

Discussion Starter: Is Valentine's Day a good or a bad holiday for you? Why?

Is a sermon and discussion series about marriage a hard topic for anyone to get excited about? Why or why not? If it does not apply to you right now directly, how is a biblical worldview on marriage still an essential component of your growing in God (*able to counsel/guide your friends, kids, and/or grandkids; able to be prepared when/if God opens the door for you in the future, etc.*)?

Prayer

Key Passage: **Genesis 2:15-25**

What foundational points for God's perspective on marriage can you list that are touched upon in this passage?

Discussion Questions:

In a culture that frequently claims that marriage is "old-fashioned" and "out of date," what are some of the purposes of marriage (*combat loneliness, unconditional acceptance/love, vulnerability, happiness, etc.*)? How are some of these purposes lost when a man and woman live together without the marriage commitment? How could a pre-nuptial agreement actually undermine the purposes of the marriage that it is trying to protect?

How would you help a couple discern whether or not they are ready to get married (*make sure conversation includes being ready to commit for a lifetime – no matter what you have to do, no matter how much time it takes, or how much it costs financially*)?

Read **Genesis 2:24** again. Pastor Ramel quoted a statistic that claimed 90% of marriage problems stem from the spouses failing to separate sufficiently from their parents. Describe a time when you experienced trouble in your relationship or created trouble in your child's relationship by not following this principle. How did you learn from this experience? Try to get at least one story/scenario from each perspective.

Pastor Ramel made the point that your relationship with your spouse comes second only to your relationship with God. What other relationships or priorities are mostly able to supplant your spouse from his/her rightful priority? As you mention a potential problem, take the time to discuss parameters/safeguards to keep that thing from rising above your spouse.

What are some ideas for cultivating a spiritual life as a married couple? If it is true that "the more I love God, the more I love my spouse," how do you help/encourage your spouse to grow in Christ? How does this dynamic look/change when the spouse that you are seeking to influence does not have a personal relationship with Christ like you have?