

# *Joined Together*

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Mike Miller

Straight Paths Bible Church

Mark 10:6-9 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Ephesians 4:16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

- I. The church is not a club, it is a body.
  - A. A club has members and a church has members,
  - B. The members of a club try to work together for a cause, which is usually mostly about perpetuating their club.
  - C. But the church's members are "joined together" in love and in a much higher and more important purpose.
  - D. If God has put us into his church we have been made a part of one another, very similar to what God said about a husband and wife being "joined together."
  - E. When God joins people together like He does in marriage and in his church, it is for good, and it is a relationship that is not meant to be torn asunder, but to grow and blossom into something much more than it is at the beginning.
  - F. A social club is a sideline, or a pastime, but not a relationship like a marriage or a church.
    1. The thing that holds a club together is not love for one another, but how much pleasure it is able to provide for its members.
  - G. The thing that holds a church together is the same thing that holds a marriage together, and that is love, unfeigned love, fervent love, sacrificial love, that makes one another more important than any other interest or concern, or any other person.
- II. The things that destroy a home and a marriage are many of the same things that destroy a church.

Jeremiah 2:2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.

- A. The beginning is always sweet and wonderful, full of happiness and satisfaction.
- B. But life with its troubles and frustrations and busy-ness has a way of causing love to grow cold.
- C. If you want your fire to keep burning you have to keep putting the fuel to it.
- D. If we get too busy working and forget to feed the fire it will go out on us.
- E. If we let it get too low it is very hard to get it going again, but if we feed it steadily it will keep us warm and things will be comfortable.

- III. The first step that the devil makes to divide a home, a marriage, or a church is to introduce a spirit of independence.
- A. It might be better classified a “spirit of rebellion” because it begins its work in your mind by starting a dialogue with you about how you are neglected, deprived, and unappreciated.
    - 1. This was the first problem that the early church encountered; the widows were being neglected in the daily ministration. (Acts 6:1)
  - B. This spirit of independence will work to cause division by encouraging you to find someone else, somewhere else, something else, to spend your time on.
    - 1. It is usually accompanied by an attitude of revenge.
  - C. When other interests slip into our lives they very easily reduce our time and thoughts toward our spouse.
    - 1. They feel neglected, forgotten, wronged, jealous, and rightly so.
    - 2. This is one of the most common charges God makes toward his people is that they have forgotten Him.

Jeremiah 2:32 Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number.

- 3. It is a natural thing to feel frustrated and wronged when the most important person in your life is too busy to think of you.
  - D. Other interests should not be allowed to disturb a marriage by either husband or wife.
  - E. Other interests are the first thing that begin to tear down a church.
    - 1. Worldly associations and activities that require fellowship with people outside of your church. (ball games, school activities, family activities)
    - 2. Religious associations and fellowship with people outside your church and outside your faith and practice.
    - 3. We are talking about continual associations, activities, and fellowship.
    - 4. When it becomes a regular thing or a thing that happens too much there will be division in the church soon.
    - 5. When someone with contrary opinions, or wild and strange ideas gets your ear you will either soon be causing division in the church, or you will leave the church, or both.
    - 6. Just as much as if a husband or a wife were to start spending too much time with another man or woman; there is bound to be problems and division and trouble in their relationship, and maybe even shipwreck.
  - F. When we spend all our energy and strength on other things and have nothing left to give our spouse, our family, our church, we have too much going on in our life.
    - 1. It is amazing how people are so used to doing this; they can go and go and work and work, sick or not, tired or not, but when it is time for church they are just too tired, or just too sick.
  - G. Those are the kinds of things that turn a church into a social club and make it impotent as an influence for God.
- IV. The thing is that we all have something that is most important in our life.
- A. It is what we live for, what we put our strength into, what we make everything else in our life work for and toward.
  - B. Very few count their church as that important any more.

1. It is a pastime or a side thing they do to adorn their life and soothe their conscience, or simply because they feel an obligation.
  2. But to them it is not the most important thing going on in the world right now.
- C. But the church IS the most important thing going on in the world right now.
  - D. We have a mission and a short time to carry it out.
  - E. Each of us has the opportunity to be a part of the most important work in the world, but we are trifling with worldly and vain things that make us proud, or feel good, or give us some kind of other pleasure, but have no real value here or in eternity.
  - F. Most homes crash and burn for the same reasons and no one has sense enough to wake up and do something before it is too late.
  - G. The fate of most churches seems to be the same.
    1. People just get bored with it, start involving themselves in other interests, which are usually worldly, and then find no reason to keep wasting their time a church that isn't doing anything.
  - H. This is the reason that so many churches are trying to keep people by having all kinds of activities and programs to keep people involved in.
  - I. It is like the family that is always planning something, buying something, going somewhere, to try to sustain the excitement and level of pleasure that they think will make them happy.
  - J. Vanity will not make anyone happy – ever, no matter how much the world approves it, promotes it, and affirms that will.
- V. What is the priority in your life?
- A. Is it to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness?
  - B. Or is to seek your own fulfillment, happiness, wealth, security, pleasure, and interests?
  - C. Be honest!
  - D. The only way to have peace in life and to be blessed by God is to put God first, and that means put God's interests first above our own.
  - E. It means sacrificing ourselves for God and his kingdom.
  - F. As long as we seek our own we will never have peace with God, and we will never have a life blessed of God.

**Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**