

How to Have a Successful Marriage

The Word of God has much to say about the subject of Relationships, Dating, and Marriage. For starters, it is interesting to note that God the Holy Spirit chose the apostle Paul, who was a bachelor, to be the greatest expert on marriage in all of human history.

Since Paul received his knowledge through Divine revelation and not human experience, he is automatically a proficient authority on the subject.

Many born again believers today make a terrible mistake in their choice of a lifetime partner because they have not learned the principles of Bible doctrine relating to marriage. Sometimes a marriage may start out as a good marriage, but that marriage breaks down because of **failure in the spiritual life**. Once that failure occurs, it's all over even though they may stay together unless the spiritual issues have been taken care of.

One of the major problems in marriage is the fact that people expect more from it than what God designed it for.

One view that many individuals have is that marriage is the ultimate in happiness.

1. If you are trying to solve your problems in marriage without Bible doctrine, your efforts are fruitless because there is no solution to your problem, no matter how sincere you are or how hard you try.
2. Any relationship based solely upon emotion is self-destructive and doomed to failure.

3. If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, there is absolutely no place for worldly counsel and human viewpoint in your marriage.

This is one of the prevalent problems in Christian relationships today. The origin of the Divine institution of marriage is God, not psychology.

4. Bible doctrine must be accompanied by unconditional love in the application of the doctrinal principles that you have learned.

5. Bible doctrine is always right. No matter what you think, feel, see or believe, if it contradicts doctrine, it is wrong, period!

6. The ultimate in happiness is fulfilling the Pre-designed Plan of God for your life. Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. (1Co 7:3)

Therefore, believers should not set out on a big search for romance because that is when problems and difficulties arise.

Instead, they should be patient, trusting in the Lord for guidance.

So, take it by faith that if God has someone for you, He will bring the two of you together. When a believer waits for the one that God has designed for his or her life, the compatibility and relationship will have been perfectly tailored.

Jeremiah 31:22 (NKJV)

²² How long will you gad about, O you backsliding daughter? For the LORD has created a new thing in the earth— A woman shall encompass a man."

First Marriage in Human Race

1. God said it was not good that man should be alone. *Gen. 2:18.*
2. God made this statement when man was in a state of innocence, before he had sinned against the Lord. Even in perfect environment it is better for man not to be alone. (He is not complete without a mate.) (God did call some men for a special service, to remain single) There is no example in the Bible about women remaining single for service for God.
3. There was no helper found for Adam among the animal kingdom, so God found him a help - meet of his own kind: "Homo sapiens" *Genesis 2:20.*
4. Man was formed from the dust (chemicals) of the earth, but woman was made from man (Adam's rib).
5. God separated something from Adam - his rib. Man is now no longer complete in himself. There is always something missing and that missing something can only be supplied and provided by a woman.
6. The man is never complete without the woman. The purpose of the woman is to complement (complete) the man and to help him.
7. The woman fulfills the man, and the man is completed by having the woman.
8. There was sex in marriage long before there were children. *Gen. 2:24.*

Marriage: Right Man - Right Woman

(This is an add on and is repeated again in this paper, but I wanted to keep RM - RW together with the study on marriage).

I. The Pattern of the Right Man and Right Woman was established at the Creation of Man: *Genesis 2:21-25*.

A. Adam and One Eve not two Eves or five. A "godly seed" comes only from the RM and RW - if other wise - only the grace of God. *Malachi 2:15* in the Hebrew.

B. In the one-man, one-woman concept, the woman was "brought" to the man. *Gen. 2:22*. When a Christian woman or man conducts the "big search" instead of trusting the Lord in guidance in marrying the right one, difficulty can result.

C. A Christian is to get his or her life partner on the basis of grace, not human hustle and panic.

D. Sex was introduced in marriage long before any children were born. Sex within marriage is not for having children only. Note the word "cleave" (soul and body contact in marriage), *Genesis 2:24*.

E. According to *Genesis 2:24*, parents interfering with marriages of their children is wrong and disastrous.

II. Just as there is one Savior and one body (the body of Christ made up of all believers) called bride (the Church) and the bridegroom (Christ) so there is one man and one woman in God's design. *Eph. 5:31-33*.

A. The husband, if properly matched, will "love" his wife.

B. The wife, if properly matched, will "reverence" (respect) her husband - *Eph. 5:33*.

III. The Right Man and Right Woman have bodies designed for each other - and no other body will match. There is one lock and one key to that lock. God has designed the right combination to work beautifully. Jeremiah 31:22 in the Hebrew.

1. Sexual relations before marriage can destroy any happiness in this area before marriage.

2. Sexual relations before marriage can destroy the soul and make it impossible to find the right man or right woman.

Translation of Jer. 31:22b, "the female (right woman in marriage) shall fit the hero (right man in marriage).

This is such a marvelous relationship that it is unbelievable. This is matching of physical bodies.

IV. No one (past the age of puberty) can seek soul or sex love apart from the right man and the right woman: Ezek. 16 - note especially verse 28, "and could not be satisfied."

V. The woman is a responder but designed to respond to just one man. This is why immoral women (whether ignorant or clever) never understand why they're not happy.

A. "Desire" in Genesis 3:16 speaking of the woman's craving for a man, but it has to be the RIGHT MAN!

B. "And he shall rule": He (singular) one man. A woman must respect a man, must realize she is surrendering her soul and body to that one man, surrendering her freedom to him.

VI. When a woman seeks to respond to the wrong man - the woman destroys her soul (and vice versa), Proverbs 6:32

Proverbs 6:32, "But whoso committeth adultery (single or married) with a woman (wrong woman) he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. "

A. "Destroy" is a term for Putting SCAR TISSUE on the soul eyes (self - consciousness, mentality, volition, emotion, and conscience). Scar tissue twists, distorts, perverts, wrecks the soul and any chance for happiness within the marriage relationship.

B. "Destroy the soul" is spelled out in Romans 1:18 ff. where it talks about homosexuality, lesbianism, Eph. 4:19 talks about being without feeling - this is scar tissue.

C. Premarital sexual relations not only give the girl and the fellow a horrible sense of guilt complex but also the feeling, "I've blown it", "I'm unclean, I'll never be pure again. " For the Christian fellow or girl, there is a recovery process, but it is summed up in one phrase, "crash program." A constant, daily intake of Bible Doctrine.

D. According to 1 Cor. 6:16, premarital sex also has an effect on the physical body. Note 1 Cor. 6:16-18.

VII. Monogamy (One man, one woman in contrast to polygamy, one man, many women) is ordained of God to demonstrate that God has a right man and a right woman for each other. 1 Cor. 7:2-4.

A. 1 Cor. 7:2, "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication (same as adultery), let every man have HIS OWN wife, and let every woman have HER OWN husband. " This IS ONE FOR ONE.

B. I Cor. 7:14, HOMOSEXUALITY, lesbianism, wrong man, wrong woman is not the answer. NOTHING WILL EVER REPLACE right man and right woman.

VIII. God demands that believers marry believers (those who are born - again, have personal faith in Jesus Christ). 2 Cor. 6:14 and surrounding verses.

A. Thus believers are NEVER to marry unbelievers no matter how nice the unbeliever may be. It is prohibited. What about people who go ahead and marry anyway against His will? Miserable - unhappy - every problem imaginable - suffering!

B. Since marriage is a divine institution two believers may marry. Unbelievers (those who have not personally received Christ as Savior - John 3:16, 3 :36) are not to live like animals, they too are to keep sex within the bounds of marriage.

IX. Even in the empty life of an unbeliever (not all unbelievers have empty lives, but they do in this case) or in the case of an unbeliever with scar tissue - when the right man marries the right woman, he derives great happiness from her - even though his life is empty. Ecclesiastes 9:9

Eccl. 9:9 says, "Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity (empty, useless life).. for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labor which thou takest under the sun." (The one good thing you did in life was to marry the right woman).

Why is this point so important? This is the emphasis. If the unbeliever with the right unbelieving woman can be happy, just think what you can enjoy as a believer when both have the edification complex. (Grace - orientation, mastery of the details of life, relaxed mental attitude, capacity to love, and inner happiness.)

X. The right woman is the glory of the man. 1 Cor. 11:7. She reflects his stability, his strength, his protector ship, his edification complex. She responds to him and enjoys him immensely; he is her life and thus reflects the glory of God as well.

XI. Thus recognition of the right man and the right woman becomes vitally important, 1 Cor. 7:9. There are four ways to determine this for believers.

A. The Edification Complex of the Soul (As developed from the word "edify" in Ephesians 4.

This is for mature believers who are single. This inner structure that God builds within through daily doctrinal intake over several years has a built - in radar screen that has the right "blips" when the right one comes along. This is the surest method for the believer. No mistakes are ever made when believers have this stability and inner beauty. Under this concept 'the big search' is not conducted, one is perfectly grace oriented and relaxed about the whole concept of marriage.

B. Faith - basis (for babe or adolescent believers in spiritual growth).

1. Take it by faith that there is a right man or right woman for you: 1Cor. 7:17.

2. Pray for the right one (even though you do not know who it is) and become, through claiming the promises of God and daily intake of His Word - the type of person you wish to marry.

3. DON'T conduct the big search: YOU'LL BLOW IT!

a. The big search prohibited for Christian women in Genesis 7:22, "The Lord brought Eve to the man" . . . pure grace.

This does not rule out dating, but remember in dating, you are probably having companionship with someone's else right man or woman, so protect their soul and body. DO NOT violate either!

b. The big search prohibited for Christian men in 1 Cor. 7:27, "'Seek not a wife.'" This means, don't hustle it - Cool it, and have a love affair in the meantime with BD, Prov. 4:6-8.

4. Make the whole operation a graceful deal. And the Lord will lead you to a girl or fellow which is so marvelously wonderful, your thought - (will be) - "I don't earn or deserve her" (or vice versa).

C. Soul basis: (Touching of souls) (Primarily for unbelievers - but believers can use some of these things as guidelines).

1. Soul compatibility:

a. Compatibility between self-consciousness, awareness of each other. Prov. 31:28.

b. Compatibility between mentalities, think about each other. Prov. 31:11.

c. Compatibility between volitions: Prov. 31:16 - Blending of wills - desire to do the same things.

d. Compatibility between emotions: Prov. 31:28
Appreciation for each other, enjoy the same things, feel the same way.

e. Compatibility between consciences: Prov. 31:25 -
Raised with the same norms or standards, same background in culture, creed, race and so on.

f. And sometimes - compatibility in old sin natures - same areas of human good - or human bad. The same areas of asceticism or lasciviousness - same areas of likes and dislikes (pattern of the old sin nature).

2. Opposite Compatibility In some instances, exact opposites may marry and have compatibility the unifier, of course, is Bible Doctrine.

D. Physical basis: (Again guidelines for both believers and unbelievers are here.) Obviously, there are things here that cannot be dealt with, but one can go far enough to give direction.

1. There will be a physical attraction for the right one.

a. Body contact beyond simple kissing, holding, non - passionate embraces is satisfied by SOUL CONTACT. Compatibility in a good conversation on BD, or in some area of interest, in silence, in doing active things that both enjoy, but stay away from production of scar tissue (mental attitude sins or fornicating).

b. In the believer this is controlled by the Word of God, the indwelling Holy Spirit and His filling, and the edification complex if there.

c. The physical side is also controlled by respect for the opposite number. Passages like Ezekiel 23 indicate that premarital sex destroys respect and often turns to hatred.

d. The physical aspect is also controlled by the fact that the fellow is the custodian of the girl's soul and body and if he is too bum - headed, stupid, to know this, the girl needs to be prepared to protect her body and soul as well.

3. Further safeguards against premarital sex: (why all the safeguards? Because premarital or extramarital sex blows it - but horribly.) Check out Prov. 6:32.

a. For the woman:

(1) The father is the guardian of the virginity of his daughters. 1 Cor. 7:36-38

(2) The woman guards her purity (even if the fellow can't control himself).

(3) The Word of God gives the woman stability: Isa. 33:6, "Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of times. "

(4) On a date the fellow is the custodian of his partner's soul and body - 1 Peter 2:25. Analogy.

b. For the man:

(1) Needs to have a love affair with Bible Doctrine. Proverbs 4:8-9

(2) Needs to have accurate information concerning himself and the opposite sex. Proverbs 5:20, 6:24-32, 7:1-27, 1 Cor. 6:16-18. (On woman - hood, Proverbs 31, and other passages)

(3) Needs to have the right companionship:

a. Stay away from operation fast crowd: Proverbs 1:10-19.

b. Stay away from operation wrong crowd: 1 Peter
4:34.

(4) Needs to respect the privacy of the opposite number on
a date.

4. The proper physical relationship in courtship between the right
man and right woman will take self - discipline but when marriage
comes, the wait will have been 1,000,000,000 times worth it.

5. THE GOAL: ARRIVAL AT THE DAY OF MARRIAGE:

a. Without emotional scars: (Scar tissue)
b. Without guilt complex
c. Without regrets, or mental image of past conquests, or
comparison or lack of respect.

6. However, even in marrying the right person - you will
have trials in marriage, terrific trials:

a. You will love him, you will hate him.
b. You will want him, you will despise him.

7. You may want to walk - out - but since you are married to
your right man - nothing will ever work out.

8. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown
it..." Song of Solomon 8:6-7. No matter what your right man, your right

woman does, it can't put out the fire of that RM - RW love. 8:6. Even unfaithfulness cannot quench it!

XII. When the believer marries the right woman he has received grace from the Lord. Proverbs 18:22.

Translation: "Whosoever findeth a good wife (RW) receives grace from the Lord."

XIII. The right woman (or man) is always from the Lord: Prov. 19:13-14.

A. 19:13, ". . . and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping" (Chinese torture). Wrong woman.

B. 19:14, ". . . and a prudent wife is from the Lord."

A woman with an edification complex is the most valuable property in the world - if she is yours. Prov. 31:10-31.

XIV. The Recovery Process from premarital or extramarital sex:

A. For the unbeliever: Salvation by faith in Jesus Christ removes all scar tissue. Then after salvation get the Word daily.

B. For the believer:

(Symptoms: A terrific sense of guilt, having blown it, severe mental strain more severe sometimes than others, especially during trials. A sense of hopelessness.) Even may consider suicide, either attempt it or accomplish it.

Marriage: Responsibility

1. The husbands have greater responsibility in marriage.
2. The man has the responsibility of initiating and expressing a mental attitude love and the woman responds to it.
3. The woman can never be expected to respond properly in marriage until the man understands the injunction in Ephesians 5:25.

Ephesians 5:22-25 (NKJV)

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

4. A woman can only fulfill Eph. 5:22 when the husband fulfills v. 25.
5. The woman is at her feminine best, with all the glory and majesty of her inner beauty, only when she is in a position to respond.
6. If she does not have something to which to respond, she is going to react in one of two ways (unless she is filled with the Holy Spirit and is taking in the Word of God:)
 - a. Become bitter and frustrated and nag her husband.

b. Practice some form of escapism.

7. Humans have the instinct to love, but the old sin nature distorts the instinct and perverts it.

8. Love is a tremendous source of strength in the adversities and difficulties of life. It is practical as well as idealistic.

9. When two people know the real meaning of love, they do not pick each other to pieces in front of others; they do not sulk and seek to hurt each other and become competitive.

10. The interrelationship between husband and wife must be one of cooperation rather than one of competition.

11. In a normal marriage, no wife really wants to dominate her husband. She prefers to be married to a husband whom she can respect, who is mature, and assumes the necessary responsibilities of family life, and who is considerate of her opinions whenever facing a decision.

12. The man is the head of the home. This does not mean that the wife has no rights, she has her rightful place in the home, and it should be a place of honor, not a place of degradation.

Marriage and Change

Men and women have been led to believe that change or growth is easier than it really is. The human potential movement urged men and women to change themselves, to actualize themselves, to grow and to evolve.

And it apparently followed in the minds of many that if individual growth is good, so too is growth in marriage, and therefore asking a mate to change is good on two counts: It helps the marriage to change positively and it increases the chances of getting what one needs.

What is conspicuously missing in all this new thinking is the old concept of "for better or worse" - of accepting a mate's flaws as well as enjoying his or her virtues.

Acceptance does not mean you have to live in conditions in your marriage that you find irritating or even intolerable. But acceptance does mean that your mate must feel confident that you love him or her in spite of any flaws, and that you can distinguish good points from imperfections.

Couples sometimes go on trying to change each other long after it is clear that it won't work. What happens is that the one who wants change begins to build a case that gets increasingly extreme and dramatic, even obsessional, as though the validity of the marriage hinged on some specific change. Getting a spouse to change is tantamount to getting him or her to love you. You are allowing yourself to be influenced by this myth-equating change with love - whenever you find yourself being unrelenting in your effort to persuade your spouse to be different. Some of the clues are constant criticism, nagging, and at times uncontrolled irritability when your mate's awful and unwanted behavior manifests itself.

Again, love is about acceptance. Your mate can love you and still find it nearly impossible to modify his or her behavior in any lasting and consistent way. No one sets out to annoy or disappoint his or her mate. A spouse may want to change but somehow finds it painfully difficult to do so. The ease or difficulty of responding to your mate's request for change is often totally independent of how much you love your mate.

Ten Commandments of Intimacy

1. Love God first.

Matthew 22:37 (NKJV)

³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."

2. Always speak the truth to each other.

Ephesians 4:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another.

3. Communicate clearly and honestly.

Matthew 5:37 (NKJV)

³⁷ But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

Good communication is a two-way avenue of listening, sharing, and understanding. (Not attacking, bringing up past failures, or anything else that will cause further separation and setbacks.)

4. Resolve unhealed wounds from the past and leave them behind.

Philippians 3:13 (NKJV)

¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,

5. Forgive your spouse every day.

Luke 17:3-4 (NKJV)

³ Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴ And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."

6. Resolve any anger every day.

Ephesians 4:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ "*Be angry, and do not sin*": do not let the sun go down on your wrath,

7. When you are wrong, admit it.

Proverbs 12:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel *is* wise.

8. Don't blame or criticize your spouse.

Romans 14:13 (NKJV)

¹³ Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in *our* brother's way.

9. Focus on the positive in each other.

Philippians 4:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

10. Serve your spouse every day.

Galatians 5:13 (NKJV)

¹³ For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

PRINCIPLES OF MARRIAGE

Falling in love is not always rational. People often marry when judgment is null and void. Therefore, it is important before someone decides to marry, to absorb some principles found in the Word of God so they can apply it before they become emotionally involved. In other words, if you become emotionally involved, you can possibly make the wrong decision. Your emotions begin to dictate to your mentality. So, the best thing is to get some information before your emotions take over.

The first thing we're prohibited, as far as believers are concerned, is not to marry an unbeliever. 2 Corinthians 6:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

Now, if you do marry an unbeliever, you have no right to divorce them and come to that principle and say, "Well, I've made a mistake, now I'm getting a divorce." After you've made that mistake you need to rebound (confess it) and get back in fellowship, start to take in the Word of God and hope that person becomes a believer by your manner of life so they can grow in *GRACE* by the knowledge of our Savior Jesus Christ. The principle is, do not make the first mistake by marrying an unbeliever.

Next thing, do not marry in immaturity. Immaturity can mean a lot of things. Immature doesn't actually mean a particular age. But it does mean while you're too young. When you're a teenager, you're definitely immature. The person you want to marry probably won't be the person you want later on in life, because your norms and standards have changed.

So, don't marry when you're too young and don't marry on a wave of libido. Libido is not love. Libido is not the burning of Right Man and Right Woman.

Also, do not marry to fulfill sexual desire. Sex is not love. It is only one of the many manifestations of love.

LOVE IS A MENTAL ATTITUDE - the Greek work "AGAPE". Out of this comes a rapport love. In other words, first of all you begin with love which is "AGAPE", which is mental attitude love.

As a result of that, you get into another category of love which is "PHILOS" love, which involves total soul rapport, and as a result of that, sex is an expression of it.

There are many expressions for this, conversation, compatibility, all sorts of things. So, don't marry to fulfill sexual desires.

Sex is not love. It is only one of the many manifestations of love. Love is a mental attitude first, then it becomes a total soul rapport. When you magnify sex out of its proper perspective, then you ignore different things.

You ignore spiritual compatibility. In other words, if you're emphasizing sex, then you have no spiritual guidance to deal with many situations that will come up in your life later.

For example, you should have some compatibility, and you should agree as to how you manage the finances at home. You should have recreational compatibility and mental compatibility. So, there are different things you have to know when you get married. (a Christ centered life is a must)

1. DON'T MARRY BECAUSE OF SOCIAL PRESSURE. In other words, some people think I'll never have another chance, I'm 25, I'm old; consequently, life has passed me by.

2. DON'T MARRY BECAUSE YOU'RE PREGNANT. People are getting married because of the fact that they're pregnant. That's two mistakes.

3. DON'T GET MARRIED TO SOLVE PROBLEMS, whatever your problem happens to be.

4. DON'T MARRY TO ACQUIRE A STATUS SYMBOL, or to improve economic situations in life.

5. DON'T MARRY THINKING IF THINGS DON'T WORK OUT, YOU'LL GET OUT OF IT EASILY. In other words, marriage is still a Divine Institution, and you just can't get out of it.

6. DON'T MARRY BECAUSE SOMEONE IS SYMPATHETIC TO YOU. Some people are sympathetic in a stressful period and people marry because of it.

7. DON'T MARRY A JEALOUS PERSON. Some people are jealous all the time.

8. DON'T MARRY AN ALCOHOLIC, IRRATIONAL PERSON, DON'T MARRY AN SELF-SEEKER, who wouldn't make a good mate. Women should not get married until they understand the principle that when they marry someone, they're losing their freedom. A woman must be careful to surrender her free will to a man who will cherish it and not abuse it.

She has to know as much as possible about him. She must realize she is surrendering both her soul and her body to one man, but it has to be the right one. She has to do this as long as they're both alive. A man, on his part, must be willing to assume responsibility and must be careful to find a woman with the proper mental attitude. Now, marriage is a Divine Institution which existed before man's sinfulness. In other words, in *Genesis 2:21-25 (NKJV)*

²¹ And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. ²³ And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." ²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

We have a principle that marriage was the order of the day and was a Divine Institution before Adam went negative. Also, sexual relationships were an expression of marriage in the age of innocence in the garden, Genesis 2:24. When it says that they should be one flesh, that's talking about sexual relationships. So, the primary purpose of sex is an expression of love. Sex existed before sin did. SEX IS NOT SINFUL. Some people think that sex in itself is sinful, but it's not, within the confines of marriage.

The secondary purpose of sex is building up of the human race. Genesis 4:1 (NKJV)

¹ Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the LORD."

In other words, Genesis 2:24 came way before Genesis 4:1.

So, you have Adam and Eve having sexual relationships as Right Man and Right Woman BEFORE they have any children. So, the secondary purpose of sex is the propagation of the human race. This came into the picture AFTER THE FALL OF MAN. After the fall, the woman no longer had sex just for pleasure, but it had another purpose, bearing children and with bearing children pain was connected with it.

The old sin nature which came with the fall, introduced things which sometimes destroy and distort sex, which is the lust pattern. Sex lust takes sex out of its proper place and makes it love itself. On the other hand, asceticism (severe self-discipline and avoidance of all forms of indulgence, typically for religious reasons) says sex is only for perpetuation of the human race. There are two types of people in the world. One, those only interested in the lust pattern, sex, and the

other people who say sex is only for having children. That's both ends of the pendulum and both of them are *WRONG*. Sex, remember, is an act of personal free will, mentally desirous. Sex is an act of mutual response and needs mental preparation. Man, initiates and the woman respond. Sex is an act which is only meaningful when there's a true love, the doctrine of Right Man and Right Woman.

Mental attitude love precedes sex love, or it becomes mechanical and animalistic.

Sexual relationships in marriage are for recreation. The purpose is expression of love between two people, partners, Right Man and Right Woman. (Before we go any further let's talk about **RIGHT MAN - RIGHT WOMAN**)

The Spiritual Perspective

Garden of Eden

The concept of Right Man/Right Woman goes back to the Garden of Eden. After the Lord Jesus Christ created the first man, Adam, he gave him an opportunity to demonstrate his volitional understanding of creation. He gave him an assignment: "Name the animals." Adam learned quickly. He saw that animals all had mates: One male and one female. God's divine design is always perfect, and this was no exception.

Adam wondered as he compared his anatomy to the animals, "What about me?" By this time, he had figured out the basics of relationships: Friendship, love, sex. Of course, the Lord Jesus Christ taught him every day about His Plan and about Creation; so, Adam was becoming aware of his shortcoming. Well, God is perfect; His Plan is perfect, and He never forgets anything. God is omniscient: He knows and sees all. He

doesn't make mistakes. This episode of letting Adam get established first, before bringing in the woman, was His all-wise, Plan for mankind.

The thinking of God is recorded in *Genesis 2:18*:

"Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper-counterpart.'"

It was never God's intention to leave Adam for long without his Right Woman. He said that He would make him a "helper-counterpart." This would be someone like himself (a human being) to help him. But help him do what? He didn't have to work. He had finished classifying all the animal kingdom. Why would Adam need help? He needed someone to complete him. He was incomplete without his Right Woman. The divine design was for male and female to be one unit. Adam, by himself, was only half.

Without the woman, Adam could not express personal love and could not respond to the intimacy of another person. Love for another person was not yet possible for Adam. However, according to the scripture, God's promise was to provide Adam a counterpart like himself.

"And the man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper- counterpart for him" (*Gen. 2:20*).

Adam's Rib

The woman for Adam was made from existing elements similar to Adam's creation. The existing elements came from Adam - namely, one of his ribs. This meant the same DNA, cell structure, blood type. Biologically, woman was the same as man.

"So, the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept, He took one of his ribs, and closed up with flesh its place."
(Gen. 2:21)

The Lord Jesus Christ, the "great physician," performed surgery on Adam. He put him to sleep and removed a rib. He chose to make the woman from the man.

"And the LORD God built into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man and brought her to the man." (Gen. 2:22)

From the rib, the Lord "built" the woman. The Hebrew word, "built," is *banah*, which means to build, to construct. The meaning is that the woman was "built!" She was a beautiful creature, built from Adam for Adam. Adam had simply been sculpted (Hebrew, "jatsar") from clay; but the woman was built. The architecture, symmetry, and beauty were the crowning glory of all creation.

The Lord removed the rib, took it away somewhere, and built the woman. Then when the woman was completed (and the scripture is silent about all this), the Lord Jesus Christ personally brought the Right Woman to the Right Man. Adam, being brilliant (genius mentality), caught on immediately. He recognized her by her bone structure, and he announced her name. He yelled, "Ishah"! In Hebrew this means, "woman." Since he had been naming all the animals as the Lord brought them to him, he continued his work by naming his counterpart. Ishah is a very beautiful word in the Hebrew.

The First Wedding

The Lord Jesus Christ brought the Right Woman to her Right Man. Adam recognized her immediately. Then the Lord pronounced them husband and wife. Adam's recognition is explained in *Genesis 2:23*:

"And the man said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman (Ishah), because she was taken out of Man." (NAS)

The first wedding ceremony was very simple. The Lord Jesus Christ brought in the bride; the man recognized her; and they were husband and wife. They did not go through a courtship phase. There was no romance: No touching and kissing. The man recognized divine design, and the woman didn't have a clue. She was new to the Garden and to human life. Adam, however, was the master, and she would learn very quickly.

Consummation of the Marriage

The marriage was consummated when the Right Man and Right Woman had sex. This is the meaning of the principle for the human race stated in the next verse:

"For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall have sex with his wife; and they shall become one flesh." (*Gen. 2:24*).

The translation has been corrected. The Hebrew word, *dabaq* means to have sex, although it is often translated by the word, "cleave," which is ridiculous. The "one flesh" indicates one complete unit, the complete solution. Right Man and Right Woman are two halves that form one complete whole.

The Divine Precedent

The pattern established in the Garden of Eden between Adam and his Right Woman, "Ishah," (for she was not called Eve until after the fall) is a divine order of precedent. The Lord Jesus Christ made the woman out of man, brought the Right Woman to the Right Man, performed the marriage ceremony, and the marriage was consummated with sex. This divine order of precedent has never changed. The protocol is still the same today.

"For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake." (1 Cor. 11:8-9) (NAS)

The man is the leader, and the woman is the follower, per divine precedent. The man has the authority, and the woman is to respect it. The man must lead on the basis of love, and the woman must recognize the authority of the leader. This is all clearly explained in number of New Testament passages, including 1 Cor. 11:10; Ephesians 5:25-26, 33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:5.

(Back to our subject)

Sexual relationships are also for procreation, but love must always precede sex happiness. It's "WHOM MY SOUL LOVES." Sex merges a man and woman and makes them one.

There is no such thing as superiority in sexual relationships. Man loses his sovereignty in sexual relationships and at the same time, the woman gains from and receives from the man, and in so doing she actually gives. It's a mutual thing.

So, marriage is the boundary for sex. It's described in the Word of God in 1 Corinthians 7:1 (NKJV)

¹ Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: *It is good for a man not to touch a woman.*

Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his OWN woman and let every woman have her OWN husband." Without boundaries people would be hurt and the nation would destroy itself from within like Sodom and Gomorrah.

Marrying simply for sexual experiences is dangerous ground upon which to base a happy marriage. In other words, just for sexual experience is not the criteria.

A husband is commanded in Ephesians 5:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, Love is a mental attitude. Love is what you think. Sex is, again, only one of the many expressions of this mental attitude. A woman must respond to a man mentally, before she can respond to him sexually, or in any other way. It has to be mental first otherwise; it's no more than animal activity.

If a woman is not responding to her husband mentally, she will say, "Honey, I have a headache," or "I'm tired," or some other excuse. Love happiness is moment by moment rapport in the soul and always must precede sex happiness. Any man who fulfills Ephesians 5:25, will receive the proper response from his wife as believers who respond to the LORD Jesus Christ.

The husband's love should be predominantly aggressive and protective. The wife's love should be responsive and receptive and actually from the standpoint of the human anatomy, the Bible is verified; man gives, and the woman receives. The principle is that man initiates love, both mentally and sexually, and the woman responds to it.

The body of one partner rightfully belongs to the other.

1 Corinthians 7:4 (NKJV)

⁴ The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

Therefore, any selfish motivation of action is ruled out. The beauty of the sexual concept is, there is response and counter response.

The man becomes complete because the woman completes him. God separated something from the man, the rib, and now this is returned to him in the form of a mate.

The woman complements the man, thus emphasizing her complete femininity.

Man does not get love by demanding love. He can only get love by giving love first...mental attitude love. No man has the right to demand relationships with his wife.

Husbands must give from the ultimate source of their mental attitude, and they can only get by giving of himself. That's the lesson in GRACE. YOU CAN ONLY GET SOMETHING BY GIVING YOURSELF.

A WOMAN IS A RESPONDER, and a husband cannot subject his wife to abuse and maltreatment and expect her to respond to his advances when he's ready to make love. Some abuse their wives either physically or mentally and then they say, "Honey, let's go." There's no way in this world that can happen.

Since God has so ordained the man and woman for each other, the sexual relationship should not be denied to each other, except under certain conditions of true worship and spiritual activity.

1 Corinthians 7:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

Sex minus love equals a lifetime of misery, sex plus love equals happiness.

True love is a mental attitude; therefore, it is positive and not possessive. Since marriage is founded on the mental attitude of love, the older you become, the more wonderful the marriage can be. As you get older, using Divine Viewpoint, the relationship gets better. From the human viewpoint, your body begins to wrinkle, bags under your eyes, weight gain, and there it goes down the drain. How can the Lord overcome that? "ANSWER"

"WHOM MY SOUL LOVETH"...and it progresses as your body deteriorates. When mental attitude love prevails, and precedes the sexual relationship, then sex becomes a beautiful expression and tapestry of blending of two factors of life into one "AND THEY SHALL BECOME ONE".

Sexual compatibility without mental compatibility can destroy marriage.

Mental attitude compatibility and sexuality with spirituality can make an exceedingly happy marriage. Marriage cannot survive on the basis of sex alone. It takes something greater than that because sex decreases and mental attitude and spirituality and compatibility increase.

PRINCIPLES OF DIVORCE

In the United States, the divorce rate is around 42%, and the percentage of marriages that end in divorce varies by the number of times the couple has been married:

First marriages: About 41% of first marriages end in divorce.

Second marriages: About 60% of second marriages end in divorce.

Third marriages: About 73% of third marriages end in divorce.

Here are some other divorce statistics:

The average length of a first marriage that ends in divorce is about eight years.

The average age of couples going through their first divorce is about 30 years old.

The number of divorces in the United States has declined almost every year this millennium.

The divorce rate for people in their sixties has doubled since 1990.

The groups with the most marriages ending in divorce include:

Adults making less than \$20,000 annually.

Baby Boomers

Those aligned with a non-Christian faith

African Americans

People who consider themselves to be liberal on social and political matters

These stats show how we must work diligently on our marriage!

1 Corinthians 7:10-16 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from *her* husband. ¹¹ But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to *her* husband. And a husband is not to divorce *his* wife. ¹² But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. ¹³ And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. ¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. ¹⁵ But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases*.

But God has called us to peace. ¹⁶ For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save *your* husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save *your* wife?

In 1 Corinthians 7:10-16 it is also clear that some of these couples are having serious marital problems! What? Marital problems in Christian marriages? Nothing has changed in this area! Christians are no more immune to marital problems than non-Christians. In spite of this Paul was clear that Christians should not cut out on the marriage when problems arise. Instead they should stay put together on their marriages building a successful and satisfying marriage takes commitment and hard work. Here, we are called to stand in direct opposition to our culture which has destroyed the sanctity of marriage and provides us with convenient excuses to quit when things get tough.

Some may say I have married the wrong person; we are incompatible. People are not incompatible by nature.

They choose to be incompatible because of selfishness and hardness against God's conviction. This is why those who divorce with this mentality and remarry usually get divorced again.

The grace of God means that, regardless of how badly you've blown it in this area, God still loves you and wants you to experience his love. The same Jesus who spoke so strongly against sexual immorality and divorce also spoke about God and grace to those whose lives had been shattered by these things.

The grace of God doesn't mean he will remove all the consequences of your poor decisions.

He won't unmake the past or completely take away the pain. But he will forgive you completely and enable you to experience his love and acceptance. He won't transform your difficult marriage into one overnight.

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

Adam and Eve—God created Adam and Eve for one another and placed them together to adjust and learn to love one another. It was His will that no one would divide what He put together.

Satan could not stand this. He waited until Eve was alone, then interfered.

Adam evidently had told Eve of the Lord's instructions against eating the forbidden fruit. Eve not only disobeyed the Lord's Word but defied her husband's instructions. So, Satan entered into the mainstream of marriage.

Abraham and Sarah—Satan was Abraham's unseen partner in passing Sarah off as his sister rather than his wife, so she

could become sexually involved with an illegitimate partner (Gen. 12:10-20).

Samson and Delilah—Satan had a field day with his doctrine of immorality. Samson knew better, for he belonged to the Lord (Judges 16:4-21).

David—The shepherd-king's matrimonial and sexual exploits demonstrate Satan's power to distort morality even in the mind of a spiritual man.

Solomon—Satan influenced Solomon beyond our wildest imaginations. He was simply without self-control with his 1,000 women (1 Kings 1 1:1-4).

Israel and Divorce—God ordained the principle of one man and one woman. Israelites, in defiance of God, demanded divorce. Finally, Moses granted it. Christ said that divorce was not God's will but that it had been granted because of the hardness of the Israelites' hearts (Mark 10:3-9). Satan has a treacherous manner of hardening hearts in marriage. Husbands and wives become stubborn if things do not go their way. Any effort to introduce spiritual principles is rejected, often violently.

It is no different today than in Bible times. Satan knows that if he can gnaw away at the roots of a God-ordained marriage he can affect an entire generation.

You cannot escape Satan's attempt to influence your marriage. But, Satan does not have the power to enter in and destroy a marriage unless the partners give him permission.

Satan doesn't want you to admit it and he will make it easy for you to deny it.

After Adam was challenged by God, he would not admit that he had cooperated with Satan. Instead, he attempted to place the blame on God! He said, "The woman that You gave me made me do it " (Gen. 3:12).

Let's look at Satan's doctrines of marriage that have permeated many Christian homes.

Lie #1 "If you are unhappy in your marriage, it is not your fault. Blame your mate."

Satan offers thousands of variations to this defense. A husband cannot blame his wife, neither can a wife blame her husband. Blaming the other leads to many negative consequences, adultery, separation and divorce.

You are responsible for your attitude in your marriage. Your imperfection makes your marriage unsatisfactory. This does not mean that your mate is innocent, but the solution depends upon your adjusting your attitude.

In Scripture the relationship between a man and his wife illustrates the relationship between Christ and the believer. Certainly, Christ was never the problem in His relationship with any individual. Though He was innocent, He went to the cross. Without criticizing the sinner, He died, so the sinner would go free.

Christ took upon Himself the responsibility of salvation. You are to take upon yourself the responsibility for the deliverance of your marriage.

If you love your mate unconditionally, not blaming him (her) for the marriage problems, your marriage will improve. As long as you dwell on your mate's weaknesses your marriage will not meet its potential.

Christ teaches in 1 Pet. 4:8: "Above all things have fervent love among yourselves: for love shall cover the multitude of sins."

Lie #2 "Stand up for your rights!" This is known as the power struggle. We want to be the center of attention. We want things to go our own way.

Each of us, to a greater or lesser extent, brings this power struggle into our marriages. Satan gives us a great variety of reactions we can use when we do not get our way:

We lose our tempers.

We refuse to cooperate.

We went silent.

We complain.

We manipulate.

We isolate ourselves and do our own thing.

We may think these things help us to win the power struggle. But while we win, our mates lose. Because we have become one in marriage, if one mate loses, both lose.

Generally, these vicious attempts to gain power do not succeed. They simply antagonize our mates in self-defense which adds fuel to the situation, causing more and more scar tissue. In which makes it harder to reconcile.

Christ teaches in Phil. 2:5 "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

Lie #3 "You've done all you can to make this marriage a success! Really? Do you overlook the very problem that causes your marriage failures?"

You would be surprised how little effort the average Christian puts into solving a marriage problem. He (she) may pray, but it is only to ask the Lord to take sides.

Usually, both partners take on martyr roles as soon as things begin to go wrong. Each says: "I've prayed," "I've tried," "I've put up with things no normal person would put up with etc."

Christ teaches in 1 Cor. 13:47: "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not, love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Lie #4 "Marriage is a romantic dream where two people live happily ever after."

I have performed many weddings. Many of which had high expectations that their marriages would be different. Many were more interested in romance than reality. No amount of warning could convince them that marriage complicates rather than simplifies life. Often marriage brings out the worst, not the best.

Before the wedding, a moonlight walk, a romantic dinner may evoke breathless romance.

But such unreal circumstances must not be the basis for marriage. A crying baby eliminates a lot of activity. A lack of funds to do very little after marriage.

Satan uses the smallest things to divide a husband and wife. He also blinds them to the presence of these things before the wedding.

Viewed from love, these things are not important, but Satan makes the little aggravations seem big. Christians fall into his trap.

Christ teaches in Gal. 5:22,23 "... The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

Lie #5 "Marriage is getting rather than giving."

Satan is crafty in passing on this lie. Our culture emphasizes three values: beauty, brains, and brawn.

A brilliant young man was moving swiftly up the success ladder in his firm. He met a girl who had won more than twenty beauty contests.

When the two married, they experienced nothing but trouble. The man soon discovered he had married, in his opinion, a vain, self-centered, spoiled girl who spent countless hours on herself. Her constant whining for attention and her refusal to do the simplest household chores turned him off.

The woman soon discovered that instead of getting a husband to continually admire her beauty, she had married a slave to a career.

When their marriage was finally beyond repair they sought counseling, but there was no solution. Both were dedicated to taking.

This is a most obvious example of the Satanic doctrine of taking and not giving. But to some extent this Satanic doctrine invades every marriage. We would all like to get a little more than we give.

Satan also has a variation called the "barter system." A husband and wife makes it plain that he or she is willing to give something, but expects a reward for doing so. But married love should make no such demands. A truly loving person enjoys giving.

Christ teaches in Acts 20:35

"... Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

If You Are Single

If you're a believer and you're single, remain in that status. Take in the Word of God, grow in GRACE, learn the principle of Right Man and Right Woman, and wait until the Lord supplies that person for you and that status is changed. It's much better to be single than married to the wrong person. If you cannot live with yourself, you cannot take your problems to someone else.

Changing from single to married status is more insane than anything you can do because your problem becomes worse. In other words, as a single person you can't manage your own problems; taking on the responsibility of someone else only makes it that much worse. As a

believer, it's better first of all to understand pertinent information on the subject of love, sex and marriage, before any change is made in status.

So, in studying Right Man and Right Woman, you might come to the conclusion that you're married to the wrong person.

Back To Marriage

That's not an excuse to break up the marriage. Keep on taking in the Word of God.

Lean strong on the inhale and exhale of the Word of God. You can turn an unhappy marriage into a happy one.

How? You can accept Christ as your Savior (unbelievers). If you are a believer (rebound, confess your sins and get back in fellowship). Your domestic problems are then secondary to your relationship with the Lord. You can understand the principle of the filling of the Holy Spirit by confession of sin (believer), and you'll begin to mature, and you'll become GRACE oriented and have the mastery over the details of life, inner happiness and capacity for life. In the meantime, carefully consider the law of contentment, Philippians 4:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

Hebrews 13:5-6 (NKJV)

⁵ *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."* ⁶ So we may boldly say: *"The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"*

Remain in the status quo. If, as a believer, you go against God's will and marry an unbeliever, remain in the status quo, marriage. You're not to break it up. Get back in fellowship over that failure, don't look back. God has forgotten it and so should you. Just keep moving. You'll have problems, you'll have natural repercussions of a mixed marriage. But the responsibility is to stay in fellowship, learn the Word, use the principle of trying to win the other person to the Lord by your manner of life.

Deuteronomy 24:1-4 (NKJV)

¹ "When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts *it* in her hand, and sends her out of his house, ² when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's *wife*, ³ if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts *it* in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, ⁴ *then* her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that *is* an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Every time you say the word "divorce" you automatically get into some legalistic thinking pattern. If you say "baptism", you think "water". If you say "repent", you think something like "feel sorry for your sins", or "turn from your wicked ways".

All those words have been so misused and abused that we can't even think clearly anymore. So, you have to keep on emphasizing it.

I know I can say "divorce" to most people and they're just shocked, because someone told them divorce is the unpardonable sin. Divorce is not an unpardonable sin.

I'm not on a platform for people to be divorced (and two Christians should never divorce) apart from Biblical exceptions). I'm saying that the unpardonable sin is rejecting Jesus Christ as Savior.

And if you're a divorced person, or you're contemplating divorce, you're still a child of God, you still have a purpose and a function. If you don't, you would not be living today).

Do you know how you will know when the Lord is through with you? (you're with the Lord). When He's through, you'll be face to face with the Lord.

Let's look again in Deuteronomy 24:2 (NKJV)

² when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's *wife*,

Now, I didn't write that! That's what it says. Try to get around it, You CAN'T get around it. "And the latter husband hate her and write her a bill of divorcement and give it in her hand and send her out of the house, or if the latter husband die which took her to be his wife, her former husband, who had sent her away, may not take her again."

Now I want you to see something here, verse 2, she can be another man's wife. Underline that...and then, verse 4, "HE MAY NOT TAKE HER AGAIN." Two definite statements. To be his wife after she is defiled, "for that is an abomination before the Lord and thou shalt cause the land to sin"...a very important expression, "the land to sin which the LORD thy God has given thee for an inheritance".

Now whether you know it or not, those four verses in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 are where God has given us four Divine Institutions for the stability of the human race. There are four principles the Lord has given the human race whether they're believers or unbelievers, to protect us from destroying ourselves.

FREE WILL. You have free will to make decisions in life. In other words, you have free will to wear whatever you want to wear, look like you want to, pursue any type of job you want to. You can make decisions to go to church if you want to. You can make decisions not to go if you don't want to.

No one should ever put any pressure on you to come to church, or anything else, because that would violate your free will.

Divine Institution #1 is free will. This is where we have volition. We make choices in life. When we are not able to make choices, then we're under a different system called Communism. Socialism, also, doesn't give you any opportunity to exercise free will.

Now we're talking about **MARRIAGE**, so free will engages in marriage because you choose who you want to marry.

No one tells you who to marry. You know the Lord tells you and the other person and that's all. So, you have free will to make decisions in life. One of those is marriage.

Divine Institution #2 is MARRIAGE. Marriage is designed to perpetuate (populate the earth) the human race. One man and one woman so we can have stability in our national entity and the family.

Divine Institution #3 is FAMILY.

We raise our children, teaching them these principles, Right Man/ Right Woman, Freedom, etc.

Divine Institution #4 is NATIONALISM.

You live in a national entity. If you have freedom of choice, you have freedom to marry whom you want to, raise your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. That gives us a strong national entity. But if there are multitudes of divorces, adultery and promiscuity, then it causes the "land to sin".

You have a maximum number of people doing that and your land is destroyed. The Roman Empire went down that way and we're going to go down the same way if we continue.

All right, so let's look at it. The word DIVORCE means biblically, not legally, not legalistically, but the word divorce means freedom to marry. See, that's a new concept in your thinking. As soon as you say divorce, you say uh-oh, that's a divorced person, that's a scarlet woman.

Illustration: "A" is a woman, "B" is a man.

"A" is unfaithful to her husband. We'll say she's unfaithful. "B" is the husband and he is not unfaithful. So now she's the guilty party. She has broken this relationship.

All right, now the husband has two choices,

1) he can forgive and forget. If he can't forgive and forget, then he shouldn't even take her back. In other words, he shouldn't hold her feet to the fire and make her do certain things to punish her.

So, he has to forgive and forget. If he can't, then he has a Bonafide reason to divorce her. That's a Bonafide reason and he can remarry. Period! A divorce in the Bible means freedom to remarry...one person.

One of them has got to be guilty. You see, if neither of them is guilty, then there's no Bonafide reason for divorce. So biblical divorce gives the right of remarriage to one person. Divorce was permitted under the Mosaic Law with one exception, verses 3 and 4.

In the Old Testament the man always divorced the woman, Deuteronomy 24:1-4.

However, the principle applies both ways. In the Old Testament the man was the head of the house, and he was the spiritual leader, living under the order of the patriarchs and they represented the family in spiritual things. Today, in the New Testament, in the Church Age, "We're all one in Christ Jesus. There's neither male nor female, Jew or Gentile, bond or free, we're all one in Christ Jesus".

So, the women and the men are alike in that we represent ourselves to the Lord. So, the principle applies both ways. The man or the woman can get the divorce.

Now the biblical background is Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Verse one says "When a man hath taken a wife and married her and it cometh to pass that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her." "Some uncleanness in her"...see under the Mosaic Law divorce was abused. It was distorted. When you get religion working with the Mosaic Law, it begins to twist it. So, under the Mosaic Law divorce was abused and distorted because there were many reasons for uncleanness.

For example, a man who wanted to get rid of his wife in the Old Testament would get her to touch some dead animal. If he got her to touch some dead animal, he would pronounce her "unclean." He'd go to the priest and get a written bill of divorcement.

It was ceremonial. Or, if she touched the clothes of someone who had died, he can divorce her because she's unclean.

Or, if she went to a funeral, he brings a priest along and says, "Hey, look at her, she's in there" and he gets out of it. It's a gimmick. So, they twisted it into a gimmick. **If you're looking for a way out, you're going to find one. But that's not biblically correct.**

So immediately he would send for a judge and declare his wife unclean. That's what "some uncleanness" means in verse 1.

Now, in verse 2 it says, "And when she has departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife." She has the right to marry because he used a gimmick against her. He found some unclean thing in her. He wanted out of it and the reason is that she finds no favor in his eyes, which means her husband hates her. That's what that expression means. He has mental attitude sins.

Here's a principle for you: Verse 3 we have 'LH' for latter husband. That's husband #2. In verse 4 we have 'FH' for former husband, that's husband #1. So, she is defiled, that is defiled in the mind of husband number one. In other words, husband #1 is short-circuited sexually, because she's been with another man. So, she's not defiled so far as her second marriage is concerned. She is right to marry this guy, but if this guy dies, she can't go back to husband #1, because he has been short-circuited. So in regard to her first husband, she is defiled and then it says, "causes the land to sin."

In other words, when a maximum number of incompatible marriages exist, the sin will take many forms. A lot of times it takes the form of homosexuality. Sometimes it takes on the form of lesbianism. Sometimes it's bestiality.

So, we have a principle. Some uncleanness, in verse 1, is a gimmick. This guy doesn't like her anymore; he's found a way to get out of the marriage. He's guilty, she's innocent. Verse 2, biblical divorce means the woman can marry someone else. But verses three and four, the exception is, she can't go back to the first one after she's married the second one.

Divorce is permitted in the New Testament also, under certain conditions. We're talking marriage between two believers, or two unbelievers. See, there's nothing wrong with performing a service for two unbelievers.

The only thing you can't do is mix the two.

So, divorce is permitted in the New Testament, under certain conditions. We'll give them to you: Adultery, Matthew 5:32, Matthew 19:19. "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." "Honor thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

If one person commits adultery, then the other person, if they want to, can divorce them, and remarry. They have the right to remarry. Now before **I tell you that, there's the principle they can forgive and forget.** But they have to forget. If they don't forget, they're going to have a terrible situation, holding the other person to the fire. So, that's one of them.

Desertion is another one. 1 Corinthians 7:15, "And unto the married I command, yet not I but the Lord, let not the wife depart from her husband." Now desertion is very interesting because desertion can be mental. In other words, "As a man thinketh, so is he."

You'll see this a little later on because when the Lord interpreted the Ten Commandments, and they said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." He said, "I say to you, he that looks upon a woman with lust has committed adultery". So, what he was talking about is: It's what you think that counts, not what you do, because what you think precedes what you do.

In other words, you can desert someone mentally. You can be living with them and your mind is entirely with someone else. That is desertion. Usually, mental desertion is followed by overt desertion. In other words, you're divorced long before you're divorced.

There are a lot of people living together who are divorced, but they're staying together for other reasons. They're living under the same roof, but their minds are elsewhere. So, it's actually not healthy.

Another reason is a divorce gimmick.

Deuteronomy 24:2. You can find some excuse, some gimmick to divorce a person, but if you do, then that person is free to marry. You're the guilty party.

Another one is not capable of being appeased. Deuteronomy 24:3. You're a victim of a spouse's continual actions, like hatred. In other words, if a person is completely abusive to you, as in Deuteronomy 24, there's no way you can have a relationship with them.

Now if a marriage is broken in a mixed marriage, God only allows it to be done by the unbelieving partner. 1 Corinthians 7:15 "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart.

A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace."

A mixed marriage is a believer marrying an unbeliever, which is probably the most horrible combination possible.

So, marriage is a Divine Institution; many people think they should not be blamed for their weaknesses or their failures in the matter of marriage; however, you choose this marriage partner of your own free will, Divine Institution #1, and as such, marriage is your responsibility. When you ask someone to marry you and they say yes, the responsibility is with you and with them, too. You have to take responsibility for your decisions.

One of three things that can result when a marriage fails is this. First of all, sticking it out. This usually occurs because people stick it out because of the children. Couples simply live in a rather grim fashion and get out and it's all done for the sake of the children.

That is not the best for marriage - because your children then come under the framework of hypocrisy and they come under that environment and whether you know it or not, your kids know, even if you never argue, that there's something wrong. They can tell immediately. So, what happens if a marriage fails, they stick it out and use some excuse.

Secondly, there's a difference biblically between the concept of divorce and what the state says about separation. The state says you can separate on anything, and you can divorce on anything. Today you don't have to have hardly any grounds.

For example, suppose you have a husband that beats his wife continually, suppose her life is in danger. What do you do with that? Do you just stay there and die a martyr's death? Right? No, you do not! See - that's keeping you from "growing in GRACE by the knowledge of our Savior Jesus Christ."

That's a marriage that God hasn't put together. That's not honoring to the Lord at all. The word "divorce" means freedom to remarry.

Remember the Bible gives the right of divorce with the freedom to remarry (Deuteronomy 24), with one exception, you can't go back to the first one.

In certain cases, a woman has to leave - Divine Institution #2, Marriage, to get back under Divine Institution #1, Free Will. Divine Institution #1 is Free Will and you have to make free will decisions as far as the Lord is concerned. If in your married life, you can't make decisions because of implacability, hatred, or physical abuse...some men are so motivated that they remove any volition from the wife and the result is, she becomes a slave. Being the head of the house does not give a man the right to enslave his wife. He's not the head of the human race. See, there's a chain of command. Jesus Christ is the Head. He has placed man as the authority over the family, but this man who is actually a mediator in that situation cannot keep his family from having a relationship with the Lord.

The Right to Remarriage

When the union of two believers or two unbelievers is broken, there are three principles which apply concerning the right of remarriage.

All things before salvation are blotted out...at the moment of salvation.

All right, if you've accepted Christ as your Savior, everything that happened previously is over because you're a new person IN CHRIST..."old things have passed away".

You're a new person.

So, all things before salvation are blotted out at the moment of salvation.

Isaiah 43:25, "I even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins no more". If an unbeliever has married and divorced 14 times, before salvation and at the moment of salvation he's single, he can marry again. Any number of marriages and divorces are blotted out at the moment of salvation. Psalm 103:3, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases".

A believer's life starts at the moment of salvation. No Christian has the right to penalize other Christians for something which occurred before salvation, or at any other time.

Romans 8:33 "Who shall lay anything against God's elect? It is God that justifieth." That's the first principle. Everything before salvation is wiped out.

The first principle is divorce because of the other party committing adultery. Matthew 5:32 "But I say unto you, that whoso ever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication causeth her to commit adultery and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." The innocent person has the right of remarriage.

The second principle is desertion.

1 Corinthians 7:15 "And unto the married I command, yet not I but the Lord, let not the wife depart from her husband."

The third principle is death. Romans 7:2, "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband."

1 Corinthians 7:8,9, "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I, but if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn."

Death destroys a marriage bond, but it does not destroy the love in the marriage. Love is a mental attitude.

So, whenever there is a Bonafide basis for divorce, the principle of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 applies the right of remarriage. Whenever someone divorces for other than a biblical cause, the remarriage amounts to adultery.

The first nine commandments as stated in Exodus deal with primarily overt activity. "Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal". When the Lord Jesus Christ did the commentary on the Ten Commandments in Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount, He said sin goes beyond the overt act. Sin exists in the mental attitude as well. That's Matthew 5:27,28, "You have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you that whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her in his heart." So, if you've married against God's will, that is an unbeliever, the doctrine of status quo supersedes the sin part of the problem.

In other words, do not break it up, acknowledge your failure, get back in fellowship, don't look back, learn the Word of God, stay filled with the Holy Spirit and use the principle of winning that other person to the Lord. If a couple hears the doctrine of Right Man/Right Woman, and they decide they have married the wrong person they are not to break up their marriage but remain in the status quo and keep on taking in the Word of God.

COUPLES CAN MANAGE THEIR PROBLEMS

2 Corinthians 12:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Married life is flanked on every side with problems and pressures.

In fact, all of life is full of problems. We live in the "kosmos" the world of anti-God thinking.

The Christian way of life is not a detour around problems. It is a pathway through and beyond them.

The committed Christian marriage does not have less problems than any other kind. In fact, it may have more problems.

The difference between the Christian and unchristian marriage is that Bible principles are a foundation upon which we can cope with those problems.

The Christian faith finds an avenue of making any problem a vehicle of glory and gratitude.

Our human emotions and abilities are like a runaway wild horse that must be brought under control, or it will become very destructive.

This is also true of our problems. Without problems there can be no relationship.

To avoid or disregard problems will prove less than helpful.

Face Problems Head On.

Fleeing does not solve problems.

There will be conflict, and it must be faced.

Relocating problems only provides a more fertile climate for them to grow.

Both must confront the problems together. It is not enough for one to confront and the other to avoid. Both will become angry.

The key is to discuss your problems and come to realize that you must communicate **constructively** about it. Then forget it once it has been solved.

Accept The Fact of The Problem.

Ignoring a problem will never solve it nor condoning it. Often the problem is not the problem - the real problem is made up of all the reactions that have been fed into our human viewpoint thinking that goes against Divine Viewpoint thinking.

These things come out in conversations during the confrontation.

The problem never gets discussed. Tempers flare, words fly, but the problem is unattended. Marriage is wounded by words that cannot be retracted.

Couples in the midst of the confrontation should admit that there is a problem. At this point, miracles can begin to work in your relationship. Once you can get beyond the point of admitting having problems, then you can deal constructively with them.

Most of us hate conflict. But we must accept it, talk it out and work it through.

Conflict can be creative, especially if it were harnessed in the framework of love and acceptance based on Bible doctrine.

Discussions should cause us to listen to each other in conflict and to hear some things we haven't heard before.

We will also learn some things about ourselves that will be beneficial for the rest of our life.

Adopt Ground Rules for Creative Conflict.

Avoid accusation. This will leave the other spouse to explain actions. "You did this".

Avoid generalities such as "you always" or "you never!". Such generalities leave no room for further discussion.

Use request, not complaint as the best approach. Entreaty assumes a kind response while complaining predicts non-response and generally gets it.

Agree that each has the right to call off discussion until a later time without being penalized.

Learn to read the stages of a conflict in order to avoid unnecessary complications through further accusations. There are times when it is best to keep quiet.

Discussions Are a Necessity.

Talk out everything—discuss, question, and answer.

Character changes we would like to make.

Guidelines in communication. Discuss all the "Dos" and "Don'ts."

Danger Signs in communication. When you feel suspicion, are negative or refuse to listen.

Confrontation in relationships. Be kind. **Refuse to be angry and be positive.** Don't criticize or condemn.

Learn to listen.

Character traits which are revealed in stress, fatigue, or pressure. Admit them and then discuss how to avoid them.

Realize that both you and your partner are not perfect. The sooner you admit this; the sooner you can trust the Lord for victory.

Directions on how to express feelings of frustration, hurt, anger and disappointment. The purpose is not to penalize each other but to be constructive.

State the case without accusation, leaving a way open for apology, explanation, or defense.

Anticipate reception, approval, and success in statement of case.

State the case as positively as possible.

Statement of Affirmation

"I will be a different person when this problem is passed. I will be a wiser, stronger, more patient person; or I will be sour, cynical, bitter, disillusioned and angry. It all depends on what I do about this problem. Each problem can make me a better person or a worse person. It can bring me closer to God, or it can drive me away from God. It can build my faith, or it can shatter my faith. It all depends on my attitude. I intend to be a better person when this problem leaves me than I was when it met me. "

Rules for a good fight.

Before you begin, both should agree that the time is right.

Remember that the aim is deeper understanding.

Check your weapons often to be sure that they're not deadly. Agree to lower your voices and never raise them.

Agree to discuss a truce when either calls a "halt". When you come to terms put it away until you agree it needs more discussion.

Speak the Truth in Love. (Eph. 4:15)

Conflict is natural, normal, neutral and sometimes even delightful.

However, it can be painful and disastrous, but it doesn't have to be that way.

Conflict is neither good nor bad, right nor wrong. Conflict simply is.

How we view, approach and work through our differences does to a large extent, determine our whole life pattern.

Alternatives that are open in most conflict situations.

Dealing with Confrontation.

The sooner the better in most cases.

Most cases of conflict worsen by waiting.

Face it as soon as I can speak the truth in love.

Not in anger--be firm but without anger. Waiting too long intensifies the danger of anger. Imagination moves in.

Be positive — assume a total response - expect affirmation.

Refuse to be destructive and use entreaty with purpose.

Consider the tone of voice and facial expressions. face.

Don't criticize or condemn.

This causes paralyzing defensiveness and encourages retaliation.

Map out a course of action.

Once the problem is pointed out, future action should be plotted out.

Realize that one partner's problem is also the other's problem also,

There should be an openness to questions without intimidation.

Use questions and never make statements that accuse.

Do not say, "You broke your agreement" Instead, ask "What did we agree on?"

This requires only an answer and never a defense.

Work out terms or signs which humorously remind each other of past conversations. This demands a sense of humor.

Husbands, affirm your wife with love and blessing. This gives security to her. A wife appreciates a husband who will remind her of needs in her life and pay attention to meeting the needs.

Make an all-out commitment to a program of victory together — as long as the husband and wife are together, there can be no failure.

Receiving confrontation - How to act when confronted.

Be Still and listen respectfully. Trust each other to be fair.

Refuse to get mad, sound off, accusing, defending actions and attacking.

Ask for advice from your partner. I know I have this problem. Tell me how I can deal with it.."

Submit to plans for victory.

Leave communication lines open with gratitude. "I want you to know that I appreciate your bringing up this matter. Please do it every time. .

Conclusion:

Husband, remember, you are the initiator.

It is in your hands to deal with problems constructively.

Take charge of the discussion. Your wife will not resent your loving leadership.

Be prepared to listen to your wife.