

# THE MUSIC OF MARRIAGE



**The Music of Marriage (Bible Study)**

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## INTRODUCTION

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# THE MUSIC OF MARRIAGE

Marriage is intended to be one man for one woman until death do them part. Marriage did not come by evolution or human design; instead the idea for marriage comes from God in Heaven.

In Matthew 19, the religious leaders asked Jesus a question about divorce. This is how He answered them:

**“Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ 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’? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matthew 19:4-6).**

All marriage counseling can be summed up in three terms Jesus used in this passage: leave, join (cleave in the KJV), and one flesh. We leave father and mother and cleave to each other. God describes this as one flesh; this is God’s plan for marriage.

The idea of becoming one flesh refers to several parts of the marriage relationship. Obviously, the physical intimacy of husband and wife leads to children. But the idea of “one flesh” also means psychologically and spiritually the husband and wife are one flesh. They are to be lovers and friends. A husband and wife are like a bow and a violin. Separately, they don’t make music, but together they do.

If you are married, make sure Christ is the head of your home and build your home on unconditional love for your mate.

If you are reading this study and you have failed—if there’s been infidelity or divorce—ask God to forgive you. If the breach wasn’t your fault, forgive your partner with God’s help.

The music of marriage is an illustration of what marriage ought to be. Even though the man sings one part and the woman sings the other, we sing the same song. In this study, we are going to learn how you can make your marriage a testimony to the world.

It is not love that keeps  
your marriage together;  
it is your marriage that  
sustains your love.

ADRIAN ROGERS



## WEEK 1

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# HARMONY IN THE HOME

### ■ INTRODUCTION

Marriage is not a man-made institution or a happy by-product of evolution. Marriage is sacred because it was designed by God. Each role, whether mother, father, or child, presents a special opportunity to glorify God in unique ways. Together, the people in a Christian home can be a light to the world.

In music, there are three parts: rhythm, melody, and harmony. The importance of rhythm is in singing together; it's at the center of any song. In the same way, Christ is to be at the center of our homes—the beat we all walk to. When we make music together, we sing the same melody and agree about the purpose of marriage. Even if we sing the same song, harmony is created when we sing different parts and fulfill different roles in the marriage relationship. This week, we're going to talk about the sacredness of marriage and what it takes to make harmony in the home.

Husbands and wives sing the same song, but we don't sing the same parts. The world wants to tell us that we are exactly the same, but God made us different. Genesis tells us that in the beginning, God made us male and female.

**So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (Genesis 1:27).**

### ■ PRAY OVER IT

*Dear God, Your perfect design for family roles is given to us in Scripture, but we have strayed far from it. I ask You to reveal that truth to me this week. Thank you for creating the marriage relationship and for Your unconditional love toward us. Thank you for creating men, women, and children with unique purposes to glorify You together in the home. In Jesus' Name, Amen*

# SACREDNESS OF MARRIAGE—LEAVE

## ■ PONDER IT

What did Jesus say about marriage? The Pharisees posed a difficult question to Jesus and asked Him about divorce. In answering that question, Jesus tells us about what marriage is intended to be—one man for one woman till death do them part.

**And He [Jesus] answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ 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’? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matthew 19:4-6).**

The first step in any marriage is to leave your family of origin and join yourself (cleave in the KJV) to your spouse. In English, the word “cleave” is unique and has opposite meanings—“to split apart” and “to stick together.” Here the Greek word means “to glue or fasten together.”

In child-parent relationships there are two kinds of love: “need love” and “need-to-be-needed love.” A baby loves father and mother because the baby *needs* the parent; not because the parents are wise or gentle or kind. Parents have children because they need to be needed. When you get “need love” and “need-to-be-needed love” the relationship between parent and child grows the way God intended. But then that child will grow.

The child will become more and more self-sufficient. Children want to establish their identities and to have some autonomy. This is not bad; it’s exactly what they’re supposed to do. They’re supposed to be men and women who want to serve the Lord, to start new families, and to raise godly children.

Sometimes when young people begin to assert their independence, their autonomy, we begin to create artificial needs to keep them dependent upon us in order to create “need love.” We don’t want them to leave and find others. Sometimes parents form unhealthy emotional ties to keep their children dependent because the parents still have the “need-to-be-needed love.” As a result, when the children are trying to break away and assert their independence and autonomy, the mother makes rules that are unnecessary, and the father builds hedges that don’t need to be there.

There are some restrictions that ought to be there to keep children from making big mistakes that are life altering. But you do need to allow your children to make mistakes and guide them along the way.

It may feel contrary to human nature, but as parents, we work ourselves out of a job, not out of a relationship. The tighter you hold young men and women, the more they’re going to want to get away. But when you release them, they don’t want to get away. When you release them, they may go off and get married, but they will come back as the best friends you’ve ever had.

#### ■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- What did “leaving and cleaving” look like in your family of origin? What does “leaving and cleaving” look like in your marriage? As you consider marriage, will you be ready to leave your family of origin and hold fast to your spouse?
- As a parent, what can you do to help your children be prepared to leave your home? What are the important lessons that you want them to learn before they leave?

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Your job as a parent, your chief assignment from God, is to prepare your children to leave home.

ADRIAN ROGERS

## DAY 2

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# SACREDNESS OF MARRIAGE—CLEAVE AND BECOME ONE FLESH

### ■ PONDER IT

The highest human relationship is not parent-child. The highest human relationship is husband and wife. We leave fathers and mothers, but we cleave to our mates. This is God's plan for us.

Your parents are not your supreme commitment. Yes, you are to honor your parents, and it is your duty to take care of them when they can't care for themselves. But, according to the Bible, neither your parents nor your children are your supreme commitment. Mate to mate is higher than parent to child or child to parent.

Many times parents say, "I want to give my children things I never had." It's great if you can do that, but make sure that you can also give your children the things you did have: lessons of honesty, decency, industry, and faithfulness. But eventually you have to work that child out of a home. The child has to learn to leave father and mother and cleave to his or her wife. This is difficult, but it is part of God's design.

The word "cleave" means "to weld or to glue." When a thing is welded together, it's many times stronger at that joint than it is at any other place. When you decide to get married, your job is to cleave to your spouse. Mentally, morally, psychologically, and spiritually, you become one flesh.

A husband and wife physically become one flesh for multiplication.

**So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply...'** (Genesis 1:27-28).

Having children is meant to be a blessing, but a growing number of young married adults have decided not to have children because they don't

want to give up their freedom or their money or their standard of living. But there is no higher standard of living than to have blessed children.

**We are also one flesh psychologically.** In our communication with each other, not only are we to be lovers, we're also to be friends. A man's wife is not to be his competitor; she's to be his completer. A husband and wife are like a bow and a violin. Separately, they don't make music; together, they do.

**We are also to be one flesh spiritually.** Pray together, have communion with God together. You haven't gone all the way with your spouse until you have the deepest marriage commitment, a love that leads to physical, psychological, and spiritual union and communion together.

#### ■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- Sometimes cleaving and becoming one flesh is difficult. What are some of the challenges your marriage has faced in this area?
- What does it mean to be one flesh physically, psychologically and spiritually in your marriage? What is God prompting you to do in order to experience more unity in your marriage?

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Whether you stay married or get divorced, every couple has problems. But there are no problems too big to solve; there are just people too small to solve them.

ADRIAN ROGERS

## DAY 3

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# CONDITIONAL VS. UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

### ■ PONDER IT

Marriage was made by Heaven, but marriages were marred by Hell. Look at what the Pharisees ask Jesus after he answers their first question about divorce.

**They [Pharisees] said to Him [Jesus], “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”**

**He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery” (Matthew 19:7-9).**

Moses in the Pentateuch gave provision for divorce. But this was not God’s prime purpose, not what God intended, not what God wanted. The phrase “sexual immorality” comes from a Greek word “fornea” (or fornication) and refers to sexual acts outside of marriage.

In this passage God *allowed* divorce in a case of fornication, but God did not *command* divorce. If you have an unfaithful husband or an unfaithful wife, it does not mean that you have to be divorced. Forgiveness and restoration are far better than divorce.

If love were a feeling you could fall in and out of, God wouldn’t have commanded us to love (see Ephesians 5:25 and Titus 2:3-4). What kind of a God would command us to do something we cannot do and then blame us for not doing it? Love is a choice.

When you were dating in high school or college and you told someone you loved her or him, what you were really saying is, “I want you to satisfy me.” We say we love each other because we like certain qualities we see in that person, and if we can acquire those qualities, then those qualities are

going to make us happy. But that kind of love is conditional, based upon personality, intelligence, popularity and beauty.

When you have this conditional love and get married, all of those certain qualities that you liked will eventually begin to fade. When you approach marriage with conditional love, it engenders certain emotions.

- **Fear**—When love is conditional, you think, “I’ve got to keep up the conditions that caused this person to love me to begin with.” You feel you must maintain certain qualities in order to keep your spouse.
- **Guilt**—When you can’t keep the conditions that caused you to fall in love, you feel like you have failed. You feel you’ve let your mate down.
- **Anger**—When that person no longer loves you because you don’t have those particular qualities that you used to have, you feel used and betrayed.

Biblical love goes far beyond emotion. It is an unconditional love, not performance-based love (see Romans 5:6, 8). Unconditional love provides security in the place of fear, peace in the place of guilt, and joy in the place of anger. The kind of love that keeps your marriage is the unconditional kind of love.

#### ■ **PUT IT IN WRITING**

- Is your love for your spouse conditional or unconditional? What would it look like for you to unconditionally love your spouse?
- If you are in a bad marriage, what are you going to do about it? What is the next step toward healing for you and your spouse? If your marriage has had problems in the past, what choices did you make that helped resolve those problems?

# DIVINE DESIGN FOR MARRIAGE

## ■ PONDER IT

We know that men and women are equal in the sight of God. The Bible tells us so.

**There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28).**

While God gives us each equal worth, He does not give us each the same function. If we all sang the same notes, the music of the home would be pretty boring. The beauty of the music of marriage is that we sing in harmony. Even though we have different functions and roles, we all are worthy of love and respect in the sight of God.

When we understand and celebrate our differences, we can find excitement and beauty in the marriage relationship. God created us with physiological, psychological, and emotional differences that perfectly complement one another. God made us different so that together He can make us one.

The Bible says, “two are better than one” (Ecclesiastes 4:9). In light of this truth, our differences are what make marriage beautiful. Let’s celebrate God’s special plan for marriage in making us each unique.

In order to understand the harmony of the home, we must understand God’s divine design. Read the account of the creation of Adam and Eve.

**And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him” (Genesis 2:18).**

In this verse, we see three reasons that God created Eve, and thus, three reasons for marriage.

1. **God made marriage for companionship.** God knew that Adam needed someone like him. Even Adam, who had face-to-face fellowship with God, was lonely. God saw Adam’s need for a human companion.

There is no sweeter, deeper, more wonderful companionship than what is found in marriage.

2. **God made men and women for cooperation.** Eve is described as a “helper.” She wasn’t just a friend; she was a co-laborer who helped Adam tend the garden. But even more than that, she would help Adam be all that he was created to be. She would enhance his life and help him to reach his full potential.
3. **God made women for the completion of men.** Eve completed Adam. Adam was like a violin without a bow. He couldn’t make the kind of music that he needed to make until he had a wife. She was meant to be his completer, not his competitor.

The harmony of the home starts with God’s divine design for marriage: companionship, cooperation, and completion of one another. Adam and Eve were both made in the image of God.

#### ■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- How does the world view equality between men and women? Have your experiences in a church or with other Christians taught you (directly or indirectly) that men and women are equal? Explain what has influenced your thinking on the equality of men and women.
- How does the world view the different roles and functions of men and women? What have you learned from church or from other Christians about the differences between men and women?

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Love is blind, but marriage  
is an eye opener.

ADRIAN ROGERS

## DEFINITE DIFFERENCE

### ■ PONDER IT

God made men and women differently on purpose. Our culture tries to blur the line of that distinction to say that there are no real differences between men and women, aside from a few physiological differences. This is simply not true.

**So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (Genesis 1:27).**

1. **Provider/ Helper**—God gave Adam the responsibility to tend and keep the garden as the provider. He created Eve to be his helper. Though the work may be shared by husband and wife, the burden of providing for the family rests mainly on the shoulders of the husband.

**Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it (Genesis 2:15).**

2. **Protector/ Nurturer**—In addition to being provider and helper, man and woman assume the roles of protector and nurturer. Adam was supposed to stand against all danger for Eve, and Adam failed Eve by not standing between Eve and the serpent. When God delivered the curse after Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the forbidden tree, God did not blame Eve; God blamed Adam. The woman reached for the fruit, but the man was held responsible.

**Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you saying, ‘ You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life” (Genesis 3:17).**

Even though Eve was the first one to eat the fruit, the Bible does not say that the sin came through Eve. God laid the responsibility at Adam’s feet, the one who was created first and given the command.

**Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned (Romans 5:12).**

Adam was responsible. In the Genesis account, it is implied that he was present with Eve when she took the fruit and did nothing to stop her. God made him to be the protector, and even today, men are to protect their wives and their children.

As the protectors of the family, dads need to learn how to say no. They need to set limits for the children—loving and responsible limits. They also need to help set limits to protect their wives. Husbands can support their wives in setting boundaries and managing time and family commitments.

#### ■ **BONUS**

Listen to Adrian Roger's message, *Harmony in the Home*, to hear an example of how he and his wife worked together in their marriage.



#### ■ **PUT IT IN WRITING**

- What is your response to your role in marriage?
- How would you describe the differences between men and women?

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A woman is infinitely superior to a man at being a woman, and a man is infinitely superior to a woman at being a man.

ADRIAN ROGERS

## CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES

### ■ PRACTICE IT

Marriage is made by God and sometimes marred by divorce. But marriage can be marked by hope. Many of us have marriages that have already failed, and divorce is not the unpardonable sin. God does not hold a grudge; God is not angry with you. If you've failed in marriage—just like if you've failed in any other way—God is merciful to forgive. Come to God and confess any sin, marriage-related or otherwise. When you honestly repent of it, you can receive Jesus (see Romans 8:1 and 1 John 1:7).

If you're living a life of sexual immorality—it is your lifestyle, your practice—and there's no remorse, no guilt, no shame, no repentance, God says you're going to Hell. But if you want to repent and turn away from your sin, God says that you can be justified in the name of the Lord Jesus.

**Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).**

A real marriage is a union of a man, a woman and Jesus Christ. Is God on the throne in your home as Lord and Savior of your household? If not, you can change that by inviting Jesus into your own heart.

*Dear God, I trust You as my Lord and Savior today. I want You to be on the throne of my home. I know that just like Adam and Eve sinned, I have also sinned against You. Forgive me for my sins. I believe that Jesus died on the cross for my sins and that He rose from the grave to conquer death. In Jesus' Name, Amen*

## ■ PROCLAIM IT

If you have friends who've been divorced or who've come from broken homes, don't look upon them as second-class citizens. Reach out to someone who is experiencing a broken home and be a friend.

What you preach about the home is not as important as what you practice. Letting others see what a godly Christian home ought to be may be the greatest lesson that you'll ever teach. Your children and the kids in your neighborhood need to experience godly family life. Find a young couple and invite them into your home and let them see what a faithful home ought to be.

Take some time to meet with another couple who can mentor or support you and your spouse as you learn about God's design for marriage. Every marriage song is unique, and we need all kinds of models.

If you accepted God's gift of salvation for the first time, please share your decision with another Christian you know or with your pastor. We would also like to hear about it so that we can provide you with free resources to help you grow in your new faith. Please let us know by going to [lwf.org/discover-jesus](http://lwf.org/discover-jesus), scrolling down the page and clicking on I BELIEVE.

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Nobody has sinned themselves  
beyond the love and grace of God.

ADRIAN ROGERS