

# Marriages that Work

## The Purpose of Marriage

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### Message Truth:

As Christians, we need to follow God's design for our marriages. God is sovereign over all of the universe. He should be sovereign, therefore, in our homes, also. Do you and your spouse live and relate to one another in ways that would please God? Do you understand God's role for you in your family? Our hearts and homes should reflect His will. Marriages which operate according to God's purposes will bring joy, fulfillment, peace and contentment to you. Children raised in genuine Christian homes will increasingly experience an advantage in society and in their personal relationships over their counterparts who are reared in dysfunctional families, which according to the census are on the increase. Today we will begin to explore the biblical purpose, plan, and practice for marriage.

## The Purpose of Marriage

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Genesis 1:27-28

## The Teaching of the Catholic Fathers

1. P \_\_\_\_\_
2. A r \_\_\_\_\_ to s \_\_\_\_\_
3. C \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>18</sup> The LORD God said, "**It is not good for the man to be alone.** I will make a helper suitable for him." <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> 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." <sup>24</sup> For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and **they will become one flesh.** <sup>25</sup> The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. Genesis 2:18-25

## The Teaching of the Puritans

1. **Procreation** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **A remedy to sin** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Companionship** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>4</sup> Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: Hebrews 13:4a (KJV)

# How Do We Keep Love in Our Marriages?

## Understanding the "In Love" Experience

1. Why do people get married? "We love each other."

2. What is this "in love" experience?

- A. Love is a feeling.
- B. It begins with the feelings.
- C. It becomes a feeling of love.
- D. It is accompanied by irrational thinking.
  - 1. He/She is perfect.
  - 2. Nothing is more important.
  - 3. I will never be happy without him/her.

3. This experience seems to be universal.

- A. Samson, a young man with the feelings.
- B. A Shulamite woman who found the perfect man.
- C. Solomon, a king who became obsessed.

4. What are the dangers of the "in love" experience?

- A. It gives us an illusion of intimacy.
- B. It blinds us to our differences.
- C. It leads us to false conclusions:
  - 1. We will never be happy without each other.
  - 2. Nothing else really matters.
  - 3. These feelings are permanent.

5. How does the "in love" experience contribute to divorce? Common scenario:

- A. A couple "in love" gets married.
- B. When their "in love" feelings subside, their differences emerge.
- C. They are shocked by their loss of feelings and traumatized by their conflicts.
- D. The conflicts create feelings of rejection or withdrawal.

E. They build a wall of unresolved conflicts.

F. They lose their sense of individuality.

G. One of them gets the feelings for somebody else, and the cycle starts again.

6. Using knowledge for our benefit.

The answer is not running. The answer is love to express love to our spouses.

The Love Test

A. The earliest time to handle the flutters is the first time.

B. There is only one wrong thing to do with an affair.

*Break It Off!*

Rekindling love in the marriage:

- A. Begin by confessing your own feelings in the marriage and recommitting yourselves.
- B. Choose to love your spouse and tell him/her often.
- C. With full love tanks, you can solve your problems and grow in intimacy.

We do not return to the obsessive stage, but we do experience warm emotional love for each other.