

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

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The Ethnics of Marriage

Bible Study Handout: Marriage – A Covenant Before God

I. Introduction

Marriage is a sacred covenant established by God. It reflects Christ's relationship with the Church and is meant to glorify Him through love, commitment, and unity.

II. Biblical Foundation of Marriage

1. Marriage as God's Design

- Genesis 2:24 – "**Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**"
- Matthew 19:4-6 – Jesus reaffirms that marriage is a divine union that should not be separated.

2. Essential Elements for a Marriage to Occur

- **Covenant Commitment** – Marriage is not just a contract but a lifelong covenant before God (Malachi 2:14).
- **Love and Selflessness** – Ephesians 5:25 calls husbands to love their wives sacrificially.
- **Unity and Partnership** – Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 emphasizes the strength of two people working together.
- **Faithfulness** – Hebrews 13:4 underscores the importance of keeping marriage honorable and pure.
- **Public Acknowledgment** – Marriage is to be recognized and honored within the community (Ruth 4:9-11).

3. Roles Within Marriage

- Ephesians 5:22-25 – Husbands are called to love their wives as Christ loved the Church; wives are to respect and submit to their husbands in love.

- Colossians 3:18-19 – Husbands should not be harsh, and wives should submit as is fitting in the Lord.
4. **The Purpose of Marriage**
- Proverbs 18:22 – "**He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.**"
 - Malachi 2:15 – God seeks godly offspring through marriage.

III. The Value of Sexual Intimacy in Marriage

1. **A Gift from God** – Sexual intimacy is designed to unite a husband and wife (Genesis 2:24).
2. **Expression of Love and Oneness** – 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 teaches that spouses should fulfill each other's needs.
3. **Prohibited Outside of Marriage** – Hebrews 13:4 and 1 Corinthians 6:18 warn against sexual immorality because it **dishonors God** and damages the soul.
4. **Spiritual and Emotional Bonding** – God designed intimacy to create a deep connection within the covenant of marriage (Song of Solomon 4:9-10).

IV. Living Together Before Marriage

1. **Biblical Guidance** – The Bible does not explicitly mention cohabitation, but it strongly warns against sexual immorality (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5).
2. **Honoring God's Design** – Hebrews 13:4 calls believers to honor marriage and remain sexually pure.
3. **Avoiding Temptation** – 1 Corinthians 6:18 urges believers to flee from sexual immorality, which often accompanies cohabitation.
4. **Commitment and Covenant** – Marriage is designed to be a public covenant before God and others, not just a private arrangement (Malachi 2:14).

V. The Bible's View on Singleness

1. **Singleness as a Calling** – 1 Corinthians 7:7-8 highlights that both marriage and singleness are gifts from God.
2. **Devotion to the Lord** – 1 Corinthians 7:32-35 teaches that single individuals can focus more fully on serving God.
3. **Contentment and Purpose** – Philippians 4:11-13 encourages contentment in every season of life.
4. **Singleness is Not Inferior** – Isaiah 56:4-5 reassures that God honors those who faithfully serve Him, whether married or single.

VI. Safeguards Against Adultery

1. **Faithfulness to God's Word** – Proverbs 5:15-20 encourages couples to find satisfaction in their spouse alone.
2. **Accountability** – Having trusted Christian mentors or friends can help keep marriages strong (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10).
3. **Guarding the Heart** – Matthew 5:28 warns against lustful thoughts that lead to sin.
4. **Prioritizing Marriage** – Spending quality time together and maintaining emotional closeness strengthens bonds (1 Corinthians 7:5).
5. **Prayer and Spiritual Unity** – Couples should pray together regularly for strength and protection (Philippians 4:6-7).

VII. Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean for marriage to be a covenant before God?
2. How can we apply biblical principles to strengthen our marriages?
3. How does a godly marriage reflect Christ's love for the Church?
4. What challenges do marriages face today, and how can Scripture guide us through them?
5. What are the essential elements for a marriage to occur, and why are they important?
6. Why does Scripture place a high value on sexual intimacy within marriage but prohibit it outside of marriage?
7. Should the Bible's definition of marriage apply to all cultures and all societies? Why or why not?
8. What safeguards can help protect a marriage against adultery?
9. Is it wrong for a couple to live together prior to marriage? What does Scripture say about cohabitation?
10. What does the Bible say about singleness, and how can single individuals glorify God in their lives?

VIII. Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of marriage. Help us to love, serve, and honor our spouses as You have called us to. May our marriages reflect Christ's love and bring glory to Your name. Amen.