

MARRIAGE THROUGH THE AGES

One In Name. One In Aim.

Matthew 19:5 *“and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’”*

This verse is part of Jesus’ response to the Pharisees trick question. They asked about divorce. They were interested in proving that Jesus wasn’t the Messiah. I expect the Pharisees thought a long time about what question would be the best to ask Jesus. You can imagine a meeting where all kinds of ideas are shouted out and explored and tossed away. Finally, someone suggested this one. Can a man get a divorce for any reason? They thought about how Jesus would answer that. They kicked it around and finally, concluded that this was it. There is no way He could answer this question without showing some flaws. Off they went to track Jesus down.

The expression, *“leave his father and mother”* has to do with maturity. Marriage is for grown-ups who are grown up on the inside. If a guy can’t get up and get to the church house, or work without his mamma waking him up each time, then he’s not ready to get married. If a guy can’t be responsible with his money, then he’s not ready to get married. The leaving is not about the address where the couple will live, it’s about the maturity of their head and heart.

A second thought from this passage is, *“the two shall become one flesh.”* There is an immediate thought here, but also a deeper implication. Two becoming one defines the sexual act of marriage. There is nothing dirty, shameful or wrong about that. There is, if it is outside of marriage. God has placed a “No trespassing sign” around sexual activity. The key that opens the fence is marriage. All others have climb over the fence and are trespassing. If they get caught, and God has already caught them, they will get in trouble. Two becoming one is part of marriage. It is good and right. God intended for the relationship to be that way.

Most get this part of this passage. Even non-believers understand this. I was in a bookstore and saw a book entitled, “Sex for Dummies.” Need I say anything more about that? I think that is one subject that dummies get.

Two becoming one involves more than the physical relationships in marriage. If that is the extent of things, much will be lacking in that marriage. There are couples who do not operate as one when it comes to finances. They are polar opposites. Money is a constant battle in the marriage. Financial guru Dave Ramsey contends that money problems are the number one cause of divorce today. Why is that so? Because a couple has not become “ONE” in finances. Another area is becoming one in raising kids. That’s important. Consistency between mom and dad. Kids figure it out quickly. If dad says, “No,” they will run to mom with the hopes that she will say yes. Becoming one. One in discipline. One in rules. One in bedtime. One in what is expected. Another area is becoming one with plans and dreams. Mom wants to stay home and be with the little kids. Dad

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wants her to work so they can have more money. That's not being one. Stress, pressure and arguments will dominate the battle of the wills.

An important area is becoming one with the Lord. One in their prayers. One in their spiritual destiny. One in their hopes for Heaven. One in worship. One in contribution. One in hospitality. One in teaching God's word. One in standing upon the platform of the Bible. It's hard to be one spiritually, when the man or the woman lack faith, interest or concern about the things of God. Sharing life spiritually is a big part of God's plans for us.

Many of these things ought to be looked at, discussed and considered in the dating part of a relationship. That's why it's called dating. If a relationship is based solely upon the physical, these other areas will surface and they will lead to a lot of heartache and headaches in marriage.

Two becoming one...unity. Oneness. In faith, in finance, in life. I tell couples 'you are soon to be married that when you say, "I do," it changes ownership of things.' It is no longer his stuff and her stuff, it becomes our stuff. It's not his friends, but now, our friends. It's not his family, but now, it's our family. It's not his debt. It's now, our debt. It's not his church, but now, it's our church. Two have become one. One in name...one in aim...one in a happy destiny together. - **Roger Shouse**