



Origins Lesson 9 1Q 2013

Marriage: A Gift From Eden

SUNDAY

Read Genesis 2:18: “And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make an help meet for him.’”

Thoughts?

Why was it not good for man to be alone? Read second paragraph, “God had declared...” thoughts?

This is well said, and the bottom of Tuesday’s lesson it says, “It is the husband’s privilege to give himself to his wife in loving service, as Christ gave Himself for the church.” This is well said.

Man was made in the image of God and Adam needed Eve, someone he could serve in order to enter into Godlike love. And Eve would receive that love and it would return to Adam in appreciative, loving care, service and regard.

This is God’s ideal for marriage what happened? What went wrong? What is the state of marriage today?

According the CDC, last survey 2002 posted on their website

- http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_23/sr23_028.pdf
- 28% of men and women aged 15-44 cohabitated before marriage
- 23% of women and 18% of men married without ever cohabiting.
- 15% of men and women had only cohabited (without ever marrying).
- Approximately two-thirds of first marriages lasted 10 years or more
- In contrast to marriages, only about a quarter of men’s and one-third of women’s first cohabitations were estimated to last 3 years without either disrupting or transitioning to marriage. More than half of first cohabitations were expected to transition to marriage within 3 years.
- The first cohabitations of men and women with no high school diploma or GED were the most likely to remain intact for at least 3 years, whereas the first cohabitations of men and women with a bachelor’s degree or higher were more likely to transition to marriage within 3 years.



- 8% of currently married women's husbands were not employed at the date of interview in 2002, while 15% of currently cohabiting women's male partners were not employed.
- Married persons live longer, have higher rates of health insurance coverage and lower prevalence of cardiovascular disease than unmarried persons. Research also indicates that marriage is positively associated with the health and well-being of children. Children born to unmarried mothers are at greater risk than children born to married mothers for poverty, teen childbearing, poor school achievement, and marital disruption in adulthood.
- From 1987 to 2002, the percentages of women between ages 35 and 39 who had ever cohabited doubled, from 30% to 61%. Yet studies have emerged that suggest that cohabitators do not show the same level of health benefits as married persons but may show greater health benefits than divorced, separated, widowed and never-married persons. Cohabitators also report lower levels of relationship quality and lower household incomes than married couples.
- Studies have found that persons who cohabit prior to marriage are more likely to have their marriages dissolve than those who did not cohabit premaritally.
- Studies comparing child academic outcomes and behaviors in cohabiting and married parent households conclude that children living in families where the mother is cohabiting do not fare as well as those where the mother is married.

Thoughts?

SABBATH

Read first two paragraphs, "Think of the blessings..." thoughts?

Why do so many marriages fail? Why do so many people experience pain and anger rather than joy and peace?

It is suggested that if the divine principles are recognized and obeyed then marriage becomes a blessing. Could it be that people experience pain and anger because the divine principles are not being obeyed? What are those principles and what interferes with them being obeyed?

Was marriage designed by God to be an expression and experience of his law of love? Operating upon what principle?

Could marriage, after sin, have taken on a legal, imposed law, construct, in which persons now were legally obligated – both by state and distorted views of God's government?

If people operate under the natural law, law of love, construct, then what is the basis for marriage? How do such marriages function? What causes the bond? How do the partners treat each other?



If people operate under the imposed law construct, then what is the basis for marriage? How do such marriage function? What causes the bond? How do the partners treat each other?

What is love? Love is the principle of beneficence, of giving. Is there a difference in marrying to share your life, to give to love another, and in marrying because one needs to be loved?

Is there a difference in giving in love and living in fear of what the other will think, say, or do? Does love live in fear of rejection? Does love live in fear of abandonment? Does love live in fear of disapproval, criticism, or other mistreatment?

What does the church teach about the role of husband's and wives in marriage? While there is much said about equality, has it been your experience that in practice the church promotes equality between husbands and wives? What examples can you give?

Have you ever heard a pastor tell a husband he should submit to the insights and wisdom of his wife, not because she was his wife, but because she was right? Does the church, inadvertently put husbandly authority over wisdom, healthy decision making and right choices, suggesting the wife should submit to husband's leadership?

If we view God's government as a human government, with a ruler imposing law and enforcing obedience on threat of punishment, will it affect our marriages? How?

Could it result in increased Domestic Violence? If you haven't watched our lecture on DV in the church, I recommend it – Domestic Violence rates in the church are no different than those in the community at large.

But should they be? Should those who profess to be followers of Jesus abuse their spouses less than those who do not profess to follow Jesus? Then what is the problem?

2Tim 3:1-5

- But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—**having a form of godliness but denying its power.**
- Verse 6: They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women

Thoughts?



MONDAY

Read third paragraph, “But God had a reason...” thoughts? What does this idea of one flesh mean to you? What are the implications? Does the fact Eve was taken from Adam’s rib have any implications beyond marriage and into the plan of salvation?

How many intelligent species did God create on planet earth? According to Scripture, has every human being come from Adam, including Eve? The Bible teaches that human life began with Adam, and every other human life is an extension of Adam.

So, when Adam and Eve deviated from God’s design, sinned, they changed themselves. If God wants to heal this creation, to save this creation, this species, what is necessary? If Christ was not born of our humanity then he is not part of this species and the Remedy he achieved is not for us. But he did become part of our humanity, taking up our infirmities, be made like us in every way, to help human beings as the Scripture teaches. Why? Because a human being had to develop a perfect human character, any other species would not have benefited us, but benefited that species.

Thus the Bible teaches Christ is the second Adam, in other words, when we surrender to Christ, the Holy Spirit comes in and we can be transformed to partake of his character, such that we are now grafted into Christ and are part of the healed, renewed, transformed creation that comes from bonding with Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit. This is described as writing the law on our hearts and minds.

What does it mean the two shall become one?

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. JN 17:20-23

Does this passage and the passage on the marriage partners becoming one have any relation?

In Mark chapter 12 the Sadducees came to Jesus and asked the question about the woman who married a man with six brothers, her husband dies and a brother marries her, and each time the husband dies until she marries all seven. They ask Jesus who will be her husband in heaven.

What do you think of Jesus’ reply? Here is the Message version of Jesus’ reply:

Jesus said, “You’re way off base, and here’s why: One, you don’t know your Bibles; two, you don’t know how God works. After the dead are raised up, we’re past the marriage business. As it is with angels now, all our ecstasies and intimacies then will be with God. MK 12:24,25



Do you think the passage in John, where Jesus prayed for all his followers to be one has bearing on this? Do you think the message goes far enough? Is it possible that in heaven we will be so united in love, that we will love others more deeply, intimately, selflessly, completely than we even love our spouses now, and everyone there will love us that much? Will there be a unity of all intelligent beings, beyond our ability to comprehend, that is like Jesus prayed for, that we will one, AS the Father and he are one?

TUESDAY

Read fourth paragraph, “Jesus also emphasized...” thoughts?

Let’s read what Malachi had to say about divorce, Mal 2:13-16:

Another thing you do: You flood the Lord’s altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. ¹⁴ You ask, “Why?” It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

¹⁵ Has not the Lord made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

¹⁶ “I hate divorce,” says the Lord God of Israel, “and I hate a man’s covering [his wife - margin] with violence as well as with his garment,” says the Lord Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith. Mal 2:13-16 NIV

Thoughts?

What position is a healthy position for Christians to take on the subject of divorce?

Does the way we see God’s law enter the picture? If we see God’s law as imposed how do we consider divorce? It is a legal obligation, and unless someone breaks a specific proscribed “exception clause” i.e. adultery, one cannot get out of the legal binding contract. But if one breaks that clause then one may exit the relationship. If one divorces, without the legal exception having been committed, then one is viewed as sinning and themselves committing adultery.

What if one sees God’s law as the law of love? Then how does one see divorce?

Does the Bible teach God hates divorce? Why?

Divorce is like an amputation – do doctors hate amputations? Why do doctors do amputations? When a limb is gangrene and beyond saving.

What do doctors hate worse than amputations? The death of their patients.



What does God hate worse than divorce? The destruction and eternal loss of his children. Are some marriages so abusive that to stay in the marriage would destroy one or both partners?

Here is The Message version of Malachi 2:13-16:

You fill the place of worship with your whining and sniveling because you don't get what you want from God. Do you know why? Simple. Because God was there as a witness when you spoke your marriage vows to your young bride, and now you've broken those vows, broken the faith-bond with your vowed companion, your covenant wife. God, not you, made marriage. His Spirit inhabits even the smallest details of marriage. And what does he want from marriage? Children of God, that's what. So guard the spirit of marriage within you. Don't cheat on your spouse.

¹⁶ "I hate divorce," says the God of Israel. God-of-the-Angel-Armies says, "I hate the violent dismembering of the 'one flesh' of marriage." So watch yourselves. Don't let your guard down. Don't cheat. Mal 2:13-16

Thoughts?

What about the MT 5:31,32:

"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.'³² But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.

Thoughts? Here is my paraphrase:

MT 5:31 "It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must do it legally, giving her a divorce certificate to protect her rights. ³² I'm here to tell you a deeper reality: divorce happens when love breaks down and selfishness wins. No one wants to lose a limb, but we sever a gangrenous limb to save the person, to sever a healthy limb is damaging and wrong. Likewise, anyone who divorces their spouse, except for the gangrenous situation of marital betrayal, inflicts unfaithfulness upon their spouse and whomever the divorced spouse should later marry.¹

Thoughts?

So, how do we now understand Christ's statement about God hating divorce, but God giving divorce because of the "hardness" of their hearts? Doctors hate amputations but do amputations because of the

¹ Adultery is a heart issue, as Jesus said in the previous verses. Divorcing a spouse whose heart is not unfaithful because of selfishness in one's own heart, forces the divorced spouse into a situation in which their heart still longs for their first spouse, so if they remarry their heart longs for the one they have lost, thus the new marriage is built on divided loyalties and longings – an adulterous situation.



necrosis of the tissue. Likewise, God hates divorce, but authorizes divorce when hearts are so necrotic with selfishness the option for healing is gone.

What is adultery? Is it merely physical sex, or is it betrayal of heart? Is it the failure to love your partner more than self?

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, “One of the greatest...” thoughts?

What do you think of the idea that God “has set some rules.”

What type of law does such a statement sound like the authors are operating under, natural or imposed?

Would you word it differently, how?

I would reword the middle sentence as follows, “That is, it’s not something we can just do with as we please **WITHOUT CONSEQUENCE**, God has **CREATED LIFE TO OPERATE UPON UNCHANGABLE PROTOCOLS AND ONLY HARMONY WITH THOSE PROTOCOLS RESULT IN HEALTH AND HAPPINESS.**”

The lesson asks us to read Matthew 5:27-30:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’²⁸ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

Thoughts? What does it mean? Did you notice how Jesus defines adultery as betrayal of heart, not mere behavior? Why do churches have such trouble with understanding this? Because they have accepted the lie that God’s law and government are like a Roman emperor, imposed.

Here is my paraphrase:

MT 5:27 “You know the Scripture says, ‘Do not commit adultery.’²⁸ But I am here to tell you a deeper reality: God is concerned with character and anyone who looks on another lustfully commits adultery and corrupts their heart.²⁹ If you are vulnerable to visual temptation then throw away the media and don’t look at sensual material. You should be so resolutely committed to doing what is right that you would rather lose part of your body than lose eternal life.³⁰ And if you are tempted by what you touch, then touch only that which is good. You



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Thoughts?

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “It is well-known...” thoughts?

What are the implications that unfaithful people are called adulterous? Does it give any insight into what the true nature of adultery is? What is the problem if we limit adultery to physical sex?

Why do so many people fall into the trap of reductionistic thinking and claiming that adultery is limited to physical sex with someone other than the spouse?

Read second paragraph, “At the same time...” thoughts?

What beautiful reality is this pointing toward? How is this possible? Will it be achieved by following rules? Will it be achieved by living by principles, through trust in God?

FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions 1-4