

## Strengthening Your Marriage Seminar God's Purpose for Marriage (Session #1)

Marriage has been defined as the legal union of a man and woman in a religious or civil ceremony by which they become husband and wife. The biblical view of marriage is found in the account of Adam and Eve created male and female and becoming one flesh (Gen. 1:26-28,2:21-25). Jesus Himself confirmed the historical basis of the Genesis account (Matt. 19:3-9).

The most basic purpose of marriage is first and foremost to glorify God (1Cor. 6:18-20, 10:31). Marriage by its' very nature entails relationship. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit enjoy a perfect and eternal relationship. Created in the image and likeness of God, the perfect relationship Adam and Eve enjoyed in the Garden was broken by sin (Gen. 3:1-19). The Fall affected all the world (Rom. 8:19-22), but particularly the most important relationship of our first parents with God and then with one another. Their sin resulted in their God consciousness and other centeredness to become "self consciousness." God hates divorce because it destroys relationships in the family (Mal. 2:16). Sin hinders or destroys oneness.

The Scriptures picture the relationship between God and His people to that of a husband and wife (Isa. 54:5-6). The breaking of that relationship is likened to adultery (Hos. 2:1-20; Jms. 4:4; Rev. 2:21-22). Most significantly, marriage is a picture of the relationship between Christ and His church that He loved and gave His life to wash and cleanse (Eph. 5:22-33). We glorify God when we act consistent with His character and nature (1Pet. 1 :13-16). We are to be faithful and truthful to our spouses because God is always faithful and true (Num. 23:19; Jhn. 14:6; 1Cor. 10:13; Rev. 1:5). A sure litmus test in your marriage is to ask, "Does this glorify God?"

The good news is that Christ came to reverse the affects of the Fall through the cross and the power of His resurrection (Rom. 6:1-14). In Christ we are new creatures (2Cor. 5:17) and partakers of the Divine nature (2Pet. 1 :3-4). If we allow Christ to live His life through us (Gal. 2:20), our marriages will reflect the perfect relationship within the Godhead. This will entail a total commitment to God and to your spouse (Matt. 22:37-38). God keeps His word and His covenant with His people (Deut. 7:7-11). As his children, we must keep our vows of commitment in marriage to God and our spouse (Mal. 2: 14-16). Marriage is not just about you, but glorifying God!