

The Marriage Covenant

Quick Review of Principles of Biblical Interpretation – Big Three

- Interpretation is subject to Definition: Words have meaning
- Old Covenant is subject to New Covenant
- Historical Revelation is subject to Doctrinal Revelation

The covenant of marriage, as both conceived and defined by God, is made with God on the basis of legitimate needs of both the husband and wife to which both the husband and wife are held equally accountable.

I. The Covenant of Marriage

A. The Covenant

1. Made with God

a. Husband – Malachi 2:14

b. Wife – Proverbs 2:17

2. Meeting Covenant needs is not to be a legal burden or duty. Rather, out of love you are saying to God, “I want to be the one who meets this need in my spouse. Choose me to be the missing piece of the puzzle. Allow me to serve my spouse by becoming one and thus meeting this need.

3. Made with your spouse – Matthew 19:4 – 6

4. Made with the State – Romans 13:1

5. Made before the Church – Hebrews 13:4

6. Is by nature binding

a. The question of divorce

1.) Malachi 2:16

2.) Mark 10:9

b. The question of remarriage

1.) Mark 10:11

2.) Matthew 5:27 & 28

c. Did I marry the wrong person?

1.) Proverbs 19:14

2.) Proverbs 16:33

3.) Proverbs 3:5 & 6

- 4.) Proverbs 5:21
- 5.) 1 Corinthians 7:12-13, 27, 39
- 6.) The “form” or “type” of wedding or marriage has no bearing on this issue.
- 7.) Whether you are married in the church, by a rabbi, by an Islamic Mullah, by a Hindu Priest, by a cultural ceremony, by the state or legal system or simply by common law declaration, if you are married, then you are married.
- 8.) The Word of God gives no guidelines for what constitutes a marriage ceremony. Thus the desire for some to rid themselves of an undesirable spouse by declaring the marriage is not void because it did not follow some prescribed church ordinance or ceremony is completely false. Even the commonly held conventional wisdom that if a marriage is not consummated then it is not valid is false. Once married, you are joined by God, not the church, not sexual intimacy but by God. The church may bless but you are joined by God regardless.

d. What if my spouse does not fulfill his or her part of the covenant?

- 1.) Wife’s Response Colossians 3:18
- 2.) Husband’s Response Colossians 3:19
- 3.) Husband yes, wife no: Ephesians 5:25
- 4.) Wife yes, Husband no: Ephesians 5:22
- 5.) Covenants are binding, even when they are “man’s” covenants Galatians 3:15
- 6.) God holds us to our covenants Psalm 15:4

B. In the Covenant of Marriage, if you do not meet your spouse’s legitimate needs, then who do you want to do this?

1. Legitimate needs do not indicate imperfection or fault, God created Adam both perfect and good, yet with needs only Eve could meet
2. Trapping your spouse with his or her devotion to God
3. Teaching your spouse to meet legitimate needs outside the primary will of God.
4. Meeting Covenant needs is not to be a legal burden or duty. Rather, out of love you are saying to God, “I want to be the one who meets this need in my spouse. Choose me to be the missing piece of the puzzle. Allow me to serve my spouse by becoming one and thus meeting this need.

C. The Fine Print of the Marriage Covenant - The fine print of Marriage Covenant or the bold print of the Bible – either way it is our responsibility.

The covenant of marriage, as both conceived and defined by God, is made with God on the basis of legitimate needs of both the husband and wife to which both the husband and wife are held equally accountable.

II. The Fine Print of the Marriage Covenant

The covenant of marriage, as both conceived and defined by God, is made with God on the basis of legitimate needs of both the husband and wife to which both the husband and wife are held equally accountable.

Introduction:

1. Legitimate needs do not indicate imperfection or fault, God created Adam both perfect and good, yet with needs only Eve could meet and vice versa.
2. Covenant needs are not grown out of but instead increase with spiritual growth
3. Covenant needs should not manifest themselves in cruel expectations

4. If not you who

A. The Husband

If he, as Ephesians 5:25 commands, is to love his wife as “Christ loved the Church”, then those verses which define Christ’s undying love for the us, also define the husbands undying love for his wife.

1. Spiritual leader of the family

- a. Wife – Ephesians 5:23 & 26; I Corinthians 14:35
- b. Children – Ephesians 6:4
- c. Ministry – Romans 16:5; I Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15; Philemon 1:2

d. If Not You: Who

2. Love wife by sacrificially meeting her emotional needs – Ephesians 5:25

- a. **Conversational intimacy** –
 - 1.) Access Hebrews 4:16
 - 2.) Topics (resulting in emotional comfort and security) Philippians 4:6, 7
- b. **Intimacy through emotional/psychological comfort and care** – Ephesians 5:33
- c. **Actually being there** – Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5; Ephesians 5:31
 - 1.) In the beginning given by God the Father
 - 3.) Reaffirmed by God the Son
 - 4.) Instituted in the Church age by God the Holy Spirit

d. If Not You: Who

3. Trusting and truthful relationship – Proverbs 31:11

- a. All men want the wife of Proverbs 31
- b. Here we have insight into the husband of this wife.
- c. If we continually “protect” our wife by not telling her the truth we treat her as a child not as a helpmate.
- d. The reason it was not good for man to live alone is the need for a helpmate. If we refuse to be open and honest with our wives we deprive ourselves of this provision by God.
- e. Not only that we deprive her of her God given ministry.
- f. It would be as if your wife intercepted your mail and threw away any correspondence concerning your ministry that she thought would be distressful. This would not be helpful but hurtful. In the same way we hurt our wives by not allowing them to minister to us.
- g. **If Not You: Who**

4. Material needs – Ephesians 5:28; I Timothy 5:8

- a. **How we clothe our body vs. our wife’s**
- b. **Our office and supplies vs. wife’s kitchen and supplies**
- c. **Our “business lunches” vs. wife’s getting to eat out**
- d. **Our travel and conferences vs. wife’s vacations and conferences**
- e. **Our transportation vs. wife’s transportation**
- f. **If Not You: Who**

5. Home and family

- a. **Priority of the home** – Ephesians 5:31
- b. **Discipline of children** – Proverbs 23:13 & 14; I Timothy 3:4
- c. **Honor in the home** – I Peter 3:7; Proverbs 31:28
 - 1.) The mother is not the children’s servant
 - 2.) Servant as defined by Christ in Luke 22:27

d. If Not You: Who

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4. If not you who

B. The Wife

If she, as Ephesians 5:24 commands, is to be subject to her husband “as the Church is subject to Christ”, then those verses which define the Church’s undying love for Christ also define the wife’s undying love for her husband.

1. Submission to his leadership

- a. Ephesians 5:22 – 24; Colossians 3:18
- b. If you define “submission” in Ephesians 5:22 as being virtually neutralized by Ephesians 5:21, then the wife must be consistent with this application in her relationships, not just with her husband, but with her children and servants as well, for the passage continues through Ephesians 6:9
- c. I Peter 3:1 & 2, 5 & 6

d. If Not You: Who

2. Sexual excitement: Lessons from Esther Luke 16:8; Esther 2:8-16

a. The care of her body as the temple of God.

- 1.) Ecclesiastes 1:8
- 2.) Proverbs 27:20
- 3.) I Corinthians 7:4
- 4.) Song of Solomon 4:1 - 7

b. Sexual intimacy

- 1.) Genesis 2:25
- 2.) Proverbs 5:15 – 19
- 3.) I Corinthians 7:3– 5
- 4.) Song of Solomon 4:1 – 16
- 5.) Song of Solomon 7:1 – 8:13

c. If Not You: Who

3. Helpmate and companion in life pursuits

Ecclesiastes 9:7 – 9; Proverbs 5:18; Genesis 2:18; I Corinthians 11:9

- a. Career – who do you want to be helping him and praising him?
- b. Ministry – why do other women praise him more than you and what are the results?
- d. Leisure / Sports – who is his greatest fan?

e. If Not You: Who

4. The home as a refuge – contrasting verses

Proverbs 7:11; 14:1; 21:9, 19; 25:24; vs. 31:12,15,26, 27

- a. What a refuge is not...
Proverbs 7:11; 14:1; 21:9, 19; 25:24;
VS.
- b. What a refuge is...
Proverbs 31:12,15,26, 27

c. If Not You: Who

5. Respect

Proverbs 12:4; Ephesians 5:33; I Peter 3:1 & 2

- a. Every mother knows the shallowness of mocking, feigned respect by a child.
- b. She should not repeat this in her relationship with her husband.

c. If Not You: Who

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God has created both men and women with legitimate needs which can only be met through the Covenant of Marriage. It has been God's plan from creation for the husband and wife to minister each other by fulfilling their mutual covenants before God.

In each of these ten areas it is always the same questions, "If you do not meet your spouse's need, then who do you want to do this?" What is their moral alternative?

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Husband

Wife

1. Spiritual leader of the family

- "If you do not meet your spouse's need, then who do you want to do this?"
- "What is their moral alternative?"

1. Submission to his leadership

2. Love wife by sacrificially meeting her emotional needs

- "If you do not meet your spouse's need, then who do you want to do this?"
- "What is their moral alternative?"

2. Sexual Excitement

3. Trusting and truthful relationship

- "If you do not meet your spouse's need, then who do you want to do this?"
- "What is their moral alternative?"

3. Helpmate and companion in life pursuits

4. Material needs

- "If you do not meet your spouse's need, then who do you want to do this?"
- "What is their moral alternative?"

4. The home as a refuge

5. Home and family

- "If you do not meet your spouse's need, then who do you want to do this?"
- "What is their moral alternative?"

5. Respect

