

**BIBLICAL MARRIAGE**  
***THE PRIORITY OF UNITY PT. 2***  
**SESSION 1B (VIDEO 2 OF 6)**

V. Maintaining Unity.

- A. Offenses will come whenever any two sinners are involved (Jas. 3:2; 4:1).
  - 1. Two major threats to unity and the pursuit of love are selfishness (me first) and pride (me best).
  - 2. The root problem in taking offense often stems from misplacing our ultimate source of joy. (See section I above.)
  - 3. The motivation for biblically resolving conflicts cannot be self-serving (e.g., desire for personal peace, to get something we want, etc.). We must do what is right for the right reasons, namely, seeking God’s glory and the good of our spouse.
- B. Biblical Conflict Resolution.
  - 1. Absolutely every single “spat”, fight, disagreement, etc. must be biblically resolved to maintain oneness (Eph. 4:26-27). Sweeping a matter under the rug is never permitted. It is these kind of unresolved, back-logged conflicts that build up over time and destroy marriages.
  - 2. There has to be a commitment to:
    - a. tell your spouse what they have done before and during a fight that was sinful and hurtful to you (Matt. 18:15)
    - b. admit to your spouse your own offense and sin – even before they tell you, if possible (Matt. 5:23-24; Jas. 5:16).
    - c. humility (1 Pet. 5:5-6; Jas. 4:6); self-denial (Lk. 9:23-24; Eph. 5:33) and a greater commitment to a godly marriage than to your “rights” and feelings.
  - 3. It must always end with not only confession but granting biblical *forgiveness* to one another (1 Cor. 13:5; 1 Pet. 4:8). That means promising to bury the issue and to not bring up the forgiven sin to others, your spouse or even to rehearse the offense in your own head.
    - a. We are to forgive in the way God forgives (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13)
    - b. God forgives by “forgetting” (Isa. 43:25; 44:22; 38:17; Ps. 103:12; 51:9; etc.).
- C. Overview of Dealing with a Sinful Offense
  - 1. The recipient of the offense: being sinned against.
    - a. Process to pursue: Mt. 18:15-20.
    - b. Attitude in which to pursue it: Gal. 6:1.
  - 2. The Perpetrator of the offense: sinning against.
    - a. Process to pursue: Mt. 5:23-24.
    - b. Attitude in which to pursue it: 1 Pet. 5:5.

(Matt. 18:15-20) →→→→→→→→→ X 😞 😞 X ←←←←←←←←← (Matt. 5:23-24)

D. Patterns of Reconciliation.

1. If you can overlook an offense in love, do so (1 Pet. 4:8; Prov. 10:12). The more you love your spouse, the more easily you will be able to bear patiently with him/her.
2. If the offense is of such a nature that you cannot overlook it, then gently confront your spouse with his/her sin (Mt. 18:15ff).
3. The person being confronted should humbly receive the admonition, and if it is true, repent of it and be reconciled to their spouse.

## VI. Serving Christ in Unity as “Co-heirs.” (1 Pet. 3:7)

- A. The husband must *know* and *understand* his wife (1 Pet. 3:7).
  1. A wise husband will learn to know his wife well enough to utilize her fully as a help-meet – counsel, insight and gifts/abilities (Prov. 18:22).
  2. This entails knowing what it means for her to be a “weaker vessel” and caring for her accordingly (1 Pet. 3:7). It means understanding her physical, emotional and spiritual limitations and sensibilities.
  3. A godly husband will be devoted to giving honor to her (1 Pet. 3:7; Prov. 31:28). This involves supporting, encouraging, defending and praising her in front of others and privately.
  4. He must cherish her by not being rude – an attribute of love (1 Cor. 13:5).
  5. It is the husband’s job to “cheer up” his wife (Deut. 24:5). Concentrate on being sensitive to her many needs.
- B. A wife must *respect* and *honor* her husband (Eph. 5:22, 33).
  1. A wise “help-meet” will strengthen, defend and assist her husband in his areas of weakness (Abigail: 1 Sam. 25:3ff; an imperfect but good example). Prudence will crown her decision-making (Prov. 19:14).
  2. She will know and fulfill his wishes when able (1 Pet. 3:1-6; Tit. 2:5).
  3. A virtuous wife is industrious and productive for her husband (Prov. 31).
  4. She will honor him by going to him for spiritual instruction, counsel and help (1 Cor. 14: 35).
  5. A godly woman will honor her husband by assisting him in lovingly raising their children in the ways of the Lord (Prov. 6:20-21; Col. 3:21; Eph. 6:4). She will be able to extend her family’s ministry to teaching other ladies to do the same (Titus 2:3-5).
- C. Harmony: What are our complementary strengths and weaknesses?
  1. Spiritually (sins/graces/gifts, etc.).
  2. Emotionally (levels/frequency of various emotions).
  3. Physically (health/strength/energy/activity).
  4. Interests (academic/recreational/hobby, etc.).
  5. Gifts/Abilities.
  6. Personality bent (temperament, task vs. people oriented, etc.).

## VII. The Bond of Unity: Vows

- A. Marriage is a covenant relationship.
  1. The Bible uses the terminology “your wife by covenant” (Mal. 3:14).

2. It is sinful for a believer to be unequally yoked to an unbeliever (2 Cor. 6:14).
    - a. Being unequally yoked is a biblical picture of being bound or tied to another by covenant.
    - b. The description of marriage in the beginning was “cleaving” and becoming one flesh (Gen. 2:24).
  3. God is ultimately joining the two in marriage together (Mt. 19:6).
- B. The ones involved in the taking of vows.
1. Your marriage vow is first and foremost to God Himself (Deut. 23:21).
  2. Your vow is secondly a pledge to one another (Mal. 2:14).
  3. Those attending are responsible witnesses to your vows, who by their attendance are committing themselves to hold you to your promise (Josh. 24:22).
- C. The Seriousness of taking vows.
1. Do not take them quickly or hastily (Eccl. 5:2).
  2. Do not take them thoughtlessly (Eccl. 5:2).
  3. Once a lawful vow is taken there is no return – no matter how much you regret it (Ps. 76:11; Eccl. 5:4, 6; Ps. 15:4b).
  4. It is better not to vow, then to vow and not pay it (Eccl. 5:5).

### Conclusion

- A. Please go over the outline and look up the passages of Scripture with your spouse. Discuss particular instances in your relationship where these principles should have been applied and other instances in which they were successfully implemented.
- B. Identify the specific areas which need to be changed. Formulate a concrete plan of how you are going to apply these biblical principles to the specifics of your situation. For example, if there is a back log of conflicts which have not been biblically resolved, start by addressing those.
- C. Water all of your study and discussions with much prayer together. “Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it . . .” (Ps. 127:1).