

Hold It High

Hebrews 13:4

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I. Divine Design

1. Marriage is God's institution ^{Gen. 2:18–24}
 - a. Let the word of God set the values and expectations of marriage
 - Marriage is not a just a ceremony, paperwork or a business deal
 - Marriage is a sacred covenant between one man and one woman by which the two promise before God an oath of lifelong loyalty and love to one another, the sign and seal of which is sexual intercourse ^(Prov. 2:17; Ezek. 16:8, 59–62; Hos. 2:16–20; Mal. 2:14; Matt. 19:6)
 - Monogamy was the original design (one flesh-sarks) ^{Mark 10:7-9}
 - This was violated by Lamech and others which often led to dysfunction. ^(Gen. 4:19; 6:2; Dt. 17:17)
 - Resistance against marriage of it is noted as one of the marks of degenerate times ^(1 Tim. 4:3).
2. Leave, cleave and let no one come in between
3. Reasons for marriage
 - a. Companionship
 - Creation of male and female was very good yet alone ^(Gen. 1:31, 2:18)
 - Animals could not fill the void of human relationships
 - This is not to imply that you can't find companionships and satisfaction outside of a marriage as a single/ celibacy for Christian service ^(Mt. 19:10–12; 1 Cor. 7:7–9)
 - Together, they could find satisfaction in fulfilling the purpose for which God had created them.

- Companionship b/w husband and wife enables physical, psychological, mental, emotional, and spiritual health.
 - Companionship within marriage is expressed in acts of love. ^(1 Cor. 13:1-7)
 - b. Purity and procreation
 - Marriage is also for the purpose of producing and rearing godly children ^(Gen 1:28)
 - A stable marriage is the ideal structure to build a family within
 - Channel sexual expression in a Christ honoring way ^(1 Cor. 7:2-5)
 - Sexual intimacy is a part of God's *good* creation within the confines of marriage
 - Don't give the enemy access through the absence of intimacy
 - c. God's glory ^(Eph 2:10; 1 Cor. 10:31; Eph. 5:21-33)
 - Husband and wife are to display in their relationship the nature of our relationship with Christ
4. Marriage is a righteous replica
- a. The marriage relation is used to represent the union between God and his people ^{(Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:1-14; Hos. 2:9, 20).}
 - In the New Testament the same figure is employed in representing the love of Christ to his church ^{(Eph. 5:25-27).}
 - The Church is the "bride" of Christ ^{(Rev. 19:7-9).}

II. High Value Marriage

Honor- Respected, great in worth/value

1. Marriages are held in honor when those within it maintain their integrity and humility among all people in every circumstance
 - Consider each other above yourselves—Submit to and respect your husband, you can win him over with how you respond ^(1 Peter 3:1)
 - Be gentle and understanding with your wife ^(1 Peter 3:7-8)
2. Edification is the goal and harmony are the hope in conflict
 - Establish godly boundaries in conflict

- Tell the truth to each other and love well
 - Seek unity over uniformity
 - Be accountable to other entrusted believers
3. Generations are watching, be a great example

III. Keep It Clean

1. Purpose in passion
 - a. Six purposes of sex that constitute worship
 - 1) Procreation (Gen 1:26-28)
 - 2) Consecration (Hebrews 13:4)
 - 3) Consummation (Gen. 2:24)
 - 4) Recreation (Prov. 5:15-20)
 - 5) Protection (1 Cor. 7)
 - 6) Connection (Songs of Solomon)
2. Purity is still a priority

Unfiled- Ritually clean, contextually it means morally pure and without corruption

 - a. Sexual intimacy within a marriage should be unblemished by sexual sin
 - God desires us to be holy because he is (internally and externally)
 - Check your eyes, desire and motivations (Matt. 5:27)
3. Perversion leads to judgement

Fornicator- someone who practices sexual immorality

Adulterer- one who is sexually unfaithful to a spouse (internally or externally)

Judge- to examine fairly and condemn (1 Cor 6:9)

 - a. Sexual immorality has no boundaries (sinful enjoyment of self)
 - b. Infidelity breaks a home
 - c. There is forgiveness and cleansing for those who fall short (1 John 1:7-9)

UNFILED—CLEANLINESS

This was a matter of great importance to the Israelites because God required them to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exod. 19:6)

- Cleanness was thus fundamental to the establishing and preservation of holiness in the Israelite community.
- As distinct from all other nations, the Hebrews were provided with specific instructions concerning cleanness and how to recover it when it had been lost through carelessness or disobedience.
 - For the purpose of to avoid pagan idolatrous practices
 - preserving the separated nature of the Israelites in matters of food as well as in ethical and religious considerations.
 - hygienic aspects of the laws as a means of preventing the spread of infectious ailments.

Unclean persons transmitted their condition to whatever they touched so that others who handled such things became unclean also.

- **Cleanness had a specific moral dimension. Because God's priests were to be clothed with righteousness (Ps. 132:9)**
 - Thus to be clean meant not merely the negative aspects of being free from disease or defilement but the positive demonstration in daily life of God's high moral and ethical qualities of absolute purity, mercy, justice, and grace.
 - Ceremonial holiness thus involved distinguishing between clean and unclean.
 - Moral holiness required the Israelites to behave as a nation separated from the pollutions of contemporary society and to live upright and righteous lives in obedience to God's laws (Lev. 20:25–26).
- For the penitent transgressor a complex system of purificatory rites cleansed from both physical and moral defilement.
 - These involved various kinds of washing by water as a natural cleansing process (Lev 6:28; 8:6; 14:8–9; Num. 8:7; 19:9);
 - the use of ashes (Num. 19:17) and hyssop (Num. 19:18) for ritual and accidental contamination.
 - sacrificial blood, which made atonement for sin and reconciled the worshiper to God.
 - The Law established the principle that blood made atonement for human life (Lev. 17:11), and thus a blood sacrifice involved the highest form of purification (Lev. 14:6, 19–20) or dedication to God (Lev. 8:23–24).

- Yet even this form of sacrifice was powerless against sins deliberately committed against the spirituality of the covenant **(Num. 15:30)**.

Christ's atoning death as our great High Priest transcended all that the Law's cleansing rituals could ever be expected to do in the single offering of Himself for us on Calvary (Heb. 7:27)

- Sacrifices and offerings are now unnecessary, for what Jesus demands is a penitent spirit that confesses the merits of His atonement
 - cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7).