

STEWARDSHIP OF MARRIAGE
MATTHEW 19:3-8

INTRODUCTION

I want us to think on a particular matter of our **STEWARDSHIP** this morning! **NOT** in the terms of what we normally think of when we hear someone, especially a preacher, say the word—**STEWARDSHIP!**

When a preacher says he's going to speak on **STEWARDSHIP**, some folks automatically think he's going to be speaking about the area of **TITHING** or **GIVING!**

Understand that the word **STEWARDSHIP** implies that we have been entrusted by God with **SOMETHING OF VALUE!** But **NOT** necessarily something of **MONETARY VALUE!** (**Time, Talent, Treasure**)

TIME – We all have the same amount of time! Our stewardship of our time speaks to how we spend our time! Time can be spent well or wasted!

TALENT – Some folks have been blessed in areas of particular things that they can do well — Those things may be God given or learned! Talents can also be used well or wasted!

TREASURE – When we think of **TREASURE**, most folks are prone to think only in terms of what God has given to us of a **MONETARY NATURE** and/or the things that **MONEY CAN BUY!** However, treasure extends beyond the things of monetary value. **TREASURE** includes **ANY** thing of value! In fact, I want us to see that **STEWARDSHIP EXTENDS TO FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS!**

Now, before we get into this, I want you to understand that my objective today is in no way intended to be critical of those who don't have perfect marital relationships. In reality, if we were to all be honest, there are probably none of us who have achieved a perfect marital relationship! What we are going to be looking at is God's ideal as it is found in Scripture!

We know that man's fall into sin corrupted that which God created!

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But listen, though we ALL may fall woefully short of God's ideal for marriage, we should nevertheless be striving toward it!

Now, I understand that many good, godly people have experienced the pain of a broken marriage, many for reasons beyond their control. If you fall into that category this morning, it is not my intention to bring back up your pain or add to your pain!

Understand too that it is not my intention to alienate those of you who are not married! The Scriptures are very clear that there is a **season for singleness**, and in some cases, God has gifted individuals with the ability to be single for His purposes!

So what is my objective? It is simply to encourage you about God's purpose and design for marriage and why we, as the Church, must strive to uphold God's ideals for this foundational and divine institution!

Now let's get back to what I said...

Our stewardship extends to family relationships:

1. Wives Are To Be A Gift Of God To Their Husbands!

(e.g. Adam was alone in the garden until God made Eve!)
Genesis 2:23-"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of man."

Proverbs 18:22-"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing and obtaineth favour of the Lord."

Proverbs 12:4-"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband"

If a woman is the wife that she should be by God's grace, she indeed is a gift of God to her husband! (e.g. *My wife is not perfect, but she strives to be a godly, spiritual wife and she is one of God's good gifts to me! She is one of God's TREASURES given to me that I am responsible for being a good steward of!*)

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2. Husbands Are To Be A Gift Of God To Their Wives!

Ephesians 5:25—“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.”

If a husband loves his wife as Christ loved the Church [And that’s a tall order guys!], then he is indeed a gift and a TREASURE that she is responsible for being a good steward of!

3. Children Are A Gift To Their Parents!

Psalms 127:3—“Lo, children are a heritage [i.e. inheritance] of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.”

And because children are a gift and a treasure, we are responsible for being good stewards of our children!

4. Parents Are To Be A Gift To Their Children!

Ephesians 6:1-4—“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. 4 ...bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the LORD!”

5. Grandchildren Are A Gift To Their Grandparents!

Proverbs 17:6 Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.

And because they are God’s gift, we are to be good stewards of them!

Let’s look at what it means to be a good steward of marriage:

I. STEWARDSHIP IN THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP MEANS BEING TRUE TO GOD’S PATTERN FOR MARRIAGE!

God made it clear that He was establishing a pattern for marriage!

Genesis 2:24—“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

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A. ONE MAN FOR ONE WOMAN! (Vs 4)

It may now be a trite saying, but it is still true... *“In the beginning, God made Adam and Eve not Adam and Steve.”*

My how the other two institutions that the LORD instituted — our government and now many Churches—have embraced the failure in the stewardship of marriages in this regard!

Any time anyone abandons God’s perfect prescribed plan and pattern for anything, it is not a good thing!
(e.g. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Solomon)

B. LEAVE AND CLEAVE! (Vs 5)

1. There is to be a leaving or a separation that takes place from one’s parents!

One of the best things that happened in our marriage is when we even moved out of the town from where our parents were early in our marriage!

2. There is to be a cleaving or a joining that takes place!

The LORD intends for the bond of the marriage to start strong and stay strong!

The two become one! Absolute commitment!

C. THEY BECOME ONE FLESH! (Vs 5)

Matthew 19:6—“...What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

Divorce goes against God’s pattern for marriage!

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II. STEWARDSHIP IN THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP
MEANS BEING TRUE TO THE VOWS WE VOWED!

A *vow* in both the Hebrew and the Greek is a statement made to God!

The Hebrew word means, "*a promise to God.*"

The Greek word for vow denotes "*a commitment to God.*"

The English word for vow means "*to affirm.*"

When the wedding vows are spoken, the bride and groom, forsaking all others, are pledging their love "*for better, for worse; for richer, for poorer; in sickness and in health till death do us part.*"

A. **Vows Are Debts Which God Requires Us To Pay!**

When a person makes a vow, he or she is entering into a debtor's relationship. The debt continues until the vow is fulfilled. For this reason the Biblical writers often speak of "*paying*" vows.

Ecclesiastes 5:4-5-"When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

B. **God Rewards Vows That Are Fulfilled!**

Psalms 50:14-15-"Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."

God's view of the one who breaks his marriage vows is described in **Malachi 2:13-16.**

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III. STEWARDSHIP IN THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP
MEANS OBEYING GOD'S COMMANDS REGARDING THE
MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP! (EPHESIANS 5:21-29)

A. **Husbands Are To Love Their Wives As Christ Loved The Church!**

A sacrificial, unselfish love that seeks the highest good for the one loved!

B. **Wives Are To Submit To Their Husbands As To The Lord!**

You can't submit without loving!

IV. STEWARDSHIP IN THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP
MEANS MAKING ALL THAT YOU CAN OUT OF WHAT
GOD HAS GIVEN YOU!

(Exp. Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14ff)

CONCLUSION

For those of you that are presently in a marriage relationship:

1. Stay true to God's pattern for marriage!
2. Stay true to the vows you vowed!
3. Obey God's commands regarding marriage!
4. Make all that you can out of your marriage!

For those whose dreams of a perfect marriage were shattered:

1. Take your burden to the Lord! (Find forgiveness and healing)
2. Leave it there!

For those who hope for marriage one day!

Are you praying about your future and the person you will marry? Listen closely, until you are totally committed to the LORD and His will for your life, you're not ready for the commitment of marriage!

For all of us!

Are there areas of your life that need to be brought under the Lord's control so that you can be a good steward in all of your relationships?