

HONOURING MARRIAGE YOUR MARRIAGE IS DESIGNED TO BE A POWERFUL WITNESS.

God designed marriage for His purposes and glory. Genesis 1:27, Genesis 2:18-25. Christian marriage is a covenant union between one man and one woman, made before God. Marriage –

- in its design, is a safe place, where there is a mutual love of God, a mutual love of each other, support, encouragement in the Word and in life, and companionship.
- is important to God; indeed there is a thread of marriage throughout scripture from Genesis to Revelation.
- has an important and vital role in the church and within a nation.

The following are some insights based on God's word for building your marriage. Whether you are just married or have been married for many years, we hope you will be inspired to deepen your relationship with God and with each other; building a stronger and stronger Christ centred marriage.

WHAT IS MARRIAGE?



Today's culture interprets marriage in ways that deviate significantly from scriptural truths. Scripture shows us marriage is about companionship, a covenant relationship made before God and including God. Standing alongside each other through the good times and the not so good, encouraging each other in the Word, praying for each other, submitting to one another and to Jesus Christ, helping each other.

God loved us first so that we may love. Love Him and love our neighbour – in marriage our closest neighbour is our spouse. God ordained marriage and,

through His design, intends it to show Christ's loving, sacrificial relationship to His church. Marriage is intended as a lifelong commitment and a living representation of the Gospel for others to see. As we build our relationship with Him we see we are all part of the same family, united in Christ.

By honouring marriage and seeing it as precious, we honour our Lord. In your marriage, you will show His love to one another.

A GODLY MARRIAGE BRINGS BENEFITS

Our handbook for marriage is the Holy Bible; it is sufficient for all aspects of our lives. It is a unique partnership, a team, with each spouse bringing their unique, God given gifts into the marriage. Marriage should provide a safe environment that encourages communication, mutual respect, forgiveness when needed, patience, and unconditional love without keeping score. It is a partnership of equals, as Matthew Henry said on the formation of Eve "That the woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be loved". In marriage we are one, each seeking unconditionally to serve the other.

There are benefits of a Godly, Christ centred marriage; just a few are:

- an example to others of God's love and grace provides physical, mental, and emotional comfort
- brings stability and security to both husband and wife
- encourages growth, development, and maturity
- provides a safe place to share joys and disappointments
- a place where husband and wife encourage each other to rely on God's strength rather than their own
- a place where husband and wife encourage each other in the Word of God

Marriage can be challenging. But with the right perspective—a Godly perspective, it can also be an incredibly rewarding experience. Remember that God is the ultimate source of strength and guidance in building a strong and lasting marriage. Following His wisdom, your marriage will glorify the Lord.

SEEK TO AVOID THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR MARRIAGE

The following are just a few of the areas to avoid:

- Not spending personal time with the Lord
- Not praying daily for your marriage and for each other
- Neglecting spiritual growth
- Taking each other for granted
- Holding on to unforgiveness
- Not having fun times together

By avoiding these potential areas of danger, your marriage will be stronger. Always trusting in God and looking to Him for strength and wisdom in all things will put your marriage on the path to honouring and glorifying Him.

HONOURING MARRIAGE

Scripture shows marriage as sacred and honourable, being designed by God to reflect His love and faithfulness. Adhering to biblical principles, the followers of Christ will honour their marriage and the marriages of others, building relationships that glorify God and serve as a powerful witness to His divine plan.

Some steps to take to honour marriage and bring glory to our Lord are:

- Put God first in your marriage and seek Him in all things.
- Grow together in your faith and love of God.
- Trust in God, knowing that He is always with you.
- Follow the teaching of Hebrews 13:4.
- “.. submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” Ephesians 5:21 [NLT].
- “.. give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” Ephesians 5:20 [NLT].
- Pray together for your marriage and for each other. [Husbands do remember 1 Peter 3:7]
- Enjoy the Sabbath day of rest together
- Don’t speak against God’s design of marriage.
- Encourage others in their marriage and not those in cohabitation.

- “And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil.” Ephesians 4:26-27 [NLT]
- “Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:31-32 [NLT]
- Remember, celebrate, and give thanks on your wedding anniversaries.
- Remember and thank those who have blessed your marriage.
- Protect your marriage against pornography and lust also encouraging others to do so.

Marriage is a symbol of the relationship God wants with us. Putting God first in our marriages can be a powerful witness to the world.

Whatever the condition of your marriage or the length that you have been married, there are always opportunities to invest in your marriage to improve it. With prayer and sometimes fasting, patience, tenacity, coupled with a desire to grow, your marriage can be a testimony to the power of God’s love.

