

God's Plan for Marriage

In the beginning God created male and female and united them as one, making the first _____. Thousands of years have passed and nothing's _____ than God's plan for marriage. God in His wisdom created us the way He wanted us to be, male and female united together as the basis of the family and the basis of society. The Lord's way is always the best way.

Great confusion about what constitutes family and marriage now permeates our _____. A Pew Forum survey released in 2010 said 39 percent of Americans believe marriage is _____. This change in thinking profoundly impacts our country and especially children. In 1960, 72 percent of adults in America were married. Today only _____ of all adults are married. Many are waiting until _____ 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 _____ dramatically.

From the beginning God made a _____ for the home. A pattern is a form or _____ designed to be imitated or copied. Psalm 145:17 says, "The LORD is righteous in all His ways And _____ in all His deeds." When people follow the Lord's way they find _____. Psalm 119:2 says, "How blessed are those who _____ His testimonies, Who seek Him with all their heart." We should all take the advice of Proverbs 3:5-7, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not _____ on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your _____ straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil." Sadly, some think they have a _____ way than the Lord's way.

Our today reading comes from the Gospel According to Matthew 19:3-6.

God's pattern for the family began at _____. **Read Genesis 1:26-28.**

God saw that it was not good for man to be _____ (Genesis 2:18). Though Adam was surrounded by every living creature, "for Adam there was not found a _____ fit for him" (Genesis 2:20). **Read Genesis 2:21-25.**

God showed his love and wisdom by giving a woman to Adam, giving him just what he _____. She was a helper designed specifically for him. He didn't need another male exactly _____ himself; he needed a female. No doubt Adam realized that among the animals there was male and female of each kind. Man and woman need _____ physically, socially, and spiritually. Like a lock with a key or a bow with a string, each needs the other to function properly. Alone neither can accomplish what God intended.

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" (Genesis 2:24). Our Lord

Longer quotations may not appear in the Study Sheet, but can be read in the accompanying transcript.

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PO Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 1-800-321-8633

This study sheet is prepared by Jerry Campbell – www.searchtv.org; jerry@searchtv.org

Jesus, in fact, quotes this very passage in Matthew 19:5. Marriage uniquely _____ a male with a female physically and emotionally. The man and woman were to become one flesh, an intimate relationship that took _____ 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 _____ 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 _____. 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 Genesis 1:28. God said, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." It's undeniable that it takes both a male and a female to _____ a child. Second, God's plan for marriage provides the best environment for _____ children. Every child needs _____ a father and a mother. Each parent has a necessary and meaningful _____ 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 _____ where righteousness dwells. God said, "Marriage is to be held in _____ among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4). When parents simply live together without being married they provide a morally-compromised _____ for their children. They can't fulfill God's instructions to fathers to "bring their children up in the discipline and instruction of the _____" (Ephesians 6:4). 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 _____ security for one another and security for their children. They turn their house into a home, a dwelling _____ with love and happiness.

It's not an accident that in the original Greek New Testament 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 New Testament, all husbands are males and all wives are female. First Corinthians 7:2 says, "But because of the _____ to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife (*gune*) and each woman her own husband (*aner*)." The Scripture here is _____; marriage is between a male (*aner*) and a female (*gune*). A husband cannot marry a husband, and a wife cannot marry a wife. Males are physically and sexually made for females, and females for males. The Bible doesn't _____ 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 _____ to marry. Some say love and desire are more important than the _____ of God. They believe they can set God's pattern for marriage _____. If any love relationship permits marriage then should we allow adults to marry little _____? Should we let brothers marry their sisters? Recently communities are forming of _____ relationships consisting of multiple husbands, wives, boyfriends, and girlfriends. Such behavior creates

_____ and ruins the moral and social fabric of the home. It will surely _____ to loneliness, betrayal and broken hearts.

The Lord himself _____ marriage for the blessing and benefit of mankind. God's commandments relating to wedlock are just as _____ as those which relate to the plan of salvation or to worship. God's way is always _____, 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 _____ confusion. Just because people have a sexual attraction to another person doesn't mean that we have a _____ to be with them. We might be convinced that pedophiles are born with a predisposition towards sex with children, but few would claim that therefore it was moral, right, and good. Alcoholics might be born with a predisposition to drink, but I have never heard of an alcoholic claim alcoholism to be a moral activity on these grounds.

Feelings or desires cannot turn something that is _____ into something morally acceptable. That would be a moral chaos. Imagine telling our young people, "Please live according to the teaching of God, but, if you discover something is really attractive or tempting to you, and if you discover that is difficult to avoid, then it's all right to do. The only behaviors that are really immoral are the ones that you feel no temptation to follow." What if we said that to our kids? If a person followed that advice, one would never know when he or she is being _____. Sexual attraction does not make fornication or living together without marriage morally acceptable. Nor does it sanctify same-sex marriage.

Read James 1:13-15. Sexual temptation comes to us as a _____; it's a strong, a very strong enticement to sin. When people give in to their lusts and sin their sins bring for _____ death. They're not right with God.

Paul described those who would _____ with the Word of God as disgraceful and underhanded in 2 Corinthians 4:2. Tampering is the practice of twisting or distorting a Biblical passage so that it says what the person _____ it to say. Tampering shows no _____ for the authority of God. By its very nature, changing the Scriptures leads to deception and the corruption of the _____. Peter spoke of those "ignorant and unstable" souls who _____ the Scriptures to their own destruction in 2 Peter 3:16. When people ignore God's teaching about marriage, they unalterably _____ themselves.

God distinguishes sexual activity in _____ from every other sexual behavior. "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will _____ the sexually immoral (fornicators) and adulterous" (Hebrews 13:4). The Scriptures 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 takes place when a married person has a sexual contact with someone _____ than his or her spouse. Marriage is a covenant _____ that excludes all others. **Read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 19:4-6.** A part of the traditional marriage _____ is that the two will remain united “until death do us part.”

Sexual immorality of all kinds was _____ in pagan Corinth. Paul condemned the practice of sexual immorality; fornication, adultery, and homosexuality (1 Corinthians 6:9). By inspiration Paul instructed the Corinthians to “Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person _____ against his own body” (1 Corinthians 6:18). Promiscuous, sexual immorality led to the many sexually transmitted diseases rampant in Corinth in those days, and it will lead to sexually transmitted disease today. **Read Galatians 6:7-8.**

Those who ignore God deceive themselves by imagining that they may have sex with whomever they _____ without consequences. The facts do not lie. According to a statement by Dr. Amy Lansky of the U. S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, “AIDS is fifty times more prevalent among men who have sex with men than the rest of the population.” In 2008, men who had sex with men accounted for 63% of the primary and secondary syphilis cases in the United States.

The Scriptures describe homosexuality as _____. **Read Romans 1:26-27.** As a practice, sodomy is filled with filth and disease. God spoke against it because it's _____. God didn't speak against it to be mean but because He loves us and knows that troubles come from sin. Let's follow God.

I'm thankful for my sweet wife, Jackie. We've been married forty-five years. We committed ourselves to live a lifetime together in the holy bonds of matrimony. Divorce was never an option; we pledged nothing but death will ever separate us. Our commitment to each other has provided a stable and loving home for our four children and twelve grandchildren. Following God isn't merely a good thing; it's the _____ and the _____ thing to do! When people follow their feelings or the way of the world, they inevitably _____ themselves. We need God's teaching to guide us. Jeremiah 10:23 says, “I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself, Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.”

Following the Lord's plan of salvation is also best and right. Being right with God is essential to the wellbeing of our souls. To be saved, to become a Christian, to believe, is believe Jesus is the Christ, repent of your sins, to confess Jesus as God's Son, and to be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. When people heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, they acted with urgency! The people at Pentecost gladly received Peter's words and were baptized (Acts 2:41). The men and women at Samaria heard Philip preaching the gospel, believed and were baptized (Acts 8:12). The eunuch heard Philip's sermon, saw water, and asked to be baptized. After hearing the truth, the jailer at Philippi was baptized though it was midnight (Acts 16:33). What are you waiting for? Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name (Acts 22:16).