

JANUARY 2023

Lesson 3 - Wedding



OPENING ACTIVITY

Take two minutes and come up with definitions for the words "love" and "marriage" BY DRAWING A PICTURE of them.

God intends the union of husband and wife to bring mutual happiness, to offer help and support in times of sadness and joy, and, when it is his will, to provide a home where children can grow in the knowledge and love of the Lord. Therefore, all who enter marriage ought to do so reverently, thoughtfully, and in keeping with the purposes for which God gave it.

-Christian Worship Marriage Rite

WHAT IS MARRIAGE?



Genesis 1:10
God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:12
God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:18
God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:21
God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:25
God saw that it was good.

Genesis 2:18-24

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 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. 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. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

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." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

Genesis 1:31

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Talk with your tablemates and come up with at least 3 items of interest from these words that can and should be applied to your marriage:

Marriage: Defined

In Marriage was established by _____ when he created the world and everything in it. Marriage, like everything else God created, was without _____.

Matthew 19:4-6

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

Romans 7:2

By law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage.

Ephesians 5:25

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

Marriage is a _____-_____ union between one _____ and one _____ in an unconditional _____ of love.

ACTIVITY As you compare this biblical definition of marriage, come up with a list of at least 5 ways (out loud or in the white space below) in which today's culture and society would disagree with this definition.

After you complete your list, try to come up with an answer for why God's way is better.

BLESSINGS BESTOWED

Genesis 2:18

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Genesis 2:24

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

Genesis 1:27,28

Male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number"

The 3 main blessings God bestows in his gift of marriage are:



EXCEPTIONS...NOT RULES

God's Word is clear. Marriage is meant for one man and one woman. Marriage is to be a lifelong union, coming to an end only when one of the partners dies. That means divorce was never part of God's plan. But is there ever a time when God permits husbands and wives to divorce?

Matthew 19:9

"I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery."

1 Corinthians 7:15

But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.

In cases of marital _____ and malicious _____ the marriage bond between husband and wife is broken. In such cases God permits the innocent partners to get a divorce.

Agree or Disagree

A divorce breaks up a marriage.

Agree or Disagree

In cases of marital unfaithfulness and malicious desertion, the marriage can never and should never be reconciled.

What about open marriages or pre-marital sex or living together before marriage? Isn't it a little old fashioned to say that those things are wrong?

Romans 12:2

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Hebrews 13:4

Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

Just because our society and government may consider something legal, that doesn't mean that it is moral or beneficial.

Ephesians 5:3

But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.

1 Corinthians 10:31

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.



Pretend for a moment that you are the pastor of this congregation. What would you say to someone who says:

"It is possible to cohabitate without having sex."

Take a few minutes and, using bible passages we have looked at today, give a response--either out loud or in the blank space.

Agree or Disagree

People who have had premarital sex have ruined the sanctity of marriage--therefore they can never get married.

Agree or Disagree

God forgives all sin, including the sin of divorce.

Agree or Disagree

A marriage isn't complete without the blessing of children.

God has given sexual happiness as a gift to married people. In addition, God has given children--as a result of sexual happiness--as another gift to married people. How would you respond to a couple who says: "We are not going to have children right away. We are going to explore options for contraception so that we don't get pregnant until we are ready."



Take 3 minutes and, either out loud or in the space below, make a list of at least 5 words or phrases that describe the way that Jesus loves you and me:

The Bible says, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends(John 15:13)." Which is the type of love that God wants us to share with our spouse?

"Honey, I'm willing to die for you."
"Honey, I'm willing to live for you."

What's the difference?

Read the passages below and make a list of at least 4 characteristics husbands and wives ought to emulate in their marriage relationship:

Ephesians 5:21
Philippians 2:3,4
Ephesians 4:2
Matthew 20:28



Choose three of the following statements and discuss why you agree or disagree with them:

--A marriage should be based on the commitment to love rather than on feelings alone.

--A wife must do everything her husband tells her to do since she has promised to obey him.

--Since the husband is the head of the house, he is to make all the decisions for the family.

--When two people love each other, they will automatically know what the other person needs and wants.

--In a good marriage, the husband and wife will never have any conflicts.

Take two minutes and choose either option below:

--Name the last important item that you own that "broke down."

--Name the house chore that you dislike the most.

How is either one like a marriage?



Venue

Date and Time

Readings

Hymns

Sermon

Ceremonia

The lighting of a "unity candle" is a relatively new custom in wedding ceremonies. There is no record of it in the bible or any Apostolic writings. The custom first became popular in the second half of the 20th century in American Christian weddings. The origins are unclear, however the use of a unity candle in a 1981 episode of General Hospital may have helped to popularize the practice.

Attendants

Anniversaries