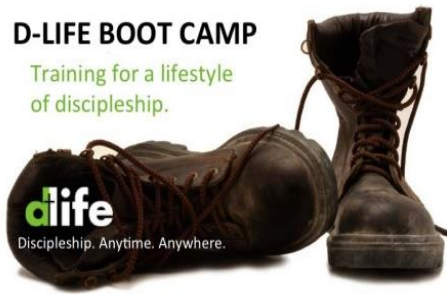


D-LIFE BOOT CAMP

Training for a lifestyle
of discipleship.



Keeping it Real

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Pastor Dale L. Crawley Sr.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

Rev. Deborah Crawley, Teacher
Sis. Tammi Crummy, Asst. Teacher

MARRIAGE - PART 2

By Don Krow

Today we're going to look again at the subject of marriage, and the question is, "What is marriage?" Have you ever thought about that? According to the Bible, it was God's idea to design marriage. **Marriage is a joining together, a oneness, a uniting.** Genesis 2:24 says, ***"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife [they will be joined, and he will cleave to his wife] and they shall become one flesh"*** (brackets mine, New International Version). Did you know that marriage is more than a joining, more than oneness? For example, 1 Corinthians 6:15-6 says if I go out, being a Christian, and join myself to a prostitute, I become one flesh with her. Then consider the quotation from Genesis 2:24 about marriage. Joining myself to a prostitute would not automatically make me divorced from my wife or make me married to the prostitute because I had intercourse with her. So, what is marriage? If marriage is a oneness, if it's a joining together, if it's becoming one flesh, what is the difference between that and going to a prostitute? Obviously, if you went into a prostitute, you would become one flesh with her.



The Bible does say that marriage is a oneness, a joining together, a uniting together, but it's more than that. It is a uniting together by a covenant. The word "covenant" in Hebrew is berith, and it has the idea of binding together. It's a final commitment of an individual, even a commitment till death do you part. Now, if I went into a prostitute, if I did such an evil sin as that, there would be no commitment on my part to her. The essence of marriage is to first of all forsake all others. The Bible says you shall leave your father and mother and you shall cleave to your wife. Ezekiel says, "You became mine." It's forsaking all others for this one—to commit yourself to this one. Obviously if you, in an immoral way, go to another person



when you are married, that would violate the principle of marriage, the oneness and unity that comes through a covenant, or commitment. Ezekiel 16:8 calls it a covenant of marriage. In Ephesians 5, we learn that in marriage, the husband is to love his wife, even as Christ loved the church, so it's a covenant of love. The reason it's a covenant of love is because love is the ruling principle in marriage. Above all things, love must be the ruling principle of marriage.



Marriage is a covenant of oneness. It says in 1 Peter 3:7 *that if I don't honor and appreciate my wife as being the weaker vessel and realize that we are heirs together of the grace of life, our prayers will be hindered.* Think about that—our spiritual lives could be hindered if we do not walk in the unity and harmony that God has designed for the marriage relationship. Proverbs 2:16-17

talks about a wayward woman who forsakes her marriage covenant, the guide of her youth, and that marriage relationship is called a covenant of her God. This is a very serious thing. It's a covenant we make to an individual, but it's also a covenant that we make before God. As much as I love to minister to people, God has a priority, and that is to focus on my marriage. Marriage really is a focusing of my life onto another individual, and as I said, the ruling principle is love.

Matthew 7:12 says whatever you would want someone to do to you, do to them, for this is the Law and the prophets. This is exactly the principle that should rule in marriage. It's not a selfish thing, not for self, not about what this person can give you. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 13:4 that love is kind. That means to seek the welfare of another, to be generous and kind, and to always seek the best for another. The reason marriage is designed that way is because it is an example, a model, of what a real relationship with God should be. He has given us illustrations in the natural. He has shown us how to have a good marriage, a great marriage, because He wants us to have a model of what a real eternal relationship is to be with Him. Marriage is only until death do us part, a temporary thing. The Bible says that in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage. God wants us to understand a good marriage—the principles of love—the principles of giving unselfishly to another. He is saying, "What I want you to really understand is that I've called you into a marriage relationship with Me—not a temporary relationship, not one that will just last a few years and then be gone, but an eternal relationship where all of My love will be manifested to you forever and ever."

Let me give you a few principles of marriage. Marriage is a merger, not just a partnership. The Bible talks about it in Genesis 4 as a knowing and in 1 Peter 3:7 as being heirs together of the grace of life. Marriage is a covenant, which means it is binding; there's a commitment involved. Sin did not enter the first church; it entered the first marriage, so we need to get the manual, get the instructions about marriage, and

implement the principles of love in our lives. We also ask, “**What is love?**” The definition of love is really, in a sense, unselfishness. Isaiah 53:6 says we are like sheep, that we went astray and turned everyone to our own way, but in marriage, we focus on the other individual and seek their welfare and benefit.

The Bible tells us in Ephesians that *loving your wife is like loving your own body*. We husbands are to cherish and honor the wife God has given to us, which means to appreciate her. To love your own body doesn’t mean you sit around and hold hands with yourself, pat yourself, and say, “Oh, I love you.” It’s not that at all. To love yourself is to protect yourself, feed yourself, and look out for yourself. We should never take our wives for granted, never take one of her weaknesses and expose it publicly, never make fun of her, or do things that hurt her. We’re to love her as we love our own selves.

Lift yourself up to God in prayer, and first of all, thank Him for loving you. Then, thank Him for your partner, the mate He gave you. That could be part of the problem. You may not have appreciated your mate, you may have put him or her down, and the Bible says that is basically selfish and is sin. It says in Ephesians 5 that Jesus cleansed the church by the washing of water by the Word, by His Words He spoke over the church. When you speak words over your mate, they will rise to the level of the words you speak. If you say “You’re no good, you’re ugly, you’re overweight,” you will suppress your marriage and not cause oneness but separation and alienation.

But if you speak words of kindness like “**Honey, I appreciate the things you do. I appreciate you. I love you,**” and back them up with your actions, your mate will rise up to the level of those words.

Can’t you see today that a lot of the problems in your marriage relationship are the words you’ve spoken? Have you brought your mate down rather than up? I encourage you to speak good words over your mate today. Love is not a feeling; love is seeking the welfare and benefit of another person regardless of how you feel. Begin today with acts of kindness, just like painting several layers of lacquer on a piece of wood. That’s how love is built—by little acts of kindness. Start to esteem, honor, value, and speak words of love over your mate, and you’ll see a difference. God bless you as you implement these principles.

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Read Proverbs 18:22. Marriage is:
 - A. A good thing
 - B. Terrible
 - C. Pleasing unto the Lord
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2. Read Hebrews 13:4. Sex in marriage (or the marriage bed) is:
 - A. Sin
 - B. Dirty and evil
 - C. Undefined
 3. Read Ecclesiastes 9:9 (*New American Standard Version*). True or False: A godly marriage is a gift and reward to you in this life from the Lord.
 4. Read 1 John 3:18 (*New Century Version*). “Judge Phillip Gilliam stated that of the 28,000 juvenile court cases that he judged, the lack of affection between father and mother was the greatest cause of juvenile delinquency that he knew” (Together Forever, p. 152). How are we to show love?
 5. Read Ephesians 5:28. True or false: I am not to neglect my wife any more than I neglect my own body.
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