

I. Introduction.

II. Leave – Your marriage creates a new family unit. Gen. 2:24a

- A. Your marriage takes priority over any other human relationship.
  - 1. The parent/child relationship is temporary and changing.
  - 2. Grown children should still honor their parents, but are no longer in subjection to them. Ex. 20:12 Mark 7:9-13 John 9:20-21 1 Co. 13:11 7:39 Num. 32:11
  - 3. Failure to leave is a violation of God’s design.
- B. Must you leave physically/geographically? 1 Tim. 5:8 Gen. 24:67
- C. Leave economically. Eph. 5:29 Pr. 22:29 10:4 Gen. 3:18-19
  - 1. Ideally a couple will be prepared to take on the full responsibilities of marriage.
  - 2. Some will face tough choices. 1 Co. 7:9
  - 3. Is it wrong for parents to help their children out? 2 Co. 12:14 Prov. 16:26 22:7
- D. Leave emotionally.
  - 1. Some parents won’t let go.
  - 2. Some children rely too much on their parents.
  - 3. Some children go to the other extreme and neglect their parents. Ex. 20:12

III. Cleave – a husband and wife are joined in a lifelong covenant of companionship. 2:24b

- A. Marriage is a covenant commitment. Mal. 2:14
  - 1. You promise, before God, to remain faithful to your covenant promises. Mt. 19:6
  - 2. The traditional vows convey the nature of the marriage covenant -- *For better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.*
  - 3. We should be concerned not only to protect our own marriages, but also the marriages of others.
- B. Divorce is a sinful violation of God’s design for marriage. Mt. 19:3-9 Mal. 2:14-16
  - 1. There is no such thing as no-fault divorce.
  - 2. God allows protection for the innocent party when their spouse violates the marriage covenant through adultery or abandonment. Mt. 5:32 1 Co. 7:15-16
  - 3. Even then every effort should be made to rescue the marriage. Eph. 4:31-32
  - 4. Some Christians, by faith, stay in hard marriages. Ps. 15:4 Pr. 3:5-6
  - 5. Some hard marriages are transformed by God’s grace. Eph. 5:1-2
- C. Marriage is designed by God to be the most personally intimate of human relationships. Mal. 2:14 Song 5:16
  - 1. It is not enough to merely remain legally married while emotionally distant.
  - 2. Some marriages are destroyed by sinful conflict. Eph. 4:29 Gal. 5:15,19-21
  - 3. Many marriages are ruined by neglect.
  - 4. There is a personal bonding which is exclusively for a husband and wife in marriage.
  - 5. Emotional intimacy, including flirtation, with anyone other than your spouse violates your marriage vows.

#### IV. One Flesh – The sexual union is designed by God to be a blessing within marriage. 2:24c

- A. The sexual union is the sign of the covenant commitment of marriage.
- B. The sexual union is designed by God to produce the blessing of children. Gen. 1:28  
Ps. 127
- C. The sexual union is given by God for the enjoyment of both husband and wife.  
Prov. 5:8-9 Heb. 13:4 Song of Solomon 1:1ff Deut. 24:5
- D. Any sexual expression outside of marriage is a sinful and destructive misuse of God's gift.
  - 1. Fornication – sex outside of marriage. Heb. 13:4 Eph. 5:5
  - 2. Adultery – a sexual violation of the marriage covenant. Ex. 20:14 Prov. 7:27  
1 Co. 6:15-20
  - 3. Lust – sinful private sexual thoughts and acts. Mt. 5:27-28 Job 31:1 1 Sam. 11:2  
1 Co. 7:4 James 1:13-15
  - 4. Any other misuse of sex – homosexuality, bestiality, polygamy, etc. Rom. 1:26-27  
Lev. 18:22-25 20:13,15 Deut. 22:5
  - 5. Neglecting one's spouse's sexual needs is a violation of God's design. 1 Co. 7:3-5
  - 6. Sexual sin is a heart problem. Mark 7:21-23 Pr. 4:23 Gen. 39:9
- E. God judges sexual sin. Heb. 13:4 1 Co. 6:9ff Pr. 5:20-21 6:26,32-33 Rom. 1:27,32  
Gal. 5:21
- F. Cohabitation is counterfeit marriage – a relationship without a covenant.
  - 1. Cohabitation is sinful and harmful – indulging in the privileges of marriage without making the covenant commitment. Heb. 13:4
  - 2. How should we deal with cohabiting couples? 1 Co. 5:9-12

#### V. Concluding applications.

- A. For singles – romance is for marriage.

See IBCD resource – “Singleness, Dating and Courtship – Avoiding the Hurt.”

<http://www.ibcd.org/resources/messages/singleness-dating-courtship-avoiding-the-hurt/>

- B. For those who are married – marriage is for romance.

See IBCD Spring Seminar -- “From Idol to Blessing”

<http://www.ibcd.org/resources/messages/series/spring-seminar-2012>

#### Discussion questions

1. What potential problems can occur when a married couple lives in close proximity to their parents? When might it be appropriate for a married couple to live with their parents?
2. When is it appropriate for parents to offer financial help to a young married couple?  
What are the risks?
3. What is the significance of the fact that marriage is covenantal union?
4. What are valid biblical grounds for divorce?  
Must a person with grounds for divorce exercise his/her right? How do they decide?
5. How can a couple maintain the personal/emotional intimacy of their marriage?
6. What should someone who is in a very hard marriage do?
7. What is the significance of the sexual union in marriage?
8. What might you say to a young engaged couple who don't want to have children?
9. What is wrong with fornication and cohabitation?
10. How should we treat cohabiting couples?