

GOD'S PLAN FOR MARRIAGE AND SEX

An All Age Talk



Introduction

Many churches fail to tackle this important subject either because of embarrassment, personal failure (but the blood of Christ cleanses all who repent), or fear of upsetting cohabitants and divorcees and/or their children. The result is that **vital teaching** is omitted. In practice many divorcees will be glad that the subject has been taught to help others avoid the pain and traumas they have experienced.

This talk is in deliberately straightforward language. A full text is given, but by all means improve it without weakening it.

It is important to warn parents some time in advance that this talk will touch on sex at a junior school level, and on cohabitation and on divorce. Some presenters may feel it unsuitable for the under tens.

Preparation

You will need a large tube of glue and a projector for Powerpoint. The drawings for the Powerpoint slides are on a separate sheet - you could of course do your own instead.

Talk

(**Introductory slide**) We are going to hear today what God says in the Bible about relationships between men and women.

(Somebody reads Genesis 2:18-24 (**slide**) and somebody else reads Matthew 19:1-6) (**slide**)

We heard in both those readings that God made man and woman. (**Slide** with drawings of man and woman at lower left and right.) He wants them to have happy lives.

We heard as well in both readings that God plans that most men and women will marry. We heard that the Bible says "A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife." God knows that most men and women need a best friend to help them in life, their husband or wife.

Everyone has a father and a mother. (**Slide** of two sets of parents - one pair at top left and one pair at top right, with man and woman at lower corners as before) - though sadly some people do not know who one or perhaps both of their parents are, and others only now live with one of their parents.

Marriage is a public event showing you are leaving your home and being united to your husband or wife and forming a new home. (Slide - man and woman together on the lower half so that their hands touch.) Now those words in the Bible "be united" about a man and a woman are **strong** words. (Produce tube of glue.) Ask - "What's this?" ...

"Be united" means be as if you are glued together - you stick together. Being married means you promise to stick together: "until death us do part" as couples say in a Marriage Service. That is why the Lord Jesus added: "So they are no longer two but one. Therefore what God has joined together let man not separate". So a husband and wife need to help each other to enjoy being married. God knows that is the best way to be happy.

The word "spouse" is a word meaning husband or wife. It has been said that "The key to success in marriage is help your spouse enjoy being married to you, and to do so continually."

Marriage is God's plan for most people. But His plan for a few is that they remain unmarried. (Slide without parents and with man and woman apart again). Ask - "Who in the Bible remained unmarried?" (The Lord Jesus, the prophet Jeremiah, the apostle Paul e.g.) That was because God had special work for them to do which they could not have done if they had married. Some people today remain single and are able to do special things for God. (Give one or two examples that will mean something to your hearers.)

But most, sooner or later, marry. (Slide with man and woman together touching hands as before.) Having made the lifelong promise of uniting in marriage, they become one flesh. God made going to bed together fun for husbands and wives. Joining together completes the marriage.

But God's law is that going to bed together and having sex should happen only within marriage. Not before marriage and not outside marriage, but within marriage, when a man and woman have made a public promise of uniting in marriage for life.

(Slide with man and woman right apart again.) (Slide Before Marriage - Stay Apart.) God's law is that before their wedding day man and woman should not get into bed together. A man or woman who has not had sex is called a virgin.

God wants us all to be virgins when we marry. The Bible uses the word "virgin" about men as well as about women. It is just as important that unmarried men should be virgins.

Now these days many people ignore what God says. Some teenagers boast about having sex and tease others about being virgins. Take no notice. Some get diseases that are difficult to heal. Others begin to have a baby they did not want. One day each of us will have to meet God with our sins if we have not repented and been forgiven. Also, you are much more likely to have a happy marriage if you remain a virgin beforehand. But if anyone who does wrong is really sorry and asks God to forgive them, He has promised He will forgive them. They we can start again, living as God wants.

Even when you are engaged to be married, wait for sex until marriage. Engagements are sometimes broken. The best wedding present you can give to your future husband or wife is your virginity.

The Bible calls any sort of sex before marriage Immorality. (Slide with man and woman together again.) (Then slide - Immorality.) Some people say you should try out living together before marrying. But that is wrong. Indeed many more people who live together before marriage end up divorced, compared with those who wait to live together until they are married. Certainly God does not want people to rush into marriage. They should get to know each other well first, but should not break God's law by having a trial of living together. It would not be a real trial anyway because it lacks the most important and vital ingredient - the promise to stay together. But again God will forgive anyone who realises they have done wrong and ask for His forgiveness.

So wait for marriage. Before marriage - stay apart. (Slide with man and woman fully apart.) But after marriage - stay together. (Slide with man and woman so that they touch hands.) (Slide with Before Marriage - Stay Apart above After Marriage - Stay Together)

You may have other friends. (Slide with another woman [red] in the corner where the man was placed first and another man [red] in the corner where the woman began.) But you should always stay together. It's good to have other friends. But never do with someone else what should only do with your husband or wife. (Slide with original man and woman apart touching man to new woman and woman to new man.) If either of those things happens what is that called? (Slide with Adultery.) And that is one of the things that may lead to divorce (Slide with Divorce, written vertically.)

God says "You shall not commit adultery". That is one of His Ten what? ... (Slide Commandments.) Divorce leads to sadness, to divisions in families, and to all sorts of problems. Some children blame themselves when their parents split up, but it is not the children's fault. God still loves them and He still loves their parents too, and longs that they will be sorry and forgive each other and come together again. God plans that marriage should be for life and be happy. In our second Bible reading today we heard the Lord Jesus say: "They are no longer two but one. There what God has joined together, let man not separate". (Slide with original man and woman together touching hands.)

People who are happily married have fun together, do their work better, have happier children, have fewer illnesses, and help each other more when things are difficult.

God is our Maker. We need to follow our Maker's instructions - and our Maker's instructions are that marriage is for life, and sex is only for marriage. God knows what is best for men and women. His plan is for our happiness, and it works!

Edward Pratt

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