

The Importance of Your Marriage

Introduction:

1. Young couples in the church married in the last five years are having a couples' retreat this week, at which time they will be exhorted with much post-marital advice that God's word can bring to bear.
2. The specific goal in this sermon is to identify reasons to motivate you to improve your marriage.
3. The Bible message from the Lord will be good for the young couples attending and all marriages.
4. The crucial human factors toward perfection in any endeavor are humility, conviction, and diligence.
5. How important to you are God's commandments, wisdom, providence, and soon coming judgment?
6. Your burden of guilt both now and in the Day of Judgment depends on what you have heard. Listen!
7. The consequences both now and later, both in your life and others', are great by your response here.
8. Some are doomed by generational dysfunction – defeated and ignorant losers that will not break out.
9. Some are doomed by personal dysfunction – lazy and selfish rebels that will not get over themselves.
10. Here is the opportunity of a lifetime for God's glory, others' rejoicing, and your pleasure and profit.
11. If you have children in the audience for this sermon, what will you do with what they hear you hear?
12. For the following reasons, you should leave this sermon with conviction to improve your marriage.

FEAR OF GOD

- A. Solomon concluded that man's whole duty is to fear God and obey Him (Eccl 12:13).
- B. God has spoken clearly about marriage – there is much in the Bible about your duties.
- C. How much do you fear God when it comes to pride and selfishness in your marriage?
- D. If you think about your spouse's selfishness with this or any point, you are the fool.
- E. A measure of loving and fearing God is how well you obey Him toward your spouse.
- F. Do not think about this verse in light of other parts of life. Apply it to your marriage.

TO GLORIFY GOD

- A. After fearing and loving God, there is the goal to glorify Him (Col 3:17; I Cor 10:31).
- B. The more you do in Jesus' name giving thanks to God brings greater glory to God.
- C. Loving enemies makes you God's child by works, so love your spouse (Matt 5:43-48).
- D. A naturally hateful and selfish soul loving a spouse His way glorifies Him (Tit 3:1-8).
- E. Is God well pleased with you, as with Job and His Son Jesus? Improve your marriage!
- F. Do not think about glorifying God other ways today. Glorify Him by your marriage.

EXALT HIS PROVIDENCE

- A. God created you and your spouse and arranged your marriage (Acts 15:18). Glorify it!
- B. We do believe in arranged marriages – the Almighty God is the perfect matchmaker!
- C. In comparison, any earthly father's suggestion or arrangement is severely deficient.
- D. Billions of factors (7 billion on earth now) were brought together for your marriage.
- E. God's chess game of infinite combinations of infinite factors arranged your marriage.
- F. Whether you were foolish or wise is now irrelevant: only fools or rebels even think it.
- G. God never makes mistakes, even allowing you to make one in a 50-year decision, for He had His glory and your perfection in mind when you married the “wrong” person!

KEEP WEDDING VOWS

- A. Solomon taught well that it is better not to vow than to vow and not pay (Eccl 5:1-7).
- B. Each of you made significant marital vows before God, angels, family, and friends.
- C. You did this in a very formal way, and rightly so, with full disclosure and knowledge.
- D. You knew marriage was a formal covenant; see your marriage covenant linked below.
- E. You are a traitor guilty of covenant-breaking and other sins if you do not perform all.
- F. It does not matter that your spouse is not what you thought – neither are you (Ps 15:4).

PRESERVE INTEGRITY

- A. Faithfulness is performance to those depending on you (Pro 3:29; 13:17; 20:6; 25:13).
- B. Love includes kindness, behaves appropriately, and seeks not her own (I Cor 13:4-7).
- C. Honest persons with integrity will keep each informal marital commitment they made, whether assumed, implied, or stated, whether to a fiancée, friends, or either family.
- D. Your spouse and family believed your many promises during courtship and wedding.
- E. We do not practice arranged marriages – you chose your spouse of countless options.
- F. Your spouse gave their life to you in marriage, are you faithful in loving them rightly?

ELIMINATE TREACHERY

- A. The Jews sinned by polygamous treachery in marrying foreign wives (Mal 2:10-16).
- B. By noting “again” in verse 13, we see the second sin of causing a wife to cry to God.
- C. There are two covenant transgressions here – one against God and one against wives.
- D. God sees any treachery in your spirit against your one wife to reject and judge you.
- E. If she cries at God’s altar for a justifiable fault of yours, you forfeit heaven’s favors.
- F. If you do not honor her with knowledge, God will reject your prayers (I Peter 3:7).
- G. The reverse is also true, but judgment greater, for the woman was made for the man.
- H. Tears of immaturity or an excuse for rebellion are not in this passage at all. Get real.

GIVE NO PLACE TO DEVIL

- A. The Bible warns not to give any place in your life to the devil (Eph 4:27; 6:10-18).
- B. The devil looks for anger and wrath, so always live in happiness and peace (Ep 4:26).
- C. Note the armor of truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, scripture, and praying.
- D. Be sober and vigilant, for this adversary walks about trying to devour you (I Pet 5:8).
- E. You give the devil place by holding on to any sin that he can leverage against you.
- F. He has devices you should know, like not forgiving those around you (II Cor 2:6-11).
- G. He was a murderer from the beginning, so reject all bitterness, hatred, and wrath.
- H. Allowing anything to dull your sex life can lead to satanic temptation (I Cor 7:5).

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT

- A. Do not grieve or quench the Holy Spirit in your marriage (Eph 4:30; I Thess 5:19).
- B. Unconfessed sin results in loss of the Spirit’s power to bear His fruit in your marriage.
- C. The Spirit’s fruit is exactly what marriage needs – love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, and meekness. These are components for a great marriage.

- D. You can quench the Spirit by sins of commission – anger, bitterness, disrespect, hatred, answering again, railing, worldly movies, worldly music, worldly friends, etc.
- E. You can quench the Spirit by sins of omission – sexual defrauding, avoiding spouse, neglecting kindness, lack of prayer, lack of Bible reading, lack of godly friends, etc.

DAY OF JUDGMENT

- A. You will give an account of your private life (Ec 12:14; Ro 14:10-12; II Cor 5:9-11).
- B. Your marriage is your largest relationship and endeavor greatly exceeding all others.
- C. In the ten parts of a man's life, marriage duties are second – professional only sixth.
- D. You will explain every thought, word, and deed as God defines marriage in the Bible.
- E. God's providence in giving you a spouse and instruction from His word creates duty.
- F. If your spouse is a believer, consider His protective spirit (Ps 105:14-15; Zech 2:8).

NO PUTTING ASUNDER

- A. We want to improve our marriages to stay far away from divorce (Matthew 19:1-12).
- B. Though we understand some Bible exceptions and principles, we should not use them.
- C. Marriages with two believers have every reason to continue and no reason to dissolve.
- D. That 60% of marriages entered into now result in divorce does not make it acceptable.
- E. That divorce now occurs quite acceptably among carnal Christians does not justify it.
- F. We want to contend against such divorces and condemn them by excellent marriages.

STOP BLASPHEMERS

- A. Paul instructed Titus about young wives to shut mouths of blasphemers (Titus 2:4-5).
- B. Paul likewise taught Timothy about young widows to silence adversaries (I Tim 5:14).
- C. When marriages are dysfunctional, or wives as taught here, it allows gospel ridicule.
- D. Your life, including marriage as a large part, should adorn the gospel (Titus 2:1,10).
- E. Hypocrisy gives the enemies of God or the carnally minded grounds to ridicule truth.
- F. You want to live in a way that they can say nothing evil of your marriage (I Pet 3:16).

OPPOSE THE WICKED

- A. Keeping God's commandments contends by actions against the wicked (Prov 28:4).
- B. This is an oft-overlooked way of earnestly contending for the ancient faith (Jude 1:3).
- C. Maximized marriages contend against the wicked for the ancient faith about marriage.
- D. Let's fight against rampant fornication, divorce, abortion, sodomy, and perversions.
- E. Let's also fight carnal Christianity by maximizing Bible marriages (II Tim 3:1 – 4:4).
- F. Let's also fight those that think the Bible is an outdated male chauvinism manual.

SHINE GOSPEL LIGHT

- A. You are told to let your light shine before men to glorify God (Matt 5:16; I Pet 2:12).
- B. How can there be a better way for all concerned than to do so by your own marriage!
- C. Let your mutual love, respect, and service and its resulting romance and power shine!
- D. Since all seek love, let a loving marriage prompt questions of your hope (I Peter 3:15).

E. When they ask why your marriage is so happy and loving, tell them of God's word.

REFLECTING CHRIST

- A. Christian marriages, both spouses, should reflect Christ and the church (Eph 5:22-33).
- B. Christ's love for the church should be the pattern for husbands loving their wives.
- C. The church's submission to Christ should be the pattern for wives obeying husbands.
- D. We are eternally grateful for His love and gladly submit to Him ... do so in marriage!
- E. God gave the example and pattern, not Paul or your pastor or parents or anyone else.
- F. The details of the verses above for this point are full of instruction for marriages.

AS UNTO CHRIST

- A. Wives should submit themselves to their own husbands as unto the Lord (Eph 5:22).
- B. Similarly, servants were to serve masters with one goal – as to the Lord (Col 3:22-23).
- C. It is fit – appropriate, suitable – in Christ Jesus for wives to obey husbands (Col 3:18).
- D. Everything we do should be done as if doing it to the Lord Himself (Matthew 18:5-6).
- E. Charity to poor saints is praised, how much more marriage kindness (Mat 25:31-46)?

END LONELINESS

- A. Man's soul is desolate, empty, and pained without an intimate companion (Gen 2:18).
- B. The God that divides soul and spirit said this about a sinless man walking with Him.
- C. What was the Creator's solution to Adam's lonely situation? He created him a wife!
- D. The Bible describes the singular wife of a man's youth as his companion (Mal 2:14).
- E. Your satisfaction and fulfillment in life depend on maximizing your marital spouse.
- F. This reason applies to the wife as well, for a single woman is lost as well (Ruth 3:1).

AVOID FORNICATION

- A. Marriage is to avoid fornication, so it requires satisfying, frequent sex (I Cor 7:1-5).
- B. Corinth was a moral cesspool so bad that a verb was formed from it, *to Corinthianize!*
- C. But our lascivious generation is not far behind, so the Lord's warning here is crucial.
- D. Note that monogamous marriage, not monotonous, can effectively defeat fornication.
- E. *Due benevolence* is sex when, where, how, and how often as your spouse desires it, for the expression is a euphemistic description of lovemaking you owe your spouse.
- F. All men should pay attention to the order – the man owes the due benevolence first!
- G. Your spouse is not you, which requires much communication and experimentation, for they are first of the other sex, and they second have a different set of preferences.
- H. If you do not fulfill this duty, you are an accomplice to a spouse's temptations or sins.

AVOID DEFRAUDING

- A. Though connected to avoiding fornication, this reason is a little different (I Cor 7:1-5).
- B. Marriage assumes each spouse will get the sex they desire, and God expects this part of marriage to be fulfilled and condemns any other choice as defrauding, a serious sin.
- C. God required polygamists to give due benevolence or the duty of marriage (Ex 21:10).

- D. The wife does not have the power – authority, right, or privilege – to deny her husband the use of her body as he might desire it, and the opposite duty is just as true.
- E. The only exception God allowed was *mutual* fasting and prayer – then great sex again.
- F. How long do you typically fast and pray? It seems that indicates the frequency of sex!
- G. Sexual defrauding, neglecting a spouse’s desires, violates marriage like adultery does.
- H. Sex is a two-way street: forget you; give what your spouse wants and wait; forget you; your spouse may just want you to grow up and act like an adult outside the bedroom!
- I. You do not want to give account of your marriage to the God of sex and be guilty.

WISE USE OF HELP

- A. God created Eve for Adam as a helper meet – suitable, fit, proper – for him (Ge 2:18).
- B. More than just a companion or friend, a wife can support and leverage his abilities.
- C. A man alone cannot usually amount to what he could have achieved with a good wife.
- D. A man maximizing his marriage by cherishing and nourishing his wife will be exalted.
- E. A man neglecting his wife in any way must hate God’s wisdom and himself (Pr 8:36).

WISE USE OF REST

- A. God provided rest for women in marriage, that life might go well for them (Ruth 3:1).
- B. In a proper marriage, a man provides for and protects his wife from danger and harm.
- C. She has a sanctuary in which to live, labor, and love, while he goes out for the bacon.
- D. Rather than being used or abused by other men, she has a committed husband for life.
- E. By working hard for and with her husband, she can help him build the family estate.
- F. Therefore, a wife should do all she can to realize this benefit for herself in marriage.
- G. Therefore, a husband must provide a sanctuary that makes this point true for his wife.

REWARD FOR LABOR

- A. Solomon the wise Preacher gave this as one benefit for human society (Eccl 4:9-12).
- B. Why does the quarterback want to throw a touchdown? Think team, father, girl, etc.
- C. When a husband gets a promotion or raise, the best part is sharing it with his wife.
- D. A wife also gets to share rewards of her labor and make her husband proud (Pr 31:23).
- E. It is sharing life that makes it worthwhile, or hard work is but empty, painful slavery.
- F. A great dinner, home, car, sight, success, event, or experience is much better shared.
- G. A great dinner by a company for a traveling businessman is empty without his wife!

HELP WHEN YOU FALL

- A. Solomon the wise Preacher gave this as one benefit for human society (Eccl 4:9-12).
- B. Having someone close by to help in time of trouble is very comforting and gratifying.
- C. Any person can fall physically, morally, financially, emotionally, professionally, etc.
- D. Without a spouse or without an affectionate spouse, you will be left alone and down.
- E. A loving spouse that gives you the encouragement when you need is a sweet treasure.
- F. A friend is born for adversity, but spouses promise it for life – *for better or for worse!*

SYNERGISM OF SPOUSES

- A. Solomon the wise Preacher gave this as one benefit for human society (Eccl 4:9-12).
- B. Combining abilities and opportunities and multiplying time, marriage leverages one.
- C. Two working together can produce more than the total of what each do independently.
- D. Your spouse has abilities that you do not, so that marital combinations are powerful!
- E. The division of labor sounds contradictory, but it is not; each exploits his strengths.
- F. A marital team can build an estate (Pr 31:10-31) or convert an Apollos (Ac 18:24-28)!

HELP FOR ENEMIES

- A. Solomon the wise Preacher gave this as one benefit for human society (Eccl 4:9-12).
- B. If either spouse has an enemy, it is a precious thing to have someone else on your side.
- C. If you are doing anything valuable in life, you will have enemies; a spouse is helpful!
- D. Two can put up a better defense against an enemy than can one; three are even better!
- E. The home should be a covert, retreat, and sanctuary where each spouse is fully secure.
- F. When a spouse is the enemy of love, joy, and peace – a devil has entered the home.

PLEASURE IN LIFE

- A. Solomon wrote an inspired philosophical examination about maximizing life (Ec 9:9).
- B. He diligent tried everything from riches to polygamy to wisdom to building and more, to a degree that you and all others like you cannot even imagine, let alone experience.
- C. A notable conclusion was his instruction for joyful love of a single wife from youth.
- D. Life is vanity and vexation of spirit, but God gave a gift to you in this life – marriage!
- E. To the degree you neglect, snub, or hurt this relationship, you destroy your own life.
- F. We ruined life in Eden, but that treacherous relationship can give joy under the sun.
- G. What two ingredients are mentioned here? Joy and love! Are you joyful and loving?
- H. Working hard without working on your marriage ruins God's gift for your pleasure.

POWER IN PRAYER

- A. A man must treat his wife correctly, or his prayers to God will be hindered (I Pet 3:7).
- B. This text shows God seriously measures and judges your treatment of your spouse.
- C. A Christian with prayers hindered is neutered in life similar to quenching the Spirit.
- D. It is impossible to be a spiritual man by Bible and prayer while neglecting your wife.
- E. Only the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man works, and dishonoring or neglecting your wife is not righteous, so forget power like Elijah had (James 5:16-17).
- F. God does not hear those regarding sin; this review turns your errors to sin (Ps 66:18).

REWARD OF INHERITANCE

- A. Every spouse, but especially wives, should remember God's great reward (Col 3:24).
- B. Service to pagan masters done to Christ is rewarded, so much more love to a husband.
- C. It does not matter if your husband praises or rewards or not, because God will do it.
- D. But for those that ignore the command and the reward, God also punishes (Col 3:25).
- E. Taken out to dinner for a hard week with the children is nice, but God pays better!

FROWARD IS THANKWORTHY

- A. Your husband is froward, hard to please? You can win God's praise (I Peter 2:18-20).
- B. A good and gentle husband means that a wife hardly has occasion to submit to him.
- C. A good and gentle husband is easy to love, to reverence, to obey, and so forth.
- D. But what of a churlish man like Nabal? Now you can look like Jesus (I Pet 2:21-23)!
- E. This applies as well in principle to men that married to odious wives and love them.

GODLY SEED

- A. God's ideal for marriage was monogamy from the start (Gen 2:18-25; Mal 2:14-15).
- B. He could have created ten wives for Adam, but He created only one for a godly seed.
- C. The exceptions He tolerated only show His longsuffering and prove polygamy foolish, for the Bible record of this foolish male fantasy show children of the basest sort.
- D. The home environment and example of a loving marriage will produce godly children.
- E. While competition of polygamy might pep up some women, God's word works best.
- F. One man and woman loving each other through life is the environment for greatness.
- G. Do not let it be violated by polygamy, adultery, defrauding, divorce, or dysfunction.
- H. Much of the character of children is formed by your marital example before them.

CHILD TRAINING

- A. Two loving parents can train children with the highest character (Prov 1:8-9; 6:20-22).
- B. The father is chief teacher (Is 38:19; Ep 6:4), but the wife has a role (Pr 4:3; 31:1-31).
- C. The combination of loving, united parents bringing God's wisdom to bear is glorious!
- D. Any dysfunction in role, in priority, in love, in sex, in happiness, etc. harms children.
- E. Why would a child ever want to be a Christian, if their parents are unhappily married?
- F. Marriage and parental love should trump the love a hormone-crazed child experiences.

SANCTIFY HOME

- A. Paul told believers married to pagans to keep the marriages for sanctity (I Cor 7:14).
- B. This sanctifying effect by the believer's presence is God's approval of the marriage.
- C. Children in such marriages are legitimized and sanctified before all by the believer.
- D. If Paul would take note of this by the Spirit, how much more true of two believers!
- E. Your marital love, joy, and peace bring God's presence down for the benefit of all.

PROVOKE OTHERS

- A. We are to provoke one another in a church to love and to good works (Heb 10:23-25).
- B. A great marriage will do much for a church by both young and old observing you two!
- C. A happy, loving marriage will condemn and convict sinners and exhort others higher.
- D. Let mutual love, respect, and service and its resulting romance and power convict all.
- E. Let still-in-love couples serving Jesus Christ set an environment for God's full favors.

Conclusion:

1. The specific goal in this sermon was to identify reasons to motivate you to improve your marriage.

2. The crucial human factors toward perfection in any endeavor are humility, conviction, and diligence.
3. How important to you are God's commandments, wisdom, providence, and soon coming judgment?
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8. Here is the opportunity of a lifetime for God's glory, others' rejoicing, and your pleasure and profit.
9. If you have children in the audience for this sermon, what will you do with what they hear you hear?
10. For the reasons above, you should leave this sermon with conviction to improve your marriage.
11. Restoring first love is simple – remember what it was like, repent, and do the first works (Re 2:4-5).

For Further Study:

1. A marriage covenant covering the Bible's wisdom ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/marriage-covenant.pdf>.
2. The sermon outline, "Marriage – Only in the Lord," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/marriage-in-the-lord.pdf>.
3. The sermon outline, "The Role of the Woman," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/role-of-the-woman.pdf>.
4. The sermon outline, "The Role of the Man," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/role-of-the-man.pdf>.
5. The sermon outline, "Perfect Marriages," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/perfect-marriages.pdf>.
6. The sermon outline, "Marriage Essentials," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/marriage-essentials.pdf>.
7. The sermon outline, "Maximizing Your Marriage," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/maximizing-your-marriage-1989.pdf>.
8. The men's outline, "How to Seduce Your Wife," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/how-to-seduce-your-wife.pdf>.
9. The reference guide, "Sex in the Bible," ... not in e-format at this time.
10. The pastoral collection, "Marriage Manual," ... not in e-format at this time.