



Marriage: Gods Design

Colossians 3.18-19

Main Idea

God designed marriage to operate as One. That means that the man and the woman both have other oriented roles to play that they may symbolize the One God in three persons. Wives should submit to their husbands, and husbands should love their wives.

Overview

I. Introduction

- Marriage in America has adopted Enlightenment ideals of self actualization
 - It is now seen as an institution that primarily looks to meet what each spouse wants in the marriage
 - Any ideas of other oriented bents that look to primarily serve the other have largely been lost
 - What has come to replace the Biblical ideas of Marriage is a “Me” centered marriage instead of a “Other” centered marriage
 - What is left is an expectation that is hardly sustainable or in keeping with the design of its Creator

II. Wives submit to your husbands, as is fitting to the Lord

- The text does not say that women must submit to men
- The text does also not say that wives must obey their husband
- Submission is not:
 - Agreeing w/ everything a husband says
 - Leaving a wife’s brain or will at the altar
 - Avoiding every effort to change a husband
 - Putting the will of the husband before the will of Christ
 - That a wife primarily gets her personal and spiritual strength from the husband
 - That a wife is to act out of fear
 - That a wife is less valuable than a husband
- Submission: The voluntary act of putting oneself under the leadership of another
 - Everything in the world has some level of leadership in the world
 - God designed the marriage to have the husband lead and the wife “help” (Genesis 2.15, 18)

III. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them

- The word used there for love is “agape”: Distinctively Christian word
 - Agape: Selfless, sacrificial, unconditional affection for another
 - Eph. 5.22-30 explains what this looks like more clearly in the life of the husband

- Christ loved his wife, the church, by laying down his life for her to build or grow something in her that she might be presented in the fullness of her splendor
 - The husband's responsibility is this type of love to his wife
 - He is to be about growing, building, something in her & protecting her
 - A failure to lead is a failure to love
- He is not to be harsh: Word there means to “make bitter”
 - Harshness tends to break down and destroy
 - His responsibility is to love in building and growing

IV. Conclusion

- The failure of many marriages is the failure to live out of the identity of its author: Oneness (Gen. 2.24)
 - Our culture advocates a “Twoness” in marriage and this is the opposite of its design
- Each of the roles of husband and wives are both “other” oriented
 - This is the design of God (Trinity: Three in One) and this is the design of the Gospel

Questions

Discussion Starter: *What has been your experience both in your personal life regarding marriage and in the opinions of marriage in general around you?*

1. Read Colossians 3:1-19. What is the context of Vss. 18-19? Why would he choose to start here in applying our union with Christ?
2. Paul says, “Wives, submit to your husbands.” Notice he does not say, “women submit to men” or “wives obey your husband.” Why is it important to understand this?
3. The word “submission” is often seen in a negative way, why?
4. Where do we find submission in the Trinity and in the gospel? Why is it important that we understand submission is rooted here and not in culture?
5. Verse 19 says, “Husband, love your wives.” What type of love is Paul taking about here (cf. Eph. 5:22-30)? Why is it important that we understand this type of love is rooted in the gospel and not in culture?
6. What does it mean to “not be harsh” with your wife? Why is this so dangerous?
7. Paul calls wives to submit to husbands, and husbands to love their wives. What is similar in these two commands, and how does this point to the gospel?
8. Read Genesis 2:24. How does the “oneness” in marriage point to God? Why then is “twoness” in marriage wrong?

Accountability Question:

(For Marrieds): Are there specific areas where you need to confess to your spouse?

(Singles): If you desire to be married, is it a healthy desire, and not idolatrous? If you don't desire to be married (or not yet ready), how can you