

God Designed Marriage

There are very few things in our world today that were ever a part of God's perfect plan for mankind.

Government systems, with all their checks and balances and laws, would not be necessary if it were not for the corruption that sin produced.

The monetary system, with all the buying and selling, would not be necessary in a sinless world that did unto others as they would have others do unto them.

And many other things that we consider institutions in our society were never intended by God, but simply are ways of trying to cope with and control the perversion that entered the world through sin.

But one thing that God established while man was still in a sinless condition and said that it was not good for man to do without was MARRIAGE.

Genesis 2:18 says,

The Lord God said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suited to him.

A perfect man who had none of the pressures or problems that we know of today still was not complete without a mate.

And it was not Adam who approached God about the situation and asked for a companion.

Adam didn't know what he was missing!

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4 years ago when God told me, he had a wife for me, I said no, out of **PAIN** not out of **LOVE**....

God new I needed a wife.....

It was **God** who initiated the whole thing because that was His **perfect** plan.

This all emphasizes the high priority that **marriage** should have in our lives.

Wake-Up Call for Modern Marriages

Christians today have put very little effort into our marriages, and therefore, we have gotten very little out of them.

We have had our vision of what a blessing God intended marriage to be, dulled by the SORRY examples of marriage we see around us today.

2 Corinthians 10:12

Not that we dare to class or compare ourselves with some of those who recommend themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding.

This is what has happened over the years. Most couples have no idea of what God intended marriage to be, so they settle for the same substandard relations that they see others experiencing.

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They think conflict is just a part of marriage; and a couple that simply coexists without outward battles is considered to be an ideal couple, although that couple may have a cold war raging.

After all, everybody is having trouble with their marriages today.

Let's just laugh at that hahaha.....

I won't be teaching for the next few weeks, but I am beginning a serious one on **LOVE**, that you do NOT want to *miss*.

Hope for Every Marriage

Well, I am pleased to announce that not everybody is having trouble with their marriages today!

The Lord is moving mightily in this area, and regardless of what the rest of the world experiences, Christians can have God's best in their homes. **YES!**

God instituted marriage, so He certainly knows how to make it work properly.

The only reason two out of three marriages in America end up in divorce is because the people involved don't follow the instructions God gave concerning marriage.

It is that simple. **The solution is not easy**, but it is that simple.

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What does God say about marriage? I AM GLAD YOU ASKED!

Ephesians 5:22-33,

22 Wives should be subordinate to their husbands as to the Lord.

23 For the husband is head of his wife just as Christ is head of the church, he himself the savior of the body.

24 As the church is subordinate to Christ, so wives should be subordinate to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her

26 to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word,

27 that he might present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

28 So [also] husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

29 For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church,

30 because we are members of his body.

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This scripture gives us quite a bit of instruction.

I cannot go into everything these scriptures minister concerning marriage,

but one principle that is interwoven throughout them all is **LOVE**:

God's kind of love.

God's institution of MARRIAGE will only work with God's kind of LOVE.

Applying God's Love in Marriage

In counseling many couples, I have found that many Christians, even those baptized with the Holy Ghost, are still operating toward each other with the same carnal love they had before they were Christians.

In many cases, they have started trying to apply God's love to their brothers and sisters in the body and have developed a "burden for the lost,"

but **NOT** in their own marriages, we see this beautiful couple in church who are loving others and look amazing, but at home take on a different look!

God's kind of LOVE has to be applied to our marriages too.

One of the most striking differences to me between the world's love and God's kind of love *is that you can teach yourself to operate in God's love.*

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Titus 2:4 says that the older women are to teach the younger women “to love their husbands, to love their children.”

Carnal love is completely motivated by the emotions or senses,

but God’s love comes from the heart, and although the feelings are definitely affected, they don’t motivate or deter God’s love.

Commitment Beyond Feelings

Carnal love is characterized by a naked, little fat boy who goes around shooting people with arrows to cause them to “fall” in love or to “fall” out of love.

That simply is not true love.

Heb. 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

God’s love is the same **yesterday, today, and forever.**

1 John 4:8 Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love.

GOD IS LOVE

People who love one minute and then their mood changes and they act the opposite way the next minute, simply don’t operate in God’s love.

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You may feel like reacting in anger, but you can CHOOSE to operate in love.

Many people are confused about this and think,

I can't act like I love them when I don't feel it.

Oh, yes you can!

God's Word tells us in Matthew 5:44 to love our enemies!

Matthew 5:44 But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you,

It is a command.....

He didn't say to do it if you felt like it.

If you will choose to do what God tells you to, your feelings will follow.

You can TEACH yourself to love with **God's kind of love.**

Transforming Your Emotions

A person who is truly born again desires to do what God says but doesn't always feel like it.

Our feelings have been corrupted by our old lives before we came to Christ.

2 Cor. 5:17 tells us now that we are in Christ, we have **His** promise that our spirits have been totally changed and have become like Him.

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2 Cor. 5:17 So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.

Galatians 5:22 says that love is a part of the fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22 In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,

This is specifically speaking of the Holy Spirit; but our new man was born of the Spirit, so it has to be true that God's love has been shed abroad in our spirits too.

WeDO have God's love in our new man.

Our feelings are not automatically changed, however.

Our feelings will continue to act like they were taught to act until we subdue them and bring them under the control of our spirit man.

It is not hypocritical to act in love when you don't feel it.

It is actually hypocritical to act on what you feel instead of who you really are in Christ Jesus.

God's kind of love is a choice that you make on the basis of what God said, and then act on it in **FAITH**

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until it becomes a *reality in your spirit, soul, and body*.

Choose to Receive and Give Unconditional Love

If you can receive this basic truth about God's love, then you can begin to be consistent in your love to your mate

because your love is based on a **CHOICE** that you have made, not on the way they act.

This is the root cause of nearly all strife in marriage.

Everything is fine until one partner does something wrong to the other, and now we are off to the races.

Aren't you glad that God doesn't treat us that way?

Romans 5:8 says, *"But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us."*

PRAISE GOD!

God's love wasn't based upon what we had done for Him or what we deserved but upon His choice to love us.

That is all!

We didn't do anything to merit God's love.

He just chose to give it.

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We can choose to receive that kind of love and then give it to others in the same way.

Another way to say this is that God's love is unconditional.

Jesus didn't wait until we were worth it or had repented before He gave Himself for our sins.

He gave Himself for us while we were yet sinners and living a life of rebellion against Him

His love was extended toward Hitler just as much as it was toward us.

The difference is our acceptance or rejection of it not His offer of love.

God's love is unconditional!

Practicing Unconditional Love in Marriage

We have to put this unconditional love of God to work in our marriages.

If you live with a person for any length of time at all, you are going to find fault with them.

If your love isn't unconditional, then you will begin to give them what they deserve.

And you can rest assured that when you make a mistake, you will reap what you have sown.

Worship Team

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Choosing Mercy Over Justice

I used to work in a convient store photo booth We had a joke about these ladies who would come in to see their proofs and just throw a fit about how bad their pictures looked.

They would say, "This picture doesn't do me justice!"

I never said it, I often thought, *Lady, you don't need justice, you need mercy!*

That's the way it is in marriage. Our mates, who see us at our worst, have to give us mercy, not justice.

Failure in this area is the ROOT of most marriage problems.

Many couples actually use their conditional love as a weapon to try and motivate their mates to do things.

That will destroy a marriage.

If the thing that keeps your mate in line is a fear of your exploding if they mess up, then you are tormenting them.

That's what 1 John 4:18 says, *"There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love."*

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You may see some results through that method, but it's a fact that you are building resentment and rejection in them, and sooner or later, it will explode.

God's love is unconditional.

Make the choice to let God's unconditional love flow through you and watch how it can transform your marriage.

As I mentioned earlier, I will be starting a series on LOVE Called "I LOVE LOVE"

Yesterday Darlene and I were talking about the significance that we have eight days until we are married.

Eight people were on Noah's Ark, do you realize we have just over Eight billion people today.

Seven is the number of completion, eight is the number of new beginnings.

Today, you can begin the journey of the best marriage, the best LOVE you can ever have, through Jesus Christ.