

God's Purpose for Marriage

Bill Scheidler

Introduction

I know that this new series is called “Guy meets Girl.” So I am assuming that this is something that we not only want to happen, but we want it to happen in a purposeful way.

There are many reasons I suppose for someone to get married.

You cannot talk about this subject from a biblical perspective without reading the first marriage passage of the Bible—Genesis 2:18-25

The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” 19 Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. 21 So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. 23 The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” 24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. 25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. —NIV

Before we take a closer look at this passage, here are some answers people gave to the question, “Why do you want to get married?”

I want to get married because...

- She got pregnant.
- I want to have children. I love kids.
- I am in love.
- Society demands it.
- My parents are putting a lot of pressure on me.
- I know a man will make me more secure for the future.
- I don't want to be alone.
- I want to claim sole possession of his/her attention.
- I'm single and it is getting old.
- All my friends are getting married and I'm afraid I will be left behind.
- I enjoy the thing that God reserves for married people.
- It's good to have someone that you can call yours.
- I've been dreaming of a wedding gown since I saw my first wedding.
- I want someone to share my life with.

- I'm really finding it hard to answer this question.
- I need someone to help me get organized.
- I want to increase the population of the nation.
- I want my best friend close to me always.
- It is God's plan.

"I want to get married because like many women I have that painting in the back of my head, of kids in a stable home, running around the lush garden and the husband and wife both working together and helping each other to make life's struggles less difficult."

"I want to get married one day. But he has to be a leader, good problem solving skills, business minded, and ready to protect his habitat. Prove to me that you are a man and stand your ground. That's my belief."

"I want to get married because it is the fulfillment of every woman to get married. Mine is my dream to be fulfilled and make an impact in the society by raising children that will add to the nation and also be a support to my dream man for him to achieve more than he could have if not married."

A common thread that you see in most of these reasons is "self-interest."

Common Human Purposes for Marriage

Here are some of the most common benefits of marriage to man. Oddly enough you can find Bible verses to support all of these.

1. Companionship/Friendship

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to live alone. I will make a suitable companion to help him." Genesis 2:18, GNB

2. Offspring/Heritage

Don't you see that children are GOD's best gift? the fruit of the womb his generous legacy? Psalm 127:3, Msg

3. Partnership/Help

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. Ecclesiastes 4:9

*Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. –NLT
It's better to have a partner than go it alone. Share the work, share the wealth. –Msg*

4. Pleasure/Gratification

Song of Solomon (the only X-rated book of the Bible) speaks of Solomon's love for his wife as something to be enjoyed naturally and spiritually.

You are beautiful, so very desirable!...(edit, edit, edit)...Kissing you is more delicious than drinking the finest wine. How wonderful and tasty! Song of Solomon 7:6, 9

In many respects these are better described as the benefits of marriage than the purpose for marriage. The real purpose for marriage does not find itself in the heart of man but in the heart of God. God was the one who invented marriage. God must have had something in mind when He did so.

God's Purpose for Marriage

Understanding God's purpose for marriage is of the utmost importance, because to marry and miss it is to enter into a life full of frustration and disappointment -- setting the stage for great marital unrest. Most of us have very romanticized ideas of what marriage is going to be. We day dream and look forward to this relationship that will finally meet our romantic and emotional needs.

God's primary intention for marriage, however, is not meeting your physical and emotional needs. God is at the center of the universe not man. God created marriage because of His plan not because of our plans. God wants us to see marriage as part God's method to reach God-ordained goals.

We could say therefore, that the most basic purpose of marriage is first and foremost to glorify God (1 Cor. 6:18-20; 10:31).

Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and who was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourselves but to God; he bought you for a price. So use your bodies for God's glory. I Corinthians 6:19-20, GNB

Well, whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, do it all for God's glory.

I Corinthians 10:31, GNB

The way in which we glorify God is by cooperating with His eternal purpose. To understand God's purpose in marriage you have to understand God's purpose in everything. To understand God's purpose in everything you have to go back to the first chapter of the Bible where God declares His purpose.

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Genesis 1:26-28

The key to understanding God's purpose is understanding God's heart—the heart of a father. Since God has the heart of a father, it follows that He also has the desires of a father. Those desires are expressed in five key ways:

1. A Desire for Reproduction of Self, Image and Likeness

“Let us make man in our image” (Gen. 1:26)

There is a desire in the heart of every father to have offspring that reflect the image of the father or that bear the family resemblance. God, too, is interested in an offspring that would be a true reflection of Him. He is interested in reproducing His character and image in His creation.

2. A Desire for Multiplicity of Seed or Fruitfulness

“Be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:28).

One of the greatest promises to the fathers of the Bible is that of multiplicity of seed. Even though children in our day are looked at by many as a curse, God originally gave them to man as the highest of blessings. The great promise that Abraham treasured above all was his fatherhood of many nations. As a father, God shares in this desire. Having only one Son did not fully satisfy the heart of God. God has a desire for many sons and daughters.

3. A Desire for Reproduction of Ministry or Partnership

“Let them have dominion” (Gen. 1:28).

“And subdue it” (Gen. 2:28).

In the heart of every father is the desire to mentor and develop ministry in his offspring so that they might share in the ministry or work of the father. This desire is reflected in the eastern custom of the training of sons in the vocation of the father. Jesus was trained under the hands of Joseph to follow him in his occupation. The Father God desires to bring His offspring into partnership with Him in His occupation, that of ruling the universe.

4. A Desire for Communion, Relationship or Fellowship

“The sound of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day” (Gen. 3:8).

In the heart of every father is the desire for appreciation to be expressed from his children and for there to be a high level of communication between him and his children. There is a desire for the cultivation of a deep personal relationship where the offspring are not just sons but friends. God has this desire in relation to those whom He fathers. This is not to be a relationship based on coercion, but a relationship built on love and the expression of free will.

5. A Desire to Provide a Bride for His Son

“It is not good that the man should be alone” (Gen. 2:18).

In the Old Testament the father had the right to arrange the marriage of his son (Genesis 24). God as the Heavenly Father plans to arrange a divine marriage for His Son by providing a worthy bride for Him.

God only has one purpose that He is working toward and everything that He has done, is doing or will ever do is consistent with that one purpose (Eph. 1:3-14).

God’s purpose can be summarized as follows:

God’s Eternal Purpose is to have a many-membered man in the image of God with whom He might establish relationship and who would qualify for rulership and dominion and for the honor of being eternally linked with the only-begotten Son as one flesh.

God’s Purpose becomes Our Purpose

God has established two institutions as instruments through which His purpose is to be established—the family and the church (If you remain unmarried your principle way of doing this is through your involvement in the local church).

How does understanding God’s purpose help us to understand God’s purpose in marriage?

1. A Desire for Reproduction of His Image and Likeness

“Let us make man in our image” (Gen. 1:26).

God is interested in reproducing His character and image in His creation. God creates “them” as a unit to reflect Him. It takes both a man and woman, in oneness, to truly reflect His image. He uses the marriage relationship to foster character development in one another. Iron sharpening iron.

Additionally, parents help to foster character development in their children so that they too can resemble Christ.

2. A Desire for Multiplicity of Seed or Fruitfulness

“Be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:28).

God has a desire for many sons and daughters. God wants a big family. It is through marriage that God will expand his family with human reproduction.

3. A Desire for Reproduction of Ministry or Partnership

“Let them have dominion” (Gen. 1:28).

“And subdue it” (Gen. 2:28).

The Father God desires to bring His offspring into partnership with Him in His occupation, that of ruling the universe. Through partnering with God and each other marriage partners are to use their relationship to extend God’s kingdom.

4. A Desire for Communion, Relationship or Fellowship

“The sound of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day” (Gen. 3:8).

God desires to cultivate a love relationship with His offspring. As married partners place God in the center of their marriage they can grow in their relationship to each other and to God.

5. A Desire to Provide a Bride for His Son

“It is not good that the man should be alone” (Gen. 2:18).

In the Old Testament the father had the right to arrange the marriage of his son (Genesis 24). God as the Heavenly Father plans to arrange a divine marriage for His Son by providing a worthy bride for Him.

Married couples are to model the relationship that God wants between Christ and the Church as a prophetic statement about God’s ultimate desire.

We are Wired for God’s Purpose for Marriage

1. We were created with a desire to reproduce in our image and likeness.

- I can’t wait to see what my kids will look like.
- He looks just like you.
- He has your eyes.

2. We were created with certain biological urges.

Without these urges (drives) we would not be motivated to have sexual relations and children. They are to be controlled and reserved for marriage.

3. We were created “not to be alone” but for companionship/relationship.

No man is an island; we are interdependent upon each other.

4. We were created with a hunger for significance

We find significance when we are living our life in harmony with God’s eternal purpose.

Summary of God's Purpose for Marriage

God's purpose for marriage is to produce godly offspring in Christ's image who have an intimate relationship with Him and will establish His dominion in the earth and help to prepare a bride for His Son.

What if I can't have children? You can do it in children other than your own.