

Marriage was instituted by God, and it should be guided by God's will

Although many people today disregard God's authority over the marriage relationship, it is still true that *marriage was instituted by God, and it should be guided by God's will*. No matter what the laws of the land or the customs of society may be, it is the abiding will of the Creator that determines the true quality of any marriage. His will should be respected.

The ultimate pattern for marriage as God would have it is the relationship between Christ and the church. The apostle Paul draws this parallel in [Eph. 5:23-27](#): "For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish." When husbands serve their wives as Christ served the church, they will receive from their wives a respect that comes from love and not just compulsion.

When Jesus was asked by the Pharisees whether a man could divorce his wife for just any reason, He replied: "He answered, 'Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate"' ([Mt. 19:4-6](#)). Jesus based the permanency of marriage on the solid rock of God's purpose concerning that relationship. God is the Originator of marriage, and it is His law that governs it. To the extent we can keep that in mind, we will find marriage not only to be more stable, but also more rewarding.

As we begin this week, let's resolve to think more seriously about God's sovereignty over marriage. As with any other relationship, God's way is always the highest and best way. We are blessed when we let Him guide us. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths" ([Prov. 3:5,6](#)).

Monday: Genesis 1:27

Key Idea: God created human beings male and female.

Questions for Family Growth: Who created mankind? Are the differences between male and female just physical or is more involved? If God created the distinction between male and female, should we not consider that distinction important?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 2:1-15](#).

Tuesday: Genesis 2:18-25

Key Idea: God joined the first man and woman in marriage.

Questions for Family Growth: Why did God make a companion for the man He had created? Was there any other living creature that could fill the man's need? According to **v.24**, what do a man and woman become when they leave their parents and are joined together?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 2:16-22.**

Wednesday: Matthew 19:3-12

Key Idea: God allows only one reason for divorce: fornication.

Questions for Family Growth: In **vv.3-6**, what question was Jesus asked and what was His answer? In **v.7**, what was the second question? In **vv.8,9**, what was His answer to that? In **vv.10-12**, what did Jesus say to His disciples?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 3:1,2.**

Thursday: Ephesians 5:22-33

Key Idea: Spouses are to relate to one another according to the pattern of Christ and the church.

Questions for Family Growth: What instruction is given by Paul to wives? To husbands? How does the relationship between Christ and the church help us to understand how the marriage relationship should work?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 3:3,4.**

Friday: 1 Peter 3:1-7

Key Idea: Husbands and wives are heirs together of the grace of life.

Questions for Family Growth: In **vv. 1-6**, what teaching is given to wives? In **v.7**, what does it mean when Peter tells husbands to "live with your wives in an understanding way"? What is said about the prayers of husbands?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 3:5,6.**

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