

GOD'S PLAN FOR MARRIAGE

1 What was God's plan for Adam?

GENESIS 2:18 "And the LORD God said, 'It is not _____ that man should be _____; I will make him a _____ to him.'"

God saw Adam's need for a companion and helper comparable to him. For procreation, a male and female was necessary.

2 How did God create a helper for Adam?

GENESIS 2:21-23 "And the LORD God caused a deep _____ to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took _____ of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. (22) Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He _____ into a _____, and He brought her to the man. (23) And Adam said: 'This is now _____ of my _____ and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called _____, because she was taken _____ of _____.'"

God did not take a bone from Adam's head to symbolize rule over Eve. Nor did He take one from Adam's foot to place Eve lower than him. God took a rib from Adam's side so that Eve would be comparable to him. The unity of man and woman is God's plan.

3 What blueprint did God use in creating humanity and with what did He gift them?

GENESIS 1:26-27 "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our _____, according to Our _____; let them have _____ over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over _____ the _____ and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' (27) So God _____ man in His _____ image; in the image of _____ He created him; _____ and _____ He created them."

God designed and created man in His image, male and female, according to the "likeness" of God. Joined together, man and woman complete the image of God in the human race. Man was given the stronger virtues and woman the delicate virtues. Thus the joining of man and woman represent the full virtues of God.

4 What command did God give to Adam and Eve to expand the blessing of God for humanity?

GENESIS 1:28 "Then God _____ them, and God said to them, 'Be _____ and _____; _____ the earth and _____ it; have _____ over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over _____ living thing that moves on the _____.'"

Adam and Eve were directed to "fill" the earth. They were created with the ability to procreate. With divine foresight, God told them, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." Genesis 2:24 (NKJV). Still today, to accomplish God's plan, fathers and mothers continue to have children.

5 How does Solomon describe the blessing of a godly wife?

PROVERBS 18:22 "He who finds a _____ finds a _____ thing, and obtains _____ from the LORD."

When God is in the heart of your spouse, the marriage is blessed. Because God created marriage, the presence of God in each spouse results in "a good thing."

6 What are the parameters of a Christ centered marriage?

EPHESIANS 5:22-24 "Wives, _____ to your own _____, as to the _____. (23) For the husband is _____ of the _____, as also Christ is _____ of the church; and He is the _____ of the body. (24) Therefore, just as the _____ is subject to _____, so let the _____ be to their own _____ in everything."

The Bible is not describing blind submission; it is describing a relationship between husband and wife, with Christ at the center. The church is subject to Christ because Christ loves the church. When the husband shows love for his wife, as Christ does for His church, then the wife is safe to submit. A marriage that follows the conditions of Christ will be blessed.

7 What parameters has Christ established for the husband?

EPHESIANS 5:25 "Husbands, _____ your _____, just as _____ also _____ the church and _____ Himself for _____."

Christ is the example for what a husband should be to his wife. The holy relationship between Christ and the church is a divine example of what the relationship should be between a husband and wife. The husband should defend and care for his wife as Christ protects and provides for the church.

8 How deeply should the husband love his wife?

EPHESIANS 5:28-29 "So husbands ought to _____ their own wives as their own _____; he who _____ his wife loves _____. (29) For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the _____ does the _____."

The delicate and holy care that Christ imparts to His church is an example of the nurturing parameters of husband to wife. Nothing brings greater joy to Christ than to nurture His church. So also nothing should bring greater joy to the husband than to nurture his wife.

9 What blessing has God reserved for His marriage plan?

EPHESIANS 5:33 "Nevertheless let _____ one of you in _____ so _____ his own wife as _____, and let the _____ see that she _____ her husband."

When there is mutual respect and love between husband and wife, God's blessings will permeate and enhance their marriage and home.

THE BLESSING OF MARRIAGE

10 How does the Bible describe the unity of husband and wife?

MATTHEW 19:4-6 "And He answered and said to them, 'Have you not read that He who made them at the _____ 'made them _____ and _____,' (5) and said, 'For this reason a man shall _____ his _____ and _____ and be joined to his _____, and the _____ shall become _____ flesh. (6) So then, they are no longer _____ but _____ flesh. Therefore what _____ has _____ together, let not _____.'"

God created male and female not only to procreate, but also to reflect the His image. Although husband and wife are literally two, spiritually marriage makes them one in Christ. What affects one affects the other. For that reason each is to protect the sanctity of marriage. Neither is to allow outside influences to violate their marriage.

11 What does the Bible teach about mutual affection?

1 CORINTHIANS 7:3-4 "Let the husband _____ to his _____ the _____ due her, and _____ also the _____ to her _____. (4) The wife does not have _____ over her own _____, but the _____ does. And likewise the _____ does not have _____ over his own _____, but the _____ does."

Many marriages have faced emotional and physical challenges because husband and wife have denied the affection each is due. As a form of punishment, withholding affection leads to broken homes and marriages. Likewise, affection should not be used as a reward for compliance to one's conditions. Godly principles should be the guide for each spouse.

12 What counsel does the Bible give about choosing a mate?

2 CORINTHIANS 6:14 "Do not be _____ yoked _____ with _____. For what fellowship has _____ with _____? And what communion has _____ with _____?"

The Bible advises Christians to choose a potential spouse that shares their beliefs and commitment to Christ. Many have entered into marriage ignoring this council and remained divided for decades. By following God's parameters His blessings of unity and harmony will follow.

13 How should I proceed after becoming a Christian if my spouse doesn't follow my choice?

1 CORINTHIANS 7:13-15 "And a woman who has a _____ who does not _____, if he is _____ to _____ with her, let her _____ him. (14) For the _____ husband is _____ by the _____, and the _____ wife is _____ by the _____; otherwise your _____ would be _____, but now they are _____. (15) But if the unbeliever _____, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under _____ in such cases. But God has called us to _____."

In cases where both spouses don't make the change together, many decide to become followers of Christ later in life. In that case, the blessings of God are still imparted to the unbelieving spouse and children. God does not withhold His blessings due to one unbelieving spouse. Yet, how much greater would the blessings be if both chose to follow Christ? If the marriage is dissolved because the unbelieving spouse chooses to leave, God calls the Christian to remain at peace with the one that left. The impact to the home and children will be less if the believer pursues peace.

14 How does the Bible describe the goal of all believers?

ROMANS 12:18 "If it is _____, as much as _____ on _____, live _____ with _____ men."

MATTHEW 5:9 "_____ are the _____, for they shall be called _____ of _____."

Too often marriages that end in divorce are racked with controversy and conflict. It is therefore best for Christians to prefer and pursue a peaceful method of communication. Often children will become double victims. The loss of the parent is often coupled with the trauma of controversy. The impact can be long-term. Consider all the possible impacts that follow a marriage breakup. If children are involved, devise plans for their mental and spiritual health. Pursuing marital reconciliation will avoid years of heartache.

15 What is God's plan to protect the sanctity of marriage?

EXODUS 20:14 "You shall _____ commit _____."

Very few things can injure a marriage, as does unfaithfulness. God's seventh Commandment is a guide to prevent untold heartache and relationship damage. Trust is broken. It creates in the non-offending spouse a heart of suspicion, and pain that takes time and intentional commitment to remedy. Many look back with lament and sorrow. God can and will forgive but the work to rebuild the marriage relationship takes time, work, and prayer. The author of Hebrews cautions us to protect the doors of fidelity. He wrote, "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge." Hebrews 13:4 (NKJV).

16 What lesson can we draw from Jesus and His handling of the woman caught in adultery?

JOHN 8:10-11 "When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, 'Woman, where are those _____ of yours? Has no one _____ you?' (11) She said, '____ one, Lord.' And Jesus said to her, '_____ do I _____ you; go and _____ no _____'."

The action of Jesus does not denote tolerance of adultery. The religious leaders cast Mary at the feet of Jesus for condemnation. But, Jesus knew that her greatest need was forgiveness. He did not condemn the woman but he cautioned her of the gravity of her sin, "Go and sin no more."

17 What does the Bible identify as the source for the motivation to abandon sin?

LUKE 7:47 "Therefore I say to you, her _____, which are _____, are _____, for she _____ much. But to whom _____ is _____, the same _____ little."

The motive that should move us to abandon sin is the fact that we have all been forgiven much. Too often people discount the gravity of their sin and look with disdain upon those that are "great" sinners. In God's economy, "All have sinned." If the marriage is impacted by infidelity, bring that one to the feet of Jesus and join Him in the restoration of your hearts and home.

18 What counsel does the Bible give to children concerning their parents?

EPHESIANS 6:1 "_____, _____ your _____ in the _____, for this is _____."

When parents are led by godly principles, God's instruction to the children is, obey them. Many children grow to regret ignoring their parents' counsel. Exodus 20:12 reminds the children to "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you." This is a promise to the obedient.

19 What counsel has God given to parents?

EPHESIANS 6:4 "And you, fathers, do not _____ your children to _____, but bring them up in the _____ and _____ of the _____."

PROVERBS 22:6 "_____ up a child in the way he _____ go, and when he is _____ he will not _____ from it."

The family that follows the Word of God will experience untold blessings.



The Family Tree
Building Strong Families

God created the family for His glory and His character. As with the Sabbath, the family is the other sanctified institution God built into a perfect creation. Before sin entered the world, God blessed Adam with a female companion to populate the earth and create an environment where peace and godliness abound.

However, with the entrance of sin, God's perfect blueprint for humanity was severely altered. Adam and Eve were evicted from their paradise home and the world has not been the same since.

The world became an adverse environment for marriage and family. Broken homes, fractured promises, confused children, multiple marriages, divorce, and abuse mar the landscape of the family. What God intended to be an uninterrupted blessing has to a great degree become an understated challenge.

In spite of our broken history, God still has a wonderful plan for the restoration of the family and marriage. God's Word is replete with promises, instruction, and divine power, that when followed, can empower the marriage and family to be a haven of peace, joy, and holiness.

This lesson is designed to introduce you to God's original plan for the marriage and family. As far removed as we are from the perfection of creation, God has not changed. Hope and power is still available and secure in the future of the family that trusts in God and His Word. May your joy be full as you follow God's plan.