

# MARRIAGE

- I. Some Biblical references to marriage
  - Gen. 1:27 - "male and female created He them"
  - Gen. 2:18 - "I will make a helper suitable for him"
  - Gen. 2:24 - "a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh"
  - Prov. 31:10-31 - "An excellent wife, who can find? Her worth is far above jewels."
  - Song of Solomon - (God's marriage manual)
  - Mal. 2:14 - "she is your companion and your wife by covenant"
  - Mal. 2:16 - "I hate divorce," says the Lord."
  - Matt. 19:3-12 - "What God has joined together, let no man separate."
  - I Cor. 7:1-40 - "Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband."
  - I Cor. 11:3 - "the man is the head of a woman"
  - Eph. 5:21-33 - "Wives be subject to your husbands...Husbands, love your wives.."
  - I Pet. 3:1-7 - "wives, be submissive...husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman"
  
- II. General foundations of marriage
  - A. God created mankind, and divided humanity into two sexes, male and female (Gen. 1:27)
  - B. The woman was intended to be the complement to the man (Gen. 2:18)
  - C. Marriage is a relational union of one male and one female joined as husband and wife.
  - D. Marriage is a union of two persons in a unit of one marriage (Gen. 2:24)
  - E. Marriage is a covenantally agreed arrangement of functional oneness (Mal. 2:14)
  - F. Marriage is a symbiotic relationship (mutually beneficial relationship of life); not just a relationship of authoritarian position.
  - G. Male and female (husband and wife) are spiritually equal before God. (Gal. 3:28)
  - H. Male and female genders seem to have been created with distinctive differences, physically and psychologically.
  - I. Marriage requires an attitude of completion, rather than competition.
  - J. The marriage relationship requires mutual deference one to another (Eph. 5:21; Phil. 2:13)
  
- III. Differing perspectives of marriage
  - A. Religious legalism
    - 1. "Follow the rules of role responsibility, and it will work out right."
    - 2. Authoritarianism, absolutism
    - 3. Self-effort, performance; "Do it"
    - 4. Over-emphasis of "Husband is head" (I Cor. 11:3); "Wife submit" (I Pet. 3:1)
  - B. Cultural egalitarianism
    - 1. "Develop your inherent personhood, and things will fall into place"
    - 2. Self-actualization and realization
    - 3. Self-development, potential; "Feel it"
    - 4. Over-emphasis of "male and female equal" (Gal. 3:28)
  - C. Christocentric lordship
    - 1. "Allow Jesus Christ to manifest His character in a loving relationship"
    - 2. Awareness of Christ's activity in husband and wife.
    - 3. Self-denial; "Be available to the life of Jesus Christ"
    - 4. Recognition of mutuality of love, deference, self-giving (Eph. 5:21)

- IV. The relational function of the husband in marriage.
- A. Source
1. Jesus Christ is the dynamic source of the husband's function.
  2. Model of such is Christ's relation to the Church - Eph. 5:25-33
- B. Expression
1. Initiation of self-giving love that seeks highest good of the other. (Eph. 5:25; Col. 3:19)
  2. Love of God (I Jn. 4:8,16; Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22,23) that provides:
    - a. direction, purpose, meaning in relationship
    - b. tenderness, cherishing, sensitivity, emotional oneness
    - c. understanding (I Pet. 3:7), relational bonding, involvement
    - d. strength, stability, consistency, faithfulness, fairness
    - e. provision, protection, care for
    - f. assurance of being 'special' (I Pet. 3:7), honored, desired, prized, enjoyed, delighted in, praised (Prov. 31:28)
    - g. acceptance and affirmation as a meaningful person
- V. The relational function of the wife in marriage.
- A. Source
1. Jesus Christ is the dynamic source of the wife's function.
  2. Model of such is Christ's relation to the Father - Jn. 10:30; Phil. 2:6,7
- B. Expression
1. Response of self-giving love that seeks highest good of the other.
  2. Love of God (I Jn. 4:8,16); Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22,23) that provides:
    - a. encouragement, support, complementation (Gen. 2:18)
    - b. respect (Eph. 5:33), admiration, appreciation
    - c. receptivity, availability, adaptability
    - d. invitation, excitement, desirability (SoS 1:2,4; 2:5)
    - e. faithfulness, nurturing, kindness (Prov. 31:26)
    - f. gentle, quiet spirit (I Pet. 3:4), transparency
    - g. acceptance and affirmation as a meaningful person
- VI. Relational dysfunction in marriage.
- A. Common explanations and excuses
1. Failure to abide by role regulations
  2. Psychological incompatibility
  3. Cultural differences
  4. Gender differences
- B. Real reason for relational dysfunction in marriage
1. Selfishness
  2. Character other than character of God
- C. Divorce
1. From Latin *divortium* - "to divert, go opposite directions"
  2. God hates divorce (Mal. 2:16), but not unforgivable sin
  3. God's mercy and forgiveness in Jesus Christ
- VII. Dynamics for the functional relationship of marriage
- A. Marriage only functions by the dynamic of God's grace through Jesus
- B. God's grace is received by faith - our receptivity of His activity.
- C. Christians have freedom in Christ (Gal. 5:1,13); not formulas of marital performance of roles.
1. The liberty of living in God's love
  2. The risk of abuse.
- D. Forgiveness is essential
1. No spouse exhibits a perfect expression of Christ's love
  2. We all express selfishness and patterns of fleshliness (Gal. 5:17)
  3. Forgiveness is only a result of the function of the Forgiver in us.