

FOUNDATIONS

LESSON 54: A THEOLOGY OF MARRIAGE: WHAT IS MARRIAGE?

*“So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”
Matthew 19:6*

Main Idea: *Marriage is a life long covenant between one man and one women, defined and enacted by God, that is designed to bear fruit and showcase God’s special, intimate love towards His people.*

I. Marriage Is Something God Does and Defines

“As you gave the ring to one another and have now received it a second time from the hand of the pastor, so love comes from you, but marriage from above, from God. As high as God is above man, so high are the sanctity, the rights, and the promise of love. It is not your love that sustains marriage, but from now on, the marriage that sustains your love.” (Bonhoeffer, *Letter and Papers from Prison*, 27-28)

A. Something God Defines

1. One Man, One Woman (Genesis 1:27; 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4)
2. For Life (Matthew 19:6; Rom 7:1-4; Matthew 22:23-33)
3. Guarded by God (Hebrews 13:4-5; Matthew 19:11-12)

B. Something God Does

1. God gives marriage (Matthew 19:5)
2. God makes two one (Matthew 19:6)

II. Marriage Is A Life Long Covenant That Magnifies God’s Love

“Earthly society is only the beginning of heavenly society, the earthly home an image of the heavenly home, the earthly family a symbol of the fatherhood of God.” (Bonhoeffer, *Letter and Papers from Prison*, 31)

FOUNDATIONS

- A. Marriages reflect the mysterious union of Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:31-32)
 - 1. Passion & picture
 - 2. Violations of the covenant: Divorce & adultery (Matthew 19:6-7; 1 Corinthians 6:16-17)

- B. Husbands Represent Christ's Love and Leadership (Ephesians 5:25-30)
 - 1. Lead as Christ led
 - 2. Love as Christ loved (Phil 2:5-8)

- C. Wives submit to their husbands as Christ does to the Church (1 Peter 3:1-6)
 - 1. What is submission?
 - 2. What characteristics does submission have? (1 Corinthians 11:3)

III. Marriage Is An Institution To Bless Others

“Marriage is more than your love for each other. It has a higher dignity and power, for it is God’s holy ordinance, through which he wills to perpetuate the human race until the end of time. In your love, you see only your two selves in the world, but in marriage, you are a link in the chain of the generations, which God causes to come and to pass away to his glory, and calls into his kingdom.” (Bonhoeffer, *Letter and Papers from Prison*, 27)

- A. Children – Marriage is for making children and making them followers of Christ.
 - 1. Physical children (Genesis 1:26-28; James 4:3)
 - 2. Spiritual children (Mark 10:29-30; Romans 9:8; 1 Corinthians 4:15)

- B. A picture for all
 - 1. Heavenly joy shared by all believers (Isaiah 58:1-7)
 - 2. Devotion to Christ now offers the greatest joy (1 Corinthians 7:8)