

# "One"

**Introduction.** Have you ever wondered what the Bible meant when it said, "... and they shall be one flesh" in Genesis 2:24? As used in the relationship of marriage, "one" means to "unify" or to be "united." The use of the word "flesh" in translations often leads to improper or incomplete interpretations. The Hebrew word refers to more than just a physical union. When they unite in marriage, the man and woman create a new family.

"One flesh" must be interpreted in light of vs. 23. In human history's first marriage, the woman was literally formed from the man's bone and flesh. Even though later marriages do not involve such a direct, divine operation, the first marriage sets the pattern for how later marriages are to be understood and explains why marriage supersedes the parent-child relationship.

Marriage is the deepest physical and spiritual union of man and woman; it is a vital communion of heart and body. There are at least three important ways in which husbands and wives are "one," and it will strengthen our marriages if we are reminded of these three, or if we are exposed to these three for the first time.

## I. **One In Aim**

- A. Jesus and the Father had one aim -- to save men from sin (John 17:20-21).
  1. "One," as Jesus used it, referred to the intimate solidarity and spiritual accord founded upon perfect love and confident trust.
  2. The marriage relationship is to be of solidarity and spiritual accord founded upon perfect love and confident trust in one another (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).
- B. Jesus' "unity" with the Father cost Him dearly on a personal level -- His glory and life. "Oneness" in a marriage will cost us dearly -- our individuality.
  1. We can no longer be selfish or "me" centered. Marriage is not a "me" but "we," and "we" are one.
  2. The aim is to please our mates and make the marriage last "until death do us part" at all personal cost.
- C. There are a few important goals which must be decided before one marries.
  1. Moral goals: Is the person you are dating deceitful (Psalm 24:3-4)? Are they fornicators (Mark 7:21-23)? Are they faithful Christians (Revelation 2:10)? I am not denying that someone can change, but recognize a red flag for what it is.
  2. Family goals: How will children be disciplined (Proverbs 22:15; 29:15)? What "faith" will they practice (Ephesians 4:4; Colossians

- 1:18)? Will mom stay home with the children or work outside the home (Ephesians 6:4)?
3. Financial goals: Who and how will our money be handled (1 Timothy 6:10)? Will it in part be used for spiritual purposes (2 Corinthians 9:6-7)?
  4. Career goals: Will the parents choose to make a living in a way that the good of the family will be best served (1 Timothy 5:8)? Can I be content with less for the good of my family (Philippians 4:11)?
- D. It was always sad to listen to Dr. Laura Schlessinger's radio program and hear callers tell horror stories of how their mates acted before marriage. When asked if there were any signs of bad behavior when they dated, the answer was almost always, "Yes."

## II. ***One In Relationship***

- A. Marriage is a indissoluble relationship of two different individuals in life and fortune, comfort and support, desires and inclinations, joys and sorrows. It brings two lives together so intricately and closely that they are said to be "one."
- B. In this relationship, love should be so strong for the other that we will happily put them first, just like we will happily put God first (Matthew 6:33; Luke 14:26). When you leave father and mother, it may seem harsh, but God said to "cleave" to your new mate. We need to honor and father and mother as long as we live (Ephesians 6:2-3), but we join ourselves and seek the good of our mate in marriage.
  1. Roger Zerbe, who suffered from early onset Alzheimer's disease, journaled this to his wife after a particularly troubling bout of forgetfulness. He wrote, "Honey, Today fear is taking over. The day is coming when all my memories of this life we share will be gone. You and the boys will be gone from me. I will lose you even as I am surrounded by you and your love. I don't want to leave you. I want to grow old in the warmth of memories. Forgive me for leaving so slowly and painfully."
  2. Blinking back tears, his wife Becky wrote, "My sweet husband, I will continue to go on loving you and caring for you -- not because you know me or remember our life, but because I remember you. I will remember the man who proposed to me and told me he loved me, the look on his face when his children were born, the father he was, the way he loved our extended family. I'll recall his love for riding, hiking, and reading; his tears at sentimental movies; the unexpected witty remarks; and how he held my hand while we prayed. I cherish the pleasure, obligation, commitment, and opportunity to care for you because I remember you!"

- C. God made the woman out of the man so that the husband will always consider and treat his wife as a part of himself; and as no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and supports it, so should a husband deal with his wife (Ephesians 5:28-29). On the other hand, the woman should consider that the man was not made for her, but that she was made for the man; therefore the wife should reverence her husband (Ephesians 5:33).
- D. This does not mean that there are equal roles for husbands and wives. While we are one in Christ (Galatians 3:28), the husband has the dominate role (1 Corinthians 11:3) and the wife has the submissive role (Ephesians 5:22). Our culture wants to change the roles, but you will never be happier than when you are satisfied with God and His roles.

### III. ***One In Desire***

- A. "One flesh" also of course relates to an intimate relationship. A husband and wife should only desire one another (Proverbs 5:15-18). More and more people seem to forget Henry Ford's advice when asked on his 50th wedding anniversary for his rule for marital bliss and longevity. He said, "Just the same as in the automobile business, stick to one model."
- B. If a man or a woman step outside the marriage relationship for sexual gratification or fulfillment, Paul says they are joined to an harlot (1 Corinthians 6:15-17).
  - 1. Christians are part of the body of Christ and the utter horror of uniting Christ to a harlot should make someone flee fornication. Fornication unites the personalities of the participants in the same way as being a member of Christ unites one with Him.
  - 2. The sexual relationship is so intimate that a person becomes one spirit with their partner. The personalities merge in the sexual act. The fornicator becomes more and more like the harlot in thought and attitude as he persists in the sinful relationship.
- C. Marriage is for life, and unlawful divorce should never be an option (Matthew 19:9). You should consider the two of you as one body, and for no one else. When we step outside the marriage "oneness" for sexual gratification, in any form, we break the "one flesh" of the husband and wife relationship, and will be judged (Hebrews 13:4).
- D. Although our culture is quickly accepting homosexual marriage, it could not be clearer that this is wrong (Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

**Conclusion.** How are we doing? As a society, the track record may appear horrible, but a Love and Marriage Gallup study conducted for

*Psychology Today* is encouraging because 80% said they would marry the same person if they had to do it over again. Over 80% of all married men, regardless of age, said their wife is good-looking. Three-quarters of married people said their spouse is their best friend, and 75% of those questioned said divorce is "not at all likely." Couples who live together before marriage are less likely than those who did not cohabit to say their marriage is very happy. Couples who have had premarital sex are also less prone to say their marriage is very happy. Agatha Christie once said, "An archaeologist is the best husband a woman can have; the older she gets, the more interested he is in her!"

You can be "one" with Christ today, too. To be "one" with Christ you must hear, believe, repent, confess Christ as Lord, and be baptized into Him. We are related to Christ just as closely as our spouses when we become Christians (Romans 7:4; 12:5). When we step outside of Christ we are no longer one, but have become one with the "great harlot" of sin (Revelation 19:2). Live a life of faith until death takes you. Then you can be with God for eternity.