



BECOMING ONE

4.2 We are helping develop servant-leadership skills at home, serving and supporting our spouses.

The Bible does not lay out a step-by-step order for family relationship priorities. However, we can look to the Scriptures and find general principles for prioritizing our family relationships.

LEADING IN OUR MARRIAGE

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Being a wise leader in your home has to start with Him (KMI 1), and our relationship with God **always** has top priority. It’s from this developing relationship that we learn how to have every other relationship. This is especially true as it applies to marriage.

In marriage we are joined by God to our spouse, and while our relationship with God is foremost, our marriage relationship, the primary human relationship in our home, is our next priority. Since caring for this relationship requires a lifetime of attention, there is no way we can wrap this up in one small lesson. However, there are two concepts about marriage we can explore that are part of the beginning: Created Different and United as One.

CREATED DIFFERENT, UNITED AS ONE

Within the covenant of marriage, we are one, yet we are different. Both of these elements, **being one but being different**, are important and intentional by God. Let’s look more deeply at each one.

WE ARE ONE

Read Genesis 1:27-28 and 2:18-25.

In Genesis, husbands and wives are called by God to become “one flesh.” Marriage is God’s idea. The following excerpt taken from “This Momentary Marriage” by John Piper outlines four biblical truths that show marriage is God’s plan:

First, marriage was God's design.

While Genesis 1:27–28 makes clear that marriage is meant for male and female, the logic of Genesis 2 also confirms it.

*In [Genesis 2:18], it is God himself who decrees that man's solitude is not good, and it is God himself who sets out to complete one of the central designs of creation, namely, man and woman in marriage. "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Don't miss that central and all-important statement: **God himself will make a being perfectly suited for him — a wife. (21)***

Second, God gave away the first bride.

God took the role as the first Father to give away the bride. "Genesis 2:22: 'And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.' He didn't hide her and make Adam seek. He made her; then he brought her." (22)

Third, God spoke the design of marriage into existence.

We can see this if we look carefully at Matthew 19:4–5: "[Jesus] answered, 'Have you not read that he [God] who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said [Note: God said!], "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"?' Jesus said that the words of Genesis 2:24 are God's words, even though they were written by Moses. (22)

Fourth, God performs the one-flesh union.

*The one-flesh union between a man and woman is the heart of what marriage is. Genesis 2:24 is God's word of institution for marriage. But just as it was God who took the woman from the flesh of man (Genesis 2:21), it is God who in each marriage ordains and performs a uniting called one flesh. Man does not create this. God does. And it is not in man's power to destroy. This is implicit here in Genesis 2:24, **but Jesus makes it explicit in Mark 10:8–9. He quotes Genesis 2:24, then adds a comment that explodes like thunder with the glory of marriage. "The two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."***

When a couple speaks their vows, it is not a man or a woman or a pastor or parent who is the main actor — the main doer. God is. God joins a husband and a wife into a one-flesh union. God does that. The world does not know this, which is one of the reasons why marriage is treated so casually. And Christians often act like they don't know it, which is one of the reasons marriage in the church is not seen as the wonder it is. Marriage is God's doing because it is a one-flesh union that God himself performs. (23)

Becoming one flesh is an act of God, not of man. Not just for Adam and Eve, but for all who were married before God. He is engaged and personally invested in your marriage. This is what makes marriage, your marriage, holy.

Q. See YOUR marriage as a willful act of God. Does that change anything for you? This is personal, so answer it personally.

WE ARE DIFFERENT

Within this holy joining by God, He did not change us into the other person. Adam stayed Adam; Eve stayed Eve. They were deeply united, yet created unique.

Q. Consider your husband or wife. What do they uniquely possess that blesses you? Write that out and give it to them. (Reading it to them would be even better.)

We have to acknowledge that men and women approach marriage differently. It's why we have so many books and seminars and retreats wrapped around the idea of marriage and how to do it well. Could it be that since God created men and women to be very different, men and women are supposed to approach marriage differently? Maybe men and women are **created** to approach it differently, and acknowledging, exploring, and even celebrating this is part of blessing our spouses. Additionally, because we are so different, how we communicate those differences and receive that communication is hugely important.

Yet, even as we acknowledge how we are different, spouses are expected to be the same in our call to serve God by serving each other. God expects that of both husbands and wives. How do we do that?

The answer is found in scripture, where there is an ongoing revelation of God's character. One major aspect of His character is that He sees the needs of those He loves and responds to them. He does this even if it means sacrificing Himself. This is the underlying character trait that drives the grace and mercy we experience with Him. It is the thing that places Christ on the cross for our sake. This is how Christ loves God and the Church. If we are to be like Christ and lead like him, what does this mean for our marriage?

Q. List some ways could you follow Christ's example as you serve your husband or wife and attend to their needs? What action verbs would you use?

Look at the list you've made. Let your husband or wife read it over and take intentional time to discuss each word or phrase. Each action verb could be a major opportunity to serve and bless the other, and talking about how that could work is a fantastic step in serving your spouse.

SUMMARY

- God made you one flesh with your spouse. This is His work, not yours and this makes your marriage holy.
- By God's intention and creation men and women are different. We bring these differences into our marriage union.
- God called us to serve each other and meet each other's needs wherever possible.

LEADERSHIP CONNECTION QUESTION

Q. What does serving someone who is very different from you have to do with Christ-like leadership?

RESOURCES FOR NEXT STEPS

- **Book**
This Momentary Marriage by John Piper
<https://www.desiringgod.org/books/this-momentary-marriage>
- **RightNow Media@Work**
The Meaning of Marriage
<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/408404>
- **Attend the Legacy Leadership Forums Marriage Retreat**