## Level 2 Lesson 11

### *MARRIAGE (Part 2)*
***By Don Krow***

Today we're going to look again at the subject of marriage, and the question is, "What is marriage?" Have you ever thought about that? According to the Bible, it was God's idea to design marriage. Marriage is a joining together, a oneness, a uniting. Genesis 2:24 says, *"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife* [they will be joined, and he will cleave to his wife] *and they shall become one flesh"* (brackets mine, *New International Version*). Did you know that marriage is more than a joining, more than oneness? For example, 1 Corinthians 6:15-6 says if I go out, being a Christian, and join myself to a prostitute, I become one flesh with her. Then consider the quotation from Genesis 2:24 about marriage. Joining myself to a prostitute would not automatically make me divorced from my wife or make me married to the prostitute because I had intercourse with her. So what is marriage? If marriage is a oneness, if it's a joining together, if it's becoming one flesh, what is the difference between that and going to a prostitute? Obviously, if you went into a prostitute, you would become one flesh with her.

The Bible does say that marriage is a oneness, a joining together, a uniting together, but it's more than that. It is a uniting together by a covenant. The word "covenant" in Hebrew is *berith*, and it has the idea of binding together. It's a final commitment of an individual, even a commitment till death do you part. Now, if I went into a prostitute, if I did such an evil sin as that, there would be no commitment on my part to her. The essence of marriage is to first of all forsake all others. The Bible says you shall leave your father and mother and you shall cleave to your wife. Ezekiel says, *"You became mine."* It's forsaking all others for this one—to commit yourself to this one. Obviously if you, in an immoral way, go to another person when you are married, that would violate the principle of marriage, the oneness and unity that comes through a covenant, or commitment. Ezekiel 16:8 calls it a covenant of marriage. In Ephesians 5, we learn that in marriage, the husband is to love his wife, even as Christ loved the church, so it's a covenant of love. The reason it's a covenant of love is because love is the ruling principle in marriage. Above all things, love must be the ruling principle of marriage.

Marriage is a covenant of oneness. It says in 1 Peter 3:7 that if I don't honor and appreciate my wife as being the weaker vessel and realize that we are heirs together of the grace of life, our prayers will be hindered. Think about that—our spiritual lives could be hindered if we do not walk in the unity and harmony that God has designed for the marriage relationship. Proverbs 2:16-17 talks about a wayward woman who forsakes her marriage covenant, the guide of her youth, and that marriage relationship is called a covenant of her God. This is a very serious thing. It's a covenant we make to an individual, but it's also a covenant that we make before God. As much as I love to

minister to people, God has a priority, and that is to focus on our marriage. Marriage really is a focusing of my life onto another individual, and as I said, the ruling principle is love.

Matthew 7:12 says whatever you would want someone to do to you, do to them, for this is the Law and the prophets. This is exactly the principle that should rule in marriage. It's not a selfish thing, not for self, not about what this person can give you. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 13:4 that love is kind. That means to seek the welfare of another, to be generous and kind, and to always seek the best for another. The reason marriage is designed that way is because it is an example, a model, of what a real relationship with God should be. He has given us illustrations in the natural. He has shown us how to have a good marriage, a great marriage, because He wants us to have a model of what a real eternal relationship is to be with Him. Marriage is only until death do us part, a temporary thing. The Bible says that in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage. God wants us to understand having a good marriage—the principles of love—the principles of giving unselfishly to another. He is saying, "What I want you to really understand is that I've called you into a marriage relationship with Me—not a temporary relationship, not one that will just last a few years and then be gone, but an eternal relationship where all of My love will be manifested to you forever and ever."

Let me give you a few principles of marriage. Marriage is a merger, not just a partnership. The Bible talks about it in Genesis 4 as a knowing and in 1 Peter 3:7 as being heirs together of the grace of life. Marriage is a covenant, which means it is binding; there's a commitment involved. Sin did not enter the first church; it entered the first marriage, so we need to get the manual, get the instructions about marriage, and implement the principles of love in our lives. We also ask, "What is love?" The definition of love is really, in a sense, unselfishness. Isaiah 53:6 says we are like sheep, that we went astray and turned every one to our own way, but in marriage, we focus on the other individual and seek their welfare and benefit.

The Bible tells us in Ephesians that loving your wife is like loving your own body. We husbands are to cherish and honor the wife God has given to us, which means to appreciate her. To love your own body doesn't mean you sit around and hold hands with yourself, pat yourself, and say, "Oh, I love you." It's not that at all. To love yourself is to protect yourself, feed yourself, and look out for yourself. We should never take our wives for granted, never take one of her weaknesses and expose it publicly, never make fun of her, or do things that hurt her. We're to love her as we love our own selves.

I would like you to lift yourself up to God in prayer and first of all thank Him for loving you. The second thing I want you to do is thank Him for your partner, the mate He gave you. That's part of the problem. You haven't appreciated your mate; you put her down, and the Bible says that basically is selfish and is sin. It says in Ephesians 5 that Jesus cleansed the church by the washing of water by the Word, by His Words He spoke over the church. When you speak words over your mate, they will rise to the level of the words you speak. If you say "You're no good, you're ugly, you're overweight," you will

suppress your marriage and not cause oneness but separation and alienation. But if you speak words of kindness like "Honey, I appreciate the things you do. I appreciate you. I love you," and back them up with your actions, your mate will rise up to the level of those words.

Can't you see today that a lot of the problems in your marriage relationship are the words you've spoken? You have brought your mate down rather than up. I encourage you to speak good words over your mate today. Love is not a feeling; love is seeking the welfare and benefit of another person regardless of how you feel. Begin today with acts of kindness, just like painting several layers of lacquer on a piece of wood. That's how love is built—by little acts of kindness. Start to esteem, honor, value, and speak words of love over your mate, and you'll see a difference. God bless you as you implement these principles.

**Discipleship Questions**

1. Read Proverbs 18:22. Marriage is: A. a good thing. B. terrible. C. pleasing unto the Lord.

2. Read Hebrews 13:4. Sex in marriage (or the marriage bed) is: A. sin. B. dirty and evil. C. undefiled.

3. Read Ecclesiastes 9:9 (*New American Standard Version*). A godly marriage is a gift and reward to you in this life from the Lord. True or False.

4. Read 1 John 3:18 (*New Century Version*). "Judge Phillip Gilliam stated that of the 28,000 juvenile court cases that he judged, the lack of affection between father and mother was the greatest cause of juvenile delinquency that he knew" (Together Forever, p. 152). How are we to show love? _____

5. Read Ephesians 5:28. I am not to neglect my wife anymore than I neglect my own body. True or False.

6. Read 1 John 3:16. The words "I love you" can be beautiful if they are backed with actions. Jesus backed up His words by laying down His life for us. We ought to lay down our lives for our mates in as many practical ways as we possibly can. True or False. Share some practical ways that you would like to be loved.

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7. Read Ephesians 5:25-26. My wife is going to live up to what I speak over her. I bring her to the potential of that which I speak over her. True or False.

8. Read Romans 8:38-39 and 1 John 4:19. We are wooed (or loved) by the intimate words that are spoken to us followed by action. God wooed us by speaking to us intimate words from His love letters, recorded as Scripture. True or False.

9. Read 1 John 5:3 and 2 John 6. The how-tos of love are expressed and known by Jesus commandments. We can learn these principles of love from God's Word. True or False.

10. Read John 14:15. Love is not a matter of your emotions but of your will. Every command in Scripture is given to man's will, never to his emotions. God never tells you how to feel, but rather He tells you how to act. True or False.

11. Read Galatians 5:22-23. Love is not natural. It must be learned and birthed into mankind by the Holy Spirit. Love is a fruit of: A. man's thinking B. man's nature C. God's Spirit.

12. Read Ephesians 5:31-32. A good marriage is a small scale model of what?

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**Scriptures to Use with Questions**

Proverbs 18:22 – *"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD."*

Hebrews 13:4 – *"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."*

Ecclesiastes 9:9 (*New American Standard Version*) – *"Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life, and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun."*

1 John 3:18 (*New Century Version*) – *"My children, we should love people not only with words and talk, but by our actions and true caring."*

Ephesians 5:28 – *"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself."*

1 John 3:16 – *"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."*

Ephesians 5:25-26 – "[25] *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;* [26] *That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."*

Romans 8:38-39 – "[38] *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,* [39] *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

1 John 4:19 – *"We love him, because he first loved us."*

1 John 5:3 – *"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."*

2 John 6 – *"And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it."*

John 14:15 – *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."*

Galatians 5:22-23 – "[22] *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,* [23] *Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."*

Ephesians 5:31-32 – "[31] *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.* [32] *This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*

**Answer Key**

1. Read Proverbs 18:22. Marriage is: **A. a good thing** and **C. pleasing unto the Lord.**

2. Read Hebrews 13:4. Sex in marriage (or the marriage bed) is: **C. undefiled**.

3. Read Ecclesiastes 9:9 (*New American Standard Version*). A godly marriage is a gift and reward to you in this life from the Lord. **True.**

4. Read 1 John 3:18 (*New Century Version*). "Judge Phillip Gilliam stated that of the 28,000 juvenile court cases that he judged, the lack of affection between father and mother was the greatest cause of juvenile delinquency that he knew" (Together Forever, p. 152). How are we to show love? **By actions and true caring.**

5. Read Ephesians 5:28. I am not to neglect my wife anymore than I neglect my own body. **True.**

6. Read 1 John 3:16. The words "I love you" can be beautiful if they are backed with actions. Jesus backed up His words by laying down His life for us. We ought to lay down our lives for our mates in as many practical ways as we possibly can. **True.** Share some practical ways that you would like to be loved.

7. Read Ephesians 5:25-26. My wife is going to live up to what I speak over her. I bring her to the potential of that which I speak over her. **True. The Greek word used in Ephesians 5:26 is** ***rhema*****, meaning "spoken words."**

8. Read Romans 8:38-39 and 1 John 4:19. We are wooed (or loved) by the intimate words that are spoken to us followed by action. God wooed us by speaking to us intimate words from His love letters, recorded as Scripture. **True. God's Word is full of loving words toward us.**

9. Read 1 John 5:3 and 2 John 6. The how-tos of love are expressed and known by Jesus commandments. We can learn these principles of love from God's Word. **True.**

10. Read John 14:15. Love is not a matter of your emotions but of your will. Every command in Scripture is given to man's will, never to his emotions. God never tells you how to feel, but rather He tells you how to act. **True.**

11. Read Galatians 5:22-23. Love is not natural. It must be learned and birthed into mankind by the Holy Spirit. Love is a fruit of: **C. God's Spirit**.

12. Read Ephesians 5:31-32. A good marriage is a small scale model of what? **Christ and His church.**

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