

Study 0077

From our last study, we were able to see how single brothers (and single sisters) ought to approach the issue of who to get married to. Critical among the issues is allowing God to give us His choice for a life partner, by praying and trusting Him. We emphasized limitedness and subjectivity if a groom-to-be, is to make the choice of a life partner himself. We also stressed the significance and importance of parental involvement (on behalf of the groom-to-be) and consent (on behalf of the bride-to-be) in the choice and confirmation of a marriage proposition. We stated three kinds of parents in the order of decreasing relevance—God, one’s spiritual leader, one’s biological parents/guardian who are born again, and, one’s biological parents/guardian who are not Christians. We noted that the Holy Spirit has been given to the believer to be his best friend, not just for the purpose of miracles and other self-motivated benefits, but more particularly, in the area of choosing a spouse for the believer. So, what if a brother or sister got married to someone in defiance to the choice of God? The way to deal with the issue, is to go to God in repentance (**1 John 1:7-10**), and then trust Him to take care of all the ‘rough edges’ that may arise in the course of the marriage. Let us state at this point that God does not expect a believer to knowingly get married to an unbeliever, and then hope that the unbeliever will be changed afterwards. In **2 Corinthians 6:14-16**, we have the word of God which makes it clear that believers and unbelievers should not be joined (yoked) together in marriage, because there really is no basis for fellowship (sharing), communion (partnership), concord (harmony), or agreement (common ground) between “*righteousness and unrighteousness (lawlessness)*”, “*light and darkness*”, “*Christ and Belial (the devil)*”, “*believers and infidels*”, and “*the temple of God and idols*”. Looking at the words used by God to describe the lack of commonality on one hand, and the contrasts between Christians and non-Christians, it is clear that God does not expect a believer to be associated with an unbeliever in any shape or form where marriage is concerned! This is essentially because, the over-riding basis for God bringing together two of His children in holy matrimony is His Kingdom; not physical beauty, apparels, jewellery, or even pre-marital love (which really is to be translated as ‘lust’).

In this study, we shall see that the reason why God is interested in His children being married to one another, and not to unbelievers, is also tied to His intentions for marriage. Some of these intentions are given below, and the rest will be given in the next study.

1. ***Marriage is to be between a man and a woman.*** Only a person, who is truly born again and sanctified by the word of God and the Holy Spirit, can submit to a one man, one wife command. There are people, including some unsanctified church goers, who will find it unthinkable that they would spend the rest of their lives with just one person in marriage. There are some other people who cannot imagine not giving into their depraved desire for someone of the same sex in a marriage union. But the bible makes it clear that when God made humans, He made us male and female (**Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:4**), and that only depraved people engage in sexual activities with people of the same sex (**Romans 1:21-27**).
2. ***Marriage is for companionship.*** God said in **Genesis 2:18**, “*It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.*”, thus, signifying that His intention in marriage is that man would have a companion, and none of the animals created filled that void (**Genesis 2:19-20**). In **Malachi 2:14**, God states clearly that a man’s wife is his companion; that is, his friend or partner. God’s intention is that man would have a close ally like himself, with whom he can have fellowship or share details that he cannot, and, should not, share with any other. And that person is his wife!

3. ***In Marriage, a wife complements her husband.*** God’s intention in **Genesis 2:18**, was not just for a man to have a very close ally, but an ally that is a helper meet (suited to or suitable for him), or, someone who complements him (someone who brings balance to the man, a fitting companion, someone who will work together with the man). The wife is not to be in competition with the husband.
4. ***Marriage is for completeness.*** In making the woman, God took a rib from man’s side and used it to create the woman (**Genesis 2:21-22**). This means that the man is incomplete until he is married to his own wife! This is one major reason why men should rely on God to bring the woman who completes them to them.
5. ***Marriage is for oneness.*** “*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be one flesh*” (**Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5-6; Ephesians 5:31**), speak of oneness for the man and his wife. By oneness, we mean that the man and his wife who are two separate and distinct individuals, will now have the same vision, purpose, direction, focus, and so on, in marriage (**John 17:21**).

ASSIGNMENT

Having gone through the intention of God for marriage, in the various aspects above, please discuss the possible ways in which these intentions can be translated into action/reality in marriage, using the scriptures provided below, and additional scriptures you may find relevant.

1. How do we ensure that the “*one man, one wife*” principle in marriage is attained and sustained? (**Romans 1:21-27; Psalm 119:9, 11; 2 Timothy 2:22; Matthew 19:8; Galatians 5:16-25**)

2. How should couples achieve and maintain companionship with one and another? (**Amos 3:3; Acts 5:1-11; Genesis 5:22-24; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 2 Corinthians 6:14-16**)

3. In what ways can a wife complement her husband? (**1 Samuel 25:2-38; 2 Samuel 6:16, 20-23; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**)

4. How does a wife complete her husband? (**Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 37:3-6; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**)

5. How can we achieve oneness in marriage? (**Genesis 2:24; Ruth 1:14-18; 2 Kings 18:1-6; Matthew 18:19-20; John 17:21; 5:19-21; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 1 Corinthians 6:15-18**)

CONCLUSION

Once we know the intention of God in marriage, we are best equipped to yield to the Holy Spirit and to submit to God's word on how we ought to live (**Romans 12:2**).