

QUALITIES OF AN IDEAL MARRIAGE

Ephesians 5:23-26

INTRODUCTION

- A. What qualities would you say make for an ideal marriage?
 - 1. Depends on what side of the fence you're on:
 - a. Husbands – three meals a day (I like), laundry done, clean house, always looking “beautiful.”
 - b. Wives – pick up after yourself, help around the house, keep a good job, let me shop when I want.
 - 2. Pew Research Center (Feb. 2019) – 9 in 10 Americans cited love as a very important reason for getting married.
 - a. Helping to stay married – having shared interests, a satisfying sexual relationship and sharing household chores.
 - 3. The Question: But what is love?
- B. Marriage.
 - 1. Genesis 1, God created the heavens and the earth.
 - 2. He created man in His own image, Gen. 1:26-27.
 - 3. No helper was found suitable for Adam, Gen. 2:20.
 - 4. God made woman from man's rib, Gen. 2:21.
 - 5. This is now bone of my bones, flesh..., Gen. 2:23.
 - 6. For this reason..., Gen. 2:24.
 - 7. On man for one woman, to become one flesh.
- B. Jesus taught marriage for a lifetime.
 - 1. Mt. 19:5-6, “*What God has joined together, let man not separate.*”
 - 2. One man, one woman, to become one for a lifetime!
- C. Marriage manual, Eph. 5:22-33.
 - 1. Wives submit to your husbands and respect them, Eph. 5:22, 33.
 - 2. Husband love your wives, Eph. 5:25.
 - 3. Creating a bond:
 - a. Look beyond faults.
 - b. Allows nothing to interfere or break apart.
 - c. Based on God's standard of love, 1 Cor. 13:4-8a.
 - d. To have and to hold, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish (and obey). I pledge my faithfulness, unconditionally – SEEMS ALMOST OUT OF DATE!

I. SOLOMON'S TAKE ON MARRIAGE.

- A. Desire the Love of No Other.
 - 1. “*Your love is better than wine...*” 1:2.
 - a. Perhaps the idea – “drunk with love.”
 - 2. “*Draw me after you, and let us run together,*” 1:4.
 - a. Spend as much time as possible together.
 - 3. “*He has brought me to his banquet hall, and his banner over me is love,*” 2:4.
 - a. A military meaning – a banner to identify a group of people.
 - b. For Solomon, his banner made it clear that she was the woman he loved.
- B. Appreciation for Physical Attributes.
 - 1. Most beautiful (taking her appearance seriously), 1:8-10.
 - a. As a mare – among Pharaoh's chariots, stirs up excitement.
 - b. The harness is adorned with silver and gold – appearance.
 - 2. Heartbeat faster, a single glance, 4:9-10.
 - a. “Sister” was a term of endearment.

- b. Meaning a lasting and permanent love.
- 3. *“There are 60 queens and 80 concubines, and maidens without number; but my dove, my perfect one, is unique:...,”* 6:8-9.
- C. Desire to Be Together.
 - 1. 2:10-13 – to get away for a time.
 - 2. 4:8
 - 3. 7:10-12, *“...whether the pomegranates have bloomed.”*
 - a. He desires her and she is glad.
 - b. Let us go away where we can be alone.
- D. Genuine Care and Concern.
 - 1. One of the dream scenes.
 - 2. 3:1-4, concern for her beloved.
 - a. Concern for their relationship.
 - b. Concern for his well-being.
- E. Total Commitment.
 - 1. My beloved is mine, I am his. 2:16; 6:3; 7:10
 - 2. 8:6-7
 - a. Love is inflexible and permanent (as death).
 - b. A fire which cannot be quenched (the flame of the Lord).

II. OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

- A. Appropriate Jealousy.
 - 1. In only 2 relationships described in the Bible when jealousy is an appropriate reaction:
 - a. God and human.
 - b. Marriage, Proverbs 6:34.
 - i. Jealousy in marriage.
 - ii. Inflexible and permanent.
 - 2. The jealousy of God, 8:6.
 - a. Exodus 20:5; 34:14
 - b. Dt. 6:5
 - c. Zech. 1:14
 - 3. Humans can have only one God. More triggers God’s jealousy.
- B. Our Wedding Vows. Mt. 26:28
 - 1. Christ died for us, Eph. 5:23, 25-26.
 - a. Sanctified – separated to God.
 - b. Cleansed by the washing of water.
 - c. A radiant church.
 - d. Without stain or wrinkle or any blemish.
 - e. Holy and blameless.
 - 2. We are His, 1 Pet. 2:9.
 - 3. We wear a new name, the name of Christ (Christian), Acts 11:26; 1 Pet. 4:16.
- C. Commit to a life for Christ, Romans 6:5-7.
 - 1. We are dead to sin.
 - 2. We are alive to Christ.
 - 3. Anything short of full commitment to Christ is spiritual adultery.
- D. Must make a choice.
 - 1. Just like Israel made a choice.
 - 2. Those outside of Christ, Mt. 7:21-23.
 - 3. Eph. 2:12-13
 - 4. Jesus invites, Mt. 11:28-30.