

Title: Maintaining Unity in Marriage

Scripture Reading: Mark 10:2-12

Introduction:

- I. There will always be those who are looking for a way out -
 - A. **Mark 10:2** - “² Some Pharisees came up to Jesus, testing Him, and *began* to question Him **whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife.**”
 1. The Bible’s oldest institution has always given man difficulty in application -
 - a. the abuse of God’s boundaries regarding the marriage bed - cf. **Hebrews 13:4**
 - b. the multiple marriages of those in the OT
 - c. the outright disregard of any divorce regulations
 2. Marriage is often disparaged - “the ole ball and chain” - “going to a funeral”
 - B. The beauty of marriage is found in God’s application - the perfect figure of our marriage!
 1. **Ephesians 5:31-32** - “³¹ For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. ³² **This mystery is great**; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.”
- II. Thesis Statement:
 - A. Our marriages are an avenue to represent the greater/more perfect relationship shared between Jesus and His bride, the church. When others look at our marriages - do they see unity and love or the influence of this sinful and dark world?

Body:

- I. Questions concerning Marriage -
 - A. **Mark 10:6-9** - “⁶ “**But from the beginning of creation, God** made them male and female. ⁷ “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, ⁸ and the two shall become one flesh; so they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹ “**What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.**”
 1. Marriage has been given to man from God -
 - a. The gender complementarity between man/woman - **Genesis 2:18, 21-22**
 2. The institution of marriage is the bedrock of all civilization -
 - a. Marriage predates civil government - **Genesis 4:17; 10:8-10** (marriage is not define nor dependent on civil government)
 - b. Marriage predates society - **Genesis 2:15-25** (marriage is not defined by culture)
 - c. Marriage predates the Law of Moses - the law of marriage is not only for the Jews, but rather what God has established for all mankind (Jews and Gentiles)
 - B. **Mark 10:10** - “¹⁰ In the house **the disciples began questioning Him about this again.**”
 1. The disciples are taken back by Jesus’ instruction - “Wait a minute...”
 - C. **Mark 10:11-12** - “¹¹ And He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman **commits adultery against her**; ¹² and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, **she is committing adultery.**”
 1. When man walks contrary to the design - SIN only corrupts and destroys!

- a. Individuals who treat marriage like a product purchased from Target - returning it when it does not work - they only hurt themselves and the others who are brought into their illegitimate marriages!
 - 2. What about the “exception”? - We acknowledge it is **authorized**, but that does not mean it is absolutely **required**! (cf. **Matthew 19:9**)
 - a. The depth of God’s grace/mercy cannot be easily explored nor understood without plumbing the depths of our own willingness to forgive others!
- II. Living “day-to-day” in marriage - “18 years is not my goal - I want 60.”
 - A. The expectations for a successful marriage are dependent upon... -
 - 1. Husbands love your wives - **Ephesians 5:25; 1 Peter 3:7**
 - 2. Wives respect your husbands - **Ephesians 5:22, 24; Genesis 2:20; Proverbs 31:10-12**
 - B. Three safeguards to ensuring the holiness of marriage -
 - 1. We must guard against the influence sexual immorality - **Proverbs 22:3; 5:15-18; 6:27-29**
 - 2. We must guard against APATHY in marriage - “the status quo”
 - a. Do I invest in my spouse or have we become roommates?
 - b. Do I allow things to build/fester? - Communication breakdown
 - c. Do we consult one another or just ask for forgiveness?
 - 3. We must guard against HARDNESS of heart -
 - a. Our hearts become hardened with resentment not LOVE - “How could I ever love her/him again?” (cf. Romans 5:6-8)
 - b. Our hearts store up pain not FORGIVENESS - “He/she has hurt me so badly - why would I ever forgive him/her?” (cf. **Matthew 6:14-15**)
 - c. Our hearts bear grudges not SERVICE - “I do not have to do anything for him/her.” (cf. **John 13:5ff**)

Conclusion:

- I. The results of a marriage united by God -
 - A. Faithful service to the Lord - What is the goal of your home/family/marriage? (cf. **Revelation 2:10**)
 - B. Faithful service to one another -
 - 1. **Bible Reading** - The relationships of Abraham and Sarah/Hagar; Isaac and Rebekah
 - 2. When the world falls down around you - what a blessing it is to have a faithful spouse waiting to catch you? (cf. **Ecclesiastes 4:9**)
 - C. Faithful service to children, brethren, neighbors, etc. - If one is drawing closer to God and his/her marriage is maturing/thriving, then the rest will take care of itself.

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