

God's Plan for Marriage Mt. 19:3-6

Great confusion about what constitutes family and marriage now permeates our society. A Pew Forum released in 2010 said that 39% of Americans believe marriage is obsolete. Unfortunately, this change in thinking has profoundly impacted our country and especially our children.

In 1960, 72% of adults in America were married. Today only half of all adults are married. Many are waiting until later in life to marry, and the number of divorced people has tripled since 1960. More than that, the number of couples living together without marriage has grown dramatically.

From the beginning God made a pattern for the home. A pattern is a form or model designed to be imitated or copied. **Psalm 145:17** says, ***"The LORD is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works."*** When people follow the Lord's way, they find blessing. **Psalm 119:2-3** says, ***"Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways!"*** We should all follow the advice of **Proverbs 3:5-7**, ***"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil."*** Sadly, to many think they have a better understanding or a better way than the Lord.

God's pattern for the family began at creation. The Lord God said in **Gen. 1:26-28**, ***"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"***

God saw that it was not good for man to be alone (**Gen. 2:18**). And, though Adam was surrounded by every living creature, ***"for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him"*** (**Gen. 2:20**). Then in **Gen. 2:21-25** we read, ***"So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.' Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed."***

God showed his love and wisdom by giving a woman to Adam, giving him just what he needed. She was a helper designed specifically for him. He didn't need another male exactly like himself; he needed a female. No doubt Adam realized that among the animals there were male and females of each kind. Man and woman need each other physically, socially, and spiritually.

Like a lock with a key or a bow with a string, each need the other to function properly. Alone neither can accomplish what God intended.

Some have suggested that Adam's declaration, ***"This is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh"*** in **Gen. 2:23** reveal his commitment to Eve under all circumstances. Here God uses the story to speak to every age, ***"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh"*** (**Gen. 2:24**). Our Lord Jesus, in fact, quotes this passage in Mt. 19:5. Marriage uniquely unites a male with a female physically and emotionally. The man and woman were to become one flesh, an intimate relationship that took priority over all others. Because of this physical bond, a man should loosen the bonds he has even with his parents and loyally hold fast to his wife.

God gave us a plan for marriage to bless us with a way that would be best for everyone. First, God showed his wisdom and love toward mankind by providing marriage as the basis and the model for family. The benefits of marriage as God designed it are numerous. God's plan for marriage provides for procreation. God's first commandment to man is found in **Gen. 1:28**. God said, ***"Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth."*** Now it's undeniable that it takes both a male and a female to produce a child. Second, God's plan for marriage provides the best environment for raising children. Every child needs both a father and a mother. Each of the parent has a necessary and meaningful role in the rearing of children. A mother can't do everything a father can do, and a father can't do what a mother can do.

Third, God's plan for marriage provides a place where righteousness dwells. God said in **Hebrews 13:4**, ***"Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous."*** When parents simply live together without being married, they provide a morally-compromised home for their children. They can't fulfill God's instructions to fathers in **Eph. 6:4** to ***"bring their children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."*** Fourth, God's plan for marriage shows great durability. When a man and a woman honor their pledge to live together after the ordinance of God until death parts them, they provide security for one another and security for their children. They turn their house into a home, a dwelling filled with love and happiness.

It is not accident that in the original Greek N.T. the word for husband (aner) is the same word for male and the word for wife (gune) is the same word for woman. According to the N.T., all husbands are male and all wives are female. **1 Cor. 7:2** says, ***"But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband."*** God is very specific here; marriage is between a male (aner) and a female (gune). Males are physically and sexually made for females, and females for males. The Bible doesn't confuse us about God's will on this matter. We also see here that a man is to have his own wife, not wives; and a woman is to have her own husband, not husbands.

Some argue that any two people who love each other and are sexually attracted ought to have the right to marry. They think love and desire are more important than the laws of God. They believe they can set God's pattern for marriage aside. But if any love relationship permits marriage, then we should allow adults to marry children? Brothers should be allowed to marry

their sisters. Lately even polygamous marriages are making a comeback. But such marriages create chaos and ruins the moral and social fabric of the home. It will lead to loneliness, jealousy, betrayal and broken hearts, etc....

The Lord Himself designed marriage for the blessing and benefit of mankind. God's commandments relating to marriage are just as binding as those which relate to God's plan of salvation or even worship. God's way is always best, and no alternative can replace it. We should preserve the sanctity of marriage as God ordained it. Any civil or ecclesiastical effort to alter God's teaching will inevitably lead to moral confusion. Just because people have a sexual attraction to another person doesn't mean we have a God give right to be with them. We might be convinced that pedophiles are born with a predisposition toward sex with children, but few would claim that gives them the moral right to be with children. Alcoholics might be born with a predisposition to drink alcohol, but I have never heard of an alcoholic claim that alcoholism to be a moral activity on these grounds.

I hope you can see that feelings or desires cannot turn something that is sinful into something morally acceptable. That would be moral chaos. We cannot teach, people *"to live according to the teaching of God, but if something is really attractive to you or tempting you, it is okay to do those things."* Sexual attraction does not make fornication or living together without marriage morally acceptable. Nor does it sanctify same sex marriage.

James 1:13-15 says, ***"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death."*** Sexual temptation comes to us a feeling; it is a strong enticement to sin. And when people give in to their lusts and sin, their sins bring them spiritual death. They are not right with God.

Paul described those who would tamper with the word of God as disgraceful and underhanded in **1 Cor. 4:2**. Tampering is the practice of twisting or distorting a Biblical passage so that it says what the person wants it to say. Tampering shows no respect for the authority of God. But its very nature, changing the Scriptures leads to deception and the corruption of the truth. Peter spoke of those ***"ignorant and unstable"*** souls who twist the Scriptures to their own destruction in **2 Peter 3:16**.

When people ignore God's teaching about marriage, they bring harm to themselves. God distinguishes sexual activity in marriage from every other sexual behavior. ***"Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous"*** (**Hebrews. 13:4**). Scripture describe sex outside of marriage between two or more individuals as sexual immorality or fornication; in Greek it is the word porneia. Porneia is a broad term and refers to all kinds of sexual activity between unmarried people, including incest, prostitution, bestiality, and homosexuality.

Adultery take place when a married person has sexual contact with someone other than his or her spouse. Marriage is a covenant union that excludes all others. Jesus Himself in **Mt. 19:4-6** said, ***"He answered, 'Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them"***

male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So, they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.” A part of the traditional marriage vow is that the two will remain united *“until death do us part.”*

Sexual immorality of all kinds was common in pagan Corinth. Paul condemned the practice of sexual immorality; *that is fornication, adultery, and homosexuality* in **1 Cor. 6:9**. Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit instructed Christians in **verse 18**, to *“flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.”* And then in **verse 11** he said, *“And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God.”* Paul had taught them God’s will in these matters, and those who became Christians abandoned their sexually immoral ways. Then, in **Gal. 6:7-8** we read, *“Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.”*

Those who ignore God deceive themselves by imagining that they may have sex with whomever they please without any consequences. Here is what God tells us happens to such people – **(Romans 1:26-27)** *For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.”* They are storing up wrath for day when God’s righteousness will be revealed.

Following God isn’t merely a good thing; it is the best and the right thing to do! When people follow their feelings or the way of the world, they inevitably harm themselves. We need God’s teaching to guide us. As **Jer. 10:23** says, *“I know, O LORD, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.”*

Following the Lord’s way is always best for people and nations. This is true in God’s plan of salvation as well. To be saved we must follow God’s pattern, to believe in Jesus as the Christ of God, to repent of your sins, to confess Christ before man as the Son of God, and to be baptized in water, in the name of Christ, for the forgiveness of sin and the gift of the Holy Spirit – **Acts 2:38**. What are you waiting for, arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name – **Acts 22:16**.

Always let your heart and mind focus on the Lord’s Way!