

XLIX. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS
LESSON FORTY-NINE
... ABOUT MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the lesson is to give us the proper perspective of marriage as instituted by our Father God, as to its purpose and functions.

God ordained and instituted marriage as a life long union between a man and a woman. He made woman to complement and complete man (1 Corinthians 11:9), one man to one woman and one woman to one man.

Genesis 2:24 is absolutely clear:

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave (adhere/glue/ bond/fuse himself) unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Our Lord Jesus Christ confirmed this Old Testament verse and stated it to be His concept of marriage.

Matthew 19:5 "And (Jesus) said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain (the two of them) shall be one flesh."

In the Old Testament we read that many kings took to themselves many wives, but this was not with the consent of God, but rather in spite of His prohibition.

Deuteronomy 17:17a, "Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away"

WHY DID GOD INSTITUTE MARRIAGE

We see the answer in the following Scriptures.

1. Genesis 1:27,28

Conclusions: The pro-creation of children is the first reason given by God for the institution of marriage. Not one man with just any woman or women, but one man with one woman, his wife. The union of a man and his wife is the only divinely approved context for pro-creation.

Any sexual relationship outside of marriage is SIN. Paul says 1 Corinthians 7:2: "to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife. and let every woman have her own husband."

2. Genesis 2:18

Conclusions: The second function of marriage as instituted by God is seen in that God put man and women together to provide each other with a unique companionship.

Question: Is this a companionship between two equals?

Yes ___ No ___ Yes & No ___

(NOTE - unequal does not mean inferior)

Refer to the following Scriptures for conclusions:

Galatians 3:26-29

Ephesians 5:22

1 Peter 3:7

1 Corinthians 4:7

1 Corinthians 11:9

1 Corinthians 11:11

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that the man and woman are equal as far as their position/place in the Kingdom of God and in their importance to the marriage relationship. However, in the creation, God in His wisdom did not create man and woman equal [no man is equal to any woman, nor is any woman equal to any man] God made/created them different, with each having a specific role in life and work. In the marriage union they are not to be regarded as co-equal partners. The one complements and completes the other simply *because they are not equal*.

The subjection of the wife to the husband, Ephesians 5:22:

"wives. Submit yourselves unto your own husbands..."

literally meaning ,"find your place under"), was founded upon the original purpose and decree of God in creation, which could not be annulled.

Woman's constitution was modeled upon that of man. It was not like his. The woman was created to complement and complete man, not to compete with him.

Man and woman are created to fully complement each other. This means that in the Lord a man needs a woman just as much as a woman needs a man. This unique relationship where the man and women complete each other is found only in marriage.

IS MARRIAGE FOR ALL MEN AND WOMEN?

What do the following Scriptures say about marriage for all?

Hebrews 13:4

1 Timothy 4:1-3

1 Corinthians 7:6-9

1 Corinthians 7:39

2 Corinthians 6:14

Matthew 19:11-12

Deuteronomy 24:1-2

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that "Yes" with one exception marriage is for all men and women who have not previously been married or whose spouse has died, and for some who are divorced (refer to lesson fifty "Divorce and Re-marriage") . The exception being in the case of the one who is physically a eunuch.

DUTIES OF HUSBAND AND WIVES IN MARRIAGE

Old Testament:

The duties of the husband in the Old Testament were generally recognized to include all that is involved in the support of the home. Exodus 21:10 enumerates as the minimum obligation the provision of food, clothing and cohabitation .

The practice of sexual morality for men fell far short of the standard of equality of treatment. The chastity of the wife was jealously guarded by the heaviest penalties, but custom and law recognized no parallel obligation of faithfulness as resting on the husband - provided he respected the rights of other men. However, the prophetic conscience was possessed by a deep sense of the abomination of whoredome; and finally, a principle which was included in the Six Commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery", claiming absolute marital fidelity, was spelled out in Malachi 2:14,15.

Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously (*been unfaithful*): yet *is* she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously (*be unfaithful*) against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for *one* covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously (*be not unfaithful*).

The duties of the wife were not so specifically stated. The fundamental ones were chastity and submission - Genesis 3:16, with devotion to the husband's family and interests. And by general consent, the standard maintained by Hebrew wives was high.

New Testament (Marriage in Christianity)

Christianity began a new chapter in the history of marriage. The changes which it introduced were due primarily to the obvious implications of the fundamental Christian principles, which are seen in the following Scriptures

Matthew 19:4-6

Matthew 20:25-28

Galatians 5:13

Duties of Husbands under Christianity

According to the following Scriptures, what is the duty of the husband in the marriage relationship?

Ephesians 5:23

Ephesians 5:25

Ephesians 5:28-31,33

Colossians 3:19

1 Peter 3:7

1 Corinthians 7:3-5

1 Timothy 5:8

Conclusions: The duties/responsibilities of the husband to his wife are irrevocably (that is to say, that cannot be revoked, recalled, undone or altered) bound up the Greek word translated love, agppaoo. A love which is a selfless, self-sacrificing love, which meets the needs of the wife (love, companionship, co-habitation, covering, protection, security, honor, respect, food, clothing and etc.), when exercised by the husband as God created him so to do.

The Duties of Wives under Christianity

Even though Christianity brought improvement in to the status of women. however, the duties of the wife continued to be developed from the presupposition of her subordination to her husband and were summed up, not in love, but in what according to the following Scriptures:

Ephesians 5:22

Colossians 3:18

Ephesians 5:23

1 Corinthians 11:10

1 Peter 3:1

Ephesians 5:33

Conclusions: The duties/responsibilities of the wife as seen in the above Scriptures are summed up in submission* to and reverence** for her husband.

*** Note: The Greek word in the above scriptures for "submit yourselves" is hupotasses which has the meaning of "find your proper place (category) under?."**

**** Note: that the Greek word for reverence is "phobeo" fear/reverential fear or fear of disrespecting/displeasing her husband because of who he is, as her head and covering. (Reverence/submission as unto the Lord, Ephesians 5:22.)**

*****Note: Although submission and reverence on the part of the woman to her husband is not contingent upon her husband fulfilling his responsibilities toward her, however, men need to take into account that women were created by God to respond/answer to their husbands, therefore, if the wife is having a problem with submission and reverence for her husband, then the husband needs to examine his relationship with his wife, to see whether he is loving her by providing her headship, covering and honor (love, companionship, respect, consideration for her physical needs, food, clothing, etc.). Men as these basic needs of your wife are provided, she will then in return respond to you with love, companionship, tenderness, respect, honor, and reverence as your true help-mate; and then she will then in return receive your response of love, tenderness, companionship, attention, honor, respect and etc.**

RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH

Since God instituted marriage. He only can be the cohesive power binding a man and a woman into one flesh and unity of life, it also follows that if the marriage is to be a blessed union, then the instructions of the One who invented it must be followed.

Does your attitude and understanding toward marriage match that of the instructions giving in the Bible?

Yes___ No___

Are you willing to submit yourself to those instructions?

Yes___No___