
Marriage & Family God's Style



Isaiah 54:2

Biblical Counseling Keys on Marriage: To Have & To Hold

- June Hunt



Isaiah 54:2



²¹ And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.

²² Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

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.”

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Covenant

“In biblical times a covenant vow was **binding** and **unbreakable**. Since God made the marriage commitment to be a sacred covenant, it is a lifetime promise, a permanent pledge ... ‘till death do you part.’ ”

— June Hunt

The concept of covenant is thread throughout the Old and New Testaments, weaving a tapestry of unending love and loyalty between God and His people. Marriage vows mirror the same faithful devotion – the expression of a lifetime commitment between a man and a woman and God.



Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth *is Mine*.

What Is God's Model of Marriage?

Marriage is a covenant agreement in which a man and a woman are legally and spiritually joined together as husband and wife.

¹⁴ Yet you say, “For what reason?” Because the LORD has been witness Between you and the wife of your youth, With whom you have dealt treacherously; Yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

¹⁵ But did He not make them one, Having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. “Therefore take heed to your spirit, And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.”

¹⁶ “For the LORD God of Israel says that He hates divorce, For it covers one’s garment with violence,” Says the LORD of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously.”

**Marriage is
the ceremony
or rite that
joins a man
and a woman
in wedlock.**





So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

A black and white photograph of two hands, one holding a small object, with a green text overlay.

Old Testament Covenants

The Hebrew word, ***beriyth***, is used over 280 times in the Old Testament and is most often translated “covenant”, which means “a binding agreement”.

The marriage covenant is not just between two people, but between a man, a woman, and God.

Mutually binding covenants were made between people and confirmed by an oath in God’s name.

God Is A Part Of Our Covenants

David and Jonathan entered into a covenant (*not a marriage*) of mutual protection established between the two of them and God. (1 Samuel 18:3; 20:8–42)

1 Samuel 20:42 NKJV

Then Jonathan said to David, “Go in peace, since we have both sworn in the name of the LORD, saying, ‘May the LORD be between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants, forever.’ ” So he arose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.

God Initiates & Keeps Covenants

God initiated and kept covenants with Noah, Abraham and others. (*Genesis 9:11 – 17*)

God Initiates & Keeps Covenants

¹¹ Thus I establish My covenant with you (Noah): Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

¹² And God said: “This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

¹³ I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.

God Initiates & Keeps Covenants

Abraham - Genesis 17:2 NKJV

And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.”

Moses - Exodus 6:4 NKJV

I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, in which they were strangers.

God Does Not Forsake Covenants

Even when the Israelites failed to keep the covenant as they promised to do in Exodus 24:7 – 8, God refused to forsake it.

Leviticus 26:43 – 44

“They rejected my laws....Yet in spite of this...I will not reject them or abhor them so as to destroy them completely, breaking my covenant with them.”



If you are going to be a **godly covenant keeper**, you will refuse to forsake your marriage covenant even though your partner may have been unfaithful at a point in time.

Covenant Requires Sacrifice

The phrase “to cut covenant” refers to an old Hebrew custom of sealing a covenant bond by the shedding of sacrificial blood.

When God established His covenant with Abraham, He required Abraham to cut sacrificial animals in half. (Genesis 15:8–18)

Covenant Requires Sacrifice

Psalm 50:5 NKJV

“Gather My saints together to Me, Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.”

The keeping of a marriage covenant requires death to self.

Marriage is NOT for selfish people.



New Testament Covenants

The Greek word, ***diatheke***, is translated “covenant” or “testament”, and it conveys the picture of a legal will—a last will and testament.

This pledge of inheritance and promise of distribution is based on one individual’s desires.

While the English word, covenant, signifies a mutual agreement of joint obligation between two or more parties, *diatheke*, connotes a covenant, pledge or promise made solely by one individual.

Death Equals Sacrifice

And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Covenant Keeper

As a covenant keeper, you are singly responsible to demonstrate your covenant of love and loyalty even if your mate does not respond as you would like.

Just as God the Father used blood from sacrificial animals to seal a covenant in the Old Testament, God seals a new covenant with His people through the sacrificial death and sheds the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Mark 14:24 NKJV

And He said to them, “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.

Keeping a marriage covenant will require “death to self” through a willingness to make difficult personal sacrifices.

The Power to Keep a Covenant

Both Testaments state God's call for His people to be covenant keepers, but only the New Testament promises us the power to remain faithful to our commitments.

This power comes through the presence of Christ in each believer.

"I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."
- Galatians 2:20

Develop Christ-like Character

Developing the strength of character required to keep a lifetime commitment is a continual process of submitting your will to God and allowing Him to develop the character of Christ in you.

Matthew 26:39 NKJV

He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”

What Is God's Pattern for Marriage?

Genesis 2:24 – 25 NKJV

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

These two verses in Genesis establish the four elements in God's perfect order for marriage.

Separation

“A man will leave his father and mother.”

Both the husband and wife leave the authority of their parents and become a separate family unit. In marriage, loyalty to your parents should never be more substantial than loyalty to your spouse.

Bonding

“And be united to his wife.”

By an act of your will, bonding is a mental commitment to have a faithful, permanent relationship with your spouse regardless of difficulties.

Oneness

“They will become one flesh.”

Physical oneness is the consummation of sexual closeness. However, to achieve a lasting oneness, both of you should look for ways to bring pleasure to the other. Openly ask what is pleasurable and take the time to enjoy one another.

Intimacy

“They felt no shame.”

Emotional intimacy is encouraged when you seek to be vulnerable and transparent, honestly sharing with one another your feelings of frustration and failure and your deepest disappointments and desires.

Spiritual intimacy is achieved when you continue to reveal to one another your unmet needs, praying together, praying for each other and sharing what God is personally doing in your lives.

What Are God's Purposes for Marriage?

God has a unique purpose for the marriage covenant.

The marital relationship affords you the awesome opportunity to showcase Christ's relationship to His bride (the church).

24 Therefore, **just as the church is subject to Christ**, so let the wives be to their **own husbands in everything**.

25 Husbands, **love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,**

26 that He might **sanctify** and **cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,**

27 that He might present her to Himself a **glorious church**, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

28 So **husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.**

29 For no one ever **hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.**

Sacrifice for the Marriage Covenant

In the same way that Christ sacrificially gave Himself to the church, you and your mate should be willing to sacrifice your individual desires for the sake of your marriage covenant.

Proverbs 18:22 (NKJV)

He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the LORD.

Proverbs 19:14 (NKJV)

Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers, But a prudent wife is from the LORD.

Proverbs 31:10 (NKJV)

Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.

**Marriage
Should
Supply us
with the
Following:**



Partnership

God has given you and your mate to one another as partners for life. True companionship grows within the marriage relationship when there is emotional, spiritual and physical unity.

Amos 3:3 NKJV

Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?

Pleasure

The marriage relationship and your mate are God's special gifts to you. True enjoyment of your mate will grow out of self-control and a servant's heart.

Proverbs 5:18 NKJV

Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth.

Parenting

God's first command in Scripture was for Adam and Eve to be "fruitful and multiply." God desires that the earth be filled with godly offspring.

Genesis 1:28 NKJV

Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Perfecting

In the intimate relationship of marriage, you become well aware of your partner's shortcomings. Your partner is also well aware of your shortcomings! God uses both your weaknesses and strengths to sharpen and conform you and your partner to the image of Christ.

Romans 8:29 NKJV

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be **conformed** to the **image of His Son**, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

What Is God's Design for Marriage?

MONOGAMY

being married to only one person or to only one person at a time

God's design is a union between man and woman that is sanctified by Him as a means of maintaining family life.

What Is God's Design for Marriage?

The idea of marriage was ordained by God in His instruction to Adam that a man should leave his father and mother, and he and his wife should be as one flesh. Gen. 2:24

The first actual mention of the word marriage is in Genesis 34:8 – 9.