

## MARRIAGE

You will note that on the six days of creation everything was good until God made man. Then God said: **“It is not good for man to be alone, I will make a helper suitable for him.”** (Gen. 2:18)

- Day one - **“God saw the light that it was good.”** (Gen. 1:4)
- Day three - **“God called the dry ground ‘land’ and the gathered waters he called ‘seas’. And God saw that it was good.”** (Gen. 1:10) **“The land produced vegetation: plants bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.”** (Gen. 1:12)
- Day four – **God made two great lights – the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.”** (Gen. 1:16-18)
- Day five - **“So God created the great creatures of the sea an every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.”** (Gen. 1:21)
- Day six - **“And God said, ‘Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds; livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.’ And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.”** (Gen. 1:24-25)
- After God created man **“The Lord God said ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’** (Gen. 2:18)
- The Scriptures explain **“But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said,“This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.”** (Gen. 2:20-24)
- Remember! Both male and female were created in the image of God. **“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them.** (Gen. 1:27)
- After creating both male and female **“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”** (Gen. 1:31)
- The word “Beulah” is only found one time in the Bible (Is. 62:4). It means “married”. It is significant that God uses “marriage” to describe the happiness that was experienced in the Promised Land. **“Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so also shall thy God rejoice over thee.”** (Is. 64:4-5)

## MARRIAGE IS FOUNDATIONAL TO SOCIETY

The word “anarchy” means “no ruler”. It describes life without any ruler or restraint. Nothing is more destructive to society than anarchy. When there is no king, every man does that which is right

in his own eyes (Judges 21:25). Life without restraints is a disaster! That's why God had to send Judges to save his people. So God provided the institution of marriage to avoid anarchy and provide a proper foundation for society. In the marriage union we find God's prescription for harmony between men and women. In the family little children learn to obey and become good citizens. Discipline is an important part of raising children (Heb. 12:5-11). When a man and a woman got married they formed a family. A cluster of families formed a clan. A cluster of clans formed a tribe. A cluster of tribes formed a nation. Building a nation begins with the family!

- Remember! Noah built an ark to save his family (Heb. 11:7).
- After the flood the family of Noah repopulated the earth (Gen. 10:1-32). Noah's children had families and their families formed nations. Genesis chapter ten is called "The Table of Nations".
- God chose Abram to have a family through whom all the families of the earth would be blessed - (Gen. 12:1-3).
- Since Abram had no children at the time God changed his name to Abraham and **"Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you." (Gen. 17:3-6)** This remarkable promise came true.
- Abraham's first son was named Ismael and God promised that Ismael would be the father of 12 rulers and that his descendants would become a great nation (Gen. 17:20).
- God, however, made a covenant with Abraham's second son Isaac. It was through Isaac that Jesus would be born (Gen. 17:21).
- Isaac had a son named Jacob and his family, as you know, became the nation of Israel.
- There were only 75 people in Jacob's family when he went down to Egypt (Acts 7:14). When they came out of Egypt they were a great nation with 603,550 fighting men (Nu. 1:46)
- Families were an integral part of the nation of Israel.
  - The nation of Israel began with the family of Jacob.
  - In Egypt the family of Jacob (also named Israel) became a nation of families.
  - Each family in Egypt was to kill a Passover lamb and put its blood on the door post of their home (Exodus 12:3).
  - The Promised Land was divided among the families of Israel by casting lots (Josh. 18:10).
  - Each family owned their own property and even the king could not take it from them (1 Kings 21:1-29).
  - The sons in the family could inherit the wealth of their father as is revealed in the parable of the lost son (Luke 15:11).
  - The daughters in the family could also inherit the wealth of their father as in the case of the daughters of Zelophehad (Nu. 27:1-11).
  - As we have said, God intended families to be an integral part of every nation.
  - Indeed: **"God sets the lonely in families."** (Ps. 68:6)

#### MARRIAGE IS GOD'S PLAN TO SATISFY SEXUAL DESIRES

Since most adults have a desire for sex Paul wrote: **"Now for the matters you wrote about: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her**

**own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife. Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.” (1 Cor. 7:1-5)**

When a husband or wife deny sex to one another, they are ignoring one of the reasons why God gave the institution of marriage.

Sexual relations, as you know, are only permitted by God between a man and a woman who are married!

### MARRIAGE IS GOD’S PLAN TO CARE FOR CHILDREN

Commandment # 7 in the Ten Commandments is: **“You shall not commit adultery.” (Ex. 20:14)** When people commit adultery little children are born without a family. This is one of the major problems in society. A child without a father is at a disadvantage.

One way the father provides stability in the nation is by disciplining his own children: **“My son, do not despise the Lord’s discipline, and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.” (Prov. 2:11-12)**

The first commandment in the Ten Commands with a promise was # 5: **“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’ which is the first commandment with a promise - ‘that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth. (Eph. 6:1-3)** Children who do not honor their parents make poor leaders. When they grow up and try to lead their nation they will destroy it! That’s why honoring your father and mother enable you to live long in the land!

The marriage union also provides for the physical needs of the family. **“If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” (1 Tim. 5:8)**

### MARRIAGE IS GOD’S PLAN TO PREVENT SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

There are more than 30 different bacteria, viruses and parasites that are known to be transmitted through sexual contact. Sexually transmitted diseases cause 750,000 deaths each year and 75 million illnesses.

Homosexual relationships are particularly dangerous. Paul warned: **“Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.” (Romans 1:26-27)**

According to sexual surveys the median age of the death of homosexuals is less than 50 years. This means that homosexual activity shortens the average life by 20 – 30 years.

God's laws are good and obeying them helps you to have a long, healthy, and happy life! Moses said: **"If you listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord who heals you."** (Ex. 15:26)

#### MARRIAGE TEACHES US ABOUT CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

**"Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."** (Eph. 5:22-33)

Paul wrote to the Corinthians: **"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him."** (2 Corinthians 11:2-4)

John wrote: **"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."** (Rev. 21:2) **"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."** (Rev. 21:9-10)

The Spirit and the Bride issue this great invitation: **"And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let him that heareth say, "Come." And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."** (Rev. 21:17)

Yes! The relationship between Christ and the church can teach us much about the relationship between husbands and wives!

#### FAMILIES BECAME AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CHURCH

Family records were so important that they became a part of the Holy Bible. There are many genealogical lists in the Bible. The first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles, for example, are all genealogies. The N.T. Scriptures begin with the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:1-17). The genealogy of Jesus is also found in Lk. 3:23-38). The existence of these genealogies bears testimony to the stability of the family. In a committed family relationship you know exactly who your father is, who your grandfather is, etc. Without the family you're not sure.

Jesus not only had a family with genealogical roots, He also had a caring and nurturing family around him during his earthly ministry. You remember, I'm sure, that **Mary** the mother of Jesus and **Elizabeth** the mother of John the Baptist were relatives (Lk. 1:36). Remember also that when Jesus was 12 years old his parents lost track of Him coming home from Jerusalem. Immediately they began searching for Him among their "**relatives and friends**" (Lk. 2:44). During His earthly ministry His family cared so much that they tried to take charge of Him (Mk. 3:21). When Jesus was dying on the cross, His mother was there, but she was not alone. Among that small group of faithful disciples was her sister, **Mary the wife of Clopas** (John 19:25). This woman is thought by many Bible scholars to also be the mother of **James the less**, one of the 12 apostles.

The Bible lists many "households" that were converted to Christ: **Cornelius** (Acts 10); **Lydia** and the **Philippian Jailer** (Acts 16); **Aristobulus** (Rom. 16:10); **Narcissus** (Rom. 16:11); **Stephanus** (1 Cor. 1:16); **Caesar** (Phil. 4:22); **Onesiphorus** (2 Tim. 4:19).

Paul the Apostle also had a number of family members in the church: **Andronicus and Junias** were relatives of Paul and were in Christ before he was (Rom. 16:7); **Herodian** (Rom. 16:11); **Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater** were also relatives of Paul (Rom. 16:21). When over 40 Jews vowed not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul, he was rescued from death by the **son of Paul's sister** (Acts 23:16).

**Barnabas** also had a family in the church. He was a Levite from Cyprus and apparently a man of considerable wealth as he sold a field and gave the money to the apostles (Acts 4:37). His aunt **Mary** lived in Jerusalem and owned a home where the early church met for prayer (Acts 12:12). Her son **John Mark** traveled with Barnabas on missionary journeys (Acts 13:5; 15:39). When Paul was in prison he wrote that Mark, cousin to Barnabas, was with him (Col. 4:10).

When **Andrew** met Jesus for the first time the Scriptures record: "**The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, 'We have found the Messiah' (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. (John 1:41-42).**" How beautiful! How absolutely beautiful! Would God that each and every one of us would be like Andrew. When we meet Jesus let us go immediately to the members of our family and share with them the good news.

Remember that Noah built an ark to save his family (Heb. 11:7). If we are to be like Noah then nothing would be too expensive, difficult, or time consuming to keep us from saving our families.

#### ARE YOU READY FOR THE BRIDEGROOM TO COME?

There is no question that Jesus is the Bridegroom! John the Baptist said about Jesus: "**You yourselves can testify that I said 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him. The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegrooms's voice. That joy is mine, and is now complete. He must become greater; I must become less.'**" (John 3:28-30)

When Jesus ascended into heaven two men dressed in white stood by the apostles and said: "**Men of Galilee, they said, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who**

**has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:11)**

The question is, are you ready for Christ to return? Are you the Bride of Christ waiting for the Bridegroom to return!

No one knows exactly when Jesus is coming back, that’s why we have to be ready all the time!

**“Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. “Do you see all these things?” he asked. “Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” (Matt. 24:1-3)**

Jesus answered these questions! The Jewish Temple was destroyed by the Roman general Titus in A.D. 70. Jesus told his disciples that they could see this day coming and flee to the mountains (Matt. 24:16). Luke’s account is also clear: **“When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies you will know that it’s desolation is near.” (Lk. 21:20.**

As we have said, however, no man knows when Jesus will returns. Jesus said: **“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” (Matt. 24:36)**

As we have also said, the genius of this strategy is that it causes everyone who believes in Jesus to be ready at all times. Jesus said: **“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.” (Matt. 24:42).**

**“So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him. “Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, ‘My master is staying away a long time,’ and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matt. 24:44-51)**

The return of Christ is also like virgins waiting for the Bridegroom. **“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.“At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’ “Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’““No,’ they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ “But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. “Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’ “But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I don’t know you.’“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.” (Matt. 25:1-13)**

## YOU CAN BE READY

**“Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11)**