

The Truth Project  
Pt 7 "Marriage Relationships Built Upon Truth"  
Genesis 2:18

Life is a series of relationships.

As a child you have relationships with your parents, your siblings, your friends, extended family members, school teachers, coaches, scout leaders.....

Eventually also with your spouse, in-laws, children, grandchildren, employer, fellow employees, neighbors, fellow church members.....

Life is a series of relationships.

The Bible gives us practical guidelines for these relationships. If we follow these guidelines, if we follow the truth of scripture, we end up with healthy, happy, strong relationships. When we reject or even simply ignore the Biblical truths about relationships, we suffer the consequences.

Relationships suffer when Biblical truth is ignored.

This morning I want to spend some time talking about marriage relationships built upon Biblical truth. Let's begin at the beginning. Take a look at a critical verse in the very first book of the Bible:

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."

After creating man, God immediately started on relationships. The very first relationship created was marriage. What does the Bible teach us about marriage?

#### 1. Male and Female

This seems obvious to most of us, but as you know, even this foundational truth about marriage is under attack.

Although the majority of Americans still believe that marriage is to be between male and female, gay activists continue to force their non-biblical desires that marriage include gay relationships. Gay activists are continuing to try to change the definition of marriage, and unfortunately, they now have the full support of the White House.

The Bible clearly states that marriage is between a man and a woman.

Genesis 1:27 "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

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."

What does Jesus say about this issue?

Mark 10:6-9

6 Jesus said, "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them MALE and FEMALE.'

7 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,

8 and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one.

9 Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

The Bible teaches that marriage is between male and female.

The Bible teaches that marriage is husband and wife.

The Bible repeatedly condemns homosexuality: Both Old and New Testament.  
Just one example:

Romans 1:26-28

26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.

27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

28 Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.

(Notice the adjectives used here to describe homosexuality: shameful, unnatural, indecent, perversion, depraved....)

Throughout scripture homosexuality is classified as sin, it is condemned.

The Biblical truth about marriage: one man one woman. What else does the Bible teach?

2. Love and respect.

Dr. John Gottman is a Professor Emeritus of psychology at the University of Washington. After decades of research and study, Dr. Gottman found a method which predicts with 90% accuracy which newlywed couples will remain married and which will divorce four to six years later. 90% accuracy!! Dr. Gottman stated, "We now know what makes marriages succeed and fail - love and respect."

Another Doctor, Dr. Emerson Eggerich, has written a very popular marriage book and leads national seminars about marriage. His book title and his seminars are called, "Love and Respect."

Dr. Eggerich said, "Cracking the communication code between husband and wife involves understanding one thing: that unconditional respect is as powerful for him as unconditional love is for her. It's the secret to marriage that every couple seeks, and yet few couples ever find."

According to these two doctors who specialize in marriage, the key to a successful marriage is love and respect.

Hey! The Bible said that a long time ago!

Ephesians 5:33 "However, each one of you also must LOVE HIS WIFE as he loves himself, and the wife must RESPECT HER HUSBAND."

If you haven't figured this out yet, please understand that men and women are very different. What numerous studies have shown is that the number one thing that women need in marriage is to know that they are loved. But the number one thing men need in marriage is to know that they are respected.

In marriage: A woman's self esteem comes from knowing that she is loved by her husband.

Men, don't assume your wife knows that you love her.  
You need to tell her AND you need to show her that you love her.

I like a saying I ran across years ago:

Men, if you want your wife to act like a princess, then treat her like a queen!

The Apostle Paul said it this way:

Ephesians 5:25 "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."

Men, the Bible says that you are to love your wife.

In marriage: A man's self esteem comes from knowing that he is respected by his wife.

Women, don't assume your husband knows it.  
You need to tell him AND you need to show him that you respect him.

The things you say to him, the things you say about him, the way you treat him.....all boil down to one of two things: respect or disrespect. What's it going to be?

Romans 13:7 "Give everyone what you owe him:.....if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor."

The Bible says: Husband, love you wife. Wife, respect your husband.

### 3. Two and one

In the business I am in, you end up dealing with marriages a lot. The fun part is that you get to share in wedding ceremonies and vow renewal ceremonies and milestone anniversary celebrations and these kind of things. Consequently, you pick up a few things over the years.

One of the things I have observed is that the very best marriages are the ones in which the husband and wife are not just a married couple, but they are also very best friends.

They don't want to take separate vacations. They want to go places together, see places together, experience things together and do things together.

They don't "have to" spend time together, they "want to" spend time together.

There is a true oneness in their marriage. They love their unity in their relationship. They are at their deepest level of comfort and their highest level of happiness when they are together.

There are far too many things which would seek to pull a husband and wife apart. We need to do all we can to preserve that oneness in marriage.

Let's look again at what Jesus said about this:

Matthew 19:4-6

4 "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'

5 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'?

6 So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

They are no longer two, but one.

He says it in verse five and then, just to make sure we don't miss it, He repeats it in verse six.

In discussing the relationship between a husband and wife, God speaks through the prophet Malachi and states:

Malachi 2:15 "Has not the LORD made them one?"

Can that be said about your marriage?

Is there oneness in your marriage? Is your spouse your best friend?

If not, spend the time, make the investment, do what you have to do to get your marriage back to the level it needs to be. Strive with all of your heart for oneness in your marriage relationship.

Ecclesiastes 9:9 "Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love,"

Two and one.

### 4. Flesh and Spirit

-- Peter Marshall wrote,

"We are souls living in bodies. Therefore when we really fall in love, it isn't just physical attraction. If it is just that, it won't last. Ideally, it's also spiritual attraction. God has opened our eyes and let us see into

someone's soul. We have fallen in love with the inner person, the person who is going to live forever. That's why God is the greatest asset to romance. He thought it up in the first place. Include him in every part of your marriage, and he will lift it above the level of the mundane to something rare and beautiful and lasting."

Marriage is a spiritual thing! You will never maximize your marriage until you understand that it is much more than a societal or social or legal arrangement. It is spiritual! Therefore: What is the biggest key to making a marriage last? Jesus Christ.

Here's how important this spiritual issue of marriage is to God:  
Malachi 2:13-15

13 Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands.

14 You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

15 Has not [the LORD] made them one? In FLESH and SPIRIT they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

When you unite in marriage, verse 15 says that God makes you one: in FLESH and SPIRIT. It's not just a physical relationship. It's not just a social relationship. It's not just a legal relationship. Marriage is a SPIRITUAL relationship!

This is a spiritual issue!  
So much so, that verse 13 says that God refuses to pay attention to your offerings if you have broken your marriage covenant.  
Divorce or adultery or abandonment.....Any breaking of the marriage vows has far reaching spiritual consequences.  
They erect a barrier between you and God. They become an obstacle between you and God.

That relationship with God CAN be restored through repentance and confession of sins, but don't underestimate the value the Lord places upon a marriage.

If it seems that your prayers are never being answered, one of the first things you need to examine is the status of your marriage!

If you have broken your marriage vows you need to do two things: seek forgiveness from God and seek forgiveness from your spouse.

Perhaps you or your former spouse have already remarried. You can still seek forgiveness for your part in the breakup of that marriage.

This is a spiritual issue and so there are spiritual consequences. God is a God of grace and forgiveness. God wants complete reconciliation in His relationship with you. But you still need to take the appropriate steps to get where you need and want to be.

Be willing to let God work in you and in your marriage and I guarantee you that you will have a better marriage.

## 5. Jesus and believers..

The last very quick point I want to make is that the scriptures use marriage to describe the relationship between Jesus and His followers.

Romans 7:4 "...you have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be MARRIED to another — to Him who was raised from the dead..." NKJV

Revelation 19:7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the WEDDING of the Lamb has come, and HIS BRIDE has made herself ready."

Look at how the Apostle Paul used the analogy:

Ephesians 5:31-32

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

32 This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Look at it this way: Marriage is a pledge between two people.

Your relationship with the Lord is a pledge between you and Him.

Have you pledged yourself to Him?