

# The plan of marriage.

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**M**arriage is a part of the creation (it is the first created institution and the only one needed in the Garden, before the Fall).<sup>1</sup> These facts alone should make us look more closely at the uniqueness and sanctity of the marriage bond. The very start of man's existence, a perfect relational construct was inserted into perfection to produce a marriage between a man and a woman. This expanded into the family; which became a culture; and evolved into a civilization. The fact that this first, perfect institution has gone so bad is not due to a flaw in the original concept, but to the poisonous admixture of sin caused by man's fall.

Genesis 2:22-24:

- 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.

God established the institution of marriage to be simple and fulfilling. Marriage was the only institution created by God prior to the Fall. In a perfect environment with perfect people, God still saw the need for the marriage bond. God created all other institutions (government, Israel, religion, etc.) after the Fall to mitigate the damage done by the Fall.

In marriage, God inserted five components as part of His plan to overcome the devastation of the Fall. Originally, they were designed to enhance the marriage bond, but now they function to preserve it against all odds.

## 1. Marriage is a lifetime commitment:

Romans 7:1-3:

- 1 Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?
- 2 For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband.
- 3 So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.

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<sup>1</sup> Before the Fall, God saw no need for government or religious organizations. All that was needed to make perfection more perfect was marriage. Marriage would establish the family and the family would establish everything else needed for civilization.

Matthew 19:6 "So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

The marriage bond is primarily established by vows between a man and a woman and maintained by a commitment to those vows. In our day, we have minimized the importance of our word. In our culture, commitments are meant to be broken as soon as they are no longer convenient or selfishly beneficial. When you spoke your vows at your wedding, you spoke them before God and in the presence of witnesses. God expects those vows to be carried out. Although wedding vows can be broken and the marriage bond established by God can be severed, a divorce decree performed by man does nothing to end that one-flesh bond.

Ecclesiastes 5:4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed.

The Bible says that God demands that vows be paid, and quickly.<sup>2</sup>

2 Marriage is the basis of social organization (it is the core of the family).

The fact that government (particularly the public schools) considers itself a change agent for human behavior should cause us some concern. The family has been the only acceptable change agent (actually a status-quo agent) in God's thinking; now the government wants to replace the family as the basis of social organization.

### 3. Marriage is the vehicle which provides care for women and children.

I realize that this goes against the storm surge of our culture as it overwhelms long-proven social verities by many of the progressive movements that undermine a proven social structure, established by God, and functional for six-thousand years. Granted, because of our sin, it has not worked flawlessly, but it is still superior to anything our sinful selves have thought up since being driven out of the Garden.

There are two groups within the family who need protection: women and children. Let's start with the toughest first.

How do we protect women? From whom do we protect women? And from whom do we protect women?

#### *3.1. The woman is the weaker vessel (1 Peter 3:7). Protected first by the father and then by the husband.*

1 Peter 3:7 Likewise you husbands, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

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Cf. Deuteronomy 23:21, "When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it, for it would be sin in you, and the LORD your God will surely require it of you."

What is the nature of her weakness? I was afraid you would ask! Let's look at some of the obvious differences.

### Physical differences.

Physical differences are the most noticeable between men and women. Dr. Paul Popenoe, founder of the *American Institute of Family Relations* in Los Angeles, lists the following physical differences.

Woman has greater constitutional vitality, perhaps because of her unique chromosomal make-up.

Normally, a woman will outlive a male by four to eight years in the U.S.

Woman's metabolism is normally lower than man's.

Man and woman differ in skeletal structure, woman having a shorter head, broader face, less protruding chin, shorter legs, and longer trunk.

Woman has larger kidneys, liver, stomach, and appendix than man, but smaller lungs.

Woman has several unique and important functions: she menstruates, gestates, and lactates. Men procrastinate.

A woman has different and a greater number of hormones than the male.

Woman's thyroid is larger and more active. It enlarges during pregnancy and menstruation; makes woman more prone to goiter; provides resistance to cold; is associated with her smooth-skinned, relatively hairless body and thin layer of subcutaneous fat.

Woman's blood contains more water and 20 percent fewer cells.

Since the red cells supply oxygen to the body cells, woman tires more easily and is more prone to faint. Note: when the working day in British factories was increased from ten to twelve hours under wartime conditions, accidents increased 150 percent among women but not at all among men.

On the average, man possesses 50 percent more brute strength than woman. 40% of a man's body weight is muscle; 23% of woman's is muscle.

Woman's heart beats more rapidly than man's. 80 beats per second as opposed to 72 in men.

Woman's blood pressure is about 10 points lower than man's. She has less tendency toward hypertension until after menopause.

### Sexual differences.

A woman's sexual drive tends to be related to her menstrual cycle, while a man's drive is fairly constant.

A woman is stimulated more by touch and romantic words. She is far more attracted by a man's personality, while the man is stimulated by sight.

A man is usually less discriminating about those to whom he is physically attracted.

While a man needs little or no preparation for sex, a woman often needs hours of emotional and mental preparation.

When a woman's emotions have been trampled by her husband, she is often repulsed by his ad-

vances.

These basic differences, which usually surface soon after the wedding, are the source of many conflicts in marriage. From the start, the woman has a greater intuitive awareness of how to develop a loving relationship. Because of her sensitivity, she is initially more considerate of his feelings and enthusiastic about developing a meaningful, multilevel relationship: that is, she knows how to build something more than a sexual marathon; she wants to be a lover, a best friend, a fan, a homemaker, and an appreciated partner. The man, on the other hand, does not generally have her instinctive awareness of what the relationship should be. He doesn't know how to encourage and love his wife or treat her in a way that meets her deepest needs.

Since he doesn't have an understanding of these vital areas through intuition, he must rely solely upon the knowledge and skills he has acquired prior to marriage. Unfortunately, our educational system does not require a training program for a husband-to-be. His only education may be the example he observed in his home.

Intuitive differences.

Norman was planning to invest more than \$40,000 in a business opportunity that was a "sure thing." He had scrutinized it from every angle and had logically deduced that it couldn't miss. After signing a contract and delivering a check to the other party, he decided to tell his wife about the investment.

Upon hearing a few of the details, she immediately felt uneasy about the deal. Norman sensed her uneasiness and became angry, asking why she felt that way. She couldn't give a logical reason because she didn't have one. All she knew was that it just didn't "sit right." Norman gave in, went back to the other party, and asked for a refund. "You're crazy!" the man told him as he returned Norman's money. A short time later, ALL of the organizers and investors were indicted by the federal government. His wife's intuition had not only saved him \$50,000, but it may have kept Norman out of jail.

What exactly is this *woman's intuition*? It's not something mystical. According to a Stanford University research team led by neuropsychologists McGuinness and Triban, women do catch subliminal messages faster and more accurately than men. Since this intuition is based on an unconscious mental process, many women aren't able to give specific explanations for the way they feel. They simply perceive or *feel* something about a situation or person, while men tend to follow a logical analysis of circumstances or people.

This women's intuition often alerts the wife to problems in the marriage relationship long before the husband has even the slightest clue.

The nature of the woman's weakness is probably not solely physical (although not as strong as men, women are quicker to recover from disease than men and have a higher pain threshold. The woman's weakness is in the spiritual realm. Although women are generally more sensitive to spiritual things than men, they are not so discerning as men, and, as a result, are more likely to be led

into doctrinal error.

2nd Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

1st Timothy 2:13-14:

13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

The wife is to submit to her own husband (not all women to all men):

1 Peter 3:1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,

The Greek word for submit is *hupotasso* (*ὑποτάσσω*), meaning to place oneself under. The word's primary use is as a military term. If anyone served in the military will attest, the word is self-defining.

As is true of men, a woman's intellect, her discernment of truth and error, even her very womanhood are placed at risk when she rejects the hierarchies in her life:

::2nd Timothy 3:6, 7:

6 For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts,

7 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

### *3.2 Since children are by nature foolish, someone is needed with wisdom to protect and to train them.*

Proverbs 22:15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him.

Notice that our children start off life as fools. That that does not mean that they are stupid; it simply means that they have no ability to discern right and wrong or good and evil. The home environment is the perfect environment for the raising of children: any other environment (child daycare, extended daycare, etcetera) is deficient in providing the love and guidance so desperately needed by children. Granted, sometimes such measures are necessary, but that is not the best. The love and discipline of parents will turn our foolish children into wise men and women of God.

## 4. Marriage is not to be forbidden.

1st Timothy 4:1-3:

1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

## *4.6. Physical love in marriage is to be enjoyed.*

Proverbs 5:18, 19:

18 Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of your youth.

19 As a loving deer and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; and always be enraptured with her love.

Notice that the husband is to “enraptured” with his love for his wife. The Hebrew word is usually translated by the word *drunk*.