



Freedom: Embracing The Limits of Marriage and Sex

Key idea:

Freedom is found in embracing the truth that marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman, and it is the only proper context for human sexual activity.

Key text:

Genesis 1:28

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Genesis 2:20-25

So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. ²¹ So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. ²³ The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” ²⁴ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. ²⁵ The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

Key points:

1. Marriage is part of God’s creation of humanity and is an institution given and defined by God, not humanity.
2. Marriage is essentially related to procreation and provides the proper context for sex and procreation.
3. God’s design for marriage is that it is the lifelong bond of one man and one woman.
4. Marriage is the only allowable context for sexual activity, and thus is only valid when between one man and one woman who are in a marriage covenant.

5. Marriage is given to be a picture of Christ and His Bride, the Church.
6. Because of all of these things, sexual sin is considered a very sin throughout Scripture.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. Why does it matter if marriage is an institution given by God at the creation of humanity rather than being something that human cultures created over time?
3. Why does it matter if marriage is essentially related to procreation? What does this tell me about the nature of marriage - and what can never be considered a marriage? If this is true, what about heterosexual couples who for one reason or another can not have children? Is their marriage still a valid marriage?
4. When Jesus is asked about marriage in Matthew 19, he refers to Genesis 1 and 2 in His answer. However, he clarifies that the **two** will become one, and they are no longer **two** but one. Why does Jesus make this clarification? If this is true, what about the people in the Old Testament who had more than one wife?
5. The Scripture teaches that marriage is the only proper context for sexual activity. Does our culture agree with this? What does our culture say are the necessary requirements for sexual activity to be acceptable? What is the root of this idea?
6. The Scripture teaches that marriage is a human picture of the deeper reality of the relationship between Christ and His Bride, the Church. Why is this important to recognize when considering the nature of marriage? How does this relate to the idea that marriage is a lifelong bond between one man and one woman?
7. Some people say that the Bible does not really address same-sex sins. Is this true? How many different sexual sins does Paul address in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11? In Romans 1:24-27? Do these texts actually speak to same-sex activity? How do they line up with what we have seen from Genesis 1 and 2, and the rest of Scripture?
8. If someone told me that the Greek of passages like 1 Corinthians 6:9 do not refer to what we know as sexual orientation and long-term committed same-sex relationships, how would I answer them? Do I need to know Greek to know the biblical teaching regarding proper and sinful sexual activity?
9. Why is sexual sin so serious? Can't I just engage in physical sex without the commitment of marriage? Why does this matter?

10. Which of the aspects of marriage do I think was the first one abandoned by our culture? How did this pave the way for further confusion on marriage? Between no-fault divorce, polyamory, and same-sex marriage, which is the most serious departure from God's design for marriage? Why?
11. Who will I call or see to encourage this week?

For Further Study:

[Marriage: When Two Become One](#) (February 12, 2017)

[Love and Respect](#) (February 10, 2014)

[Is Cohabitation the Same As Marriage?](#) (December 4, 2005)

[Does God Allow Homosexual Marriage?](#) (December 11, 2005)

[The Covenant Nature of Marriage](#) (January 1, 2006)

For a full series on God's plan for marriage and family, see the series [As For Me and My House](#) (October 2005-March 2006)

Preview of next week: Freedom, Limits, and the Depth of Sin (Genesis 3)