

BIBLICAL MARRIAGE | WEEK 2

Marriage is a beautiful and glorious gift from God, but it can also be difficult and challenging. It's beautiful because it reflects the glory of God and His merciful pursuit of sinful man, it can produce intimacy between spouses that cannot be experienced in any other relationship, and it is the means by which God has designed to fill the world with more image-bearers.

At the same time, marriage can be difficult and challenging due to our sinful flesh, the world, and the enemy. Satan desires to destroy marriage and to tarnish the glory of God. The world seeks its own glory and pleasure and woos us to indulge and to follow the wide path. Our flesh wants to do things our way, independent from God.

God's heart for marriage lies in how He gives this gift to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden: the two become one flesh. This gift of oneness is at the heart and foundation of biblical marriage. God desires that we would be one with Him and that, in our marriages, we would become one with our spouse.

This oneness is reflected in three aspects of marriage: spiritual oneness, emotional oneness, and sexual oneness. The spiritual aspect of oneness is the most important component for Christ-followers. *Oneness* is the goal—God's goal for us—as we strive to do marriage God's way.

When our marriages are founded on Christ and we daily seek to live in oneness with Him and oneness with our spouse, our marriages will look different from those marriages that are built and maintained through mankind's feeble attempts. Simply put, biblical marriage is founded on Christ, built upon His word, and maintained through the daily and ordinary pursuit of obedience and intimacy with Him.

We experience deeper oneness with our spouse when we are pursuing oneness and intimacy with Christ. This is the ordinary Christian marriage toward which Christ calls us to pursue each and every day.

Week 2 challenge

For married and engaged couples:

Think | What does God say in the Bible about spiritual oneness? How do you apply Genesis 2:24? How are you and your spouse experiencing oneness? Are you and your spouse on the same page regarding oneness? What might be a way God would want you to change, personally, and to pursue oneness with your spouse? How can you live that out in your marriage today?

Pray | Take time each day this week to pray that God would increase your oneness with Him and with your spouse. Pray daily that God would reveal areas where He wants to change your heart for Him and/or for your spouse. If possible, pray with your spouse as you seek oneness in your marriage.

Do | Develop a plan with your spouse for growing the oneness of your marriage. Pursue counseling at College Park if you need some help growing your marriage. Start reading *The Meaning of Marriage* by Tim Keller and discuss it with your spouse or a friend.

For singles:

Think | What does oneness with God look like, and how does that lay a foundation for oneness in marriage? What marriages do you know that experience this deep oneness? What can you learn from that couple and their marriage?

Pray | Ask that God would draw you to greater depth with Himself and that He would work in your heart to prepare you for a Christ-centered marriage. Ask God to specifically work in the heart of your future spouse, that he/she would be the godly person that you desire to marry. Pray for a oneness with God that would be the foundation to produce a deep oneness with your future spouse.

Do | Begin reading *The Meaning of Marriage* by Tim Keller, and discuss it with a friend. Pursue a couple that you want to learn from and ask them to help you see and understand oneness in their marriage.