



Leaving and Cleaving

By Bryan Trotter on May 23, 2022

TODAY'S READING: Mark 10

"But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate" (Mark 10:6-8).

Marriage is no joke! Marriage is full of very rewarding and very frustrating experiences. It has high highs and low lows, yet God uses it to refine us into the image of His Son. Marriage isn't mankind's creation but was created and instituted by God. The love between a husband and wife is the best earthly example of the agape, unconditional love God has for mankind.

Marriage is the union of two very different people bringing different ideas, experiences, expectations, dreams, love languages, etc., into their relationship. The two individuals become one flesh. This doesn't mean just one physically but one emotionally and spiritually. For me, this description of marriage sounds like a recipe for disaster. How can two people who are so different become one flesh? We become one by leaving and cleaving.

As I read this text, I am reminded of something a counselor once told me. When we leave families to become married, we are not just changing our address. We are leaving behind our familial dysfunction. No family or marriage is perfect, so the husband and wife leave behind the dysfunction of their families so that they don't bring the prior dysfunction to their marriage. This is leaving and cleaving, we leave the past expectations, dysfunction, experiences, etc., and hold fast to our spouse to become one flesh. This is not always an immediate process. It may take years or decades to break the cycles of dysfunction from your family, but it is so worth it!

Marriage is hard! Chris and Jamie Bailey of Expedition Marriage have compared working on your marriage to pushing a bowling ball up a hill. It takes constant work to keep your marriage from going downhill. The cost of investing in a healthy, God-honoring marriage far outweighs the cost of living in bitterness with a miserable marriage. Being miserable in marriage is not how God designed it or wants us to live. It is NEVER TOO LATE to invest in your marriage. Begin praying for your spouse today. Find resources to grow together. Reach out to a pastor or counselor to begin a conversation to improve your marriage. You can do it and God can give you the strength to love your spouse as He loves you, unconditionally.

TOMORROW'S READING: Mark 11

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