

## IMPROVING MARRIAGE

### Int.

1. Aim: To make some suggestions that will make our marriages better.
2. Marriage is ordained of God
  - a. Gen. 1:27 - created us male and female
  - b. Gen. 2:21-25
  - c. Jesus approved this arrangement - Mt. 19:4-6 - one flesh
  - d. Eph. 5:31 - Paul by inspiration refers to this same idea
  - e. Heb. 13:4 **"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."**
3. In the ideal marriage the husband and wife will be happy as they obey the commands of God
  - a. Eph. 5:25 **"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."**
  - b. Eph. 5:22 **"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."**
  - c. Eph. 5:28 **"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself."**
  - d. Eph. 5:33 **"Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."**
  - e. This is the way God intended for marriage to be.
4. The ideal is not always reality
  - a. Many problems arise in marriage - There are no perfect marriages

- b. There is always less than perfection when people are involved.
5. But there can be improvements - You can make your marriage better
    - a. A better marriage begins with "You" "Me"
    - b. You cannot change your mate, but you can change some things about yourself.
  6. Here are some suggestions for improvements in your marriage.

## Discussion

### **I. LEARN TO COMMUNICATE**

- A. Mt. 19:5 "...**shall be one flesh**" Gen. 2:24 & Eph. 5:31
  1. This refers to much more than the physical relationship
  2. We must be able to talk with one another and exchange ideas
  3. Communication is a two way street - an exchange of information
- B. Many couples do not talk
  1. Research says that average couple spends only 17 minutes in conversation per week.
  2. There are 10,080 minutes in each week
  3. During dating years couples spend much time talking - on the phone, school, church, dates, -- wherever they happen to be together.
  4. But many husbands and wives hardly speak to one another - which is a symptom of a dying love.
- C. In the ideal marriage
  1. Husbands and wives will talk to one another - should tell each other about your love for them = They will talk about anything and everything
  2. Each will listen well and with interest to the partner
  3. When there is a problem they will talk it out, and solve the difficulty.
- D. You can improve your communication in your marriage

## **II. SPEND TIME TOGETHER**

- A. Mt. 19:6 **"Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."**
1. God hath joined us together
  2. No one should put us asunder - separate - apart; into pieces -- in a different place or direction
  3. We should not let man do it to us, neither should we do it ourselves.
- B. Problems arise in this area
1. Both are working - gone from home
  2. Get involved in so many things that they don't have time for one another
  3. Sometimes this happens gradually and by accident
  4. Other times it happens by choice and intentionally
  5. Result - couples grow apart and become singles in practice
- C. Remember dating years
1. Wanted to be together constantly
  2. Looked for excuses and ways so you could spend time together
  3. Reluctantly go separate ways when you finally had to go home
  4. Desire to be with each other was very strong.
- D. In a marriage we should be together as much as possible:
1. Eat together - Go places together
  2. Enjoy spending time with one another
  3. Read your Bible together
  4. Pray together
  5. Attend services together

### **III. LEARN HOW TO HANDLE DISAGREEMENTS**

A. All couples will have some disagreements

1. As we learn to live with one another there will be differences of opinion
2. We must learn how to handle these differences in a Christian way

B. Bible Advice:

1. Col. 3:19 "**Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.**"
2. Eph. 4:26 "**Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:**"

C. Handling disagreements:

1. Talk quietly and calmly
  - a. Never shout at your mate
  - b. Don't make threats nor use vile, hateful language
  - c. Bridle your tongue - Jas. 3:6
  - d. If you cannot talk without getting angry, then write a note
2. Learn to walk away from an explosive situation
  - a. Sometimes a cooling off period is very good
  - b. Few things can be solved in a moment of anger
3. Before starting an important discussion pray for God's help
  - a. Jas. 1:5 "**If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.**"
  - b. Try to understand the others point of view
  - c. Be forgiving - mercy begets mercy - Mt. 5:7
4. Never throw and break things
  - a. It's foolish and useless to get angry and throw and break things in the house
  - b. Does not solve any problem

5. You must never physically fight with your mate
    - a. No matter how angry you get you do not have the right to hit one another
    - b. Violence - physically hurting one another is wrong !!
    - c. It only compounds the problem
  6. Be considerate of the children
    - a. Do not have an argument in the presence of children
    - b. A child is hurt when the parents are arguing
    - c. Discuss any differences privately
  7. Pray for a peaceful solution
    - a. As a husband and wife you should be able to pray together about anything.
    - b. 1 Pet. 3:7 " **Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.**"
    - c. It is difficult to be angry and explosive when you are praying for God's grace
- D. If you cannot solve the problem then get help
1. Those who are wise will seek help from older, wiser Christians if they cannot solve their problems
  2. There should be no shame in discussing problems with elders, or preachers, or other Christian friends
  3. Don't wait too long to get help!!
  4. Those too proud or too stubborn to ask for help often pay a fearful price!!

## **IV. MAKE A GOOD TEAM**

### A. A husband and wife form a team

1. Gen. 2:24b. "...**and they shall be one flesh.**"
2. Team = "To yoke or join in a team." Web.
3. Yoke = It has a common meaning referring to a yoke of oxen or horses in performing certain tasks, like pulling a carriage or a wagon. So to yoke means to link, to couple, or to marry. To be joined or intimately associated.
4. When God formed man he made a mate for him and they became a team

### B. That first husband and wife team

1. They were a perfect team at the beginning
  - a. Adam and Eve were created perfect in body, mind and health
  - b. They were not married too young or too old
  - c. They were God-made companions - marriage made in heaven
  - d. They had no language barriers, no cultural, racial, or religious barriers
  - e. They had no "in-law" problems
  - f. They had no mortgage payments - no credit cards
2. But this first family had problems with sin
  - a. They were expelled from the garden of Eden because of their sins
  - b. They had the first juvenile delinquent - a murderer who killed his own brother
  - c. We don't know all that happened in that first family but we learn that the once perfect marriage was no longer perfect

- C. We will have problems in our marriage, but working together as a team we can overcome and have a successful marriage
1. To be a team - yoked together requires AGREEMENT
    - a. A team of horses not working together will destroy a wagon
    - b. A team of husband and wife not working together will destroy a happy home and marriage
  2. They must work on the same objective - horses pulling a load
    - a. Husbands and wives to produce a happy marriage and a happy home in which they bring up the children
    - b. Mutual goals and objectives help keep us together
  3. Harnessed together
    - a. When we marry we form a team
    - b. We have agreed to be harnessed together for life
    - c. We agree to pull together, to work together, to share together not only the joy and happiness, but to share the loads and burdens of life which at times are hard to carry or endure.
  4. Stubbornness will hinder
    - a. Heard the expression "stubborn as a mule"
    - b. Sometimes husband and wives are like this:
      - (1) "She would die before she would admit that she is wrong."
      - (2) He would die before he would say, 'I'm sorry.'"
    - c. This kind of attitude will cause problems and destroy a marriage.

D. A Christian team is the best

1. A husband and wife who are truly Christians are equally yoked together
2. The true principles of Christianity, when put into practice, will solve all the problems which divide and destroy marriages.
3. The team of husband and wife united with Christ as the director and held together by love will not fail.

### **Conclusion**

1. Marriages can be improved only when we as individuals improve ourselves
2. You can make your marriage better by:
  - a. Learning to communicate
  - b. Spending time together
  - c. Learning how to handle disagreements
  - d. Making a good team
3. IMPROVE = To enhance in value or quality, make better, to make useful additions or amendments [ Web. p. 421]
4. Marriage is for those who love God and one another

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