

The God That Joins Together

KEY SCRIPTURE: “Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:6).

It is so amazing and incomprehensible that God, the Creator of the Universe, who owns the earth and its fullness, is concerned about something as seemingly insignificant as the marriage of a man and a woman.

Equally incredible is God’s mathematics: one plus one equals one. More specifically, one man plus one woman plus one God equals one. Look at the shape of a triangle. At its base are the man on one side and the woman on the other. As they come closer together the triangle points upward to God.

Marriage is a binding together between God, a man, and a woman. It can be compared to a rope that is weaved together. “A threefold cord is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12).

Search the entire *King James Version* through, panning sixty-six books and you will find only one situation where English phrase, “joined together” is used. It refers explicitly to God joining together a man and woman in holy matrimony. The only place that comes to a close second is Ephesians 2:21-22, and refers to the Body of Christ; the Church. “In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” This is also fitting. The Church is likened to the Bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 21: 2, 19; 22:17). We are commanded to love our wives as Christ loved the Church (Ephesians 5:25; Colossians 3:19). Marriage represents the church in miniature.

Going back to the first man, Adam, look at the days of creation. God created. God looked over what He had done. He repeatedly proclaimed, “It was good” (Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25). But, when God looked at Adam (and when God looks at mankind) the tenses switch from past to present, and He says, “It is not good for man to be alone” (Genesis 2:19) The Bible has much to say about relationships: our relationship with God; relationship with our spouse; and relationships with others. The purpose of marriage is **companionship**.

“And the Lord God said, “It isn't good for man to be alone; I will **make a companion** for him, a helper suited to his needs” “(Genesis 2:18, *TLB*). A

helper suitable to a man's needs makes him **complete**. God knows just what you need.

You remember the story. God soothes man into a deep sleep. While Adam snored, God worked. He pulled a rib from the man's side, closed up the space, and presto, Woman has arrived. She has been close to a man's heart ever since (well, at least, most of the time). Then God "brought her to the man" (Genesis 2:22).

I'll never forget the words of a song featured in our own wedding, "To me you are the hand that I reach for when I've lost my way...Just as sure as I'm sure there is a heaven, this was meant to be. No road is too long as long as you belong to me."

Get the picture? A godly marriage does not start with a man noticing or being attracted to a lady. It starts long before that. It begins in the heart, mind, and plan of God. What God has already designed in heaven begins to be formed in the minds of two people. For marriage to last a lifetime it must be anchored in the knowledge of the will of God. When times get tough, and trials rock the marriage boat, we can depend on a steadfast anchor, "God joined us together." Marriage is a **covenant** between God, a man, and a woman. That covenant is vertical (upward) made in the sight of God, and horizontal; between a man and woman, in the sight of witnesses.

It is easy to love someone from a distance but difficult up close. A married couple can be compared to two porcupines left out in the cold. They huddle closely. They need each other, but they also needle each other.

And so the newly married couple lives happily ever after. Sorry! It seldom happens like that. Take note. Problems and disappointments will come. It doesn't take long either. Prepare yourself for an imperfect marriage. Go back to the original couple. Eve listened to the serpent. She ate the forbidden fruit, and gave it to her husband to eat. God—the one that joined them together—came down for a little fellowship time with the now godless couple. He asked, "Adam, where are you?" Adam was hiding because he realized that he was naked. God asked, "Have you eaten the forbidden fruit?" And the blame game begins.

Adam admitted, "Yes, but it was the woman that you brought to me." Sounds to me like he was blaming God, the woman, but did not accept blame himself.

God then asked Eve, “How could you do such a thing?”

Eve said, “The serpent tricked me, so I ate.”

The blame game has been popular ever since. We blame others for our problems, and sometimes point a finger at God. We should be like the man who admitted, “I have found the problem and it is me.” A healthy marriage demands **communication**. A husband and wife must be able to talk to each other; to work out their problems peacefully; and to control anger. Someone (or both) must be willing to say, “I’m sorry!” One person needs to allow the other to have the last word. Winning the little battles is not important. Preserving the marriage is, and that is where the biggest battles are fought.

The woman listened to Satan. The man listened to the woman. No one listened to God. A lot of prayer goes into finding the right marriage partner. The man and woman desperately seek the mind of God, and listen to His voice. After marriage, prayer and seeking God’s face is still required. Many think that marriage is like one of those items you purchase with the message, “No assembly necessary.” Marriage requires work! Prayer can make the difference. Coming together is easy. Staying together takes **commitment**.

When problems do come, it is natural for the husband or wife to think of ways to get out of the marriage. As usual, natural and spiritual are not the same. Go back to Matthew 19:6. Remember, God joins couples together. Man should not mess things up. This verse is right in the middle of a conversation between Jesus and the Pharisees concerning divorce. When troubles come divorce is not an appropriate option. God hates divorce (Malachi 2:15-16). It is not His will for the husband, wife, or representatives from either family to try to undo the union. Marriage is an irreversible fusion of two into one.

Wedding vows often include words like “until death do us part” or “as long as you both shall live.” Marriage is meant to be permanent, binding, and unbreakable.

The Pharisees knew that Moses allowed a letter of divorce. Jesus countered that this was only because of their hardness of heart. From the beginning it was not so (Matthew 19:8). Take a closer look at “because of the hardness of your hearts” (Matthew 19:8). Similar phrases would be: perversity, stubbornness, rebelliousness, obstinacy, unbelief, mistrust of God, coldness,

and wicked. Which one of those words sound like something that should be applied to a Christian? None!

Dake's Annotated Bible explains that rabbis permitted divorce for many frivolous reasons, such as carelessly adding spices or seasoning to food, causing one's husband to eat food that had not been tithed, going into the street with loose or uncombed hair, loud or constant talking in the house, or the husband simply finding someone he thought was more beautiful.

When problems come every effort must be made to rescue the marriage and rebuild the relationship. Divorce is not an option! Marriage is a physical (and spiritual) relationship. There are only two physical causes that can break the marriage bond: death and adultery. In the Old Testament the guilty party was stoned to death leaving the other part free to remarry. In the New Testament we do not find the authority to put the guilty to death. Thus, divorce is comparable to death.

It's time to conclude. The words of Jesus provide an apt review. "Don't you read the Scriptures?" he replied. "In them it is written that at the beginning God created man and woman, and that a man should leave his father and mother, and be forever united to his wife. The two shall become one-no longer two, but one! And no man may divorce what God has joined together" (Matthew 19:4-6, *TLB*).