

The Husband/Wife Relationship Part 1

September 21, 2008

Assertion

- Among the relationships in our lives, marriage is unique only in its permanence and intimacy
 - It's not made of a fundamentally different substance than our other relationships
 - Therefore, all the relationship stuff we've learned so far (forgiveness, etc) applies here

A Few Key Ideas

- Marriage a picture of Christ and the Church
- Your marriage has God-ordained purpose
- Men and women are different by nature and have different roles in marriage
- Marriage is full of challenges
- Marriage isn't fair
- The Bible gives us examples (both positive and negative) to teach us about marriage

Your Marriage Relates to God's Ultimate Eternal Purpose

- “It is not good for man to be alone”
 - In the creation account, the man is Adam
 - In God's larger purpose, the man is Christ
- “I will make a helper suitable for him”
 - In the creation account, the helper is Eve
 - In God's larger purpose, the helper is the church

***Our marriage teaches us about Christ and the Church.
Christ and the Church teaches us about our marriage.***

What is Christ to the Church?

- Creator
 - Redeemer
 - Protector
 - Provider
 - Companion
 - Head
-
- Is Christ's relationship to the Church an equal partnership?

Some Purposes of Marriage

- Companionship (Gen 2:18)
- Procreation (Gen 1:28, Mal 2:15)
- Child-rearing (Dt 6:6-9; Eph 6:4)
- To exemplify the father-son relationship (Matt 7:11; Heb 12:10)
- To exemplify Christ and the Church (Eph 5:32)
- To sanctify you (Pr 27:17)

It's important to have the proper frame of reference for our marriages. It's possible to expect too much from our marriages!

What is a Husband?

- husband¹
 - 1: a male partner in a marriage
 - 2 *British* : [manager](#) , [steward](#)
 - 3: a frugal manager
- husbandry¹
 - 1 *archaic* : the care of a household
 - 2: the control or judicious use of resources : [conservation](#)
 - 3 a: the cultivation or production of plants or animals : [agriculture](#) b: the scientific control and management of a branch of farming and especially of domestic animals

¹husband/husbandry. (2008). In *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*. Retrieved September 19, 2008, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/husband>

Some Challenges in Marriage

- Failure to leave and cleave (Gen 2:24)
- A husband's failure to lead (Gen 3:6)
- Competition for headship (Gen 3:16)
- The blame game (Gen 3:12-13)
- A husband's failure to love (Eph 5:33)
- A wife's failure to respect (Eph 5:33)
- A husband's failure to be considerate and respectful (1Pe 3:7)

Marriage Isn't Fair

- *Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.*

1 Peter 3:7 (NIV)

- How is the wife a weaker vessel?
- What is the implication of this to the husband?

How A Man Should Love

- Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her
Ephesians 5:25 (NIV)
- There are lots of ways that Christ loved the church—here's a big one:
 - ***We love because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19***
 - Christ's love for the church is an initiating love
 - Since Christ loves first and we love back, so too is it between a man and a woman
 - This one principle tells us a lot about what it means to be a leader in our relationships
 - It is masculine to initiate
 - It is feminine to respond
 - Assertion: This is deeply imprinted on the souls of men and women



Samson's Relationships

Lessons In How Not To Do It

- **Judges 14:16 (NIV)**
16 Then Samson's wife threw herself on him, sobbing, "You hate me! You don't really love me. You've given my people a riddle, but you haven't told me the answer." "I haven't even explained it to my father or mother," he replied, "so why should I explain it to you?"
- **Judges 16:15 (NIV)**
15 Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when you won't confide in me? This is the third time you have made a fool of me and haven't told me the secret of your great strength."
16 With such nagging she prodded him day after day until he was tired to death.

What do these verses reveal about what makes a woman feel loved?

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What relational challenges are illustrated in these verses?

Abram and Sarai

A Lesson In Spiritual Leadership

- “Abram agreed to what Sarai said” (Gen 16:2)
 - Here we have the birth of a bad idea
 - Trouble begins when Abram fails in his leadership responsibility
 - It’s not that he shouldn’t listen to Sarai, but he should have the discernment and strength to reject this poor idea and continue to wait upon God (cf. Gen 21:9-13)
- “You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering” (Gen 16:5)
 - As head of his family, Abram was indeed responsible
 - However, Sarai shifts the blame totally to Abram whereas there is plenty of blame to go around
- "Your servant is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." (Gen 16:6)
 - Another failure of leadership
 - Sarai mistreats Hagar and God has to intervene (vv.7-9)

Boaz and Ruth

A Template for Romance

- He paid attention to her (2:5)
 - Boaz asked the foreman of his harvesters, "Whose young woman is that?"
- He protected her (2:8)
 - So Boaz said to Ruth, "My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here. Stay here with my servant girls."
- He pursued her (2:14)
 - At mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar." When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over.
- He provided for her (2:16)
 - Rather, pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don't rebuke her."
- He praised her (3:11)
 - And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of noble character.

Application

- Men—Be an initiator!
 - If you've been passive, get active!
 - If you've been shirking responsibility, take responsibility!
 - If you've been blaming your wife for something, think about how you could be the root cause and take remedial action!
- Ladies—Be a responder!
 - If your man's been passive, don't rush in to fill the leadership vacuum; let him feel the pressure!
 - Don't nag your husband; you may get what you ask for!

