

Grace Evangelistic Ministries

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How to Build a Healthy Marriage

Day One - Section One - God's Purpose in Marriage

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- God's Glory
- Procreation
- Corporate Testimony
- The Lifeline of a Nation

1. God's Glory

Origin of Marriage: Gen. 2:18-24:

Gen. 2:18-24: 18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." 19 Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. 21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. 22 The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.

23 The man said,

"This is now bone of my bones,
and flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman,

because she was taken out of Man.”

24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

As a divine institution, marriage is ordained by God for recreation, procreation and perpetuation of the human race. There are four divine institutions: Volition, Marriage, Family, Nations

Definition

(Christian marriage is “an intimate, personal union to which a man and woman consent, consummated and continuously nourished by sexual intercourse, and perfected in a life-long partnership of mutual love regulated by the Word of God and by the laws and customs which a society develops to safeguard its own continuity and welfare.”)

Question: What has my/your marriage to do with God’s glory? *Everything!*

What the Eiffel Tower is to the French people and others is what marriage is to angelic beings and the world. It is watched with wonder and awe. Christian marriage ought to reflect God’s image. “Let us make man in Our image, according to our likeness” Gen 1:26

God’s creation exists for His glory (Ps. 19:1: “The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.”).

We exist for God’s glory (Isa. 43:6-7: “Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth, everyone who is called by My name, And whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made.”)

Christian marriage is a match made in heaven for God’s glory

2. Procreation

God’s purpose in marriage includes, but is not limited to recreation and procreation

Recreation: Happiness/honeymoon: (Deut. 24:5 “When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or be liable for any other public duty. He shall be free at home one year to be happy with his wife whom he has taken”). As Dr. Spiros Zodhiates rightly noted: God intends for intimate, sexual joys only to be fulfilled within the bonds of holy matrimony—“the man and his wife were both naked.” (Gen. 2:25). No shame.

Procreation: Population in mind: (Gen. 1:28 “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth”)

3. Corporate Testimony

God’s purpose in Christian marriage is to demonstrate to Satan and the fallen world that two individual believers, man and woman, mired with sin can, in regeneration become a Tower of the beauty of God’s glory.

Christian Marriage: A Great Witness to the World

Since childhood, as a Muslim boy, I was taught that Christian marriage lacked boundaries, exposing itself to every kind of immorality... (Muslim clergy) introduced the marriage system in Islam as the best model for humanity and the Christian marriage as the opposite extreme.

My 32 years of Islamic knowledge on Christian marriage proved untrue and unjust when I found myself in a church in Istanbul, Turkey, and saw first-hand the relationships of Christian couples. I will never forget the depth of amazement I went through in my conversations with these Christians and when I heard the teachings of the Gospel. One day in a conversation with a husband and wife, who were in their fifties, I was struck by their lovely and humble attitudes towards one another. As the wife spoke, the husband looked respectfully at her, showing a sincere gesture of respect in acknowledging her that this was her time, and lovingly waiting for her to finish her comments without interrupting her. His attitude was an eye-opening lesson to one who was from a pious Islamic background. I had not found such respect in the entire Quran and Muhammad's biography toward any Muslim woman. I thought at the time that this wonderful family value was a product of Western modern thought. I never considered that it could be from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However, in reading its words, I learnt new truths from its pages:

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it (Ephesians 5:25)...

The God of the Gospel ordained a one man and one woman union from creation, where spouses may experience edifying relationships with each other; teaching their children based on this love and unity, forming pillars in building healthy societies...

Having more than one wife, or disregarding the Christian marital values, which is prevalent in the Western countries, are the direct result of refusing God's love; they have nothing to do with piety and righteousness, or with freedom, as many in the West claim. These ungodly attitudes, rather, are motivated by the love of self that encourages the misuse of power for selfish gain and is a threat to healthy relationships within a family.

God's desire for marriage is for the husband and wife to practice their freedom in the context of being one in body, mind and spirit. As in a body, all members support and uphold each other, and none discriminates against any other. The Gospel puts this relationship in a wonderful way saying:

[T]hat there not be division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another (1Corinthians 12:25).

In a similar manner, a husband and wife should truly be dependent on each other, having wholehearted interest in one another. One's individual interests should not be at the cost of the other's, disregarding his or her rights as redundant or worthless. They must love each other completely; not fifty per cent, not eighty five per cent but one hundred per cent.

Love is the fundamental tool put forward by God from eternity as a creative and fruitful means for establishing a united family with a united hope. In a similar way, united families will, in turn, be able to establish united communities and nations. For this reason, love surpasses every other thing in God's philosophy for marriage. Godly love destroys the separating walls between a husband and wife (as with any other relationships) and leads them to a sincere unity in spirit and flesh. As the Gospel says:

For this cause a man shall leave father and mother and shall cling to his wife, and the two of them shall be one flesh (Matthew 19:5).

Alienation from the marital values of the Gospel produces unfriendliness, factions, rivalries, conflicts and separation. If a husband and wife wish to have effective values for the establishment of a joyful and loving family, they will find no greater source than the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It truly is a blessing. Dr. Daniel Shayesteh

- Marriage as a model for Christ's love for the children
- Marriage as a witness of God's love to the church
- Marriage as the Tower of Christ's love to the world

4. Marriage as the *Lifeline* of the Human Race

It goes without saying that charity begins at home. In family God's divine design, marriage is a lifeline, which supplies power to the family, society and a nation at large.

Truth for Thought

- Marriage is the starting point in God's order of "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth."
- A healthy marriage is the foundation for a healthy family
- A healthy family is the cornerstone for a healthy community
- A healthy community is the springboard for a healthy nation
- All four—marriage, family, community and a nation stand or fall together—one cannot stand without the other.



Day One - Section Two - Satan's Assault on Marriage

Moses Onwubiko

Having a healthy marriage begins with

- Knowing that marriage is a battleground
- Knowing who the enemy is
- Knowing yourself
- Knowing what it takes to have a healthy marriage

1. Marriage as a Battleground

Christian marriage is a battleground, whereby Satan seeks to dismantle divine orchestration of unity between two couple that are joined in holy matrimony—"Let no one [Satan/man/woman] split apart what God has joined together" (Mk. 10:9 NLT).

Question: Why is marriage a battleground?

There are three important reasons to consider

- God has a stake in Christian marriage: By biblical deduction, God's intention is to demonstrate to Satan and the world, that a regenerated couple, imperfect in nature has the potential of reflecting His glory.
- Marriage is the foundation of a family
- Marriage is the lifeline of a family, community and a nation

2. Know yourself. Who are you?

- a. You are a new creature, married to Christ and are in union with Him. (2 Cor. 5:17: "Therefore if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, *the* new has come into being." BLB).
- b. You are God's possession. (1 Cor. 6:20: "For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.")
- c. You are an aristocrat ("a member of a privileged or superior class"). (1 Peter 2:9: "But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light." NLT).

- d. You are Christ's light bearer to the world. (Matt. 5:14: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.")
- e. You are a Tower of Christ's love to the world. (John 13:35)
- f. You are the salt of the world. (Matt. 5:13: "You are the salt of the earth")
- g. You are the fifth Gospel. (2 Cor. 3:2-3: "Your lives are a letter written... [so that] everyone can read it and recognize our good work among you... Clearly, you are a letter from Christ... This "letter" is written not with pen and ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. It is carved not on tablets of stone, but on human hearts." NLT)
- h. You are a vessel of blessing to a nation. (Pr. 11:11: "By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted").
- i. You are a blessed individual. (Eph. 1:3: "Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Through Christ, God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing that heaven has to offer. GW).

We are blessed beyond description! No wonder Christian marriage are under heavy assault.

3. Know Your Enemy

"If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the results of a hundred battles."—Sun Tzu

Question: Who's your enemy to comfort in building and enjoying a healthy marriage?

Answer: Satan.

Most Christian marriages and Christianity as a whole have suffered shipwreck for lack of knowledge of ourselves and our enemy.

Principles

- To know God is to know that our battles are His. (1 Sam. 17:47, "the battle is the LORD'S.")
- To know yourself/marriage is to know that you/marriage are the prime target on the spiritual battlefield. (1 Peter 5:8: "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.")
- To know Satan is to know the all-time schemer and spoiler of your happiness. (2 Cor. 2:11: "we are not ignorant of his schemes.")

Who is Satan?

- a. He's God's arch-enemy
- b. He's a schemer. (2 Cor. 2:11)

- c. He's a deceiver and a distorter of truths (Gen. 3:1-7)
- d. The father of all lies (John 8:44)
- e. He is a thief (John 10:10)
- f. He is called the devil (1 John 3:8).
- g. A roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8).
- h. An accuser (Rev. 12:10)
- i. He's the god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4).

The Origin of Satan's Assault on Marriage

The Garden of Eden - Gen: 3:1-7

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,

3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' "

4 "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman.

5 "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves

Satan deceived Eve and Eve, with sin nature sweet talked her husband to follow suit. Marriage was tainted. "Voila" as they say in French. Satan has won has won his strategic victory. The end has come. Right? Not so fast! At the tail end of the fall, God began with regeneration, procreation and ultimately a creation of a new platform—the church as a display of the unsearchable riches of His infinite wisdom and knowledge.

Rom. 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

Your marriage fits in the depth of the riches of God's wisdom and knowledge. God wants the best for you. He wants us to have the best marriage on earth! We must know how. There are no two ways about it.

4. Know what it takes to have a healthy marriage:

- A healthy marriage is within reach; it's attainable. But one must be willing to sacrifice. The cost must and should be paid.
- Both spouses must evaluate and daily articulate into their marriage scriptural principles designed to build a healthy marriage.
- Everyone must be willing to play their part.

