

A Healthy Church

“Strengthening Marriage & Family”

Ephesians 5:22 - 33

Big Idea – Marriage and the Christian family pictures Jesus Christ’s love for the church.

"...We should provide the facts about the importance of marriage as a matter of child welfare and economic aspiration. As a society, we have launched highly effective public education campaigns on much less momentous issues, from smoking to recycling... For now, the decline of marriage is our most ignored national crisis..." TIME Magazine. March 5, 2012

Having said that, please know and understand:

1. Marriage is not for everyone.

If you have the gift of singleness don't get married.

1 Corinthians 7:1 Now regarding the questions you asked in your letter. Yes, it is good to live a celibate life.

1 Corinthians 7:7 But I wish everyone were single, just as I am. But God gives to some the gift of marriage, and to others the gift of singleness.

8 So I say to those who aren't married and to widows—it's better to stay unmarried, just as I am.

2. Children need family to do best.

"The Brookings Institution says that if we had the marriage rate today that we had in 1970, there would be a 25 percent drop in poverty."

Marriage breakdown is costly to our kids and to society at large. Divorce and unwed childbearing cost the U.S. taxpayers a whopping \$112 billion annually. In these economic challenging times, building stronger marriages helps build a stronger nation.

The Heritage Foundation says that marriage drops the probability of a child living in poverty by 82 percent." FoxNews Op-Ed.

Marriage works. It makes people happier, live longer, and build more economic security. Children with married parents perform better in school.

See Bulletin insert: New research on "Why Marriage Matters: Thirty Conclusions from Social Science."

3. Biblical marriage is between a husband and a wife.

Matthew 19:4 Jesus answered, "Surely you have read in the Scriptures: When God made the world, 'he made them male and female.'

5 And God said, 'So a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two will become one body.'

Here in Matthew's Gospel Jesus is quoting Genesis chapter 1.

Note what Paul said in his letter to Corinth.

1 Corinthians 7:2b ...each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband.

4. Mutual submission makes marriages work

Ephesians 5:21 And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

5. Unequal yokes won't work

2 Corinthians 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

2 Corinthians 6:14 Don't become partners with those who reject God. How can you make a partnership out of right and wrong? That's not partnership; that's war. Is light best friends with dark?

6. Wives love is submission to Christ and her husband.

Ephesians 5:22 For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

23 For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of his body, the church.

24 As the church submits to Christ, so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything.

7. Husbands' love is to be:

Sacrificial

Ephesians 5:25,26 For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church.

Sanctifying

He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word.

Satisfying

28 In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself.

Selfless

29 No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church.

The root of most marital problems is sin, and the root of all sin is selfishness. Submission to Christ and to one another is the only way to overcome selfishness, for when we submit, the Holy Spirit can fill us and enable us to love one another in a sacrificial, sanctifying, satisfying way—the way Christ loves the church.

