its commitment: a covenant commitment designed to be permanent.**

“Because even though the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, you have acted treacherously against her. She was your marriage partner and your wife by covenant” (Mal. 2:14).

“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that he who created them in the beginning made them male and female, 5 and he also said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?’ 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate” (Matt. 19:4–6).

# Biblical Marriage

## Lesson 2

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### 5. *Marriage is not a civil contract, but a holy covenant with one another before a holy God.*

- While a contract is based on distrust,  
**a covenant is based on trust between two partners.**
- While a contract is based on limited liability,  
**a covenant is based on boundless responsibility.**
- While a contract protects individual needs and rights,  
**a covenant prioritizes commitment to the relationship.**
- And while a contract has conditional terms,  
**the marriage covenant is unconditional, binding, and permanent.**

#### a. *The marriage commitment requires self-denial.*

“At marriage a single man and a single woman die to self, and the two become one flesh. The wedding marks the end of the former man and woman . . . Christian marriage vows are the inception of a lifelong practice of death, of giving over not all you have, but all you are” (Kent Hughes).

#### b. *The marriage commitment is unto death.*

“A wife is bound as long as her husband is living. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to anyone she wants—only in the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:39).

##### i. “Leaving” parents

##### ii. “Cleaving” to one’s spouse

##### iii. Implications for in-laws

- **Two Controlling Realities**

- 1) Something new (Gen. 2:24)
- 2) Something old (Exod. 20:12)

- **Three Controlling Principles**

- 1) Love them (1 Cor. 13).
- 2) Have open, gracious communication with them (Col. 4:5–6).
- 3) Be at peace (Rom. 12:18).

# Biblical Marriage

## Lesson 2

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- **Four Practical Suggestions**

- 1) Keep in touch with them.
- 2) If you're visiting, don't stay long.
- 3) Enjoy them rather than endure them.
- 4) Speak well of them.

**6. *Marriage is precious in its picture: a reflection of the relationship between Christ & his church.***

"For no one ever hates his own flesh but provides and cares for it, just as Christ does for the church,<sup>30</sup> since we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup>For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. <sup>32</sup>This mystery is profound, but I am talking about Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:29–32).

God designed marriage, "so that the world would have a category for understanding the relationship between Christ and the church. Every marriage should be a minidrama of the gospel" (Jim Hamilton).

"The mystery of Genesis 2:24 is that [marriage] is a parable or symbol of Christ's relation to His people. There was more going on in the creation of woman than meets the eye. God doesn't do this willy-nilly. Everything has a purpose and meaning. When God engaged to create man and woman and to ordain the union of marriage, he didn't roll dice or draw straws or flip a coin as to how they might be related to each other. He patterned marriage very purposely after the relationship between His Son and the church, which He had planned from all eternity" (John Piper).

"As God made man in His own image, so He made marriage in the image of His own eternal marriage with His people. Through marriage the glorious mystery is unveiled" (Bromiley).

**7. *Marriage is precious in its goal: the glory of God.***

### PREPARATION FOR NEXT LESSON

- Read "The Best Is Yet to Be" by Daryl Wingerd at [bulletininserts.org/the-best-is-yet-to-be](http://bulletininserts.org/the-best-is-yet-to-be)