

Weekly Cell Guide

Leader's Copy

Series - Family Emphasis

Date - 27-Sep-2020

Topic - Marriage: An Original Idea (Genesis 2:18-25)

Speaker - Ps Ben KC Lee

WELCOME [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

[Ice Breakers 1](#)

[Ice Breakers 2](#)

WORSHIP [15 min]

You may select songs like

1. Jesus Come
 2. Spirit Touch Your Church
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WORD [45 min]

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the sermon discussion, cell members will:

1. understand that marriage is God's idea and design; sacred and divinely ordained.
2. (if married) commit to being the best spouse that they can be and make Christ the centre of their marriage.
3. (if single) commit to preparing for the ultimate marriage to the Lamb when He returns.

Sermon Summary

The following are the key points of the sermon:

1. Marriage is not an invention of man. It is God's original idea.
2. Marriage is of divine origin that is 1+1=1.
3. Marriage is one man and one woman in an inseparable lifelong covenant.

Sermon Recap (Full Summary)

The main teaching in our world is self and individualism. This leads to a wrong vision of marriage, and it seeps into the church as well. We need a vision of marriage that is higher, deeper, stronger, and more glorious than anything that culture can present. God's Word reveals the foundational truth of marriage in Genesis 2:18-25.

1. Marriage was God's design (v18-22a)
 - Adam has the perfect relationship with God, yet God saw that it is not good for man to be alone. It was God's design that man be made for companionship and interdependence.
 - Therefore, God created woman to unite with man.
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- “Woman” means helper, not inferior but equal in essence and substance to man, to complement him. She is his corresponding opposite.
2. God gave away the first bride (v22b)
 - Marriage is God’s design because He is the first Father to give Eve away in marriage. God ‘fathered’ Eve in the sense that He created her and then gave her to Adam to be his companion.
 - Marriage is not a human contract; it is God who brings a man and woman together.
 3. God spoke the design of marriage into being (v24)
 - God spoke marriage into existence. It is not a human invention or a cultural practice. It is divinely ordained, instituted by God. The nature of marriage as ordered by God is for the good of the spouses and the bringing up of children.
 - The struggle you are facing in marriage was divinely designed to transform you into the image of Christ. Perhaps God is using this hardship or difficulty in your marriage to make you holy.
 - God did not design marriage to make us happy but to make us holy.
 4. God performs the one-flesh union (v24)
 - It is a miracle from God in making two persons into one. This oneness is a three-dimensional union: body, soul and spirit.
 - The sexual act is the primary means of establishing the mystery of oneness. This is an exclusive relationship. There can be no intimate relationship between two persons when a third party intervenes.
 - When a man and a woman consummate their marriage with sexual union, neither man nor woman is the main actor. God is. Society does not view marriage and sexual union as such, which is why it is treated so casually (even in church). Marriage is not seen with the wonder that it should be: God-designed, divinely ordained, and a miracle in itself.
 5. Marriage is a sacred covenant rooted in covenant commitment (v24)
 - Being united in one flesh points to something deeper. It points to the sacred covenant: a man and a woman establishing a partnership for life. This is a permanent joining, an inseparable lifelong covenant.
 - Marriage is patterned after Christ’s covenant commitment to His Church (Ephesians 5:31-32). Christ had to pay the dowry to redeem His Bride. He called this unbreakable relationship the new covenant (Luke 22:20). Therefore, the ultimate purpose of marriage is to put the covenant of Christ and His Church on public display.
 - This is why divorce and remarriage is so horrific in God’s eyes. It is not just breaking covenant with your spouse; it also misrepresents Christ and His covenant. Staying married is about keeping covenant.
 - Make God’s Word concrete in your life and live out a godly marriage. A couple’s marital love makes God’s love real to their children as well.
 - Singles are married in an eternity to the Lamb of God. Singles are preparing for the ultimate marriage to the Lamb.
 6. Marriage is shame-free, based on the gracious nature of covenant love (v25)
 - This is about standing in front of each other undisguised, without pretension, seeing our spouse as who he/she really is and loving him/her without being ashamed (1 Peter 4:8).

- Christ's Bride is free of shame. God's Word teaches authenticity, transparency, and honesty in our marriage. We can be free from shame in marriage even though we are imperfect because we have no fear of being rejected by your spouse.
- The foundation of a covenant-keeping love between a man and a woman is an unbroken covenant between them and God.

God said that He made us in His own image. God is love, so we have the capacity to love as God loves. God surrendered everything in His love for us, even dying for us on the cross. Marriage is God's original idea. If your marriage functions as God intended, you will experience the intimacy that God designed.

Discussion Questions

- 1. The highest meaning and ultimate purpose of marriage is to put the unbreakable covenant relationship of Christ and the Church on display to the world. In light of this, what is wrong with the current worldview on marriage? [10 min]**

Leader's Notes:

Hear from your members what they think is wrong with the current worldview on marriage (eg. as seen in the lives of their friends or portrayed in the media) and whether they have observed this in the church as well. In a world of individualistic rights and self-fulfilment, marriage is just one of the 'goals' in everyone's pursuit of happiness and self-satisfaction. Most get married to have someone to make them happy and to give them some sort of meaning in life. When their spouses no longer satisfy, or when they tire of facing the same person every day, they divorce, thus beginning another search of the 'next' one to satisfy them. Therefore, marriage is treated very casually, almost as if it's a 'life' event to accomplish and tick off the bucket list. This can also happen in the church, in which couples marry, not as God's will, but because they 'desire' to. This is just one reason – self-satisfaction – but there could be many other wrong reasons as well. Discuss them in your group.

Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)

Let us be clear of the purpose of marriage – to reflect the covenant relationship of Christ and Church to the world. We tend to think that marriage is just between two parties, the man and the woman. But just as Christ is the head of the Church, Christ is also the head of your marriage. Anchor your marriage in Christ and not in self.

- 2. How can marriage be a sanctifying tool in discipleship for both husband and wife? [15 min]**

Leader's Notes:

We face various difficulties and hardships in marriage. Since marriage is an unbreakable covenant, couples have to come together to work out the issues. It is a good opportunity to allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify us, where each spouse grows spiritually by rising above every struggle together. Not only will you grow closer to God, you will also grow closer to each other. It is in doing life together that discipleship and sanctification can happen. In the process, your children will also be disciplined.

Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)

Marriage is a sanctifying tool in which husbands and wives grow in Christlikeness by rising above their weaknesses and struggles. This sets a precedence for their children to follow (which is discipleship). Not only is marriage a sacred covenant, it is patterned after Christ's

covenant commitment to the Church. Through marital love, we display the love that Christ has for His Bride.

3. Reflect on your relationship with your spouse. What is one step you can take to be authentic with your spouse and relate to each other without pretension? [15 min]

Leader's Notes:

It is important to be as authentic and honest as you can be in your marriage. This means you can share openly and honestly about your struggles and failings without fear of judgment and rejection from your spouse. You should be free from shame in your relationship, just like Adam and Eve were before they sinned. When you are open and honest, it encourages your spouse to be the same. An authentic and open marriage is a mark of a Christ-centred marriage. The first step can be something like confessing your failings as a spouse, or confiding in how inadequate you may feel as a wife or husband, or sharing the anxieties and worries you have for your family in this season.

Note: If there are no married couples in your cell, consider asking this question – “How can I elevate the sanctity of marriage?” (E.g. Through encouraging married couples to spend more time with each other, to rediscover their feelings for each other, etc.).

Read:

- *The Solid Ground of a Christ-centred marriage:*
<https://www.focusonthefamily.ca/content/the-solid-ground-of-a-christ-centred-marriage>

Transition (Wrapping Up, Vision Casting to Cell & Closing the Discussion)

Marriage is a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman. It is divinely designed to transform us and make us more like Christ. Therefore, it is important to relate to one another without pretensions. However, it will not be easy showing your true self or accepting your spouse's imperfections, but it is only when there is authenticity and acceptance will there be spiritual growth and transformation.

WORKS [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. That our marriages will be Christ-centred:
 - For couples to view marriage as sacred and God-ordained, and therefore, not to be treated casually.
 - That our marriages will reflect the unbreakable loving covenant of Christ and His Bride to the world.
2. Pray for Phase 3 of the Circuit Breaker:
 - that God will protect each and everyone of us from COVID-19 as public places are opening up more for larger numbers,
 - that the community cases and dormitory cases will continue decreasing till zero,
 - that all active cases in hospitals and community facilities will be cleared and declared virus-free.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. RiverLife Prayer Room

Starting Wed, 7 oct | 8pm to 10pm
Live from worship centre
Tune in at this link: rlc.sg/rpr-watch

Church Vision

“A radiant disciple-making church catalysing Kingdom transformation in our communities and the nations.”

Mission

We exist to make disciples who behold Christ and reveal Him.