

# The Institution of Marriage

According to **Hebrews 13:4**, marriage authorizes sexual relations between a man and a woman. But any kind of sexual activity outside the marriage union will be judged by the Lord (**I Corinthians 6:9, Revelation 21:8, I Corinthians 7:1-2, and Ephesians 5:2-6**).

“Successful marriage is always a triangle:  
a man, a woman, and God.”

## THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE

According to Scripture, marriage is a covenant witnessed and ordained by God, for God binds the marriage agreement, **Malachi 2:14**, “*Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.*” Other related verses showing that marriage is a covenant are: **Proverbs 2:17, Genesis 31:50, Ezekiel 16:8, 32, 38, Jeremiah 3:14, Matthew 19:6**. According to **Ecclesiastes 5:4**, God is not impressed with foolish vows. Since marriage is a covenant, we see its permanence throughout the Bible (**Matthew 19:6, Romans 7:1-4, I Corinthians 7:10-11**). The Lord Jesus Christ honored marriage by attending a wedding in **John chapter two**, whereby His first miracle was performed.

Most of the things done and said at weddings have a Biblical basis. For example, our vows normally include, “In sickness and in health, and till death do us part.” The wedding ring, being a circle, shows the eternal love of which is no end. The white wedding dress speaks of purity of heart and life. Even the marriage papers establish a public document and public record of the covenant. Most marriages are performed in the sight of God, family, and friends.

## THE MYSTERY OF MARRIAGE

According to **Genesis 2:24**, marriage is a “one-flesh relationship,” “*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*” The word “one-flesh” means the full integration of both persons, an inseparable union. In marriage there is an intimacy shared as with no other, not even with parents or children. They are no more two, but joined together in perfect harmony as a unit. The one-flesh relationship means to make whole and carries the thought of oneness, kinsman, and family. After this union, God called

them (Adam) in **Genesis 5:2** as those who are joined to Christ are one with Christ in **I Corinthians 12:12**. This union is so strong that the Scriptures say in **Matthew 19:6**, “*Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*” In **Ephesians 5:31-32**, this union is a picture (type) of Christ and the church, “*For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*” In marriage, we become one to the extent that we have no more power over our own body (**I Corinthians 7:4**), “*The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.*” There is such a union in marriage that the couple begins to act and feel alike, even in some cases look alike. I am told that when plywood is glued together the bond (glue) is stronger than the two pieces of wood, and that they cannot be torn apart without great damage to them. If you take blue and red paint, and mix it together the two colors make the color purple. It would be nearly impossible to separate the colors after being mixed together. The point I am trying to make is that the marriage bond is a binding covenant in the eyes of God. This one-flesh union is to last as long as both partners are living. In other words, only death is to separate the relationship (**I Corinthians 7:39**), “*The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.*” In marriage our identity is lost. It is forfeited and we are not considered alone any more. We never think of one without the other, both become one in soul, mind, and purpose.

## THE MINISTRY OF MARRIAGE

We will now look at five purposes or functions of marriage, that is, God’s plan for a man and woman uniting in Holy Matrimony.

**First**, marriage was designed for partnership. According to **Genesis 2:18-25**, Adam was alone and needed companionship and fellowship so God gave him an helpmeet. He needed a friend, someone he could love, communicate with and work with. The woman was created just for the man (**I Corinthians 11:7-9**). The Scriptures are clear that two are better than one (**Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**). So, man was given someone like himself to enjoy each other.

**Second**, marriage was designed for procreation. According to **Genesis 1:27-28**, God told man to be fruitful and multiply. This command means to increase, that is to reproduce ourselves. The first blessing and command in the Scriptures is related to

children. This command is repeated in **Genesis 9:1** and many other Scriptures. Birth control in an unscriptural and ungodly practice. It did not originate in the church of Jesus Christ, but in the world. We hear a lot about family planning today but what about letting God plan your family. The Devil (our enemy) desires to reduce God's people. The agenda of secular humanism is to reduce the size and strength of the family. Please read what Pharaoh did to the Hebrews in **Exodus 1:7-10**. Even in Babylonian captivity, the children of Israel were told to multiply their strength through having sons and daughters according to **Jeremiah 29:5-6**. In **Genesis 38:9-10**, we see God's displeasure in birth control. Before the 1900's, most ministers preached against birth control, but most pulpits are silent on the subject today.

**Third**, marriage is for purity. According to **I Corinthians 7:1-9**, to avoid fornication, every man is to have his own wife, and every woman is to have her own husband. We cannot be pleasing to God and at the same time live in sexual immorality. Only in marriage is the bed undefiled (pure).

**Fourth**, marriage is for protection. The Lord says in **Hebrews 13:4** that, "*Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*" Marriage not only saves us from immorality, but it saves us from God's judgment. It also saves us from much heartache and pain, as well as diseases. Many societies have been destroyed because of immorality. One example of this in **Genesis 19**, is the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

**Fifth**, marriage is for pleasure. This is clearly seen in **Proverbs 5:18-20**, "*Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love. And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?*" According to **Genesis 26:8**, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife. That is, they were kissing and caressing one another. **Song of Solomon** is a love story between Solomon and the Shulamite maiden. The book is filled with the description of love between a husband and wife. The following verses are just a few references to bear this out: **chapters 1:1-4, 2:4-8, 4:1-7, 5:10-16, 7:1-9**. The recreation between a husband and wife is not the pleasure of sin for a season nor lustful pleasure, but one of God's gracious gifts to his people.

## CONCLUSION

According to **I Peter 3:7**, the husband and wife are "*heirs together of the grace of life.*" Let us never forget that marriage is a divine institution designed for the glory of God and His kingdom. Amen.

Marriage was instituted by God, blessed by the Lord Jesus Christ and promoted by every writer of the Holy Scriptures. This is why it is called honorable and the bed undefiled. Marriage was a part of God's original plan, it was not an afterthought, nor is it man's idea. It took place in the Garden of Eden before the fall of man. Marriage is a holy institution, made in Heaven, and sanctified by the Lord. It is the first institution given to man, and is the oldest. It is a foundational institution upon which society depends. God Himself performed the first marriage showing the importance of this divine union (**Genesis 2:18-25**).

"As God by creation made two of one so again  
by marriage He made one by two."

- Thomas Adams

*"Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."*

**Hebrews 13:4**