

## New Testament Sermon Outlines 12/12

### Behaviour in Marriage

#### 1. Introduction

Marriage is one of the greatest steps for any person to make. It is therefore important to prepare for such an occasion. Most marriages fail through broken relationships but what cause them to fail?

This sermon attempts to instruct, prepare and show areas of possible conflict.

#### 2. What is love?

The bible has two Greek words for love. The first is Agape and the second is Phileo. There is a third Greek word for love it is Eros after the Goddess of sexual pleasure.

Married couple should have all three aspects of love appearing throughout their marriage.

##### a) Agape.

This is the highest form of love. In John 3:16 For God so loved the world... the word for God's love is agape. If we go to Ephesians 5:25 then Paul says that husbands are to agape their wives as Christ agape the Church and gave himself for it.

The husband therefore should have, if required, dying love for his wife. Nowhere in the New Testament does it say that wives should love their husbands! The reason is God has a hierarchy of love. His love is poured out on Christ, Christ pours his agape love on the husband and the wife responds to that love. This is a matter of the head. So when a man says to his pastor, 'I have fallen out of love with my wife.' The pastor has a perfect right to ask at what time and day was that decision made. The reason is agape love is a decision of the mind. 'I will love my wife whatever she says or does. That is agape love in action

##### b) Phileo

Phileo means to be a friend to (fond of [an individual or an object]), i.e. have affection for denoting personal attachment, as a matter of sentiment or feeling; .A wife is required to phileo (respect) her husband (Eph 5:33). Husbands too must respect their wives and treat them kindly and protect their honour and dignity. Take her part whatever the situation. The wife should do likewise.

##### c) Eros

This is the sexual function of the marriage and a very important one. Right at the beginning of human relationships God made his intentions very clear. In Matthew

19:5 Jesus repeats the Old Testament when talking about divorce. He said. He answered, "Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' 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'? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." Mt 19:4-6

The 'one flesh' indicated here relates to sexual intercourse. When a couple come together Paul says it's a mystery shared between them and them alone. That is why adultery breaks the marriage covenant because all other sin is performed outside the body but that particular activity is sinning in the body.

Paul is clear, there should be regular times when husband and wife come together. The exception was to pray and fast but the warning is that at the end of that period, the sexual relationship should be established. \*(See 1 Cor 7:5).

### **3. Furniture in marriage**

Only two pieces of furniture are necessary for a successful marriage. A table and a bed. The table should provide an opportunity for at least one meal a day, uninterrupted by radio or Television. It is a place where husband and wife can communicate. Couples should go to bed at the same time in the same bed. This provides a place for communion. Which means a state of intimate, heightened sensitivity and receptivity.

Failure on these two points can lead to problems in the marriage.

### **4. Men and women process information differently**

It has been shown in experiments that men are much better at single tasks and women at multi-tasking. Knowing this the wife should be aware that

- a) Men watching television will not hear their wives speaking to them
- b) Men shopping without a list are likely not to bring back the right goods.
- c) Men will interrupt conversations with offers of solutions.
- d) Men seldom require or ask for advice from their wives.

Women

- a) Need to talk without interruption
- b) Are more emotional to situations
- c) Often more perceptive to people and situations.
- d) Offer advice even when not asked for.

### **5. Forgiveness**

If ever there was a need for couple to offer unreserved forgiveness it is in this age.

Paul said, Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Eph 4:26-27

Looking long-term at marriage, it does not matter who started the present episode of misunderstanding, be the first to use the word 'forgive me'. Saying sorry does not convey sorrow and guilt whereas forgiveness means I take the blame. Live in perpetual forgiveness.

## **6. Establish a joint prayer and Bible reading covenant**

Marriage is a covenant and the best way to keep it is to pray together every night before sleeping and read a portion of Scripture to each other. This means that you cannot go to bed not speaking to each other. It also brings you close together and to the Lord. Automatically pray about situations and bring them to God. Every time this is done, the covenant is strengthened.

Couples who show the three aspects of love in equal measure and use forgiveness properly can help to protect and develop their marriage for the future.