

The Altering of God's Marriage Design

Scripture: Hebrews 13:4 *“Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”*

Introduction:

Glen was telling me that his brother Jess owns a John Deer 4010 tractor. Apparently a lot of these tractors were built with what is called a tricycle front end (where the front tires are real close together), a lot of folks wanted the wide front ends, especially people operating in hilling terrain like Arkansas.

The factory made and designed wide front ends, but they were hard to come by, so outside companies began to make after-market replacement front ends.

Well, Jesses tractor has an after market wide front end on his tractor. And it has had a huge problem, the front axel breaks on a frequent bases. Jess has to get them welded up only to last a bit longer.

Can you imagine trudging the hills of Arkansas and have the front end break on your tractor....this could kill you.

Anyway his front end keeps breaking because it wasn't built according to the original design. So to remedy the problem, brother Glen went and found (O.E.M) John Deer wide front end to return it to the factory design.

Transitional Statement:

Church today I would like to point out some ways that people have tried to alter God's design for marriage and most specifically point out that the only cure is a return to the original design.

Lesson:

I. First, let's look at Adam and Eve

A. Adam and Eve were the first married couple.

1. They were given as a gift by God to each other.
2. They would become the father and mother of all the living
3. But, they would also start the breakdown of God's plan for marriage.

B. God had instructed both of them through Adam not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

1. But Eve did not guard her heart and here eyes became lustful (Gen 3:6)

- a. Now, this is the first step in many failed marriages.
 - b. Whether we are talking about the man or the woman, when we focus in on what we want and desire and make that a top priority over the combined needs of both spouses, we have just entered the marriage destruction zone....a dimension of selfishness that leads to marital destruction.
 - c. James 1:14-15 *“But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. 15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”*
 - d. 1 John 2:16 *“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.”*
 - e. God didn’t design marriage for each spouse to chase their own desires, but to jointly seek after His desires.
2. Then another first step in failed marriages, and one that I am very passionate about, is that Adam stood by and did nothing to help his wife.
- a. Gen 3:6 says that Adam was right there with her.
 - He wasn’t off in some remote part of the garden oblivious to what was happening.
 - b. This gutless wonder of a man passively stood by and watched as someone took advantage of his wife....and did nothing to stop it !
 - Yes, it was Adams ultimate responsibility to step in and lead his family.
 - But, he stood there and watched his wife being spiritual raped.
 - c. And if that weren’t enough....he decided to follow the lead of his wife !
 - And he ate also.
 - But he wasn’t deceived like Eve was (1 Timothy 2:14), but he willfully choose to turn away from God, and sin entered the world through Adam and his wife and all his future family would have to endure the consequences of his sin.
 - d. You see, Adam basically withheld his leadership.
 - Withheld male spiritual leadership stands at the center of most failed marriages today.
 - We will talk more about this next week !

II. Then there was polygamy

A. God instituted marriage as one man and one woman (Gen. 2:18-24)

1. Abram and Sarai (Gen 16:1-4)

- a. God had promised to bring forth an heir from Abrahams own body (Gen 15:4)
- b. In Chapter 16 we find that Sarah decided that God needed some help fulfilling His promise.
- c. So She asked Abram to go into Hagar, her maid servant, and have a child through her.

-And the text says “*Abraham listened to her*”

d. What happened to let’s consult God

-They didn’t stop and have a prayer.
-They didn’t ask for guidance.

-They just decided that since they both agreed about it...that it must be right.

*What a tragedy this is for many today

2. Latter, through the life of Jacob we see more clearly the ill effects of polygamy.

- a. In Gen. chapter 29-30 we see perhaps the biggest dysfunctional family that has ever walked the face of this earth.

-Jacob ends up marrying both Leah and her sister Rachael.

-Leah, Rachael and there maid servants Bilhah and Zilpah live in constant struggle with each other.

*Many hardships and struggles for all of them was the result.

- b. I can’t help but to wonder how things might have been different if Jacob had stoped to consulted God about this when Laban had first deceived him.

3. God even instructed the Kings of Israel not to multiply wives

- a. Deuteronomy 17:17 “*He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away....*”

- b. Solomon in his wisdom run amuck had 700 wives and 300 concubines

III. Then there is Lot and his wife.

A. They lived in Sodom

1. A place filled with homosexuals, violence and much sin.
 - a. Sound familiar?
2. Sodom had less than 10 righteous people living there. (Gen 18:32)
3. Have you ever wondered why they choose Sodom as home?
 - a. Lot picked out the desire of his heart...Gen chapter 13
 - b. Shouldn't a godly married couple consider deeply the place where they live and even consult God about it...because He cares about where we live ...Acts 17:26

B. Not only were they living in Sin City.

1. But, Lot and his wife didn't have enough sense to leave.
2. In fact, God had to send a couple of angels down to rescue them
 - a. But even then Lot hesitated to leave (Gen 19:16)
 - b. Talk about a lack of male spiritual leadership.

C. Both Lot and his wife got to comfortable with there surroundings.

1. Then, as they were leaving, Lot's wife looked back (Genesis 19:26)
2. I wonder what it was that she longed for in that city?
 - a. She willfully violated the command of God...(Gen 19:17)
 - Ultimately, putting her family in jeopardy.
 - b. And she turned into a pillar of salt.
 - You know it's hard to see someone you love die.
 - But how much harder to watch them put to death by God?

D. We know that Lot was a righteous man (2 Peter 2:7), but he seemed to come up short on godly leadership in his home.

III. Then came the marrying of foreign wives.

A. God has specifically told His people not to marry foreign wives

1. Deuteronomy 7:1-3

“When the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, ... You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them. 3 “Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons.”

a. That is God wants His people to marry godly people.

2. Why? Because the ungodly...

Duet 7:4

4 “For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you.”

B. King Solomon is a great example of why not to marry outside of the Lord.

1. His foreign wives turned his heart away from God

1 Kings 11:1-4

“Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, “ You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods.” Solomon held fast to these in love. 3 He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away. 4 For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.”

C. This thing got so bad that Ezra commanded the people to put away their foreign wives. Ezra 10:3

D. Many young people today think that they will marry someone and convert them latter.

1. But God re-affirms this truth to us in 2 Corinthians 6:14 where he says:

“Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness”

2. If you think God has changed His mind on thisyour mistaken !

IV. Then there is adultery

A. Adultery is engaging in sexual relations outside of the marriage.

1. It is turning to someone other than your God given spouse to fill the needs of your heart.

a. i.e. it is going outside the boundaries of God to seek pleasure.

2. Adultery is willfully rejection of God's will.

a. A violation of God's holy institution.

3. Also a defilement or a (contamination of the soul) Hebrews 13:4

B. In the 10 Commandments God specifically instructs us to not engage in adultery.

a. But stay committed to each other Exodus 20:10

b. And God attaches the highest of penalties to adultery....death ! Lev. 20:10

C. But his people were constantly violating this command.

a. David and Bathsheba is a well known example of adultery. (2 Samuel 11)

1) First of all David's heart had moved away from God:

-He should have been off at war...2 Samuel 11:1

2) He shouldn't have been looking over at Uriah's roof top

3) He shouldn't have invited sin into his life.

4) But he willingly rebelled against the commands of God and slept with Bathsheba ...another man's wife.

5) Latter this grieved his heart, very much..... Psalms 51

D. Adultery was so prevalent among God's people that:

a. God even established a test for lying about itNumbers 5:11-22

b. God even assign a prophet assigned to marry a harlot to emphasize to Israel the shame of adultery

Hosea 1:2 *"When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, " Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry; for the land commits flagrant harlotry, forsaking the LORD."*

- E. Adultery is so cruel and hurtful to the innocent spouse that Jesus even made it an allowance for divorce

Matthew 5:32 *"...but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of un-chastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery."*

- F. And ultimately God used adultery as a spiritual metaphor to explain spiritual unfaithfulness.

Jeremiah 3:9 *"Because of the lightness of her harlotry, she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees."*

- G. Make no mistake about itadultery is turning away from God

IV. Then there is divorce.

- A. Make no mistake ...God hates divorce.

Malachi 2:16 *"For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the LORD of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously"*

Matthew 19:6 *"...What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."*

- B. But in the Old Testament

1. Folks were apparently divorcing for any old reason.

a. Deut 24:1-4Anything indecent

b. Dealing treacherously with the wives of their youth (Malachi chapter 2)

2. And God suffered it because of their hardened hearts.

a. Matthew 19:8 *"Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way."*

b. You know the hardness of peoples hearts, is really at the core of divorce.

-Often times in marriage people become hardened to their ways...

-Like Abigail's husband Nabal who wouldn't listen to sound reason 1 Samuel 25:17

- D. By the time of the New Testament Divorce was even common place.

1. Remember the woman at the well in John 4 who had five previous husbands and was then living with some guy?
2. Today many people view marriage as disposable.
 - a. They actually plan for things not to work.....pre-numps
 - b. Then there is the annulment, that acts like a big eraser in case you rushed into marriage.
3. Then there are those that use marriage like a pawn in a chess game
 - a. Seeing marriage as a stepping stone
 - b. Or merely a matter of social status
 - c. Then there are those who even get divorced to become eligible to receive Social Security benefits.
 - e. Basically marriage has become disposable like our razors and electronic devices. Use it until your done with it and then throw it away.

V. Then there are those who don't think marriage is important at all

- A. These folks want to just shack up and live together in a life of fornication.
 1. The really sad part is that even Christians get caught up in this too.
 2. You wonder what is happening to the family unit.
 - a. MSNBC reported on November 21st 2006 that 4 out of every 10 children are born out of wedlock.
 - b. Folks that's 40%
 3. Children are designed to be raised by a father and a mother, in the Lord.
 4. We can all look around and see the effects of trying it the ungodly way.
- B. Then there are those who care about marriage but want to marry people of the same sex.
 1. Now our state, along with others are running to jump on the homosexual band wagon.
 2. Which God call's an abomination Lev 18:20
 3. It's no wonder our world is falling apart.

Conclusion:

Let's get back to the design
Let's teach our kids what the design is.