

God's Design for Marriage

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Matthew 19:4-6 (ESV)

GOD'S DESIGN FOR MARRIAGE:

- Marriage is to be between one man and one woman** (*"from the beginning made them male and female"*)
 - God's design does not include group marriage (polygamy) or same-sex marriage.
 - God's heart is for me to love and value all people including those who marry outside of his design for marriage.
- The husband and wife pledge allegiance first and foremost to each other** (*"leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife"*)
 - "Leaving" means that I must relinquish that priority position of commitment and devotion previously given to parents in order to give that position to my spouse.
 - "Cleaving" means to bond as husband and wife. It is the degree of healthy oneness and intimacy in the marriage.
- Marriage is an intimate union** (*"the two shall become one flesh...they are no longer two but one flesh"*)
 - Husband and wife are to enjoy the pleasures and oneness of physical intimacy.
 - Biblical oneness in marriage involves not only sex, but intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and social oneness.
- The husband and wife are to be brought together by God** (*"God has joined together"*)
 - At the core of my marriage must be a conviction that God has ordained my marriage to my spouse.
- Marriage is a covenant for life** (*"let not man separate"*)
 - God's design is for marriage to last *"for as long as we both shall live"*

- The church community must be a place of love and healing for anyone who has experienced the pain of a broken marriage.

CENTRAL TRUTH:

In God's design, marriage is a lifelong covenantal commitment and union between a man and a woman who have been brought together by God.

LIFEGROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Going Deeper into the Message

- Describe your parents' marriage. Has what you observed in their marriage affected your goals for your own marriage (present or future marriage)? How?
- Why do you think God's design for marriage calls for one man and one woman?
- What does "leaving" parents and "holding fast" to one another look like in everyday life for a married couple? [Be sure to correctly define "leaving" parents and "holding fast" first]
- What does "intimate union" in marriage mean to you? What might it mean to your spouse?
- What might tempt a man or a woman to marry someone who he/she does not feel is God's will to marry? What problems can result?
- What is the difference between viewing marriage as a covenant versus a contract?
- How can YNEM be a place of love and healing for anyone who has experienced the pain of a broken marriage?

Responding to the Message

- What one insight from the message seems most personally significant to you right now and what action can you take in the next week to start putting this into practice or to cooperate with God in bringing about this transformation?