

Welcome to the *Three Cord Ministries*® teaching page on

Knowing What The Bible Says About Marriage

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The traditional marriage relationship is so similar to God's loving relationship with His people that He used it to illustrate His covenant with His people in the Old Testament and Christ's love for His church in the New Testament.

The only true and acceptable definition of human marriage is the union of one man with one woman in a lifelong bond of love, respect and companionship.

Whether or not earthly societies create laws to define it any differently does not change the meaning of Christian marriage. The 'world' may call these other unions what they want but it does not alter the unalterable fact that God created husband-wife marriage as He created it!

Let's look at what the Bible requires from a marriage.

1. What is Christian Marriage?

Christian marriage is a relationship (one man with one woman) that was created from the beginning as described in Genesis 2:18

"And the LORD said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion who will help him ..."

2:22 " Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib and brought her to Adam ..."

2:24 "For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined (cleaved) to his wife and the two are united into one ..."

Genesis 2:24 is repeated in the New Testament in Mark 10:6-9 and Ephesians 5:31-32. In the latter case, Paul is comparing the marriage of man and woman to the relationship of Christ and His church – a great mystery – one that while on earth we cannot fully understand.

When something is repeated three times in Scripture, God means for us to take notice ... it is important to Him and for us to understand this importance!

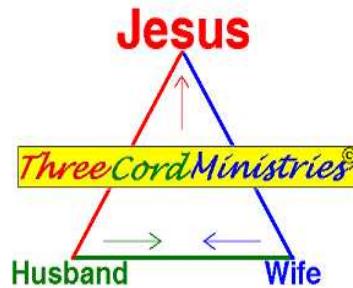
Marriage was God's idea from the very beginning and was reinforced in the time of Jesus. Marriage is a solemn act and a sacred relationship not to be entered into lightly.

Christian marriage is more than a 'civil ceremony' and it is more than a 'legal entity' although any marriage carries with it both civil and legal responsibilities. At Three Cord Ministries we believe that Jesus Christ must be made central in any marriage for it to succeed. With Christ truly at the center, a marriage cannot fail.

Marriage is a covenant and not a contract which means there are no hidden terms, no loop holes. In God's design, the marriage covenant is a life long covenant broken only by death. In the fallen

world that we live in, worldly pressures have degraded the covenant aspect of marriage to a loose contract that implies 'if you do this, I will do that' and 'if you don't do this, I won't do that' and the 'contract' is void.

Here is our 'marriage triangle'. It is worth keeping in mind when you are thinking about your marriage based on Christ's centrality.



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2. Why Husband-Wife Marriage?

Besides the obvious reason of procreation, husband-wife marriage was established because **God didn't want His created human beings to be alone**. Even though we are blessed with family and friends, God created us to desire an [intimate relationship](#) with another human being. His plan is that this lifelong, intimate relationship be fulfilled in the husband-wife marriage covenant. Other deep, lifelong relationships between people are certainly in God's plan, but not for "intimate" union.

"And the LORD said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion ..." Genesis 2:18

"For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined (cleaved) to his wife and the two are united into one ..." Genesis 2:24

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, the foundational Scripture for **Three Cord Ministries**, reiterates the significance of having a partner for life through marriage.

If a man and a woman are married to each other and want to fulfill their vows as God intended, these vows must have been made in His presence (in a solemnized Christian marriage ceremony), must have been made by free will, and must have been based on each person's belief in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord.

3. Biblical Keys to the Christian Marriage

What we could do with the money from all the books written on the subject of marriage! The 'keys' presented here represent but a few of the words that the Bible has to say about Christian marriage. These are merely words but when considered through the filter of the Holy Spirit, they can be life changing to a marriage.

Your marriage may be good but is it as good as it can be?

Your marriage may be an example to all your friends of what a good marriage should be – but are you both drawing closer to each other as you journey through life or are you being drawn apart by the world?

Here are some things that the Bible has to say about marriage, a happy, strong marriage!

Genesis 2:24 *"For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined (cleaved) to his wife and the two are united into one ..."*

The husband must LEAVE his parents and CLEAVE to his wife – not cleave to his parents and leave his wife. This leaving and cleaving is so important – a husband cannot live for his parents and his wife. Once he has chosen to marry, his wife is to be the most important human being in his life – above parents, above siblings, above children! Yes, above children.

Joshua 24: 15 *"... choose today whom you will serve ... But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD."*

Sometimes this is hard to do when we feel we have to serve 'the boss', serve the church, serve the school and serve the community. Read Matthew 6:33 and ponder on this Scripture that says *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*

Serving the church as a deacon or an elder or a Sunday school teacher are all good works of service, but in the marriage context, if they take away from the marriage relationship, then are they really "seeking the Kingdom first"?

Proverbs 5:15 *"Drink water from your own well – share your love only with your wife (husband)."*

This is pretty self-explanatory. You cannot love (in an intimate, marriage way), more than one other – your spouse.

Hebrews 13:4 Referring to fidelity, *"Give honour to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery."*

Ephesians 5: 21 *"... submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."*

The Bible has a lot to say about submission in the marriage context. Don't get caught up on the word "submit" as the world defines it. Submission in the Bible means to honour or to worship, that is to give *'worth-ship'* to your spouse – both the husband and the wife! Most people stop at the verse that says "wives submit to your husbands" and don't go on to the next part that says "as your husbands submit to Christ."

There is a creation order to things not from a superiority point of view but from an 'orderly' point of view. All cannot be boss, all cannot be leaders, all cannot be first but in a Christian marriage, there must be an order based on the Biblical perspective that HUSBANDS must first SUBMIT their lives to Christ before all else.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing." [CHRISTIANITY without love is not CHRISTIANITY!]

Verses 4-8a: **"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."**

Verses 8b-13: "But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection [CHRIST] comes, the imperfect [US] disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man [LEAVE and CLEAVE], I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."
[Square brackets added]

Most people when they think of love and marriage look at [versus 4 through 8a](#), the "love" verses. But Paul wants us to read all of this section in terms of Christ's love (*agape* love) for us. When read in its entirety, this passage is the essence of the marriage relationship and the church-Christ relationship – that mystery – that wonderful love affair of God and his creation.