

What Is Marriage, Anyway?

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 21 July 2013

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] Would you open the Bible, please, to Ephesians chapter 5. Gary and Carolyn Harple are away this weekend out riding their bicycles somewhere.

They get on these rides and sometimes cover 50, 70, 80 miles in a weekend on a bicycle. And I know, I know they seem really normal, but I really had not intended to bring this message at all this morning.

But I think I was just kind of compelled to do so because of what we have treated the last two weeks on the subject of marriage and same-sex marriage and everything that goes along with it.

So I just decided that we ought to talk more about a traditional, conventional marriage. And I can't imagine doing that without going to Ephesians chapter 5.

[1 : 07] So if you will, in whatever translation you have available, turn to that portion, and that will be our launching text for the morning.

Ephesians chapter 5. I don't think that in all of the weddings that I have conducted, and by the way, I'm reminded that yesterday was my younger sister, Carol's 50, her and Roy's 50th wedding anniversary.

And they were the first marriage that I ever performed in 1963. And it was such an honor to be involved in that. And, of course, I was probably more nervous than either the bride or the groom. But I just cannot fathom where five decades have just whiffed by. And I used this passage at their wedding, and I have never had a wedding without incorporating Ephesians 5 in it because it is just so critical to the whole subject.

And we will begin reading with verse 22. It is a favorite verse of wives universally. Wives, be subject to your own husbands as to the Lord.

[2 : 24] For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, he himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for her. That he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word.

That he might present to himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and blameless.

So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of his body.

For this cause, a man shall leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

[3 : 41] This mystery is great, but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

Nevertheless, let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself, and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.

The passage, of course, deals with the subject of unity, of oneness more than anything else, and that is what marriage is all about more than anything else.

It is oneness. It is togetherness. And it is such an important concept that Christ even uses it as a human object lesson to set forth the importance and the special nature of the relationship between Christ himself and the church, which is made up of all believers.

There is a connection. There is a oneness there. There is a connection.

There is a connection.

[5 : 36] I am behind the tried. There are people. There is a connection to the church. There is a connection to the church, which is a connection between Christ and the church, and the church is in

the community that was in the church. So, I would be able to deal with a connection between God and Mary. Look, that truth is, I was able to run out of the church that you wanted to do that.

I would be able to deal with somebody by creating a significant standpoint. I wanted the church to come out of all of a■■■, aHAMin' house because there is a connection between pleasing Park and California and elsewhere.

came to the rescue and did a wonderful job of tying the knot, and the happy couple is living happily ever after. But I was kind of struck by the fact that in order for him to perform the marriage, he had to hurriedly run over to Columbus and talk with the powers that be in the right office over there in order to get cleared and licensed to perform a marriage here in the state.

Of Ohio. So there are kinds of hoops to jump through. And that set my mind to wondering just exactly what makes a marriage a marriage?

And what about all of the different traditions and practices within different cultures that constitute marriage there?

[6 : 55] I mean, marriage in Thailand is not the same as marriage in Saudi Arabia. It's not the same as marriage in Israel. It's not the same as marriage in Bolivia or the same in the United States.

Now, there are certain commonalities. But I mean, the customs and traditions that accompany the marriage are often radically different. Yet they all have the same objective in mind.

The intent is the same. The result is the same. And that is the joining of two people, male and female, into a union that previously did not exist.

So there are religious and civil ceremonies. There are ceremonies, marriage ceremonies, that are performed by a judge in the local courthouse or a justice of the peace down on the corner wherever he sets up shop.

He is authorized to conduct a marriage. Traditionally, the captain of any ship at sea is able to conduct a marriage. So that sets the whole thing to thinking, what is it that really constitutes marriage?

[8 : 11] You remember years ago when the phenomenal series was on that PBS did with Alex Haley and the subject of roots, and it went all the way back to the slave times in the South and the conditions under slavery and everything.

These African slaves, and I'm talking about 1800s now, had some remarkable traditions. I guess they brought them from Africa. I don't know. But do you remember this?

Do you remember jumping over the broom? What in the world is that all about? Jumping over the broom? The bride and groom together leaped over a broom that somebody held out on either end, parallel, and they jumped over the broom.

And that was considered an essential part of their wedding ceremony. Now, we look on that, and we look upon the traditions of some other wedding ceremonies in different parts of the world, and we say, well, they are really weird.

That is strange. But do you know what? They think the same thing about ours because that's just the way culture is. So what I would really like to just focus on is the commonality that they have.

[9 : 27] And another thing, even though all of these marriages, the ceremonies, the ritual traditions, et cetera, vary so greatly all over the world, yet every country accepts the marital status of people from every other country.

I mean, if you get married here in the USA and you go to Bolivia, the Bolivians will consider you as married.

Well, you weren't married in Bolivia, and you weren't married according to their customs or according to their laws or rules or regulations or whatever, but they accept you as married just as if you had been married there in their state.

And it's that way all over the world. It's called full faith and credit. And it works internationally just like it works here in the United States.

There are certain requirements for getting married in Ohio that are different from Kentucky and Indiana because that's considered to be a state thing.

[10 : 42] With all the federal encroachment that has been taking place over the last few years, don't be surprised if marriage gets federalized too. The feds have got their nose in everything else.

They might as well have it in marriage. That's about the only thing they're lacking in. But even though there are different requirements for getting married in Ohio than there are in Kentucky or Tennessee or Georgia or Massachusetts, once you're married in one state, legally married and

accepted in one state, you can go to any other state in the Union and present yourself as a married couple, and it will not be challenged because each state accepts full faith and credit of those other states.

Throughout the world, nations do the same thing, one nation for another. There are common law marriages. I don't know how familiar you are with those.

A lot of people are practicing that or working toward that even now, but they may not even know it. Now, don't quote me on this because it might not be accurate, but I do know there was a time when, in the state of Ohio at least, and there again we're talking about the differences between states, but I remember in the state of Ohio, if a man and woman lived together as a couple for seven years, they were considered legally married.

Whether they considered themselves to be or not is beside the point, the state would consider them legally married if they cohabited for seven years. So what I'm looking for is a commonality that is shared by all cultures as regards a definition of marriage, and I want to look above and beyond and away from traditions and things like culture defines, like jumping over the broom and like the Jewish wedding ceremony is always performed under a canopy and this kind of thing.

[12:45] What we are looking for is the essence and nature of the union itself. And the question is, is there a commonality that is shared by all cultures, regardless of where you go in the world?

And why is such a thing as marriage even deemed necessary? Now it is true, there may be some really deep, dark backwoods place where people are really out of the mainstream of everything and completely unaware of what the rest of the world is doing, and they devise their own culture, and they may have what they consider to be a marriage union within that culture that could be different. But these things are always in force in connection with marriage. First of all, marriage is for the production of offspring and for parental responsibility for them, and it involves the perpetuation of the species.

Now man isn't necessarily concerned about obeying any mandate that God gave. Man isn't really, by and large, concerned about, well, you know, the Bible says that we are to multiply and fill the earth, so we need to get married.

That's not the motivation for 99% of them. The motivation for 99% of them is simply what is built into our psyche and our humanity, and that the time in life in the teenage years when the hormones start throbbing and running wild, and there is a desire and an interest in the opposite sex, whom you couldn't even stand 10 years ago.

[14:34] But all at once, you know what? Girls are pretty neat. And we used to just think they were nothing but cootie carriers, you know. But all of a sudden, we get smitten, and the next thing you know, we want to really be involved with that person in their life.

And it is a human chemistry thing that I'm confident that God has put in motion and has built into the human spirit. And not only that, but marriage involves the determination of property rights and inheritance.

Yes, we have to talk about money and assets and possessions and things like that, because there are certain benefits that accrue to being married, and it has to do with the laws of ownership and proprietorship and inheritance, and all of these things come into play in connection with an orderly society.

And lastly, but most important of all, it is the solidarity of the union, whereby two become one, both in a physical and in a spiritual sense.

This most important element is, as we might suspect, the least valued by society in general. Let me repeat that.

[16:02] Lastly, but most important of all, marriage means the solidarity of the union, whereby two become one, both in a physical and a spiritual sense.

this most important element, the spiritual, as we might suspect, is the least valued by society in general.

Consequently, the true meaning of marriage suffers a great deal. Now, let me tell you, when you take the most important element of marriage, and either deny it, or omit it, what have you got left? If you gut from marriage, the most important aspect of it, which is not the body, and it's not the pocketbook, and it's not possessions, it is the spiritual, and most would be hard-pressed to even define that, much less abide by it.

But if you take the most important element out of any entity, what have you got left? Not much.

[17 : 29] You don't have a marriage left. You have an arrangement. If you do not give place to the spiritual component of marriage, you can never, ever achieve what God intended a marriage to be.

It's impossible. And we have marriages today in great stressful difficulty that has invaded the Christian community almost as much as it has the secular community.

Well, there are three international commonalities that appear to exist throughout the world as to the meaning of a marriage.

What constitutes a marriage? What has to take place? Under what circumstances? And I have tried to reduce this to as few and as simple common denominators as possible.

And during the Q&A; time, you might think of something to add to it, and I would appreciate that because I've been looking at the subject for a while, but I've never really brought a message like this.

[18 : 46] The three international commonalities that appear to exist throughout the world as to the meaning of a marriage and what makes marriage marriage is first of all, and we're going to assume that the given is a man and a woman.

All right, we'll assume that. Although today that might not be a safe assumption, but you know what I mean. First of all, it must be a public event.

There have to be witnesses. I do not know of any state in Ohio where you can get married without any witnesses. If a husband and wife, or excuse me, if a man and a woman decide that they want to get married and they just stand there and repeat some promise to each other and consider themselves married, they may consider themselves married, but nobody else does.

Nobody else does. So the first necessity is that it is public. Now, that doesn't mean it has to be held in a church or in a city hall or a place where there's a whole lot of people, but on just about every marriage license that I have ever signed and filled out, there is usually a space for witnesses to sign.

And we usually call those the man who stood up for the groom or the woman who stood up for the bride.

[20 : 16] And if it is a more formal wedding, then you've got a best man and you've got a maid or a matron of honor and a whole nine yards and maybe a whole congregation full of people.

And each one of them is a witness. This is a thing that's taking place in public. And even if you're not married in a church with a minister saying, before God and this company, if it's the justice and the peace down on the corner, he's a witness and it's usually his wife or someone else who's there, they're a witness.

They have to bring in some witnesses to be able to testify that this union of this couple actually took place here at this time, at this place, and it was officiated by this person.

So there has to be a certain amount of public involved with it. It is not possible for a marriage to be recognized as such just between two people, with the exception of the two people agreeing to live together without the benefit of marriage, but they have to do that for seven years, and then the state, at least in Ohio, will consider them as married.

And secondly, it must contain vows or expressions of commitment. I think this is common to all cultures all over the world.

[21 : 45] There have to be some promises made, some pledges made from one to the other of what their mate can expect in this relationship.

It is an expression of love, of tenderness, of great desire and ambition to become one with that person.

So there are always the inevitable vows. I almost always, I guess it's just the old nature of me that flares up, but I always enjoy the little kick I get from the groom's face when I say this.

We go over the vows, you know, in premarital counseling. Sometimes I even give them several sections or several expressions of vows that they can choose from because some of them are worded a little different and include different things.

And I always assure them that when the time comes, I will keep the vows short and sweet so that they will be able to remember them easily and repeat them after me and so on. And just about every time, there were a couple times when I didn't do this because I didn't think the groom could handle it, that he would be in any shape to go through with the wedding.

[23 : 00] But as we're standing right there at the door, just ready to come in, I turn to the groom and I say, now, you do have your vows all memorized, right? And you get this look of absolute terror

on his face.

I hate to do that, but I love to do it. Ladies, you don't understand, but it's a guy thing. And then I, after he comes to, I fan him a little and the blood starts coming back in his face and gets his color back and we go on with it.

So that's the second thing that it must contain. Vows or expressions of commitment, tenderness, love, devotion, expressed one to the other.

And then, third, it must be consummated physically. Traditionally, this happens on the evening of the wedding.

It is their honeymoon night and it is at this time that the marriage is consummated. Physically, they have sex.

[24 : 16] supposedly for the first time. Supposedly.

That's a big supposedly nowadays. And what if they don't? What if the marriage isn't consummated? They're not married. I mean, they express their vows, they have the license, they signed it, the minister signed it, justice and a peace signed it, whatever.

But if they go on for whatever reason, if they go on day after day without consummating that marriage, either of them can show up at the whatever administrative office it is and apply for an annulment.

And it will be granted. An annulment is officially saying the marriage never took place. Even though there was a wedding, there's no marriage because it wasn't consummated.

And if it isn't consummated, it isn't a marriage. Either one can back out of it, obtain an annulment.

Now, once again, I'm talking about the state of Ohio. I don't know about other states.

[25 : 35] But that is really, really important. In the wedding ceremony, the public marriage takes place.

In conjugal relations, following the public wedding, the private marriage takes place. In the wedding ceremony, the legal, social, and traditional requirements are met.

In the sexual consummation of the wedding, the physical requirements are met. So, Scripture makes no provision for common law, but civil and legal authorities do.

Most people in all cultures do not obligate themselves to the requirements of Scripture unless by sentiment or tradition rather than by conviction.

and I don't know how many people talking about sentiment and marriage, I don't know how many people I've had call the church here. Do you rent out your church for weddings?

[26 : 47] And because I see that sometimes as an opportunity to communicate the gospel, I never just flat out say no. I say, well, there are certain circumstances under which we provide wedding apparatus of all kinds for people who are not involved in our church, but in order to determine whether or not you would be eligible for that, I would have to meet with you and your intended for at least an initial session.

And sometimes during that initial session, we are able to say that we can't help them or that we cannot help. We don't want, you see, some people regard getting married in a church like a good luck charm.

That if you get married in a church, that automatically means that it's going to be a wonderful wedding. Well, you know, I don't want to be, I don't want to offend anybody, but weddings are not really a big deal.

They aren't. I know they are to the bride and groom, especially to the bride and especially to the bride's mother. But weddings are not really a big deal at all compared to marriages.

Marriage is the big deal. That's what really matters. You can spurge thousands and thousands of dollars for an elaborate wedding and invite everybody and get all the write-ups in the newspaper and a big hullabaloo and have a wretched marriage afterwards.

[28 : 20] Some of the most wretched marriages I have ever counseled were those that were married in a church. It shouldn't be that way, but we know that that's the way it is. So getting married in a church is fine, and I'm all for that.

That's part of what I do, but it's not a silver bullet. It's not a guarantee. You get married in a church, you're going to have a wonderful wedding. Not necessarily. It depends on what you put into that wedding, what you put into the marriage.

So, the importance of the physical consummation is, and this, I was amused in hearing and understanding how the Jewish traditionally do this.

This is just amazing. Now, we would consider it, what would we consider? We would consider it inappropriate. inappropriate. But I think it's probably right on target, and it's, maybe ought to be more this way.

When the Jewish couple get married under the ceremony that a big party starts, and depending on the depth of the pockets of the people involved, the party may last a day, it may last a whole week. It just goes on, and the guests come and go, and they come back again, and they go, and they come back again, and the wine flows freely, and the food and everything, and sometimes they have a splurge for several days.

[29 : 42] But on the day, and the evening of the wedding, after the ceremony is complete, in many instances, depending on the location, the geography, how near the homes are, the different ones, sometimes they even have a wedding tent set up.

And this is for the newlyweds to consummate the marriage. Usually just a couple of hours after the ceremony. And everybody is extending their best wishes, and their congratulatorys, and drinking the wine, and everything that goes with it.

And then the time comes for the couple to excuse themselves from all their guests, and they go in to the wedding tent. What are they going to do there?

Everybody knows what they're going to do there. They're going to have sex. And it's not a big secret. It's not a, if a kid says, somebody says, we don't talk about that.

You know. No, no. They're very open about it, very matter-of-fact about it, and they have a whole lot better sexual standards than what you will find in typical USA.

[30 : 51] They are much more knowledgeable about it, much more honest and open about it, because they do not see shame connected with it like a lot of Americans do. sex is dirty.

We don't talk about that. You know, that's nonsense. But anyway, while they're in there, I need to take you to an Old Testament reference.

Deuteronomy 22. While they are in there, everybody is waiting outside. And you know what they're waiting for?

They're waiting for the act to be concluded. And when it is, the groom comes out of the tent, and he's got a cloth that's probably about 18 by 18 inches.

And the cloth is blood-stained. He comes out of the tent waving this cloth like a flag. And everybody breaks into cheers. Hey! And everybody's clapping and rejoicing and everything.

[32 : 04] And what he is saying by that is, I got a virgin. My wife is a virgin wife.

She has never known any other man. She kept herself just for me. Isn't that something? And isn't she an unusual woman?

Now, here in Deuteronomy chapter 22, let's begin with verse 13. All right?

We just got to jump in here. And let me say this, in case you're not familiar with grace teaching, nobody is saying that we are obligated to follow this.

But I'll tell you what we are obligated to do, and that is to adopt the principles that are involved, even though we don't engage in the mechanics and the details.

[33 : 05] And that's very, very important. So verse 13 says, if a man takes a wife and goes into her, that goes into her means he's consummating the marriage, and then turns against her and charges her with shameful deeds and publicly defames her and says, I took this woman, but when I came near her, I did not find her a virgin.

Then the girl's father and her mother shall take and bring out the evidence of the girl's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate.

Now, what is that all about? Well, let me explain it as briefly as I can. Traditionally, ordinarily, if everything is as it is usually, on the wedding night, the virgin bride in the act of sexual intercourse will have the membrane in her vagina pierced by the male penis.

And that membrane is called the hymen, H-Y-M-E-N, the hymen. She was born with it. And when that hymen is pierced, ordinarily, with the first act of sexual intercourse, there is a small amount of blood that is lost.

That's very typical, very ordinary. Many, all of you have experienced that who are married one time or another. But, sometimes, it's done before marriage.

[34 : 55] And I don't mean by sexual intercourse, although that's the way it usually happens now. But sometimes, a girl can have her hymen pierced through some utterly innocent event or incident such as some kind of a strenuous athletic endeavor or some kind, or she may undergo some kind

of illness or injury that can result in the breaking of the hymen.

and under whatever circumstances it occurs, there will be a small amount of blood loss. And if that takes place in this Jewish family, if that takes place in a girl's body when she is, say, maybe 14 or 15 or, you know, 16 years old or something like that, and she wakes up in the morning and looks, and there's blood on the sheet, she will immediately notify her mother.

And her mother will come in and examine that and she will cut that sheet up and keep that part with the blood on it. And the father and the mother will both know that their daughter has had her hymen ruptured.

And they will keep as a family treasure that cloth with her blood on it. And in the event that this is happening here, and this man takes a wife and he goes into her, you know what he's looking for? He's looking for her to bleed. Not much, but just a little. He's looking for evidence of that. And if she doesn't, he's thinking, uh-oh, I have married a woman who has been used.

[36 : 44] And he rebels at the thought and he makes the accusation. Now the parents can come to the rescue and what the parents do is they go before the authorities and they present the cloth and they say, this is from our daughter.

She was 16 years old, thus and so, thus and so, and they swear like an affidavit to that, and that suffices for the court. Sometimes that happens, and there is provision made for it here in verse 15. And the girl's father and her mother shall take and bring out the evidence of the girl's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate.

And the girl's father shall say to the elders, I gave my daughter to this man for a wife, but he turned against her. And behold, he has charged her with shameful deeds, saying, I did not find your daughter a virgin, but this, this cloth that he's got there, this is the evidence of my daughter's virginity, and they shall spread the garment before the elders of the city, so that the elders of that city shall take the man and chastise him.

Now, it's the guy who's making this claim who is really out of line, and he ought to be willing to accept that as evidence. And you see, there are a lot of people involved in this.

[38 : 09] And do you know why this involves the elders of the city? All these people. And we would today say, it's nobody else's business. Listen, the reason they made it their business was because they knew the value of marriage, and we don't.

We don't hold it with the same sanctity they do. And this is why we are able to justify the discarding of multiple partners. No big deal. Divorce in some places is almost a badge of honor.

honor. It's almost like a rite of passage if you haven't been divorced at least once or maybe twice. But in Israel and under the law, they had a very, very high regard for the marriage union.

And you can go on and read what happens here, and it involves money. And the whole nine yards, we just come down to verse 22. If a man is found lying with a married woman, that doesn't mean that they're just taking an afternoon nap.

It means they are caught in the act, if you will. Then both of them shall die. Boy, wouldn't that decrease the population of the USA?

[39 : 27] Wow. And the woman. Both of them shall die. The man who lay with the woman and the woman, thus you shall purge the evil from Israel.

And we look at that and we say, oh, that is so extreme. Well, comparatively speaking, it is. But when you were operating under the value system that they had under the law of Moses, they regarded marriage as very, very sacred.

If there is a girl, verse 23, who is a virgin engaged to a man and another man finds her in the city and lies with her, then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city and you shall stone them to death.

The girl, because she did not cry out in the city and the man, because he has violated his neighbor's wife. Thus, you shall purge the evil from you.

But if in the field the man finds a girl who is engaged and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lies with her shall die. This is the penalty for rape under the Mosaic law.

[40 : 47] And the reason it is so harsh is because, now hear me well, the act of sexual intercourse between a husband and a wife is the highest, most honored expression of love that can occur between two people who are committed to each other.

And when a third party enters that and violates that sanctity, it is viewed as a horrible, detestable thing. There is no greater expression of love between a man and a woman than this.

And when that is violated by someone who has no right to it, it is viewed with the utmost of seriousness. That is how highly they regarded the marriage union.

That is how highly we ought to regard it, but don't. Well, and even in verse 23, we have got the equivalent of a shotgun wedding.

If a man finds a girl who is a virgin who is not engaged and seizes her and lies with her and they are discovered, then the man who lay with her shall give to the girl's father 50 shekels of silver and she shall become his wife because he has violated her.

[42 : 19] This is assumption. This is the assumption that it was consensual and he violated her and he cannot divorce her all his days.

He is stuck with her and she's stuck with him and it may not be a very amiable relationship. Now, there is one more reference quickly in the New Testament that we need to consider and it's back in 1 Corinthians 6.

1 Corinthians chapter 6 and let's begin with verse 12. All things are lawful for me but not all things are profitable.

All things are lawful for me but I will not be mastered by anything. Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food but God will do away with both of them. In other words, these are temporal things.

The stomach and the food that you put in it, those are temporal things and they will both come to no end. They will pass away. Yet, the body, which is physical, is not for immorality but for the Lord and the Lord is for the body.

[43 : 35] Now, God has not only raised up the Lord but will also raise us up through his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?

Paul's favorite expression here, do you not know, it's the same thing. You do know this, don't you? You do understand this, don't you? I am assuming that you know this because what he's talking about is really a sociological given.

You know that your bodies are members of Christ. Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? May it never be.

Meganoido. Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For he says the two will become one flesh.

But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with him. Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body.

[44 : 45] But the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God and that you are not your own?

And what we are to do with it is to glorify God. Now this expression that is used here in verse 17, the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with him.

There is a union there. And in verse 16, there is a very puzzling expression. Do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her?

Well, he probably didn't mean to be. He was probably thinking, hey, nothing personal, ma'am.

Strictly business, right? I mean, you give me what I want and I give you \$20 or \$30 or whatever the going rate is. That's a business transaction. And he doesn't intend it to be anything else.

[45 : 55] But it is something else. It's something else that we really don't very well understand. And I'd be the first to admit that I don't understand it, but I sure do believe it.

And that is this. When a man engages in sex relations with a woman, he leaves something of himself there.

And I'm not talking about semen. There is some spiritual component that we do not understand.

There is more involved here than the body. It isn't just sex. It is much deeper than that. It involves the spirit part of our being.

It involves the entwining of two non-physical, non-material, but very real spirits, the males and the females.

[47 : 03] angels. And no man, no man should ever lower himself to give part of that spirit entity to any woman to whom he is not officially committed for life.

He cheapens and demeans himself, and he is using her just to gratify sexual pleasures instinct.

That's all. And when couples engage in this without the benefit of marriage, which is so rampant in our culture today, it has almost become a herd mentality.

And how many times have I told you, you can legitimize just about anything if you can get enough people doing it. Because so many are persuaded that legitimacy and acceptability comes with a whole lot of people doing it.

That makes it all right. Why don't they just get married? Well, they will give you what appears to be a very logical answer.

[48 : 28] Well, we don't know that we're really intended for each other for the long haul, so we want a period for a trial so we can see how we get along.

After all, would you buy a car without test driving it? Well, no, I don't guess I would.

That sounds kind of logical, doesn't it? So all we're trying to do is determine our level of compatibility and that way, you see, she says, I love this man.

Oh, I love him very much. Well, why don't you marry him? Well, I don't know if I'll love him a year from now. Then, honey, you don't love him.

You don't love him. You only have the potential of loving him, and he feels the same way. So the idea of marriage, what is marriage?

[49 : 34] It's just a piece of paper. Just a piece of paper. What's a piece of paper? Okay, so you're going to buy this house, nice house, a \$200,000 house.

So, you come up with the money, and you go for the closing, and you write out this humongous check for the amount of the house, and you say, okay, now, it's my house, right?

Right. Okay, where's the deed? The deed? Oh, that's just a piece of paper. Don't worry about the deed. You don't need a deed. That's just a piece of paper.

You know anybody that's going to buy that? When a couple is willing to move in together to determine their compatibility, they are already admitting that there is a great likelihood that they are not compatible.

Now, what I'm going to say does not apply to unbelievers, because unbelievers are not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and their desire to marry only after they've lived together for so long, and maybe even had a couple of kids, and still aren't married.

[50 : 58] I've had two babies with this man, but we're still not married. And when they are willing to do that, they are already confessing a lack of necessary commitment, and it's usually because they are unwilling to make the commitment, or they are scared to make the commitment.

And what the remedy is, I know this is old-fashioned, and I would not expect, I would not even attempt to impose this at all on anyone who is not a believer, male or female.

I wouldn't expect it of them, they would dismiss everything that I've said today as pure hogwash, and I understand that. But for those who name the name of Christ, what you're supposed to do is this thing called courtship.

Courtship. You spend time together. You spend a lot of time together, and you spend enough time together with that person to see how they respond under just about any and every kind of situation. I would ordinarily not recommend that couples get married after having known each other and dated for only four months, but that's what Barbara and I did.

[52 : 17] And what we did was we put our courtship on a fast forward, and we dated every night of the week. I mean every night.

I didn't miss a night for four months, and actually it got to the place of where we felt we had to get married because I was so exhausted I couldn't keep that up. But you know something?

When you spend that kind of time with someone, for four months you can really get to know them. And by the time the four months was up, I felt, I've got to have this woman.

I can't live without her. I don't want to live without her. And she felt the same way. And you know something? When you feel that way about each other, commitment is simple.

It's easy. In fact, you're eager to make the commitment. And Marie and I saw each other in a different vein for almost 50 years.

[53 : 25] She was just a sister in Christ. We were good friends. Good friends with her husband. Barb was good friends with Marie. And we saw each other over a period of almost 50 years.

And then when the time came, we had a courtship. But we also had a head start just through knowing each other on a friendship basis for so long. What was ours?

Four months too? Something like that? Something magical about four months. Anyway, under those circumstances, it's okay. But a lot of times it takes a year or a couple of years.

And there are absences involved, maybe military or school or you spend time away or whatever. But you need to be involved in a courtship so that you're not worried about making a commitment. You want to make it and you're eager to make it. And if you don't feel that way, you have not only no business moving in together to see if it's going to work out, you have no business of doing anything other than just getting married and enjoying the blessing of God.

[54 : 40] Well, so many today are following, as I said, the herd mentality. and there are people who are so strongly influenced by what others are doing in the culture, they just kind of like lemmings going over the cliff into the sea.

They just follow those in front of them and don't do a lot of independent thinking. Marriage, I have always been convinced that marriage is God's intention for a couple to enjoy the closest thing to heaven that you can have on this earth.

That's what marriage is intended to be. And God has made numerous operating assets available to us to implement in a marriage relationship that will solidify and stabilize and enrich and deepen the marriage relationship.

And there's nothing like it in the world. and living together without those official public commitments is a really, really substandard, unsatisfying, unwise, unfulfilling way to go about it.

I would hope that anyone who really, especially a woman, if a woman really has self-respect for herself, and if she has some strength of character, daughter, she's not going to come around with this nonsense.

[56 : 12] I didn't want to move in with him, but I was afraid I would lose him if I didn't. Honey, lose him. Lose him. If he will not commit to you unless you live together so you can test drive this car for six months or a year or whatever.

And isn't it interesting how we'll get married soon afterwards, and I've talked to couples who have been living together three, four years, couple of kids, still aren't married.

Well, the time just hasn't been right. You know what? They're both sorely lacking and they both bought into a lie and they don't even know it.

And I've never yet seen a couple like that who was really happy. All they can think about is if we want to split, you just go your way and I go by. We don't have to fool with a lawyer.

We don't have a messy divorce. We don't have the property settlement, all that stuff. It just sounds so logical. But then sin often does. And it is a terrible, terrible taskmaster.

[57 : 15] Well, we do have some time left and I have more I want to say, but I need to hear from you. So have we a roving mic back there and somebody with a comment or question, feel free. Up here in the front, Loretta.

The mic man is on his way. I feel that if there is a couple living together and they have a couple kids, you would think that the common sense, especially for the women, would think, you know, he can walk off and leave me at any time and I've got two kids to raise.

And they do. I know because I deal with those moms. They do. And it's scary. They become very, very dependent on the system and they don't have a good life.

It's disastrous. It is. It's disastrous. You see, making the commitment, making the commitment and entering into an actual official marriage will require an additional level of discipline and maturity that most kids, I'm talking about kids, you know, 19, 20, 22 years old, don't really have at that stage. And marriage can help both the husband and the wife to grow up a lot in those few years. And then when that Bambino comes along, that's an additional level of commitment.

[58 : 54] And to make that official with a commitment that literally entangles the couple in a good way, it is designed so that it is not easy to get out of.

It isn't supposed to be easy to get out of. It's supposed to require more stick-to-itiveness, more apology, more forgiveness, more growth, more maturity, and so on.

Part of our problem today with the marriage scene is that divorce is too easy and marriage is too easy. Both of them are too easy.

There need to be more requirements. They need to be more sticking in there. I've seen couples that had marriages that were in such a state of disarray, you didn't think you could see any way that they could survive.

But you look at them then after the crisis passes and maybe five years later and they say things like, it was really rough, but we are so glad we stuck it out because of what we've got now.

[60 : 07] I've seen that a number of times. Other comments or questions. Chuck McConkie up here. Keith and then Chuck. Our society has corrupted so far that in comparison, if I buy a property and I want to develop it, there happens to be a swamp on it with polywogs, I may be prohibited in draining that swamp because of their production, their livelihood.

And we have now tinkering with the human race, with the passing of such laws that recent past and without a twinkle have done it.

and yet we'll reverend the polywogs. Yeah. Yeah. Thank you. Thank you. Up here. in John chapter four, um, Christ meets the Samaritan woman.

And he, he tells her that, uh, in short here, you know, she's had five husbands and now the one she's living with is her sixth.

Yeah. Not her husband. Yeah. And, uh, he, Christ is basically, he's calling, he's using the name husband, the term husband, when apparently the only thing that has happened is, is intercourse.

[61 : 45] Yeah. Yeah. And, you know, if, if that's true, then maybe there isn't anything such as premarital sex, because when you have sex, you are married.

Well, when a man has sexual relations with a woman, he becomes one with her, even if it is a harlot. And, you know, women in a live-in situation would look at that passage and say, well, that is insulting.

I am not a harlot. I don't get paid for what I give, you know. Well, uh, you know, she's, that's, that's the only difference.

She's being available without the payment, without the money. You know, that's, and that's, that's, that's, that, that is a woman who is demeaning herself, lowering herself standards and, and willing to be used.

And you will find that there will be men who will stand in line to take advantage of a situation like that. Because so many men are not thinking of commitment, of love, of a lasting relationship.

[62 : 58] They're only thinking of her body, and they want it. And if she's willing to lower her standards enough to give it, especially with the idea, I didn't want to have sex with him, but I was afraid I would lose him if I didn't.

Like I said, honey, lose him. It'll be the best thing that ever happened to you. In the back, Terry. I just wanted to add that I happen to notice it's in red letters.

Okay. Terry, Terry, in the back. Thank you. Just wanted to clarify, common law in Ohio, common law marriage, since October 1991, it is not legal to be common law married in Ohio.

Really? If you were married prior to that common law, prior to October 1991, it is still recognized. Oh, okay. Well, thank you for that correction, that update.

And that is coming from the horse's mouth. It's an attorney, so you ought to know. Well, these laws do change, you know, from time to time. But I'll tell you, you know what?

[64 : 09] I think it is going to become increasingly difficult for civil government to really keep P's and Q's together and administer the law when we have got so many live-in situations, and now we're talking about legitimizing same-sex situations.

And once the same-sex thing becomes validated in the public, you cannot give me one good reason why polygamy is not going to follow.

It is inevitable. What do you mean I can't have two wives? You are infringing on my rights. These women are willing, and I want to marry them, and you're telling me I can't have two wives.

This whole thing is crumbling right now before our eyes. And what I'm talking about is the warp and woof of society as we know it is crumbling right beneath our very feet because it is the marriage situation that produces the family, and it is the family structure that provides the underpinning for the whole nation, not just this nation, but every nation, any nation.

And once that is muddied or set aside or done away with or overlooked or whatever, you talk about a slippery slope, it is going to be disastrous, and it isn't that far away.

[65 : 52] And I didn't mean to wax eloquent on this, but what is real close behind it, and this is all tied together, this is all tied together, I'm talking about the economy. How is the economy tied to marriage?

Oh, in more ways than you could imagine. It is really tied. And we are on a slippery slope financially. You've been following what's happening in Detroit? It's very simple.

Very simple. You know what Detroit's problem is? Numbers. Arithmetic. Nobody was able to add two and two.

It's incredible. These are people who are in charge of the government in Detroit, and they are completely oblivious of what is involved and the commitments made to these different unions and the payouts and the time frame and everything.

Somebody should have scratched their head and said, you know what? Come year 2013, we're not going to be able to do this. What are we going to do then? Well, we declare bankruptcy. Declare bankruptcy.

[66 : 54] And you know, there's only one difference. Now follow me. There is only one difference between Detroit and Washington, D.C. and the nation. And the difference is Detroit can't print money.

That's it. The feds can. And those presses are being cranked out as we speak. Printing money, printing money, printing. And the more money they print, the less the money becomes worth. And we are now to the place and we will be to the place very, very shortly where we will not be able to honor the interest payments on our national debt and we are told by the so-called experts, don't worry about the debt.

Don't worry about the debt. Don't worry about the debt. But you have to pay interest on the debt because the debt is accrued from countries and people that we have borrowed money from.

And you know what? They have the audacity to want their money back. And they even expect interest. So we're paying a huge amount of money just in interest.

[68 : 08] And pretty soon we're not going to have it. What are we going to do? Economic collapse is a very real threat.

And I'm talking about something that would make the depression of 1929 and the 30s look like a weekend compared to what we could have before us.

Aren't you glad that you know who is really in charge? Would you stand with me please? Father, we've talked about very important, very solemn issues and we know it's a matter of real controversy among among many people who are really wanting to know and to do the right thing.

and it can be very, very confusing especially for young people today of marriageable age. We don't expect those who do not know Christ to abide by the principles that he set forth but we certainly expect that from those who claim to be Christians.

And we want to position ourselves in such a way that we can encourage and provoke to good works what is involved in marriage and all that it entails and the joys and the blessings and the benefits of it are just indescribable when they are acted upon in accordance with the book.

[69 : 42] Thank you for making available to us what you have. Help us to go forth from this place with some degree of enlightenment perhaps that we didn't have when we entered in a determination to be obedient to it.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen.