

SACRED MARRIAGE

GODLY MARRIAGE

Purpose of Marriage -

1. To Bring Glory to God

1 Peter 2:4-9

We are a story telling community- called to tell the story of an amazing God.- To proclaim- by our lives- the gospel of Jesus Christ

"...that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

How I live my life- particularly in my marriage- How I treat my wife, husband- tells the story of God- gives a picture of God; and cause people who see our marriages- want to get to know the God, whose image they see in your marriage

What kind of story do I want to tell?

Do our children- who we tell the story to on a daily basis- see our marriages and say- I want what mom & dad have?

We must keep in mind- what's at stake-

John 13:35- "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love another."

Or-

Romans 2:24- "As it is written, 'God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.'"

Whether we know it or not- we are telling a story of the God we follow- we are the city on the hill- our kids are watching- our neighbors, singles, co-workers, family-

Matthew 5:14-16- "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your father in heaven"

Proverbs 4:18- "The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day."

1 Peter 2:12- "Live such godly lives among the pagans, that though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits."

We must keep in mind the right motivation in our marriages- we tell the story of an amazing God

2. To Form Christ in Us-

Another Goal/Purpose of marriage is to form Christ in Us- become more like Jesus

Galatians 4:19 “My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...”

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect[a] the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

Ephesians 4:22-24 “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Marriage is where we have the opportunity to become more and more like Jesus
Self Denial// Humble // Servant// Sacrificial// Unconditional Love// Hard Working
Putting Others Need above your own//mercy // grace

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (Jesus’ characteristics that can be formed in us in marriage)
We learn Patience- Kindness-no envy- no boasting- not to be rude- not to be selfish - to protect, trust hope & persevere

Marriage is where characters are forged// developed// refined

Marriage Can bring out the mess- No you did not just become selfish when you got married- marriage just exposed HOW SELFISH YOU REALLY ARE

In Becoming One- we bring together different- but essential- aspects of Jesus Character to form the complete picture of Jesus// his likeness

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12- Two Are Better than One

The truth is then- that we need each other- to become more like Jesus- to get to heaven

*Side Note- If we could begin to see our need for each then we might appreciate each other more- and avoid less garbage in our marriage-

3. To Make Disciples

Beginning at Home- Godly Offspring

Malachi 2:15- God wants our children to be disciples

Then the rest of the World- Matthew 28:18-20

WEEK ONE- LESSONS FROM ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA

Acts 5:1-11

Who's In charge? Whose idea was this? What was the motivation?

If Ananias planned this, why did Sapphira go along with it?

Ephesians 5:22-24 Is this the kind of submission that God requires?

Submission does not equal- weak willed

If Sapphira planned this- what does that say about Ananias'

leadership/spirituality? What kind of man is he? (J.P. Wimpus)

What's the price for a lack of spiritual leadership in marriage?

Death// First Disciples (assuming that they are true disciples) To Die- but not as martyrs- Not for the faith - but to die in sin//shame//disgrace// fear (how many kids do you know named Ananias or Sapphira?)

What if they had children?

What price do we pay for an ungodly marriage? Death(of marriage), divorce, SIN- Pain & suffering for our families// children

For the Men- What price do our families pay when we choose to be spiritually weak?

What happens to our wives, sons, daughters?

What kind of relationships did they have?

Acts 2:46- Every day they met together...

Acts 4:23-31- Did they miss the prayer time? (Hebrews 10:25)-

What happens when we as couples- miss the meetings of the body?

Do you think they Got advice on this? Proverbs 20:18 "Make plans by seeking advice; if you wage war, obtain guidance."

Acts 5:5- where was Sapphira? Why didn't she hear about what happened?

What is the price of poor relationships?

What is the value of godly relationships?

How would you rewrite the Story- so that there is a happy ending?

What can we do to rewrite our own stories-

For disciples- Get back to the basics- Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35

For non-Christians- to learn about the God that the Disciples proclaimed- To make the effort to really know Jesus- to study the bible-

Invite visitors to study the bible!! Set up for this week!

Preview Next Week- Communication

Announce Marriage Retreat- Handout Flyers// Information

WEEK TWO- COMMUNICATION -“CAN WE TALK”

Introduction- Videos- “Marriage Coaching Skit”

So, what’s the issue here?

What things in marriage need to be communicated?

Schedule, feelings attitudes, expectations, discipline of kids, dreams, desires, plans, fears, etc.

Why is communication so important?

Unity, conflict resolution, so you can meet each other’s needs.

Video - “Funny Husband With Wrong Answer”

What’s the problem here? Listening// timing// topic// distractions

Why do wives/spouses tend to ask these kind of questions?

Example- Bud light commercial- would you save me or your bud light?

What are some of the things in human nature that can be a barrier to good communication?

Insensitivity, selfishness, arrogance, resentments, fear of rejection, etc.

Let’s Look at Four aspects of good communication

1. Being Outwardly Expressive

Luke 6:43-45- “out of the overflow of the heart”

Generally Speaking, how do men’s and women’s communication differ? Do you ever feel as though you and your spouse speak different languages?

Men- “just the fact mam” -shorter, to the point, hard to communicate-

Women- share feelings, more, longer, expressive

Why is it important in a marriage for you to be expressive?

Communication brings intimacy and unity

Unexpressed feelings turn into bad attitudes/bitterness

It reveals your heart.. Where the heart is, actions follow

It is the key to helping each other be right with God

2. Having Pride Killing Humility

Phillipians 2:1-3 “Consider others better than yourselves..”

How does pride KILL communication?

Pride wants to get its point across, be right, does not listen

Pride is not willing to be vulnerable or close

How can we have the humility necessary for good communication?

See yourself as you are without God

Truly see your spouse as better than yourself

Confess sin regularly

Pray for humility and be unified with your spouse

3. Being Expressively Respectful

Ephesians 5:33- "The wife must respect her husband"

1 Peter 3:7- "The husband must respect his wife."

Why is respect critical to good communication?"

How do you feel when you are disrespected?

What are some of the things that cause us to feel disrespected?

What are some ways to show and express respect for your spouse?

Note: God does not make respect an option or say that your mate must earn respect!

IT IS COMMANDED!

4. Nothing is More Important than Your Relationship with God and his son, Jesus.

Luke 14:25-26- "Must hate father, brother, husband, wife...."

What does this scripture mean?

Jesus is NUMBER ONE!! Comes first above all relationships

How does making Jesus our Lord help us in our communication?

Teaches us to love others first, put their needs above our own(Phillipians 2:5)

A great disciple can learn, grow, and change

What happens when something or someone else is more important than God?

We don't have the right standard

We will do what we want, when & how we want

We Will compromise our marriage, children and ourselves

Jesus' teaching is contrary to society's

Learn to get your point across, not how to meet your spouse's needs

Communication is for selfish reasons, not for unity

Look out for Number one, not submissive

Pride never shows weakness, no humility, no consideration for others-"me first"

These are by products of being a disciple of Jesus.

The key to great communication is to change yourself

The way to change is to decide to follow Christ- and continually make decisions to be like him.

O-Outwardly Expressive

P-Pride Killing Humility

E-Expressively respectful

N-Nothing before God/Jesus

Invite visitors to study the bible!! Set up for this week!

Preview Next Week- Conflict Resolution

Announce Marriage Retreat- Handout Flyers// Information

WEEK THREE- CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Introduction// Ice Breaker “Can’t We all Just Get Along”

Take Sheet of listed Issues/ copy and distribute an individual set to each couple. Have each couple(husband & wife work separately) rank in order the issues which create conflict in their marriage. Have each couple take a turn in sharing their list. Please take note of the responses and watch for any developing conflict as game progresses. (Option- have small prize available for couple with most matches) (Please note that the goal of this time is not to “solve” the conflicts but to direct couples to Jesus and demonstrate that only in Christ can we have a marriage that rises above all conflict.)

Opening question- What is the dumbest thing that you have argued about?

From your list- what do you fight about in your marriage?

(Have each couple share)

James 4:1-3 (Contemporary English Version)

“Why do you fight and argue with each other? Isn't it because you are full of selfish desires that fight to control your body? You want something you don't have, and you will do anything to get it. You will even kill! But you still cannot get what you want, and you won't get it by fighting and arguing. You should pray for it. Yet even when you do pray, your prayers are not answered, because you pray just for selfish reasons.”

Looking at this passage, what would you say is the primary basis for conflict in marriage?

Answer: #1 Killer in Marriage is Selfishness

Looking back at your lists, what part does selfishness play in creating conflict?

(Please note that this can be a sensitive area for the couples, make note of any negative body language, emotions, etc.; Share from your own list- be open.)

How can we “just get along?”

Begin with Jesus’ attitude? Phillipians 2:5-8; Luke 9:23-25; Matthew 20:25-28;

How can we manifest self denial in marriage?

How would your marriage look if you put into practice “self denial” or “servanthood”?

What role does humility play?

What happens when we do have conflict? (Every marriage will have conflict)

How do we resolve it?

What about ANGER? Is it okay to get angry? When is it okay? - Ms. Tiger Woods!!

There are times when it is okay to get angry// there are things that make us angry

What made Jesus angry?

John 2:13-16 (righteous indignation, God’s honor)

It is okay to get angry- but in our anger we must not sin! Ephesians 4:26

What are some of the sinful ways that we can use anger?
Bullying our spouses, intimidation, fits of rage, etc.

How does Jesus resolve conflict? Matthew 18:15-20

What is the danger of unresolved conflict? Ephesians 4:26-27
How can we give Satan a foothold in our marriage? For example- Bitterness

How can we develop Jesus' character in our marriage?
By studying the bible, learning more about who Jesus is. Invite visitors to study the bible- to see how God defines marriage; and how, it is only through God- the author of marriage- that we can have a successful, hot, holy, lifelong, till death do us part marriage!

Invite visitors to study the bible!! Set up for this week!

*Preview Next Week- Needs & Expectations
Announce Marriage Retreat- Handout Flyers// Information*

WEEK FOUR: NEEDS/EXPECTATIONS

Open with Activity called the Needs Test. Have each couple, on a separate sheet of paper, list in order, their spouses top three needs and how they meet them. Have them work independently from each other. (Pay close attention to the responses as this activity can spark feelings, conflict, etc.) Have each couple share at least one.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Why are two better than one?

Helping each other, meeting each other's needs

How can our expectations effect our ability to meet our spouses needs or get our needs met?

What are some of the expectations/needs that we have of our spouses/marriage?

Companionship, friendship, love, respect, affection, sexual fulfilment, work, providing for, children, standard of living, trust, fidelity, etc.

What are some of the expectations that we have of ourselves?

What role do we play in identifying and meeting our spouses needs?

What does the bible say about meeting needs?

Psalm 37:4- What does it mean to delight oneself in the Lord?

What are the desires of our hearts in regard to our marriages

Matthew 6:25-34

What kinds of needs is Jesus addressing here?

What does it mean to seek first His Kingdom and His Righteousness?

How can seeking first the kingdom//or delighting ourselves in the Lord- change our marriages?

How are our marriages impacted when there is no relationship or a weak relationship with God?

Phillipians 2:5-8

How can having Jesus' attitude effect our ability to meet our spouses needs, and have our own needs met?

How do we develop the attitude of Christ?

For disciples- Get back to the basics- Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35

For non-Christians- to learn about the God that the Disciples proclaimed- To make the effort to really know Jesus- to study the bible-

Invite visitors to study the bible!! Set up for this week!

Preview Next Week- Romance

Announce Marriage Retreat- Handout Flyers// Information

WEEK FIVE: ROMANCE

Video- "Funny Marriage Romance Gone"

Open- Have the couples write on separate sheets of paper their idea of the dream date with their spouse. Also write down their spouse's idea of the dream date. Have some share their answers upon completion.

Why are there differences?

We are different and have different ideas and expectations

Men are from Mars- women from Venus// men created in the wilderness,
women in the garden

See a need, fill a need: The Need we all have is to be loved

To love is to give what is needed- Not what you want, but what they need

Q. Women: What are some words that you think of when you think of romance?

How do you feel when those ideas are expressed// conveyed by your husband?

Read Ephesians 5:25-27

Q. Men: In view of Ephesians 5:25-27

What does it mean to loving your wife the way Christ loves the church?

She is radiant

How would you describe your wife- when she is radiant? Her mood, her demeanor, her security,

Read Ezekiel 34:25-30

Q. Men: What is the result of loving our wives as Christ does the church?

No matter the circumstances- she is secure in your love, secure to be who she is, you add good, not harm to her life, she is in an environment to grow, thrive and blossom.

Q. Men: What are some words that you think of when you think of romance?

Sex, sex, sex, dinner out, movie, sex, sex!

Re-Read Ezekiel 34:25-30

Q. Women: What are the wild beasts that attack your husband? Knowing your husband's needs- how does Satan come after your husband?

Men are inundated with sexual images- tv, music, commercials during sporting events, pornography, dress (lack of modesty)

Read Ephesians 5:1-2

What is God's call for both husbands and wives?

In the context of romance, what does it mean to give yourselves up for one another?
To do what they want, to meet their needs

Close: John 15:12-13

We must love as Jesus loved in the area of romance- to lay our lives down for one another- romance is- whatever your mate thinks it is - whatever they need- we need to learn to meet each other's needs in this area

In order to learn about how Jesus loved- we have to study His word- take a close look at how he loved, how he met needs

Invite visitors to study the bible!! Set up for this week!

Preview Next Week-

Announce Marriage Retreat- Handout Flyers// Information

Signs of Romantic Problems-

1. No dates and or getaways - we need to keep dating our spouses - we need time away and alone to re-connect// without the kids!
Jesus - Luke 5:16- often went away to be alone with his father// to spend special time with his dad
2. Sex is Uncommon or uninteresting - sex needs to be common and interesting
1 Corinthians 7:1-5 (since there is so much immorality)
How does Satan tempt us in this area?
T.V., pornography,
3. Your Heart is Trolling- Putting our best energy into things outside of our marriage
Matthew 6:21- where your treasure is- the heart is
For men- work// toys- video games?
For women- the children, work
Note: We must be sure not to have any relationships with the opposite sex that are inappropriately close.
4. Constant Bickering- everyone fights // but if we fuss all the time- this is a bad sign
5. Your passion is applied to other things-
Our passion for our marriages must be paramount!!
6. We are Critical towards each other- instead of grateful//encouraging

Things that need regular Maintenance in our marriages

Communicating & understanding needs and expectations
Continue to Flirt with your spouse (how did you win her/him)
Be realistic- life is not TV, movies- we get tired- we get older
Be encouraging - go out of your way to praise each other
Be grateful