



## Lessons for Disciples - Marriage (Part 3) - Joined Together By God

### Key idea:

When a man and a woman take covenant marriage vows God supernaturally joins them together, creating a new union that they must spend the rest of their earthly life nurturing through healthy practices so that their marriage flourishes to the glory of God and their joy.

### Key text:

Mark 10:5-9

<sup>5</sup> “It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law,” Jesus replied. <sup>6</sup> “But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’ <sup>7</sup> ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, <sup>8</sup> and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one. <sup>9</sup> Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.”

### Key points:

1. The biblical focus is not on the negative prohibitions in God’s Law against sinful practices, but rather on the positive virtues that the sinful practices destroy.
2. The biblical focus is not on the prohibitions regarding divorce, but rather on the positive reality that God intends marriage to give space for true intimacy, knowing and being known by one another, being naked and unashamed.
3. Several specific practices nurture marital intimacy:
  - a. I must remember that the enemy of my marriage is Satan, not my spouse, and pray for my spouse and our marriage.
  - b. I must use my words to nurture my spouse and our marriage.
  - c. I must use my actions to serve and give to my spouse to meet their needs rather than manipulating my spouse to fulfill my desires.
  - d. I must forgive my spouse as Christ has forgiven me.

## Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. Do I tend to focus on the negative prohibitions in God's Law ("do not divorce" or "do not steal") or the positive commands and virtues that the prohibition is meant to protect and foster ("protect your marriage relationship" or "work hard and give to others")? Why is this my tendency?
3. Have I considered true deep intimacy, knowing and being known by one another, being naked and unashamed as the central focus in marriage? If not, what have I thought of as the central aspects of marriage?
4. When I think of being totally naked with my spouse - not in clothing but emotionally, relationally, mentally - how does it make me feel? Why?
5. Why is marriage such a key battleground in the spiritual war between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness? Why is marriage so important?
6. What does Scripture mean when it says my words have the power of life and death? How is this related to my being created in the image of God? Have my words been carriers of life or death? How can I improve in this area, especially in my marriage?
7. Why does love seek to give and serve rather than take and be served? How is this related to God's character and my creation in His image? Why is it so easy for me to give into the desire to manipulate others into serving me rather than giving myself in love to them? Why is this a particular temptation in marriage?
8. Is it possible to develop or maintain a close, intimate relationship apart from consistent forgiveness? What happens if I do not forgive others? How does it affect my ability to be "naked" before my spouse? Is there any area where I have not forgiven my spouse? If so, take time to confess this to God, and if needed, to your spouse.
9. Who can I reach out to this week to invite to the Easter Sunday service?

## Additional Teaching Resources:

[Marriage: When Two Become One](#)

[Love and Respect](#)

[The Purposes of Marriage](#)

[Relationships](#) (a series on practices that harm relationships, including marriage)