

“Quiet Talks On Marriage”

Session I

“God’s Basic Design For Marriage”

Introduction:

One of my favorite verses in the Bible is Romans 8:32,

*“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all,
how will He not also with Him freely give us all things.”*

I want to invite you to consider the truth of this verse: God loved you . . . enough to give His own Son to redeem you! Since that is true . . . it only makes sense that He would also give you everything to make life what He has planned! The Apostle Peter

agrees in II Peter 1:3,

*“His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and
godliness, through the knowledge of Him!”*

I invite you to get to know this God who loves you and has provided “everything” you really need for meaningful living!

Let’s begin by asking an obvious question: “If God really is our Creator, the One who made us in His image, the One who gave marriage as His basic plan for human life, what did He have in mind?

What was His “_____” and “_____”?

If we can understand His plan for marriage and family, we can make an accurate diagnosis of what is wrong! And, to the degree that we understand our failure to follow His design, we can know what to do to “help” and “heal” the damage that has occurred!

Let’s use one of your hands as a tool to learn God’s basic design for marriage. On the five fingers of your hand let’s put the five Biblical truths that God’s want to be true in your marriage. I like to call this illustration . . .

The “_____”

. . . because it is a summary of the “good” things God intended for a married couple!

Looking at your hand, we’ll begin with your index finger; save the thumb for last. Your index finger represents the most basic truth God had in mind for marriage

→

I. “ _____ ”
→ having someone to share life with you!

“It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”

Genesis 2:18

May I paraphrase this verse? God says,
“Without a wife to share his life, a man will experience loneliness and miss the needed and helpful input of a loving partner – this would not be good!”

So, “**Companionship**” is God’s design for . . .

“ _____ ”

It is the desire to share our deepest inner being with another person and for them to do the same with us! When this does not happen, we feel “alone”! We are aware that something is “missing” on the level of needed relationship!

--This desire for “True Intimacy” comes from God Himself . . .

--We are made in His image . . . we are like Him . . . so we desire “true intimacy”!

So, when this “personal” God designed human marriage, He made it to resemble the unity of . . .

The “ _____ ”

--The “Trinity” is three persons living in a perfect “unity” – a perfect harmony!

--Human marriage is two persons – the “unity” of a man and a woman.

--His basic design for human “intimacy” = for “two” to become “one”! **True Intimacy!**

Now, we see this “oneness” in the physical, sexual relationship between a man and

woman, but God intended that this “unity” go much deeper than just the area of physical intimacy – He wanted the “intimacy” to involve the deepest level of their being – the inner “person” – the soul and the spirit!

Warning: Too often our relationships never go any deeper than the physical and the sexual – no “Emotional Intimacy” ever develops for many couples! They

come together as one “physically”, but do not come together on the level of a growing emotional relationship as “persons”.

--Emotional Intimacy is the desire to be known in my deepest or truest “person”.

I need for you to be part of this conversation:

1. Do you feel that you are known in your marriage? Have you ever said, “You don’t even know me!”

--Husband?

--Wife?

2. In you desire for “true intimacy”, do you feel the freedom to open up to your husband

or wife . . . to do you think that he or she feels the freedom to be open with you?

--Husband?

--Wife?

Another way to describe “Emotional Intimacy” is to relate it to “friendship”.

“Emotional Intimacy” is being “_____”!

Most couples probably considered themselves to be “Best Friends” when they dated

and got married.

3. Did you? Were you “best friends” when you married? Are you still “Best Friends”?

--Husband?

--Wife?

4. If not, how long has it been since you were? . . . When did that deep friendship die?

Was it ever there?

--Husband?

--Wife?

Let's take this further . . . "**Companionship**" → being "best friends" → really "knowing" each other, requires three basic things. Each of these requirements begins with the letter "**C**".

A. The first requirement for Companionship is "_____ - _____":

— "Communication" is more than just "talking" to each other on the surface of life —
talking only about the "necessary" and "demanding" issues of life.

It is "speaking from the heart!"

It is the desire and freedom to share what is in your heart **with** the one you love!

--Some men, and some women, find this hard to do, especially if they were reared in a home where no real "conversation" took place — where there was no

"speaking from the heart" in the family! This was not part of growing up!

--Let me promise that no matter how hard it might seem, no matter how threatened

you might be to try, learning to "speak from the heart" will transform your marriage!

Q: "Are you willing to "speak from your heart" in your marriage?"

--Husband?

--Wife?

B. The second requirement for Companionship is

“ _____ ”:

“Cultivation” means that you take the necessary time to “work” at your relationship!

--Every week should include time that is set aside to communicate with each other!

--In the busyness of daily life, this is hard to do – all of us are busy!

--But, you must protect the time . . . it must be guarded . . . other things will steal it!

--Think of this picture: A good marriage is like a “vegetable garden” filled with healthy and tasty vegetables. How did these beautiful vegetables get there?

Did they grow on their own, or did someone do a lot of hard work?

So it is in marriage! A beautiful and healthy marriage requires time and energy.

--Q: “How much time and energy is devoted to “cultivating” your marriage?

--Husband?

--Wife?

C. The third requirement for “Companionship” is the use of the

“ _____ ”:

Unless we consciously schedule the time to work at communication in our marriage,
it will probably look like an unworked garden – unhealthy and full of weeds!

--Q: “If I asked to see your “calendar” or schedule for this past week, would it include your spouse?” In all honesty, how long would we have to go back in
your calendar to find the last time you took the time to “speak from the heart”
with each other?

--Q: “Will you put ‘speaking from the heart’ on your calendar for this week?”

“controlling
relationship” of their lives. Failure to “make the break” with the past produces
great
difficulty for a man or woman in establishing a new home together!

Q: Has your marriage become the controlling relationship in life, other than
God?

--This is so vital and remains true even after a couple has children. As
much as
we love our children, they must not become the controlling relationships
of our
lives!

2. After “leaving” a man is to “**cleave**” to his wife.

This Hebrew word “**cleave**” is very graphic – it pictures “holding on” to
something as

if your life depends on it! Men, our wives must know that they are our most
treasured and valuable possession!

--This command to “**cleave**” also argues for the moral truth of moral “purity” --
that a

husband is to “cleave” to no other woman but his wife!

Q: Men, do we “cleave” to our wives → more than our work, more than our
pass-time

pleasures, more than any other female relationship? Our wives always
know if

they are the thing we truly value. Men, “treasure” your wife!

3. Genesis 2:24, describes this “Physical Intimacy” within marriage:

--The “sexual union” of husband and wife is described by God as . . .

“ _____ ”

→ they become “**one flesh**”. This is the way God now sees them → “**one
flesh!**”

--This is to be the way they are to view themselves! My wife is literally
“part” of
me! I cannot lose her without losing part of what God intended me to be!
She

is vital to finding and fulfilling God's will for my life!

--**Helpful thought:** The sexual relationship is like a

“ _____ ”!

A barometer is used to predict the “weather”. The “sexual union” of a marriage functions in this way. It is an accurate indication of the “weather” in the marriage – is

it “fair and sunny”; or, “cloudy and stormy”?

Q: How is the “weather” at your house? Your sexual intimacy is a good indicator!

What most marriages need is not “better sex”, because “sex” is usually not the

problem. What is needed is to recover the relationship of being “Best Friends”.

Best friends in marriage have great sex! So, if you are having problems in the

second area, the “sexual”, go back to the first!

--Restored “emotional intimacy” almost always restores “sexual intimacy”!

The **third basic need** of marriage, the third finger on the “Good Hand”, is . . .

III. “ _____ ”!

→ functioning in “oneness” with each another!

“It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”

Genesis 2:18

God has designed marriage so that it requires the input of both partners; what each partner contributes is essential to the success and meaning of the relationship!

The opposite of “Teamwork” is “selfishness” – personal selfishness destroys a family!

Why did God say that a man needs a “helper”? . . . *“I will make a helper for him!”*

→ the word “**Helper**” means, “one who corresponds to” him, or “one who fits” him! The

picture is that of a “gig-saw puzzle” -- when you find the right piece, it fits perfectly!

God's goal in marriage is to place us with someone who “fits” us . . . someone who

“completes” us! Over time, we become a **“Team”** capable of working together beautifully and effectively!

Warning: The person you are married to might not seem like a “fit”! It might seem just the opposite – that you don’t “fit” together at all – that you are actually married to the wrong person!

--Be careful → think about this on a deeper level . . . before you conclude that you

might be married to the wrong person . . . before you consider the possibility of

ending the marriage in divorce!

Let’s use our hands again . . . this time let’s use **both** hands → let’s see more of the significance of this idea of “Teamwork”.

Hold up your hands:

--One hand will represent the **Husband** . . . let’s let that be your right hand.

--The other hand will represent the **Wife** . . . let’s let that be your left hand.

Now, allow the tips of your fingers to face each other, right hand to left hand, almost touching each other. Imagine that each of your fingers represents the **“strengths”** you brought to your marriage

→on the right hand, the husband has “strengths” . . .

→on the left hand, the wife has “strengths”!

Now, imagine that the “space” or “gap” between each of your fingers represents the **“weaknesses”** you brought to the marriage

→the spaces between the fingers on the right hand are the husband’s “weaknesses”.

→the spaces between the fingers on the left hand are the wife’s “weaknesses”!

The picture of our two hands is clear: Every man and woman has “strengths”; every man and woman has “weaknesses”. This is what we bring into our marriage – a combination of strengths and weaknesses.

Now, push your hands together allowing your fingers to join so that each hand is holding or grasping the other hand.

→The fingers of the “right” hand have **“filled the gap”** of the “left” hand!

→The fingers of the “left” hand have **“filled the gap”** of the “right” hand!

This pictures what God intends in a healthy marriage:

→The strengths of the Husband **“fill”** the weaknesses of his wife.

→The strengths of the Wife **“fill”** the weaknesses of her husband.

So, when a husband and wife “merge” together in the practical aspects of marriage, they work together as a **Team** – they are made stronger by what the other person

contributes! We “give” to each other! This is what true “love” looks like!

What a beautiful possibility for marriage!

But, I must mention something that is not beautiful → it is the fact that we often bring a different “attitude” into our marriages – a dangerous, destructive attitude – the attitude of “**selfishness**” – an attitude of “**prideful independence**”! For those of us who are Christians, this is a sinful attitude! It is a spirit of “**self-sufficiency**”! It is the thought, “**I don’t need you!**”

When we bring this attitude into our marriage, we assume that our way of thinking and our way of doing things is always right . . . and, from the beginning of our marriage, we set about to change the person we marry to be like us – to do things our way! This selfish self-sufficiency has the potential to destroy the marriage! It strips the other person of personal value, suggesting that they contribute nothing of value to the marriage! It also makes them a “servant” to my needs and desires, suggesting that they exist for my benefit!

The opposite attitude is to recognize the God-given “**strengths**” of your partner – to recognize that God gave that person to you for a purpose! You need her! You need him! You need someone to “balance” who you are! Without them, you are incomplete!

Q: How is the teamwork in your marriage? Do you have the humility to admit that you need the person you are married to . . . that God gave them to you for a purpose?

--Husband?

--Wife?

Q: How long has it been since you told your spouse how much they are needed and valued. Would you do that? Would you plan a special way to that this week?

--Husband?

--Wife?

Well, we have looked at the first three fingers of the “Good Hand”

- “Companionship” → “emotional intimacy of being “best friends”;
- “Sexual Union” → the “physical intimacy” which grows out of “emotional intimacy”;
- “Teamwork” → working together as a team for the success of the marriage!

Now let’s add **the fourth basic principle** about marriage:

IV. “ _____ ”!
→ “agreement” about the things of God!

*"For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother;
and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."*
Genesis 2:24

--This is “agreement” about the things of God as a couple.

--This is “the glue” that holds everything together.

If you have “**Spiritual Unity**”, no matter where you might struggle in other areas of
your relationship, your marriage will be held together by God Himself!

The concept of “Spiritual Unity” comes for the same verse we mentioned earlier. This verse teaches the “oneness” of couple physically → they become “one flesh” in the marriage bond.

--But, this Hebrew phrase “one flesh” brings additional insight. The meaning goes far deeper than the “sexual union” of husband and wife. The word “one” implies the merging of the "total" person. It is a “**bonding**” together on the deepest level – the level of the “spirit”.

--A husband and wife are to be “**one**” in their “**spirit**” before the Lord!

What is “Spiritual Unity”?

1) It is “ _____ ” about “**Who**” Jesus Christ is: That He is the Son of God!

That He is He is our personal Savior!

2) It is “_____” about “**Where**” Jesus Christ fits into our home:
That He is “**Lord**” of life!

That He has the “**Final Authority**” over both of our lives – that **He** calls the shots?

Q: Where are things spiritually in your marriage? Are both of you “Children of God?”

Does His “New Life” live in you?

--Husband?

--Wife?

Q: Have you settled the issue of final authority? Is God truly “in charge” at your house?

--The most important question about any marriage is:

Who “_____” this marriage?

--Do we “own” it, or does God “own” it?

--A powerful “confession” → To admit that “**We**” have owned our marriage!
Our marriage is where it is because we have owned it!

--A powerful “change” → To admit that, we don’t own our marriage, **God** does!

Remember, God sees the truth in every area of our lives!

*“For the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword,
and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both the joints and marrow,
and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature
hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with
whom we have to do.”*

4:12-13

Hebrews

This level of knowledge – that God “sees” and “knows” everything about us should

not bring fear, it should bring hope! God does not want to “judge”; He wants to “help”! He can help because He does know!

We have now discussed the “Four Basic Needs” of a marriage:

- 1) “Companionship” → The emotional intimacy of being “best friends”;
- 2) “Sexual Union” → The physical intimacy that grows out of emotional intimacy;
- 3) “Teamwork” → The value that comes by “filling the gaps” in your partner’s life;
- 4) “Spiritual Unity” → The agreement about “Who” Jesus is and “Where” He fits into

the marriage relationship!

Please note: These four Biblical principles, these four fingers, are **the same** for both the Husband and Wife. But as we finish our discussion of the “Good Hand” by adding the “**thumb**”, you will notice that the “thumb” will be **different** for both the Man and for the Woman.

On the thumb of your hand, we want to add a **fifth Biblical principle** . . . we want to answer the question,

--“What is the greatest need of a man?”

--“What is the greatest need of a woman?”

The Basic Need of a Wife is for . . .

V. “ _____ ”

→ the ability to “TRUST” her Husband!

Without true “**Security**” she will have “Fear” about the future: fear for herself; fear for her children; fear for the financial and practical issues of the family!

Note: We are not talking about her “abilities” -- a woman’s abilities are equal to a man’s abilities! What we are talking about is the way God made a woman, her deep inward need → the thing God “imbedded” in her by His creative design.

The Scriptural background is found in Genesis 3:16.

--This verse is given right after “sin” entered the world and began to destroy

God's

plans for life! God is announcing new order and structure for the human race!

"And to the woman He said, 'I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you shall bring forth children; yet you desire will be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.' " Genesis 3:16

While this verse has been misinterpreted and sometimes used in incorrect ways, don't miss the unbelievable truth it contains: Two vital principles are given!

First: The "pain" of childbirth will stand as a reminder of the consequence of rebelling against God – of a woman choosing to live her life in rebellion toward God! But, in the midst of the pain of childbirth, something wonderful and life-changing is given → a child . . . "life" from her own body . . . like "life" out of death! God's "grace" is greater than our "sin"!

Second: The need for a woman to look to the leadership of her husband will mark her life. She will have a deep desire to know that he truly loves her and will provide the basic needs of her life! Briefly stated, these needs are for:

"Provision" → "Protection" → "Passion"!

--These are "**3 - P's**" desired by a woman!

Please note: It is obvious that a woman can seek to find these three things without

being in relationship with a husband, but God's design is that when the "**3-P's**" are

part of a marriage relationship, it meets a woman's deepest needs!

--A woman desires to be able to trust her husband for these things! When these basic

needs are provided in her relationship with her husband, a woman feels secure – her

deepest fears are removed. While she knows that no husband is perfect, she also

knows these three things make a man "trustworthy"! The greatest gift a husband can

give his wife is Security!

However, when a man is "untrustworthy" or "unfaithful" to meet these basic needs, a wife feels "**Insecure**"! When she cannot trust him, she will turn to someone or some-thing else!

This brings a Christian wife to a point of great danger. An “insecure” wife will often attempt to take the place of leadership from a husband she does not “trust”, and in turn, to “rule” over the family herself! Sometimes this “role-reversal” of the Biblical pattern is unavoidable because of a man’s irresponsibility, but when a wife chooses to take over the place of leadership in her family she will not find the Biblical “security” she so deeply desires. Often she will become hurt, resentful, or bitter – and this will be the “atmosphere” in which the children grow up!

Let me address you Husbands directly:

Q: “Does your wife feel that she has a “Secure” relationship with you → one that

allows her to relax and be confident that you are “Trustworthy”?

--If so, thank God! But, if things have caused her to question whether she can

place her “trust” in you, honestly identify those things, ask her forgiveness, and

begin to rebuild her trust -- by the changes she sees in you!”

Q: “Wives, if you are “Insecure” in your relationship with your husband; if you don’t

feel that you can “Trust” him, what should you do?

a. Remember that hostile words and anger never change anything – they only

make the situation worse!

b. Remember that God is your “Helper” – He is more concerned about your husband’s immaturity or irresponsibility than you are!

--Pray for him . . . and trust God to work in his life → let God take the action!

God alone can “break” a man and “make” a man what he needs to be!

c. Remember that God is your ultimate “Security” – He is your Trust!

--You will have His “peace” when you make Him your “trust”!

Wife, your basic need is for “Security” – You have it with God; you need it with your husband!

The Basic Need of a Man is for . . .

V. “_____ - _____”

→ the ability to achieve Biblical significance!

Men, what is the “Basic Need” in our lives? Scripture is very clear about this.

--In Gen. 1:26 we read,

“And God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish . . . the birds . . . the cattle . . . and over all the earth . .

.”

--In Gen. 2:15 we read,

“Then the LORD took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate and keep it.”

God gave Adam the instruction the “conquer” and “cultivate” and “rule over” the world

He had made. What the Creator had made, He now told the Man to manage!

From

“obeying” God and doing a “good job” of this responsibility, man would gain

“**Self-Worth**”!

Please notice, when God finished each day of “creation”, He stepped back and said,

“It is good!” “I did a good job!” Man is made in the “image of God” and has the same desire – to know that he has been responsible, that he has done a good job!

So the “Basic Need” of a man is for “**Self-Worth**” or “**Significance**”!

--He needs to know that God is pleased with what he has done;

--He needs to know that people recognize that he has done a good job;

--But, He especially needs to know that his wife is proud of him!

Warning: The “world” in which we live presents a real **danger** for men at this point:

Great pressure is put on a man to define his “success” by human standards:

--He is “pressured” by what the world calls “success”!

--He is “pressured” by “achievement” in business, or athletics, or possessions,
or

power, or popularity!

God says something totally different about “success”! He defines “success” as achieving or gaining His approval!

--“Success” for a Christian man is achieved by living in a way that is “pleasing” to

Jesus Christ!

--“Success” is choosing to live for the things that will matter for “eternity”!

Q: Men, what defines “success” for you? Where do you get your “**Self-Worth**”?

Romans 12:2 says,

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

--True “Self-worth” comes from God → what does He say?

--Also remember: If your wife is a Christian, her deep desire is for you to be

a

“Man of God” – a man who seeks the “will of God” for himself and his family!

Q: Wives, do you “**Respect**” your Husband? Do you honor him for wanting to be a

“Man of God”? Do you encourage him by letting him know that his Godly character

means more to you than the amount of money he makes?

--Have you told him recently that you respect and believe in him?

--What attitudes do your children see in you?

--If you are married to a man you are not able to respect, are you willing to let God

control your attitude? When your husband thinks of you, does he hear “critical”,

“demeaning” words? Or, does he think of a woman who is praying for his spiritual and personal growth and speaks with “kindness” in the home?

Men, our greatest need is for “**Self-Worth**” – the desire to be approved by God Himself when we stand before him; the desire to have the “respect” of our wives and children!

Helpful Observation: When a marriage is not positive and healthy . . .

a. Without knowing, the husband will attack his wife at the point of her greatest need →

her “**security**” – he will communicate to her that he cannot be trusted!

b. Without knowing, the wife will attack her husband at the point of his greatest need →

his “**self-worth**” – she will communicate that he is not a man worthy of

“respect”!

This pattern of “attacking” each other at the most damaging place becomes a vicious cycle -- it feeds upon itself, getting deeper and deeper, doing more and more damage!

Be careful that your marriage is not caught in this destructive “cycle”!