

Companionship in Marriage

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[0 : 0 0] towards her groom, towards her husband. And the statement is this, and this is my friend. And this is my friend.

You know, the title of the next few weeks we're going to be looking at here is married but not best friends. You know, because we're going to see here the importance of it because can you honestly say that your spouse is your friend?

You know, if you're married, you ought to be able to look at your spouse and say that person is my friend. Friendship is a foundational element of marriage.

If you're going to spend that much time with somebody, I'll give you a little clue, you'd better like them. You know, you ought to enjoy hanging out with them because when it comes to marriage and our spouse ought to be your best friend because God joins two into one flesh.

That means much more than just becoming lovers. It means joining our hearts, joining our dreams, joining our thoughts. It means being best friends. You know, take a look over into the New Testament for a moment.

[1 : 1 4] Look over to Titus chapter 2. Titus chapter 2, down here in verse 4. Titus chapter 2 and verse 4. And we're going to look here because notice what the Apostle Paul encourages the older women to teach the younger women.

Because that's really the other part of God's process is those with experience help those who are inexperienced to get experience and to do the right things that are going to benefit them.

And we're going to see here, notice what it says, that they may teach the young women to be sober. That's to think right. Because if you're not thinking right about marriage, it's going to hinder the marriage.

But notice that next phrase we're going to look at, to love their husbands and to love their children. Now the word love here is philandros, which means friendship.

This is not an erotic type of love. It's not anything like that. It's a friendship type love to teach the women to love, to be friends with their husbands. This is important that we're going to look at, this essential building block, because today there's a lot of marriages fail because the husband and wife fail to be friends.

[2 : 3 3] Or they may have once been friends and they let that friendship slip away. And so we need to grab a hold of the importance of this, those things that connect.

And we're going to see this because this is, we're not talking about romantic love, but a friendship kind of love. You might say that we could, the Bible translators could have said this, wives be friends with your husbands.

You know? To be friends with them because it's important. You know? Because when you understand that connection, Ephesians 5 verse 29 tells us this.

It says, So no man ever yet hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth it and cherisheth it, even as the Lord, the church. You know, the word cherish here means to delight.

Cherish means to delight in, to hold one another dear. You know? Literally to keep, to hold closely to keep warm. You know? Your spouse ought to be somebody that you keep warm with.

[3 : 35] That's literally what the Bible's telling us here. In this, it's talking about friendship. Now, oftentimes in today's society, there's people who say, well, I can't marry somebody I'm friends with.

That's a wrong thinking. Because if you can't be good friends, you can't be married. At least you're not going to be married very long. Because there's going to be a problem come up.

There's going to be some issues that come up in the relationship because you don't have that friendship and that foundation that's built. You know, I want you to understand, marriage is the highest level of relationship created by God between human beings.

Sometimes today people say it's the mother-child. I tell you, God created husband and wife first. The best thing, ladies, you can do for your children is to love your husband and your husband to love you.

That's the greatest thing you can do for your children. Because if you two together love your children, they'll have what they need. When they see a strong relationship in their parents, you know, that high level of relationship, so the friendship ought to reach its very zenith in the context of a marriage relationship.

[4 : 54] You know, but oftentimes today, I want you to understand, and we're going to talk to ladies and men here today, but ladies, sometimes it's easy for you to be drawn away from a relationship with your husband.

Ladies, I want to encourage you that no relationship you have with any other person should come as close to the relationship you have with your husband. Not even your children, not another lady, and certainly not another man.

You need to guard those things. Men, the same thing is for us. There ought to be no buddy that supersedes your wife. There ought to be no co-worker that supersedes your wife.

There ought to be no hunting partner or no secret treehouse fort buddy or whatever place you want to put them. I mean, nothing else should hinder that relationship because God has joined you together.

You are put together. You know, couples ought to be best friends. It's by no means a sure thing, though, because all of us quickly learn in life friendships don't happen by accident.

[6 : 06] Friendships that are maintained take work. They take effort. They take things to be involved. You know, when we understand that just because you made vows to one another, you know, just because you trade rings with one another, you know, just because somebody declared you a husband and wife doesn't make you friends.

I want you to understand that matter of fact, I believe true friendship is often strangely absent from a lot of marriages today. And it causes severe problems with not only within the marriage, but also our culture.

Because they're thinking about marriage is a problem. Because remember, remember what it says in Song of Solomon? This is my friend. She was speaking of her husband.

She knew that that was a place of friendship, a place of security. You know, when we understand, we can cultivate a wonderful friendship within our marriage.

You know, there's many, many reasons why marriages lack friendship. You know, friendship is often lacked. And this morning, we're going to look at the first one as we go through this here this morning, because we're going to look at this for a few weeks, because there's a lot to cover in this.

[7 : 30] But I think it'll be beneficial for you. You know, when we understand that whether you're young or old, married or single or even widowed, you can learn or help somebody else by understanding, encouraging them in this truth.

But we're going to look here. One of the things that I find today in relationships, a major cause of a lack of friendship in marriage is couples focus on physical contact in their dating relationship.

Physical contact prior to friendship becomes a problem, because you're building everything backwards. And when the physical takes priority in a romantic dating relationship, the friendship automatically stops growing.

Now, let's give you a little illustration, because we're going to give you an illustration from an ice cream sundae, okay? Because I want you to understand, the bowl is that intellectual union.

The bowl is the intellectual union. That's the friendship that you have with one another, to have that connection. You know, a bowl in an ice cream sundae, if you don't have the bowl, what happens to everything inside?

[8 : 46] It's hard to keep it together. That is that intellectual union. You might say the ice cream is that emotional union. You know, that's the sweet part.

You know, the big like, it turns to love, and you're all excited, you know, and all the things. And then you have the toppings. That's the spiritual union. You know, the shared goals and shared dreams, shared direction.

You know, when you get married, you need to be moving in the same direction. Especially when it comes to the things of God. If you're marrying somebody going in an opposite direction from God, you let them go.

Because you're not moving in the same direction. The whipped cream is that physical union after marriage. Now, here's the danger.

If you enter into a physical relationship before marriage, the other three parts stop growing immediately. Because God has them in an order for a reason. God has established those things for a reason.

[9 : 58] You know, because if you're dating and you skip to the last, all you have is whipped cream. You miss all the other things that are going to be beneficial that maintain the relationship.

You know? If you find yourself saying, I was physically attracted to this person, but I really don't know if I like them, there's a problem.

You know, if you don't at least like them, you're in trouble. It's going to be a long road. I want you to understand the importance as we look at this, because if you never grow together intellectually, emotion, or spiritually, you'll stand there with nothing but a handful of whipped cream.

And I'll tell you what, whipped cream gets old really fast. If you have any questions, you can talk to some of the people.

We used to have VBS offerings up here with the penny offerings, and the losers, we had a tradition of giving the other one a whipped cream pie in the face. And most of the time, about 20 minutes after the whipped cream hits you, you're going, eww.

[11 : 13] Because whipped cream by itself, without the rest of it, just isn't the same. It destroys very quickly instead of being a benefit to it.

You know? I believe it's a major contributing cause of a lack of marital friendship because premarital relations so commonly accepted and practiced and is rampant within our society.

The problem is, this is practiced and accepted amongst believers. they say, I have faith in God, but you know what?

They don't trust what God said. God gave us the directions for a reason. And if we follow His order of things, it will benefit you when we trust Him.

Do you have something, Gene? Yeah. Most young people, they're afraid of moving the person or dating that will never get anybody else, but they don't realize God has a plan for them.

[12 : 14] Yep. If you wait on the Lord, He'll bring the right one. You know? Good to hear the Martins, you know, meeting in church, that's a good place to meet. I like that.

That's a, you know, I often tell parents that too, you know? Your kids meeting somebody at church camp or at church or a church activity, there's a lot worse places to be shopping for a spouse than those locations.

There's no guarantee you're going to get a good one, but there are a lot better odds. You know? I'll just put it that way. There's still a lot of other elements in it, but you know what? If you want the best, you need to shop where the best are.

You know? You don't look for quality at the discount store. You know, you expect what you get from the discount store. You know, if you use it once and it falls apart, you're like, okay, it's a discount store.

You ought to seek, especially in marriage, to be shopping in the places that are going to have a premium spouse for you. That availability that is there.

[13 : 15] We'll move on from that one. But to the couple sitting here right now who know God is speaking to them in this matter, I hope it encourages you because not only is there a problem, but there's a solution.

Maybe the cause I just listed applies to you. Maybe it's a lack of friendship because of something else. It doesn't matter. There's hope. God doesn't want to punish you throughout the life of your marriage because you made some mistakes along the way.

God says those things can be corrected when they're dealt with in God's way. To rebuild those things in God's way and the way God put those things together. because the word we're going to look at here this morning for a few moments is a key word to focus on and that's companionship.

Companionship is directly connected with friendship. Companionship. What's meant by companionship? Well, let me share a story with you.

A guy and a girl meet and the guy likes to golf and the girlfriend likes to work out. But they like each other so they try each other's interests. They golf together and have a lot of fun and he tries to teach her the sport and she makes an extra effort to try and sometimes they go work out together even though it's not as fun to him as golf.

[14 : 37] But still, he's with her and that's what makes it great. So they get married and they start to take each other for granted and they fail to realize the importance of companionship after they get married.

They forget about the friendship, the courtship and that the way that you get them is the way you keep them. So girls start telling the guy to go do his thing while he's on the golf course.

She'll go work out. So now the guy is going to the one direction and the girl another. But after a while the guy meets another girl at the golf course. She's a good golfer. She really appreciates his love for the sport and wow, they have a common interest.

Meanwhile, a girl meets another guy at the gym and he's a real gentleman. Almost reminds her of the kind way she was treated by her husband when they were dating. And would you spot me on this machine?

And the guy says, sure. And what you have now, guys and girls are both cultivating relationships with other guys and other girls and deciding maybe they like them better than their spouse.

[15 : 40] One thing leads to another. It's all the devil's great design until finally something happens. The breakup ensues and it's all because the lack of companionship left them looking elsewhere for something more than what they could do and what do they look, what they looked for.

You know, someone they cannot only be married to but will also be what? Their friend. You know, we find friendship is important.

You know, to be a best friend, you know, and men likewise. You know, let's consider a few scriptures here this morning. Proverbs 18.24. Can you look that one up for me, Daryl, if you would?

Proverbs 18.24. And then I need Proverbs 27.9. Proverbs 27.9. Can you get that one for me, Matt, if you would? The Matt up front, not the Matt in the back.

And then so Proverbs 27.17. So if you can get verse 9 and verse 17. And then Acts 27 in verse 3.

[16 : 50] You got that one, Gene? Acts 27, verse 3. So let's read that. Proverbs 18.24. Okay. How about Proverbs 27.9?

Okay. And then verse 17. Okay. How about Acts 27 in verse 3? Okay.

So the one thing we find in these verses that connects with friends is friends spend time together. You know? Friends spend time together.

If you're going to be friends, you need to spend time together. Now, let's take a moment here because all of us probably have people that we call our friends but we're not as close to as we once were. And why are we not as close to them as we once were?

We're not spending time. Time with them makes a difference. You know? Because when we get together, when friends spend time together and want to be together, they grow fond, they stay connected, they have fun together, they talk together.

[18 : 21] They talk together. But you know, those things come about when how do you spend your leisure time going in different directions is always a problem. You know, a lot of marriages today, we have people that do two different things and they have nothing that they do together.

They have that common connection with one another. You know? As much as possible, we should do things together. You know? Now, I want you to understand what we're talking about here because there ought to be some things in your life.

Now, I know there's guys that hunt, you know, and it's like, well, my wife doesn't hunt. Well, that's okay. Didn't say you can't go hunting. It's just the fact you need to make sure you have something that you both do together that's not centered around your children.

Because let me give you a little advice. Your children will one day grow up and leave home. They're going to depart out of the scene and you're going to have an empty house.

That's the cause of the great divorce. Because they don't have a relationship with each other. They concentrate on their kids. When the kids leave, there's no basis for them to come together. Yep.

[19 : 34] Yep. That's exactly the dynamic. I mean, it's a, but you see it play out. You see it play out what? Time and time again in people's relationships. And it doesn't matter whether they're even in church sometimes.

You say, how does that happen? I've seen pastors that get divorces. Why? Because there's a problem in companionship.

They're not in it together. You know? I want you to understand it doesn't mean that she loves going antiquing, you know, and you despise it.

You know, if you don't like antiquing, then you're probably a normal guy. But sometimes there's things you need to do. She doesn't take me when they go shopping.

I just... Shopping is not our companionship, let me tell you that. We learned our processes right away.

[20 : 43] I'm a guy shopper. I'm like a hunter. This is where it's located in the store. We're going in the store. We're getting this. You know, unless you go to a really cool store, like a tool store, and then that's a different store. You know?

If you go to Sheels, that's an exception, okay? But the nice thing about Sheels, you can send them downstairs and you can go upstairs. Amen? Go look at the fish. But you know, I want you to understand that you can go do those things, but it ought not to be to the exclusion of spending time with one another.

You ought not to exclude or make that such a priority. It excludes that connection with one another because that connection is important.

That's the reason the Scripture makes it clear in there, this is my friend. That was a declarative statement that was a foundation of the relationship. To understand that dynamic of friendship, you know, it's talking about oftentimes that we need to, as men, we don't want to do, men who do what they want to do at the exclusion of their wives will have a problem because when we do things that separate us apart, instead of draw us together, there's going to be a disconnect.

We need to be careful of that a healthy marriage cannot operate that way. You know, this is the reason companionship is so important. Now, number one there, because it's, why is companionship so important?

[22 : 23] Number one, because it's unhealthy for a married person to spend the most enjoyable moments of their life in the company of somebody else. As a married person, you should be able to enjoy the company of your spouse and enjoy those moments of life, the things that you enjoy together.

You know, oftentimes we can get drawn away with different things. You know, and sometimes we can ask, you know, why did somebody even get married, you know, when the guy just wants to hang out with the boys all the time or sit and play on the computer?

And, you know, why did they get married? Sometimes the same for ladies. Why do they talk with their friends for hours on in and shop? And why do they even want a guy around when that's all they want to do?

You know, if the only time you have fun is when they're not around, then how in the world will you ever have a friendship together? You ought to have things that you enjoy together.

Find things that you do together. Maybe it's finding something different than either one of you think you like and go do it together. Do something together.

[23 : 41] You know, companionship is important. It forms closeness in a relationship. Some may say we don't have common interest. God made us different.

Well, I'll bet if you just pray about it, God will give you something you can both enjoy together. You know, you need to have that connection. That connection in marriage is what builds lasting marriages.

you know. We need to understand to not give up, but sometimes you're going to have to swallow your pride, push away selfishness, and pray that God would give you something you can do together.

Companionship is important because anything less is unhealthy in the relationship. Number two, companionship is important because pursuing your own self-interest without your spouse demonstrates selfishness.

You know, it's really sad when people who are supposed to be adults act like kids. When they say, if I can't do it my way when I want to do it, I'm going to pick up my toys and go home.

[24 : 55] You know, selfishness causes an unhealthy relationship because it doesn't help companionship. because it becomes one-sided in the relationship.

Gene? When I was first married, I was first strong and very selfish. It took me about 10 years to get older. I prayed and asked the Lord, but when I realized what I was doing, I guess it makes me more receptive to my wife's teeth.

I saw and I said, that's the way we're going and God did that. Amen. Amen. You know, and that's a testimony sitting there.

You know, that God can work through those things, can't He? You know, if we're willing to let Him and let Him do those things and you'll find that that is important, but companionship is also important because it will lead to a fulfilling marriage.

You know, you're either looking, are you looking to just fulfill yourself or to have a fulfilling marriage? You'll never be happier than when you strive to be a giver and not a taker.

[26 : 12] When you give more, it will make them want to be a giver which benefits you naturally and it all snowballs from there. You know, to do those things, to be fulfilling, you know, sometimes it's a common problem that sometimes we do have issues in life and things come up and we just deal with all the negative things, you know, instead of saying what are things going to be beneficial?

Because, you know, oftentimes, and this is another common scenario, a man has fun with people at work and he goes home to the washer is broken, the dog did his duty on the car, you know, you have a whole list of things that hit you at the door when you come in of all the things that happen, you know.

Then he spends his day off doing something else but only thinks his spouse in terms of survival and by just getting by, if they never have fun together, they'll always associate negative things with each other while they associate fun times with others.

You know, you need to do fun things together. That's what builds companionship, you know. to do things together. You know, God gives us a lot of things you can do together. I know people that, you know, do all sorts of different things together.

It might be going out camping together, you know. It might be doing different things, you know. We like going out and adventure and we go hunt waterfalls and go look at mountains and trees and things, you know.

[27 : 44] And I have a philosophy if it's worth going, you can drive there. If you know what I drive, you'll understand. If my Jeep won't make it, it's probably not worth going.

But that's just, you know, we joke around about that, but you know, it's something we do together. April and I do that together and we do other things together. We need to do, have something in common together that we do and just to enjoy spending time with one another.

You know, your relationship, you need to enjoy wanting to spend time with the other because the other thing in this is that companionship is important because shared experiences lead to shared feelings.

Shared experiences lead to shared feelings. Things you experience with somebody else connects you. You look back at those moments.

if God made two into one, then it makes sense that those two will do one thing together. You know, think about this as the Bible teach this.

[28 : 56] You know, consider what it tells us, Ephesians 5, 25. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. Sacrificial love.

Nothing is so important that you won't sacrifice it for her. You know? Guys, our relationship with our wives is important that we invest in.

Got to invest in that connection. You know, the problem is, I think oftentimes with guys, we get the idea we keep a conquer mentality even after we're married. Because it's almost like you spend a lot of effort to win them.

And then you've won them and it's like, okay, I've got that trophy, put it on the shelf and let's go do something else. The problem is, your wife, she's not a trophy, she's your wife. She's not an accomplishment, she's your wife.

You need to keep building that relationship. Keep investing in those things. You know, those things together. You know, you think about Ephesians 5, verse 26 says this, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, be holy and without blemish.

[30 : 10] So men ought to love their wives as their own bodies and he that loveth his wife loveth himself. You know, if you're going to love your wife and loving yourself need to be interconnected.

if you're one, to love her is to love yourself. It's for your benefit. It's for her benefit.

You know, it's a sanctifying love. It goes on in Ephesians in verse 29, it says, for no man hath yet hated his own flesh but nourished and cherished it even as the Lord the church. You know, when we understand this idea of one flesh, of what God is doing.

You know, that's a secure love and some people are insecure because they're not sure if their spouse really likes them as a friend. That friendship, that companionship is important and critical in a relationship in a marriage.

To maintain those things, to enjoy time together because shared experiences, shared connection build bonds.

[31 : 24] It's what connects people together and especially in marriage. And so we'll leave off there before we get into the next point next week. But, you know, think about your companionship.

You know, be observant, be thinking about those things of how that connects and how that importance of that in your relationship with your spouse.

And if you're single, you can think in context, how does that play out? What am I doing to prepare myself for that in the future? Because if you're going to get married, you'd best to be prepared before you get there.

At least a little bit. You're still not prepared. Marriage is an adventure that you... Because you never know where it might take you or what's going to happen.

But if you have the right foundation and the right connection and the right attitude, the right companionship with God, you can go through anything that you face as you're together.

[32 : 32] Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we come before you this morning, Lord, we just thank you and praise you for your word. And Lord, even the reality of just our spouse being our friend and even our best friend, Lord, that you might just help us to always be mindful of that essential nature of that connection there, Lord, that you might build those bonds with one another, Lord, even in the relationships here, Lord, that we might be mindful of those things and the importance of it.

And Lord, we just ask all these things in your precious name. Amen. All right. See everybody...