

Marriage

I will honor marriage as a gift from God. God's intention and design for marriage is a committed partnership between a man and a woman with a permanent promise of love and faithfulness. All other results are unfortunate, the spoiling of God's plan by greed, lust and selfishness. The goal of marriage is oneness, the mystical union of a man and woman joining hearts and lives. Marriage is not simply God's cure for lust and loneliness. Marriage, although at times imperfect, is a God-given institution that provides a picture of the unity of Jesus and His Church. Because of this, I will pray and work to remain faithful through my thoughts, attitudes and actions, maintaining high standards with those of the opposite sex.

I will honor marriage as a gift from God. I will not base my view of marriage on a feministic or chauvinistic view; instead, I will view marriage through God's design. At the very core of God's design for marriage is the most powerful of all relational principles: mutual submission. The foundation for mutual submission is love, love that serves, gives and prefers. Through mutual submission, I subordinate my personal desires first to Jesus and to the good of the one I love. Jesus is my example; He submitted to the will of God the Father, even to death on the cross. My motive for this submission is to honor God through Jesus, knowing one day I will give an account to God for how I honored marriage, and ultimately how I loved.

Marriage requires hard work and is a reflection of the effort a man and a woman have invested into living and loving in oneness as God intends. A thriving marriage reflects the heart and willingness of a man and a woman to obey God and keep Him at the center of their relationship. To honor marriage as a gift from God, husbands must choose to live the high calling of spiritual leader. This is not a position of advantage but of service and sacrifice, putting aside his own interests in order to care for his wife, loving her as Jesus loves the church. To honor marriage as a gift from God, wives must choose to follow and support the spiritual leadership of their husbands as they follow Jesus. A healthy marriage relationship requires both the man and the woman, the husband and the wife, to actively participate in loving and respecting one another, praying for one another and being faithful to one another.

Be it my marriage or the marriage of others, I will honor marriage as a gift from God.

Study: Marriage

Day 1: God's Design for Marriage - *Matthew 19:4-6* (Page 749); *Genesis 1:27* (Page 3); *Genesis 2:18,24* (Page 4)

Day 2: Roles in Marriage - *Ephesians 5:21-33* (Page 898); *Genesis 3:8-13,16-17* (Page 4)

Day 3: Honor all Marriages - *Hebrews 13:4* (Page 928); *Proverbs 6:24-35* (Page 485)

Day 4: Divorce - *Mark 10:2-12* (Page 770); *Malachi 2:14-16* (Page 729)

Day 5: Marriage to an Unbeliever - *1 Corinthians 7:12-16* (Page 873); *Hosea 3:1* (Page 680)

Day 6: Concerning Being Single - *1 Corinthians 7:1-40* (Page 873); *Isaiah 56:3-5* (Page 561)

Day 7: Sexual Intimacy Reserved for Marriage - *1 Corinthians 7:3-5* (Page 873); *Genesis 2:24* (Page 4). Read the *Daily Reading* once again and highlight things that stand out. Answer the three Life Transformation questions for growth in this area. Take time to learn the memory verse.

Memory Verse: Hebrews 13:4 *"Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery."* Hebrews 13:4

Life Transformation Questions:

1. As you read the *Daily Reading*, what stood out and why?
2. What action will you take to apply this truth? Be specific.
3. What areas of your life will benefit from this action? How and why?