

## **Christ: The Center of Your Marriage (1)**

Genesis 2:23-25; Proverbs 18:22; 5:18-21; Ecclesiastes 9:9; Ephesians 5:18-33

Marriage: the fantasy of most, the disappointment of many, the perfection of few. For those who dream of great things in a life of marriage, hope runs high. For those who try and are disappointed, the way grows darkened. Ultimately, those who spend their lives together in ever increasing union and blessing seem a rarity. So, how can two be one and partake of the blessing?

If there is a secret to a life of union, what is it? The only way for one to live is for both to die. If two live, there is conflict. If one dies there is toleration. If both die, life will come; peace will come and both can rejoice. How can we die and then live? Quite simply, when each one firstly pursues a constant relationship with the Lord, the overflow of such enjoyment rises higher than selfishness and all manner of conflicts. To find each other, be always seekers of the Lord.

Some couples seek out a center of common interests as they search for a "happy marriage". Some want to have a child to "save" the marriage so they can have a new and common center. Some develop a family life centered around children and sports and school; other on their family business or farm or remodeling projects. It seems these things bring a measure of unity, but are they not temporary? What will happen when things change or your children grow up and leave home? Will you let Christ be your practical center? How? When?

### **The biblical principle of union and its center of life:**

1. What are examples of good and bad marriages in the O.T.? (Gen. 6:9; 7:7; I Kings 21:25)
2. What is an example of an agreeable marriage, but not centered on Christ? (Acts 5:1-11)
3. What is an example of a couple centered on Christ for the church? (Romans 16:3; I Corinthians 16:19; 7:32-35).
4. How is marriage union a picture of Christ and the church? (Ephesians 5:18-33).

### **Questions for prayer, consideration and fellowship:**

1. What is the purpose of marriage, according to the scriptures? (Genesis 1:27a).
2. What is the picture of marriage in the creation of Adam and Eve? (Gen. 2:18-24).
3. Why do two people "in love" still need a central focus in their home?
4. If Christ is not your personal center, can He be the practical center in your home?
5. What does it mean that "a relationship with Christ is the most important of all things"?

### **Suggestions:**

1. Help each other make time alone with God in His Word a daily priority.
2. Encourage each other daily with kind words from the Lord and from your heart.
3. Let your love for the Lord spill over in your home atmosphere, not in words only.
4. Learn the difference between making Christ your center and marriage your center.
5. Compare your marriage with how Jesus loved the church so much He gave up His life.

(by Richard A. Nelson/www.Mstarpublishing.com/July 2008)