

The Family Works!

Pt. 1: Magnificent Marriages

Welcome to my family room! It's great to have you all here this morning. Today we begin a brand new sermon series titled, "The Family Works." As you are aware, there's a lot of gloom and doom attitudes out in the world about the decline of the American family. There are even some statistics about the decay of the American family.

Well, I am here to tell you today that The Family Works! I firmly believe, as do the rest of the Pastors here, that your family can be healthy, happy and can function as God intended the family to function.

During this sermon series we will be addressing the issue of the family and discussing ways in which you can be sure that your family does indeed work.

Specifically, we're going to talk about relationships within the family and how to make those relationships work.

We're going to talk about: Husbands and wives, parents and children, parents and teens, grandparents and grand kids.....

So, once again, welcome to my family room. Please, relax, make yourself comfortable as this morning we talk about Magnificent Marriages.

A marriage is a lot of things.
But first and foremost, if it's going to be magnificent, it must be Biblical.
Biblical marriages are successful marriages.
Biblical marriages are happy marriages.
Biblical marriages last.
Biblical marriages are the best marriages.
Biblical marriages are magnificent marriages.
What, then, is a Biblical marriage?

1. A Biblical marriage is very valuable!

A Biblical marriage is one that is valued. It is one that is treasured. It is one that is cherished. It is one that is esteemed. It is prized.

Proverbs 18:22 "He who finds a wife finds what IS GOOD and receives favor from the LORD."

Proverbs 31:10 "A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than RUBIES."

Rubies are very valuable. They are worth a lot of money.
The bible is teaching that your marriage is also very valuable.
Maybe you can't put a price tag on it, but that doesn't mean it isn't valuable.

Proverbs 12:4 "A wife of noble character is her husband's crown."

Next to the Lord, your spouse should be the thing you treasure most in life.
Next to the Lord, your spouse should be your number one blessing in life.
Don't ever take for granted the value, the worth of your marriage.

What a shame, what a tragedy that some people wait until they are standing at the foot of a grave before they realize just how precious their spouse really is.

What a shame that some people wait until they are speaking at a funeral before they will publicly speak words of praise and adoration and love for their spouse.
Say the words of love now, not leaning over the casket.

Marriage is a blessing from God, it is of great value, it should be treated as such.

2. A Biblical marriage is pure.

A biblical marriage is pure. It is chaste. It is decent. It is moral. It is virtuous.

Hebrews 13:4 "Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral."

Sometimes preachers assume that everyone knows that which seems obvious to us. But sometimes our assumptions are wrong. So let me state this very clearly: Adultery is always wrong. Adultery is sinful. Adultery will destroy a marriage. It is evil.

1 Thesalonians 4:3-5

- 3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality;
- 4 that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable,
- 5 not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God;

A man wrote to Dear Abby, he said this. "Dear Abby: I am in love and I have a relationship with two different women. I love them both, but I can't marry them both. Please tell me what to do, but don't give me any of that morality stuff."

Abby gives a great answer. "Dear Sir: The only difference between humans and animals IS morality. If you don't want that morality stuff, next time please write to a veterinarian."

Ephesians 5:3 "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people."

Men, be faithful to your wife. Women, be faithful to your husband.
A biblical marriage is a pure marriage.

3. A Biblical marriage is passionate.

Just because a marriage is pure, doesn't mean it shouldn't be passionate. You should be passionate about your marriage. You should be passionate about your spouse.

Proverbs 5:18 "May your fountain be blessed, and may you REJOICE in the wife of your youth."

Marriage was created by God, it is a great gift from God, it should be lovingly enjoyed.

Passion in marriage is a good thing!

Sometimes the passion fades simply because we allow it to fade.

To keep the passion in your marriage, try to do some of the things you did when you first started dating.

- Buy her some flowers once in awhile.
- Buy her some candy once in awhile.
- Get a baby sitter for the kids and go on a date together.
- Make his favorite cookies once in awhile.
- Laugh at his jokes, even if they aren't funny.

Now, you ask, how is this all biblical? This is supposed to be about Biblical marriages. Where does the Bible talk about passion in marriage? Lots of places! Have you read the Song of Solomon? Look at these statements between husband and wife:

Song of Solomon 1:2 "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth — for your love is more delightful than wine."

Song of Solomon 1:15 "How beautiful you are, my darling! Your eyes are doves."

Song of Solomon 2:6 "His left arm is under my head, and his right arm embraces me."

Song of Solomon 2:10 "My lover spoke and said to me, "Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come with me."

Song of Solomon 3:4 "...I found the one my heart loves. I held him and would not let him go."

Song of Solomon 4:11 "Your lips drop sweetness as the honeycomb, my bride; milk and honey are under your tongue."

Go home and read the whole book of Song of Solomon. You'll be surprised how much passion is right there in the Bible! Passion in a marriage is good. It's healthy for the marriage. It strengthens your relationship.

It is Biblical. It is how God has designed marriage.

Ecclesiastes 3:5 "...there is a time to embrace....."

I don't remember the study or who conducted it, but I do remember the conclusion. The conclusion was that for the emotional well being of the wife, every husband should give his wife a minimum of three good hugs a day. A passionate embrace in marriage is always a good thing!

4. A Biblical marriage is permanent.

I've been a minister for 32 years. I've done hundreds of weddings. Every wedding I've done I have the couple repeat their wedding vows. The wedding vows conclude with the following statement:

"For better or worse, in richer and poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part."

These vows are spoken before witnesses.

But more importantly, these vows are also spoken before God.

The vows begin, "Do you promise BEFORE GOD and these witnesses, that you will....."

God expects us to fulfill our vows.

Deuteronomy 23:21 & 23

21 If you make a vow to the LORD your God.....the LORD your God will certainly demand it of you or you will be guilty of sin.

23 Whatever your lips utter you must be sure to do, because you made your vow freely to the LORD your God with your own mouth.

Numbers 30:2 "When a man makes a vow to the LORD or takes an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break his word but must do everything he said."

God expects us to fulfill our vows.

God expects that our marriage is permanent. It is for the rest of our life.

When we say our wedding vows, we say, "Until death do us part."

"Until death do us part." A Biblical marriage is permanent!

Through the good times and the bad times.

Through the happy times and the sad times.

Through the healthy times and the sick times.

Through the easy times and the stressful times.

"Through better or worse, in sickness and in health, till death do us part."

Unfortunately, there are too many who subscribe to the world's philosophy of the marriage deal. When they first get married everything is IDEAL. Then they have their first fight and marriage becomes and ORDEAL. After several years of marital conflict they believe they have gotten a RAW DEAL. And so they start out looking for a NEW DEAL.

But God has the BEST DEAL for your marriage and it is a GREAT DEAL:

God's intention is that marriage is permanent.

God's intention is that in your spouse you have a friend who will always be there for you, one who loves you, trusts you, encourages you, stands by you and with you, someone you can count on.

God's intention is that marriage is for the rest of your life:

Mark 10:6-9

- 6 Jesus said, "At the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.'
- 7 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,
- 8 and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one.
- 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

A biblical marriage is permanent.

Nothing should keep you from fulfilling your vows. Nothing should cause you to stop loving your spouse.

5. A Biblical marriage creates unity.

One of the things I have observed is that the very best marriages are the ones in which the husband and wife are not just a married couple, but they are also very best friends.

They don't "have to" spend time together, they "want to" spend time together.

They want to go places together, see places together, experience things together and do things together.

There is a true oneness in their marriage. They love their unity in their relationship. They are at their deepest level of comfort and their highest level of happiness when they are together.

There are far too many things which would seek to pull a husband and wife apart. We need to do all we can to preserve that oneness in marriage.

Jesus said it this way:

Matthew 19:4-6

- 4 "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'
- 5 and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'?
- 6 So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

In discussing the relationship between a husband and wife, God speaks through the prophet Malachi and states:

Malachi 2:15 "Has not the LORD made them one?"

In a true biblical marriage there is a harmonious unity between husband and wife.

6. A Biblical marriage is encouraging.

Build each other up. Encourage each other. Cheer for each other. Be your spouse's biggest fan.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 "Encourage one another and build one another up, just as in fact you are doing."

Husbands, if you want to energize your marriage, put your wife on a pedestal.

Never, ever criticize her in public. Don't tell jokes at her expense. Don't humiliate her like that.

The Bible says to encourage her and build her up.
Compliment the way she looks,
compliment the way she's dressed,
compliment the food she prepares,
compliment the way she cleans the house,
praise her in public.

Ephesians 5:33 "However, each husband must LOVE his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must RESPECT her husband."

Key word: love and respect. When you love your wife, you will encourage your wife.

A woman's self esteem comes from knowing she is loved by her husband.

Husbands, love your wife!
And don't keep it a secret, let her know that you love her! Tell her that you love her!

Wives, respect and encourage your husband.
Women need to know they are loved, Men need to know they are respected.

Jack Dempsey was a boxing champion. He was the heavyweight champion of the world. Jack Dempsey's wife was asked by a newspaper reporter what it was like to be married to a boxer. She replied, "I'm not married to just a boxer, I'm married to a champion." Can you imagine how that made him feel. What a wonderful wife he had. That is one very smart lady.

Men need to know that they are respected. Especially by their wife.
To have a dynamic marriage you must encourage each other.
Love is expressed through words of encouragement.

7. A Biblical marriage is all about love.

Doesn't that seem obvious?
Then why do so many people seem to forget that?
Marriage is all about love.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8
4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.
5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.
6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.
7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
8 Love never fails.

1 John 4:8 "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."

In this world, the closest thing you can compare your relationship to God with, is your relationship with your spouse.
Your relationship with God is all about love.
Your relationship with your spouse is all about love.
Husbands, love your wife.
Wives, love your husband.

Marriage is all about love.
So is your relationship with God!
God loves you.
Have you entered into a loving relationship with your heavenly Father?