

# God's Design for a Happy Marriage

July 23, 2017

**Our Savior's Way  
Worshipping Sundays 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00 AM  
Pastor Bill Mann**

I saw a cartoon. It showed Moses coming down from Mt. Sinai after meeting with God. He was bringing the 10 Commandments. Moses says to the People of Israel: "I've got some good news and some bad news for you. First, the good news—I got Him down from 20 to 10. The bad news is the one about adultery stays."

Today, we're going to talk about the 6th Commandment—"Do not commit adultery." We need to talk about this because in our day and age, God's design for marriage is being assaulted in ways that most of us would never have even imagined. Today, you can even find websites advocating adultery. I'm sure you know the name of this famous website—"Ashley Madison." Two years ago, in July 2015, the website was hacked. A month later the names and personal information of 32 million users was leaked to the public. You'd think—that would be the end of Ashley Madison. But no, today the website is still up and running with 52 million new subscribers. Their motto: "Life is short; have an affair." Their guarantee: Buy our premium package and you're guaranteed to have an affair or your money back.

Does anyone else think that this is troubling? I mean, how are we ever going to get to the point where we can enjoy the full and blessed life that Christ promises if we are on the internet searching for porn or trying to hook up with someone who is not our spouse? This morning, I want to share with you five bible verses that, I believe, will put a

wall of protection around your family--Bible verses that can help you have a stronger marriage.

The first one is from **1 Peter 4:8**—“**Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.**” I counsel a lot of young couples on the way to the altar, before they are married. Almost all, without reservation, believe that they have found the perfect match—their perfect life partner for them. Here’s the thing—every marriage is the unification—the joining together of two sinners. There is no perfect marriage. Husbands mess up. Wives mess up. They fail one another and hurt one another. They get frustrated and angry with one another. So, it’s important to remember God’s definition of love. “Love covers a multitude of sins.” That’s why, in the Bible, God uses the marriage relationship as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church. Our Lord Jesus Christ and His willingness to forgive over and over and over again is a model for how husbands and wives should treat one another in marriage. Because “(true) love covers a multitude of sins.”

Here’s the second verse: It’s from **Ecclesiastes 4:12**--“**Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.**” The three strands in this cord of three strands represent a husband and a wife and God. Two strands are strong. Three strands are just about unbreakable. God is the third strand. That’s why I strongly encourage couples to pray together, to read the Bible together, to attend church together. It’s pretty hard to find accurate statistics on how many marriages have been affected by affairs. Conservative estimates are 20% (1 in 5). The Journal of Marriage and Family Therapy says 41%. And when you factor in emotional affairs the number is over 50%. Think about it—women and men are working side by side; they are spending more time with their coworkers than their spouses; they have incomes that make them independent; they travel and are away overnight; they dress up and look their best for their colleagues at work—it’s no wonder. The world is full of temptation. And do I have to mention cybersex and online porn? We need God in marriage like never before. We need

boundaries--in a world and society that says there are no boundaries, we need a cord of three strands, because “a cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”

The third Bible verse I want to share with you is from **Ephesians 4:2-3**—“**Be completely humble and gentle; Be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace.**” If a husband and wife can be completely humble, gentle and selfless in a relationship it can make all the difference. I had one wife say to me, “Me and my husband never argue. I just give him the silent treatment.” “How long?” I asked. “The longest has been seven days.” I think one of the things you learn, after 35 years of marriage, that you didn’t know in year one is how to argue. Arguing well is a skill and it takes time to learn. Here’s some tips: (1) Don’t insist on being right. That’s a non-starter. The goal isn’t being right. The goal is to a peaceful resolution together. (2) Speak up as soon as you feel the anger rising. Don’t wait until you are ready to explode. The angrier you are the harder it is to resolve a problem. (3) Listen. Nothing is more frustrating that feeling like you are not being heard. Repeating what your spouse says and letting them know her or she has been heard can really help diffuse the anger. (4) Avoid the temptation to bring out your store of ammunition. What I mean is—don’t bring out all the old hurts and wrongs. That only adds fuel to the fire. Instead “make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit.” One wife said, “What am I going to do? Whenever we argue, he gets angry and then storms out in a huff.” Don’t do that. Even an agreement to disagree is better than walking away in a huff.

The fourth Bible verse is from **Jeremiah 29:11**—“**For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.**” These words fill our hearts with hope. They show us the heart of God toward the people he loves. We do not know what the future will bring. But we know that God loves us and He will give us the strength that we

need for each day. Take a look at this video. It compares our culture's definition of marriage to the Bible's definition of marriage.

Marriage is not about bling—how big the ring, how beautiful the dress, or what color the tuxedos. Marriage is about commitment and a simple promise to love one another your whole life long. Marriage is not about the excitement and the thrill and the surprise—although there will be excitement and thrills and surprises along the way. Marriage is not just about young love. It's not one day. It's for better and for worse, for richer and for poorer, in sickness and in health—your whole life long. Marriage is two people who stand together hand in hand at the beginning of their life together; who make a commitment before God; who speak their vows to one another—vows that are meant to last a lifetime.

Here's the fifth Bible verse: **“Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.” Mark 10:9.** God speaks this word to Adam and Even in the Garden. Jesus speaks them in the New Testament. They are recorded in the Gospel of Matthew and again in the Gospel of Mark. (3x) Seems like God is pretty serious about marriage. And when you get married, the last thing you are thinking about is divorce. But things happen—things that threaten and may even destroy your relationship. The problem is that some people enter marriage thinking it will solve all their problems. Sometimes the opposite is true. But the message of the Gospel is that God loves us no matter what. Even when our lives are not perfect. God forgives us and loves us, for Jesus' sake. Always marriage is hard work. Marriage is two people living together who refuse to give up on each other. Marriage requires faith, sacrifice, service, hard work, forgiveness, and the firm belief that God will keep his promises no matter what.