

# *For the Love of the Family Ministries*

**Missionaries to America's Forgotten Mission Field, the Family**

***Understanding Marriage From the Bible***

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## *Understanding Marriage From The Bible*

Marriage! It can be one of life's most beautiful experiences or one of life's most miserable experiences. As Kim and I travel and speak in churches and to different groups about the home, children, and marriage, I find that many people are confused and many have great pain in their marriages. About fifty percent of all pastoral counseling is marriage counseling. With the divorce rate well over fifty percent for all first marriages and the divorce rate for second marriages more than seventy-five percent, it is obvious there is a serious problem. Christian marriages are blowing apart at an alarming rate. The subsequent problems and disillusionment for children, marriage partners, and the church is a huge disaster. It does not have to be this way.

Many times after services I will have people stay around to talk and generally there is great pain in what they are speaking about. Through our counseling ministry we find marriages in serious trouble. This is the first article in a series of articles on marriage which will include husband and wife roles and many Biblical practical helps. I want to mention some basic principles first and then move on to some more in depth topics later in the series.

In our society, marriage is being thought of as a negative. When I was a younger man, just out of high school and unsaved, a friend of mine was getting married and so we "guy friends" thought it would be fun to play a joke on him. One of them painted on the bottom of his shoes, "Help Me!" At a point during the service the lovely young couple knelt down and this exposed his soles to the wedding congregation. Snickering and laughing started and of course, someone took a picture for the future posterity of the moment. I heard someone say, "Man I am glad it was him and not me" speaking about getting married. We have all heard many negative statements about marriage. Marriage has not been looked upon positively.

Things to consider Biblically about marriage:

1. Marriage is a **positive**. It was started by God who is loving, kind, and merciful. Genesis 1, 2. It is continually exalted in the Scriptures. Proverbs, I Corinthians 7, Hebrews 13:4, Ephesians

5. **If you think about marriage as a positive, you will talk about it as a positive.** It is important to think and speak about your marriage positively.
2. Marriage is a **beautiful picture**. (Ephesians 5:22-33). The context of Ephesians 5 is two saved, Spirit controlled people. The sadness of our hour is many Christians seek to have a marriage that is not Christ honoring. The most important aspect of establishing a Christ honoring marriage is to fully understand what it means to be filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit on a daily basis. Real problems come in when people seek to live for their lusts and go their own way as a Christian in their marriage. God shows us this beautiful picture in Ephesians 5:22-33 of two saved, Spirit controlled people having a positive experience in their marriage. What does it mean to be Spirit controlled? It means on a daily basis I ask God to show me any sin that stands between me and Him. When he does show me my sin, I specifically confess the sin and ask God to forgive me of that sin. I repent of it (means I change my thinking about it to God's thinking and then my behavior changes). After I have dealt with the sin issues of my life I then ask God to fill me and control me today with and by the Holy Spirit. You see folks; there is no change in our lives without getting specific about our sin and repenting from it.

**The husband's role is to portray God in the Biblical picture of marriage.** As the leader he is to be most responsible, Ephesians 5:23, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body." The husband is to be the most sacrificial.

Ephesians 5:25, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." As the lover, he is to be the most giving.

The way in which this picture works is the husband is to be like Christ, in that:

1. He is to love his wife and care for her tenderly and kindly, Ephesians 5:26.
2. He is to be concerned about long term spiritual goals, holiness, and godliness in her life, Ephesians 5:27.
3. The result will encourage reciprocal love, Ephesians 5:28-30.

The wife is to portray the church in the picture by:

1. Being subject to him, Ephesians 5:22.
2. She is to be subject in everything, Ephesians 5:24.
3. She is to be cooperating with his goals for her, Ephesians 5:27-28.
4. She is to be respecting her husband, Ephesians 5:33.

Do not miss the point dear brothers and sisters what we are talking about is two saved, Spirit controlled people. **The grievous error today is not being Spirit controlled people.** A Spirit controlled person is a Word controlled person. God's Word is what controls their thinking and their actions rather than emotions and feelings. You will not have a good marriage until you get that point. Living the way you feel is a disaster for the Christian. You will then have a hard, ugly, home and marriage, Proverbs 13:13, 15. A person who is not Word controlled will be destroyed. Unfortunately, that is what we are seeing around us in the church on a daily basis. Homes, marriages, and children are being destroyed even though they attend the house of God. Why? Because they fail to understand God says what he means and means what he says. I Corinthians 11:31, "For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged." People who live carnal, selfish, worldly lives and live for themselves invite the judgment of God upon their lives. The real sadness is many of them do not understand God is judging their life. What

they see around them in the church are ungodly, selfish, carnal and worldly Christians who talk about their life being so hard. They believe that is normal. Proverbs 13:13, 15, "Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded. Good understanding giveth favor but **the way of the transgressor is hard.**" Folks, if you choose to live for yourself in your marriage, your transgressions will make your marriage ugly and hard. It will also include your children. Many times it leads to divorce and many other disastrous choices and problems.

Most of the time when Kim and I counsel a couple about their marriage, they may be attending church some but they are generally unfaithful in their lives. They do not deal with sin on a daily basis, are not being filled and controlled by the Spirit, do not read their Bible on a daily basis, are generally unfaithful in the house of God, in witnessing, giving, prayer or other areas. We seek to show them from the Bible God's standard for faithfulness, I Corinthians 4:2, "**Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.**" Generally, they will be angry about that because they **think they are faithful.** However, they are resisting Biblical godly change in their life by their unfaithfulness. They are generally showing considerable anger and unkindness to each other, and do not understand that "**LOVE IS KIND**", I Corinthians 13:4. Many times they have considered being unfaithful to the marriage because they believe their needs have not been met. What we seek to point out is God's desire for their life is to seek to glorify Him, I Corinthians 6:19-20, I Corinthians 10:31. You cannot glorify God in your life if you are an unfaithful person. Therefore, the consequence of your unfaithfulness is affecting your marriage, children, and home. They are in serious spiritual trouble.

We then take them to I Samuel 15 and read the account of Saul's unfaithfulness and the dire consequences of it. He thought he was faithful as well, and his life was a disaster because he did not fully obey God. Partial obedience is no obedience. We then need to help the couple realize their life is in the mess it is in because of their disobedience to God. Many times we will hear, "But you don't understand Pastor we are in a financial mess", or "We are arguing all the time, or "She does this or he does that....." Honestly, marital issues are not going to be solved until spiritual issues are solved. If a person will not see their sinful disobedience, then God does not have the answers for them. They are in the mess they are in because they fail to understand the picture of Ephesians 5 and how they are to live with God's help through His Word. Failure to do so means you are not trusting God and not living by faith. Romans 10:17, "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." Romans 1:17, "the just shall live by faith." Hebrews 11:6, "But **without faith it is impossible to please him:** for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

They also fail to see their unfaithfulness. They must repent of their unfaithfulness. There are many things that people can be unfaithful about and they are deceived. Galatians 6:7-8, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." This makes it plain we need to be filled and controlled by the Spirit of God and desire His will and way in our life, otherwise, we have serious issues on our hands. When I show people this passage I ask them to write down five ways they think they are sowing to the flesh. It doesn't take long to figure out that the issues are there because of spiritual issues. Of course, we then look at God's answer from His Word for each issue. Isn't it great that we serve the God of answers who has the answer for each of us from His precious Word? He loved us so much he gave us the answers on how to live if we desire that.

Divorce and the things that lead to it destroy the picture God wants for us in Ephesians 5. God does not want you to do that, Malachi 2:15-16.

3. Marriage is progressive, Genesis 2:18-25. In verse 24 the Bible says, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother...” Leaving does not mean abandon or forsake, Deuteronomy 4:9, I Timothy 5:8. It also does not mean a geographical move.

What does it mean? It means to settle past conflict and recognize three very important things: 1. Before you got married, living in your parents home was a temporary condition. 2. Marriage is a permanent relationship between you and your spouse. 3. Your children are a temporary condition in your home. You will live with your spouse after the children are gone; therefore, you need to build a godly Spirit controlled relationship with each other.

You need to realize that you must meet the needs of your mate first. You must assume financial responsibility. You need to make your marriage partner the primary human relationship you have.

The word “cleaving” means to weld together. **You must understand that the basis of marriage is commitment, not love.** God views this commitment as very important. Proverbs 2:17, Malachi 2:14.

God intended marriage to defeat loneliness. God wants you to function as a team. It is achieved by having: 1. The same spiritual goals. 2. The same motives. 3. Continual godly communication, Ephesians 4:29-32. 4. Personal spiritual growth, II Peter 3:18, 5. Creativity in relating to each other.

Marriage is a positive picture of spiritual progress. Marriage can be a beautiful experience or it can be a miserable experience, depending on your spiritual life.

I read something awhile back and I thought it was appropriate for the picture of Ephesians 5. I read the testimony of a couple who had been married fifty years and were godly; Spirit controlled Christians living the Ephesians 5 picture. He stated, “After all these years I still look for her in a crowd and it excites me when I see her. I still long for the touch of her hand upon mine. I think about her first thing in the morning and I think of her smile. I think of her laughter and how she makes me complete. I think of how much I love her and want to do my best for her. When I think of her, I think about us walking hand in hand together into the sunset of our life. Together we just keep on walking, loving, caring, and serving the Savior right into eternity.”

He got the picture! I encourage you to understand the Bible picture of marriage. May God give you sweet peace and joy as you work on it and find it together.

Terry L. Coomer is the Pastor of Elwood Bible Baptist Church, and the Director of For the Love of the Family Ministries. He has also served as the Publisher of the nation’s fastest growing daily newspaper. Pastor Coomer holds Family Conferences in the local church. To have a meeting at your church or other needs he may be contacted at (765) 552-1973, [tlcoomer@juno.com](mailto:tlcoomer@juno.com). There are many helpful articles and material on our web site to help you change your life at [www.fortheloveofthefamily.com](http://www.fortheloveofthefamily.com). We serve the God of answers. If you need help finding those answers you may contact us at [tlcoomer@juno.com](mailto:tlcoomer@juno.com). To be removed from our mailing list send an e-mail to [tlcoomer@juno.com](mailto:tlcoomer@juno.com).

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1. To encourage and help Pastors, parents, and the local church in strengthening and training their families and

their children to live for and serve God. To have a strong church we must have strong families. (Proverbs 22:6, Ephesians 6:4).

2. To provide literature, cassette tapes, videotapes, and resource material to churches and families from an independent-fundamental, Biblical, Baptist viewpoint that encourages godly families.
3. To provide a magazine *For The Love of The Family Magazine* (under construction and coming soon) dealing with family issues that encourages godly living and provides practical Biblical training for the home. This will be a subscription-based magazine.
4. To hold Family, Missions and Bible conferences in the local church. We also hold Family Living Seminars. Pastor Coomer is available on a limited basis for these conferences and seminars, as we believe the family is a great and forgotten mission field in many instances. We have a book table with godly family literature available during the meetings. Our booklet *For the Love of the Family*, a practical guide on rearing children spiritually to grow up and serve God will be available at the conferences and seminars. Some Pastors have placed orders for these books to give to each family in their church. Please contact us at the address, phone or e-mail address above to schedule meetings or order *For the Love of the Family* \$5.00 each, order 25 or more and the cost is \$4.00 each. See the order blank on our web site [www.fortheloveofthefamily.com](http://www.fortheloveofthefamily.com).
5. To be Ambassadors for Christ (IICorinthians 5:20) to the forgotten mission field the "American Family."
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As a Pastor for many years I have become greatly concerned and greatly burdened over the number of children who grow up not to serve the Savior from Christian homes. There seems to be a real lack of practical, spiritual, Biblical training going on in this apostate hour. I am also greatly concerned about the number of Christian families that are blowing apart and the tragedy that results from these lives. It is the desire of this ministry to help, encourage, and to provide training and Biblical help to families to not lose their children and for parents to know what it means to be godly parents, husbands and wives. Please feel free to contact us for more information. Contributions and support are appreciated to provide for the work of the ministry.