

Sidetracked: Marriage
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Reflection & Discussion Questions

Many of us get sidetracked spiritually about our understanding of marriage

We live in a culture that has made an idol out of marriage, family, and romance.

*How do you see this to be true in our culture, the church, in your life?

*Why might our cultural ideals about marriage sidetrack us spiritually?

The Bible introduces something that looks like marriage almost right away

Read and discuss Genesis 2:18-25(NIV)

18 The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

19 Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. ²¹ So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

²³ The man said,

"This is now bone of my bones

and flesh of my flesh;

she shall be called 'woman,'

for she was taken out of man."

²⁴ That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

²⁵ Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

*What does this passage say about the original ideal for marriage?

*How do we see marriages change after Genesis 3? Knowing this, what can we reasonably expect out of marriage?

God's ideal for marriage functions in the same way as God's perfect law

The goal for Christian marriage is to experience the grace of God and represent that to your spouse.

*If you are married, how has it revealed your need for grace? How have you experienced God's grace in your deeply flawed marriage?

Both marriage and singleness exist biblically to form us in the image of Christ; they are both blessed

Read and discuss I Corinthians 7:32-34 (NIV)

³² I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord. ³³ But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife— ³⁴ and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband.

*What does this passage say about marriage and singleness?

*Why do you think the church has seemed to think or act negatively about singleness at times? How is being single a blessing?

The narrow path in finding wholeness in the mercy and love God has for you

His grace can heal our hearts, so we are capable of being able to see, know, and love another sinner.

*How is the heart of marriage for every person, not just those with a spouse?

*How have you been on the sidetrack of looking for a relationship other than with Him to make you whole?

*What is the Spirit saying to you about the narrow path that leads to life-giving relationships?