

MARRIAGE and FAMILY

Living the Gospel in Our Lives

Session One • Wednesday, January 9, 2019

I. In the beginning there was “marriage.”

A. Genesis 1:26-28a. The plural God of the Trinity creates humankind.

1. A partnership designed for community.
2. “Be fruitful and multiply.” Part of the partnership is to procreate.

B. Genesis 2:18, 21-25. A second version of the beginning and there was “marriage.”

1. From the earth, out of the ground, a man; from him, a woman.
2. And the two shall become one flesh in partnership, recognizing the rest of the story (Genesis 3:12-13).

C. An idealized image, not always helpful in a very different culture and world.

1. Proverbs 31:10-31. The “idealized woman/wife.”

II. Indications of marriage in the New Testament.

A. 1 Corinthians 7:1-7. A good reason to marry is to have sex, so do not deprive one another.

1. Authority over each other’s bodies.

B. Ephesians 5:21-33. Be subject to one another.

1. How does a husband who loves his wife, as Christ loves the church, seek to dominate her?
2. “He who loves his wife loves himself.”
3. Marriage is a mystery, not unlike the great mystery of the union of Christ and the church.

C. 1 Peter 3:1-9. Yes, I included it!

1. The text demonstrates the hierarchical assumptions of a first century author.
2. A description of the “inner self” of the soul. Might it not apply to both genders?
3. 1 Peter 3:1. Uneven male/female church participation seems to have applied even then.

III. Luther and marriage.

A. Martin Luther’s influence on marriage cannot be overstated.

1. This is the true definition of marriage: Marriage is the God-appointed and legitimate union of a man and a woman for the purpose of avoiding fornication and sin, living to the glory of God.
2. Marriage, rightly constituted for Luther, is for avoiding sin and having children.
3. In 1522, Luther published “The Estate of Marriage.” In 1525, his arguments were a factor in convincing himself and Katharina von Bora to wed.

B. Marriage is no longer sacramental.

1. Unlike baptism and Holy Communion, there is neither a specific promise nor a special sign involved with marriage.
2. Luther also suggested marriage is “the real religious order.”

C. 1531 wedding sermon.

1. “The ancient doctors have rightly preached that marriage is praiseworthy because of children, loyalty, and love. But one physical benefit is also a precious thing and justly extolled as the chief virtue of marriage, namely, that spouses can rely upon each other and with confidence entrust everything they have on earth to each other so that it is as safe with one’s spouse as with oneself.”
2. Marriage provides opportunities to revisit baptism and the daily dying and rising, from repentance to forgiveness, from sadness to joy, from despair to hope.
3. To live into marital love is to live into bearing one another’s burdens as a cross-centered Gospel people.