

# **Sacred Marriage**

*What if God designed marriage to make us holy more than to make us happy?*

## **1. The Single and Celibate Life is a Good Alternative to Marriage.**

- a. **Jesus and the apostle Paul were single and fully human.**
- b. **Singleness is a gift that many can and should embrace** (1 Corinthians 7:6ff)

*I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord. <sup>33</sup>But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife— <sup>34</sup>and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband.*

- c. **The early church valued and upheld the single life.**
  - i. In the Bible, widows over 60 took a vow of celibacy (1 Timothy 5:9ff).
  - ii. By A.D. 110 younger celibates could take vows that mirrored marital vows.
  - iii. In the early church, after divorce, many remained single.
  - iv. For much of Christian history, the single celibate life was commended.
- d. **The single life is hard *without* lots and lots of close Christian relationships.**

## **2. God gives Marriage as a Gift to Fulfill God's Purposes for Many of Us:**

- a. **Companionship and Shared Mission.**  
*Genesis 2: 18-22* - The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him. . . . Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.
- b. **Passion** (1 Corinthians 7:1-2; 8-9; Song of Songs)  
*1 Corinthians 7:8-9* - Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am. But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.
- c. **Children** (Godly Offspring).  
*Malachi 2:15* - Has not the LORD made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.
- d. **Godly Character** - A Relationship for Developing Holiness & True Christian Love (*Agape*).  
*Matthew 19:5-6* - For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?' So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."  
*Ephesians 5:33* - Each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church.

*If you want to be free to serve Jesus, there's no question - stay single. Marriage takes a lot of time. But if you want to become more like Jesus, I can't image any better thing to do that to get married. Being married forces you to face some character issues you'd never face otherwise.*

### **3. God Intends for Marriage to Be Permanent and Life-Long.**

Mark 10: 2-6 Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" "What did Moses command you?" he replied. They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away." "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

**We will discuss exceptions to this teaching next week.**

### **4. Because God Intends for Marriage to Be Permanent, He Intends It to Teach Us A lot about life and God . . . . .**

Marriage Teaches Us how to *Respect others* . . .

Marriage Exposes *Our Selfishness* . . .

Marriage Teaches *Us About Serving Others* . . .

Marriage Teaches Us *How to Persevere* . . .

Marriage Teaches Us *How to Forgive* . . .

Marriage Teaches Us *About Grace* . . .

Marriage Teaches Us to learn how to *Love with God's Love* . . . .

