



# Managing GOD's Money

Theme for the May: The Family

Despite persistent, vicious attacks on the traditional family by Governments and others in society, God's ordained roles for the family and family members apply today. Stand firm; don't let Governments' ill-conceived anti-traditional family policies deceive you. Always remember popular policies don't equate with morally acceptable policies. God's Word is the only authority for moral absolutes. This month, we will review God's Word to learn about the traditional family under these headings:

- May 1-7 - *The Husband: Servant Leader*
- May 8-14 - *The Wife: Partner and helper*
- May 15-21 - *The Parent and Child: Relationship building*
- May 22-31 - *The Family Council: Essential teaching and learning medium*



Topic for the Week: The Husband: Servant Leader

May 1-7

## The Word



### Genesis 2:23-25

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." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

These verses remind us of God's original, permanent marriage covenant: the man leaves mom and dad, cleaves to his wife, and both become inseparable, one flesh. The Old Testament abounds with teachings

about the holiness and permanence of marriage. Those in society who want to update marriage and make it temporary and more relevant should note that's against God's plan.

### Marriage: One Man, One Woman

Today, feminism, machismo, self-centeredness, ignorance, arrogance, and other reasons have led to no-fault divorce, and other means of ripping the family apart. Those proposing this course, in their continuing ignorance, have not tried to understand God's best for the family unit. Neither have they counted the huge direct and indirect social and emotional divorce costs. Listen to Jesus' reply to the Pharisees in Matthew 19:4-6:

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore

what God has joined together, let man not separate."

When you interpret this passage with God's words in Malachi 2:16, "I hate divorce," His original plan for marriage becomes even clearer: God designed a permanent marriage between one man and one woman. Not liking His answer to their trick question, the Pharisees continued to question Jesus in Matthew 19:7-8:

"Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning.

The Pharisees got it wrong. Nowhere in the Pentateuch, did Moses "command" using a divorce certificate. The Pharisees referred to the only two references to the certificate of divorce cited in the books of Moses in Deuteronomy 24:1-4; but they were not "commands." Moses' mention of the certificate of divorce

merely recognized the existing practice as he addressed remarriage; he was not presenting God's law on divorce. In Deuteronomy 24:1-4 below, notice Moses did not "command" divorce, as the Pharisees claimed:

If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, and if after she leaves his house she becomes the wife of another man, and her second husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, or if he dies, then her first husband, who divorced her, is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled. That would be detestable in the eyes of the LORD. Do not bring sin upon the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Though not part of God's plans or laws, men, not women, issued divorce certificates; but Deuteronomy 24 doesn't state allowable grounds.

Moses didn't rebuke divorce, but he didn't excuse it. In Matthew 19:7-8, Jesus explains plainly Moses allowed the practice because of "hard hearts," suggesting prolonged, calculated, and unrepentant rebellion.

The believer in Jesus shouldn't cite Moses' certificate of divorce to escape his marriage vows. Christians who believe "irreconcilable differences," adultery and other difficulties give them "grounds for divorce" should realize that's not God's best. They need to accept the Bible doesn't include "commands" for divorce, because God designed marriage to be permanent.

We should enter marriage accepting its permanence and realizing God's grace is enough to solve all challenges. Husband and wife need to

surrender all areas of their lives to Jesus. Nobody's circumstance is too difficult for God to fix in His time, in His way.

We can learn from prophet Hosea's circumstances: it was real and a picture of God's relationship with the nation of Israel. Meant to display God's redeeming love for the nation of Israel, it shows also essential **traits** a marriage need. God told Hosea to take a prostitute for his wife even though she was "still in sin" (Hosea 1:2-3; 3:1); Hosea obeyed. He didn't tell God he couldn't, because sexual immorality was one of the grounds for divorce! He just did it; displaying traits every marriage needs: **obedience to God**, grace and forgiveness.

The key here is **obedience to God**, not to our own fleshly wishes and intellect. If one spouse asks the other to break God's laws, the spouse being asked need to turn to God and obey Him. Only a secure personal relationship with Christ will allow us to ignore man's reactions as we follow Jesus always. The question for each of us today is this: Are we prepared to accept His solutions and His timetable, especially when they appear counterculture, even threatening our pride?

In certain abusive conditions in the marriage, the abused party should not remain physically with the abuser. But, the believer is not to divorce his or her spouse (1 Corinthians 7:10-14) but should release the unbeliever if so requested.

### Man's Role In The Marriage

Let's examine some key parts of man's role in the marriage, which God ordained to allow the marriage to work under His direction. Though Adam's sin broke the perfection God created, through the power of the Holy Spirit, man can fulfill His role. In Ephesians 5:23, Paul wrote:

For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

God ordained the man to be His representative in the marriage; he is to set the tone in the marriage by his godly leadership. Men, do we understand this? It means we must be unselfish, loving, caring, kind, merciful, gracious...shall I continue! When we grasp this vision, our wives will yearn for this servant leadership (Luke 22:26-27).

By God's grace, understanding and accepting this role will help husband and wife keep their focus on Jesus and away from circumstances, lawyers, and bad counsel. It's the only way to escape unbiblical advice and remain faithful to the marriage covenant.

Apostle Peter's comments in 1 Peter 3:7 must grab our attention. Read carefully:

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so nothing will hinder your prayers.

Obedying this instruction removes one hindrance to answered prayers. But the man's responsibility doesn't stop there. He must love his wife the way Christ loves the church, ready to die for her (Ephesians 5:25). Besides, husbands would do well to pay attention to these two admonitions:

- **Colossians 3:19:** Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.
- **Ephesians 5:28-29:** In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—

Husbands must provide for their families. In 1 Timothy 5:8 Apostle Paul explains:

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Not only is the husband to “provide” financially for his family, but also he is to “respect” his family.

## Application



### Genesis 2:18-22

<sup>18</sup> The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

<sup>19</sup> Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. 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.

<sup>20</sup> So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.

<sup>21</sup> 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 closed up the place with flesh.

<sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

In 1 Corinthians 11:8-12, Apostle Paul describes roles of the man and woman in a marriage as

they serve each other. These verses compliment Ephesians 5:21 and show needed mutual dependence while not undermining the man’s servant leadership role. Men, mull them over during the next seven-days as you meditate on the topic, *The Husband: Servant Leader*.

Husbands, while reflecting on your God-prescribed role in the home, consider these questions:

1. Have I left my mom and am cleaving to my wife?
  - a. This was an early “blind spot” for me, which I had to correct during the first 18 months of our 35-year marriage.
2. Am I ready to lay down my life for my wife?
  - a. Daily I ask the Lord to equip me for this. He hasn’t tested me yet, but I pray I will be ready when He does.

## Memory Verse

### 1 Timothy 3:2-4

Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect.

3. Am I functioning as the spiritual head of the home?
  - a. What would Jesus say about this?
  - b. Ask a trusted Christian male friend to hold you accountable to carry out your God-ordained role in the family.

Considering this month’s theme, *The Family*, this period’s topic, *The Husband: Servant Leader*, each day reflect on the specific verses in the *Daily Reflection* section below. These questions may help your reflection:

- Who is talking to whom, about what, and in what context?
- How do these verses apply to me today?
- What lessons from these verses can I start to do today?

## Notes

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible (Copyright (c) 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers. All rights reserved.)

# D A I L Y R E F L E C T I O N S

**May 1**

Genesis 2:23-25; I Timothy 3:2-4

**May 2**

Matthew 19:4- 6; Malachi 2:13-16

**May 3**

Deuteronomy 24:1-4; Matthew 19:3-8

**May 4**

Hosea 1:2-3; 3:1-3; I Corinthians 7:10-13

**May 5**

Ephesians 5:21-23; I Corinthians 11:8-12; Colossians 3:19

**May 6**

I Peter 3:7-9; Ephesians 5:28-32

**May 7**

Luke 22: 25-27; I Timothy 5:8