

“The Essentials Of Our Faith”

Session XXXII

June 5, 2011

“The Christian Family”

Part One: “God’s Pattern And Purpose For Marriage”

Introduction:

The Word of God provides the following order of priority for the Christian’s life.

1. Jesus Christ.

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” Matthew 6:33

2. Marriage Partner.

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself up for her.” Ephesians 5:25

“Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.” Ephesians 5:22

3. Children.

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4

4. Body of Christ.

“And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:24-25

5. Work.

“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord, rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.” Colossians 3:23-24

Observations About Marriage:

1. God’s plan and purpose for marriage has been under Satanic attack in every generation of human history. The present moment is no exception. Tragically, about half of all marriages end in divorce, including the organized Church!
2. At the time of their marriage, every couple plans to be happy -- they think happiness will be their future experience!
3. Even in some marriages which do not end in separation or divorce, the partners are silently unhappy. Marriage has not brought what they hoped for and expected!
4. Separation and divorce in a marriage bring the deepest level of hurt and pain. The Body of Christ must show genuine love and support for those who suffer this hurt!

The Biblical Plan And Purpose Of Marriage

--A Helpful Illustration: The "**Good**" Hand.

Your hand can be used to illustrate these Biblical principles. Just as there are four fingers on the normal hand, so there are four "basic needs" of a marriage. Just as there is one thumb on the normal hand, so there is one "basic need" of a man or woman. When the one basic need of a man or woman is added to the four basic needs of a marriage, you have a complete summary of God's design for marriage.

I. First Basic Need Of Marriage: " _____ "!

"And the LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make a helper suitable for him.'" Genesis 2:18

A. Purpose: Man/Woman were made for each other " _____ "!

1. Key Hebrew word: "alone".
2. When God finished each of His other creations, He said, "*It is good!*" When He finished making the man, He said, "*It is not good!*" The creation of mankind was not perfect yet -- God was not finished until He made the woman!
3. Note: "Loneliness" is not the absence of people in my life. "Loneliness" is the absence of God-intended relationships!

B. Definition: What Is "Companionship"?

1. Companionship is **Emotional** " _____ " :
 - a. God created man and woman with the capacity for deep emotional relationship -- "Intimacy".
 - First, with Himself. Before sin entered the world (Gen. 3:1-7), man and woman "walked and talked" with God. The Creator and His "creation" had intimate relationship!
 - Second, with each other. Before sin entered the world, there was no selfishness, hurt, anger, jealousy, or unfaithfulness in human relationships!
 - b. After sin separated man and woman from God, they began to struggle for intimacy.
 - Man/woman lost "intimacy" with God because they lost all relationship with God. ("Sin" brought "separation")
 - Man/woman lost "intimacy" with each other. Selfishness, hurt, anger, jealousy, and unfaithfulness began.
2. Companionship is "**Friendship**" -- **Being** " _____ " !
 - a. In life, there are many different "levels" of friendship. Our friendships range from the surface level to the deepest, most intimate level.
 - b. The marriage relationship is intended by God to be the deepest, most intimate of all human relationships.
 - c. Observation: Most couples believe they are "best friends" when they marry.

But, after being married for some time, many ask, “Are we still best friends?”

C. Requirements: What Does Companionship Demand?

1. Companionship demands “_____”.
 - a. Definition: What is "communication"?
 - Communication is "speaking from the heart."
 - It is the desire or willingness to honestly and openly reveal what is in your "heart" or deepest person.
 - It is the desire or willingness to "share" your life.
 - b. Function: Communication is "verbal" and "non-verbal".
 - In "verbal" communication I use words to share what is in my heart and life.
Note: Every marriage has its own spoken "language"!!
 - In "non-verbal" communication I reveal my heart – my inner thoughts and feelings -- without using any words.
Note: Every marriage has its "unspoken" language!
 - c. Danger: Men often struggle with "communication" in their marriage and often refuse to admit its importance!
2. Companionship demands “_____”.
 - a. Definition: "Cultivation" in a marriage is the willingness to work at the relationship to make it healthy and happy.
 - b. Illustration: Failure to "cultivate" a marriage brings the same results as failure to "cultivate" a garden. (Destructive “weeds” grow!) Both require careful planning, a lot of time, and hard work!
3. Companionship demands a “_____” – careful “_____”.
 - a. Definition: A calendar or daily planner is a "tool" which assists in the wise use of time. It is very helpful to couples who have a busy lifestyle.
 - b. Goal: To provide the time necessary for communication.
 - c. Observation: Some use a mental calendar, not physical.
 - d. Observation: We don't always do everything that we plan on our calendar, but we do very little that isn't on them!
Note: Helpful question: “Am I on your calendar?”

II. The Second Basic Need Of Marriage: “_____”.

“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

A. Purpose: Man/Woman were made for each other “_____”!

1. Key Hebrew words: "one flesh".
2. God designed the physical or sexual part of human life for two clear purposes:
 - a. To procreate the human race;
 - b. To provide the deepest level of human intimacy and union.

B. Definition: What is this special “one flesh” relationship?

1. It is the “physical intimacy” which God intended to grow out of the “emotional intimacy” of a marriage commitment.
2. It is the sexual union that is reserved for husband and wife in a marriage commitment.

C. Biblical Instructions:

1. Genesis 2:24 -- “leave”.
--A man is to “leave” the primary relationship which controlled his life (“father and mother”). He is to have a new primary and controlling human relationship!
2. Genesis 2:24 -- “cleave”.
--A man is to “cleave” to his wife! **Nothing** on earth is to be more important to him. **No one** on earth is to hinder or interfere with this relationship.
Note: A woman gets her security from knowing her husband “cleaves” to her.
Note: A man gets much of his self-worth by knowing that his wife values his “cleaving” to her.

D. Helpful Suggestion:

This area of marriage is similar to a barometer which forecasts the weather. The “physical intimacy” (or lack of it) tells a lot about the overall condition of the relationship.

--Difficulty in the area of physical intimacy normally indicates a lack of “friendship” and “companionship”. They need to become “best friends” again!

III. The Third Basic Need Of Marriage: “_____”.

“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone: I will make him a helper suitable for him.’ ” Genesis 2:18

A. In Creation, God Gave The Man A “Helper”-- A Partner In Life!

1. Key Hebrew word: “helper”.
--The word means “*one who corresponds to*” or “*completes*”.
2. This word paints a picture: Like two pieces of a jigsaw puzzle which fit perfectly when placed together, the man and the woman “fit” together as husband and wife in the creative plan of God!

B. Since God Gave Man A “Helper”, She Is Needed And Important!

1. Problem: Many men do not understand or accept this Biblical truth.
--Many men do not believe they need help!
2. Problem: Many men do not think that they have “weaknesses”.
--Many men think they need no “input” from their wives!
3. Problem: Many men do not value their wives.
--Their wives feel no real significance in life and marriage!
4. Problem: Many men actually believe that this is what the Bible teaches.
--They do not believe women are as valuable as men!

IV. The Fourth Basic Need Of Marriage: “Unity”

"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

A. Purpose: A Husband And Wife Are To Be In Spiritual "Oneness".

1. Key Word: "One".

This Hebrew word brings important insight. We have already seen that it refers to the "oneness" of a husband and wife in physically intimacy. But, the meaning goes far deeper. This word implies the merging of the "total" person. It is a "bonding" together on the deepest level.

2. What is the deepest level of life? Biblically, it is the level of the "spirit". A husband and wife are to be "one" in their spirits before the Lord.

B. Definition: What Is "Spiritual Unity"?

-- Spiritual Unity is "**agreement**" about Who Jesus Christ is and Where He fits into the marriage and family.

1. Who is Jesus Christ?

--He is the "Son of God": He is the "God-Man"; fully God and fully man; virgin born; promised Messiah.

--He is "Savior": He paid the penalty of our sins on the Cross. Salvation is "by grace, through faith" -- a free gift!

--He is "Lord": He still rules over all creation; He is "Head" over the Church, the Body of Christ; He is Lord over the Christian's life.

2. Where will He "fit" into our marriage and family?

--If He is "Lord", He must be "Lord"!

--He is the One Who controls the whole family. His Word is our "final authority" and "Truth". His Spirit is our "Guide".

--His approval is the "goal" of the marriage and family.

C. Statement: "Jesus Christ is the glue that holds everything together!"

-- Transitional Observation:

The plan and purpose of God for human marriage is "**Good**"! We have listed the **four** Biblical truths which are the **same** for the husband and wife. Now we need to distinguish the basic need of a man and the basic need of a woman – these are **not** the same for a man and woman . . . they **differ**!

-- The "Good Hand" Illustration:

We have suggested that it is helpful to use the four "fingers" of the hand to list the four basic needs of a marriage. It is equally helpful to use the "thumb" of the hand to distinguish the basic need of a man and the basic need of a woman. In order to emphasize the difference of these Biblical truths, the **same** Roman numeral, "**V**", will be given to each, so that we have a completed "hand" for the man and a completed "hand" for the woman, the "thumb" being different.

V. The Basic Need Of A Woman: “_____”.

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

A. The Teaching of this Verse:

- This verse clearly teaches that the husband is to "**rule**" over the wife.
- 1. The husband was established as the authority in the home.
- 2. When God gave the authority to the husband, it meant that the wife was to look to him to lead her and to provide for her. He was to lead; she was to follow.
- 3. With this authority came responsibility.
- 4. A husband is responsible for three things toward his wife:
 - a. Protection -- make her "safe";
 - b. Provision -- meet her basic "needs";
 - c. Passion -- make her feel "loved"; cared for emotionally.

B. The Implication of this Verse:

- When a husband is faithful to meet these basic responsibilities, his wife feels "**Secure**" because her husband is what God intended him to be.

Note: This is the Basic Need of a woman – "Security"!

- When a husband is unable or unwilling to meet these basic responsibilities, his wife feels "**Insecure**".
- Danger: An "insecure" wife will often attempt to take the God-given authority from her husband and "rule" over the family in his place. Ironically, this never brings the "security" the wife is looking for and never allows the man to be the leader God desires him to be!

C. Definition: What Is Biblical "**Security**" ?

1. What it is not: The "false" security of the world -- power, position, possessions.
2. What it is: The knowledge that the "primary" relationships of life are what God intended -- especially her relationship with her husband.

V. The Basic Need Of A Man: “_____ - _____”.

"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule . . . ' And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule . . . ' Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it." Genesis 1:26,27,28; 2:15

A. The Teaching of These Verses:

1. These verses clearly teach that the man was created in the "**image**" of God.
A man is never God, but he is "like" God!
--Our main "likeness" to God is that we have existence as a "**Person**". He is a "Personal" God; we are His "Personal" creations!
--Our existence as a "Person" in God's image brings the capability of having personal relationship with God through His Son.
--No animal has this privilege or capability! No animal was created in "His image". No animal can ever have a personal relationship with the Creator -- only "man", as "male" and "female".
2. These verses teach that, in our "likeness" to God, He gave us **responsibilities** and **privileges** similar to His own.
 - a. Man was instructed to "**rule**", Gen. 1:26, 28.
 - b. Man was instructed to "**multiply**", Gen. 1:28.
 - c. Man was instructed to "**subdue**", Gen. 1:28.
 - d. Man was instructed to "**cultivate**" and "**keep**", 2:15.

B. The Purpose of These Verses:

From faithful obedience to God's instructions, man was to get his "**self-worth**" or his "**significance**".

--Man was to perform acts of obedience which would cause him to know God's pleasure or approval.

--God's "pleasure" was to be the source of man's "**worth**".

Note: When God finished each part of creation, He stepped back and said, "It is good"! A man is created with the same desire to know that what he does is "good" -- that it has value and significance!

C. Definition: What Is Biblical "Self-Worth**"?**

1. What it is not: The "false" self-worth or significance of the world -- the worldly "success" of money, possessions, power, or pleasure, etc.
2. What it is: The knowledge that a man is what God intended him to be -- that what he is doing on earth will last for eternity -- that he is a "man of God".

D. Helpful Quotation:

"Every provision of secular man for meeting the real need for personal significance is logically and horribly inadequate . . . In order to enjoy psychological health, people must meet their need for significance. Non-believers (and many Christians, too) do gain non-lasting significance from short-term goals and so function reasonably well. In their moments of honest self-examination, most admit to a sense of 'something wrong down deep'. Lacking explanations or answers, they ignore their deep, quiet uneasiness and redouble their efforts to gain significance from reaching temporal goals." --Dr. Lawrence Crabb