



TEACHING SERIES
July - August 2012

created by Pastor Dave Brown



Welcome to Severna Park Baptist Church! We are excited you are here. God is cultivating a community of faith that genuinely **loves God, loves people** and having impact to **lead generations**. This booklet is part of a teaching series by Pastor Dave Brown.

This teaching series is titled “Family Matters”. Confusion and curiosity surround today’s generation of families. There is lots of conversation but little clarity on the subjects of marriage, parenting and the family relating to our brave new world. This series hopes to present a picture for marriage and family to not only survive but thrive with meaningful, God-honoring relationships.

The following is a list of titles and topics we will cover each week. You may notice that each title, apart from the first and last, is actually a title of a book with a selected Scripture passage. This was intentional to point you to a resource on that subject. Each session will take largely from that given work and specific Scripture(s). Further, this booklet is an accumulation of personal study, insight and collection of various resources. In fact, two essential resources part of the backdrop for this booklet are:

God, Marriage and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation by Andreas Köstenberger

Marriage, Family, Sex and The Gospel. Secret Church Study Guide by David Platt and Disciple-Making International (www.disciplemakingintl.org)

FAMILY MATTERS

July 8 Dream Family
Genesis 1-4

July 15 When Sinners Say I Do (Dave Harvey)
Ephesians

July 22 God on Sex (Daniel Akin)
Song of Solomon

July 29 Shepherding A Child's Heart (Paul Tripp)
Proverbs 4:23

Aug 5 Peacemaking for Families (Ken Sande)
James 4:1-10

Aug 12 Marriage, Family and Culture Wars
Genesis 1, 18-19

Aug 19 21st Century Families / interactive

Aug 26 21st Century Families / interactive

FAMILY MATTERS: A DREAM FAMILY

Genesis 1 – 4

What does a dream family look like? Write your thoughts or maybe even draw a picture.

Life is a dream reality.

Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning, God...”

John 1:12 “But to all who did receive Him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”

- God made galaxies... (Colossians 1:16-17)
- God gives grace... (Colossians 1:18-20)

Life and marriage is a good gift from a great God. Since the beginning God has designed the world with the great dream reality of His existence and with His purpose. God created you to be in relationship with Himself through the gospel of Jesus Christ. To miss this reality is to miss out on all that life is meant to be.

God is the Architect of life

Genesis 2:15 “The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’”

- G o d ’ s O w n e r s h i p = M y S t e w a r d s h i p
(Psalm 24:1; Matthew 6:33)
- God’s blueprints for life are found in the promises and commands of Scripture (Psalm 1; Psalm 119; 2Timothy 3:16-17; 2Peter 1:3-11)

God gave family as a beautiful gift.

Genesis 2:18, 21-22 “The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him...But for Adam no suitable helper was found. 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. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.”

- Human relationships are unique and essential (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)
- Marriage is a creation institution for humanity and not just a Christian right.
- Spouses are chosen by God (Genesis 24; Proverbs 18:22, 19:14)
- Children are a holy heritage (Psalm 127-128)

God's design for marriage is perfect oneness.

Genesis 2:23-24 *"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.'"*

Hosea 2:16, 19a *"In that day, declares the Lord, you will call me 'my husband'; you will no longer call me 'my master'....I will betroth you to me forever."*

Isaiah 62:5b *"As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you."*

Genesis 2:24 is the essential verse defining marriage in the Bible. It is quoted 4 times: Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-8; 1 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31) and is alluded to indirectly numerous other times. From this passage flows a working definition of marriage.

- Marriage is an earthly relationship pointing to an eternal reality (Matthew 22:20; Ephesians 5:31-32)
- What you say about and how you live out marriage & family represents your beliefs about God and His relationship with the church.

God's design for marriage is profoundly unique.

- Marriage is a foundational stewardship for creation (Genesis 1:27-28). It provides the safe environment for pro-creation and nurture of individuals in society. It is personal, relational and communal.
- Marriage is heterosexual (Leviticus 18:22-23/20:13; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:9-10; Jude 1:6-7). It is for "a man and his wife". The natural sense of relationships and pro-creation validate heterosexuality. Marriage is not reduced merely to sexual intimacy. It's a foundational institution pointing to a greater reality of Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:31-32).

More about this in study guide section "Marriage and Culture Wars".

- Marriage is exclusive. "A man will leave father and mother and be united to wife".
 - Marriage is exclusive in that of leaving parents. This is not so much location (geography) as it refers to loyalty in a new relationship.
 - Marriage is also exclusive in terms of monogamous (not polygamous) partners for life (Deuteronomy 17:17; Leviticus 18:18). God expects faithfulness in His worshipers, not adulterous idolaters.
- Marriage is covenantal and life-long (Deuteronomy 24:1-4; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 19:6; 1 Corinthians 7:10-16). Its union is *"bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh...shall hold fast... one flesh"*. The permanence of marriage provides the security and hopefulness of relationships. It is more than a human contract but a divine covenant. Likewise, God is faithful in His covenant.
- Marriage is complementarian. Man and woman are interdependent with equal value but independent with different roles assigned in the family. The biblical ideas of "headship" and "helper" are significant here. Further, families are to reflect the love, sacrifice, service and

submission that Jesus had unto the Lord God, thereby modeling the gospel unto the world.
Biblical Manhood

- has a work to labor (Genesis 2:15)
- has an assignment to lead (Genesis 2:16, ff.; 1 Corinthians 11:3, 8; Ephesians 5:23)
- has a relationship to love (Genesis 2:23-24; Ephesians 5:25, 28; Colossians 3:19; 1 Peter 3:7)
- Biblical manhood affirms purpose and rejects passivity; affirms responsibility and rejects apathy; affirms connection and rejects isolation.

Biblical Womanhood

- has a calling to support [helper] (Genesis 2:18; Ephesians 5:24, 33; Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:3-5)
- has a calling to shape (Genesis 3:15/4:1; Proverbs 31:10-31; 1 Timothy 2:15; 1 Peter 3:1-6)
- Biblical womanhood affirms a submissive spirit and rejects a controlling attitude; affirms a nurturing spirit and rejects a neglecting selfishness.

What is with the “S” word?

Inigo Montoya, *The Princess Bride*

“You keep using that word. I do not think it means what you think it means.”

Elisabeth Elliot

“Marriage is used in the OT to express the relationship between God and His covenant people and in the NT between Christ and the Church. Tremendous heavenly truths are set forth in a wife’s subjection to her husband and the use of this metaphor in the Bible cannot be accidental.”

Elizabeth George

“Our submission to our husband—whether or not he is a Christian, whether or not he is obeying God—preaches a lovelier and more powerful sermon that our mouth ever could.”

Carolyn Mahaney

“The edict for wives to submit originated in the gracious heart of God. This command is not punishment for our sin. Neither is it optional or devised by man. Rather it is *God* who determined that we are to voluntarily place ourselves under our husbands’ authority. He designed submission for His glory.”

The Baptist Faith and Message (2000) (Article XVIII)

“...The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.”

Submission does not mean

- Lesser value or worth (Genesis 1:27; Galatians 3:28)

- Husband is in place of God (1 Corinthians 11:3)
- Wife relinquishes independent thought
- Wife cannot influence husband or succumbs to his every expectation (1 Corinthians 7:16; 1 Peter 3:1)

Submission does mean

- Trust: as Jesus trusted the Father's wise plan (Philippians 2:5-11) and as Sarah followed Abraham
- Respect in heart and attitude (Ephesians 5:33)

God's plan for oneness is disrupted by Satan.

Genesis 3

3:1, 4 Satan spreads doubt on God's Word

3:1 Satan slights God's marriage role assignment

3:8-19 Satan separates man from God

Effects of the Fall (Romans 5:18-19)

- Theological/Spiritual (3:8-9, 21, 23-24)
- Psychological (3:7, 10, 21)
- Ecological (3:14, 18)
- Biological (3:15-16)
- Sociological (3:12-13, 16-17)
- Physiological (3:19)
- Epistemological (3:22)

The Fall of Man

- Apathetic Leadership
Adam observes Eve's temptation and fall (Gen3:1-6 note the "we" of v.2 and he was "with her in v.6)
- Abused Leadership
Adam hides from Eve and then later blames her (3:8-12). Man will be tempted to rule over woman (3:16)

The Fall of Woman

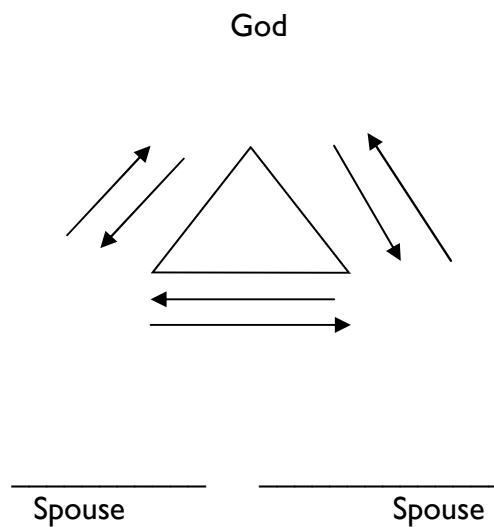
- Dismissal of responsibility (Genesis 3:1, 13)
- Defiant of leadership (Genesis 3:6, 16)

The world we live in is not a perfect place, in fact it is a profoundly broken world. Genesis 3 describes "The Fall" of humanity and mankind has never been the same since. God's idea for marriage was perfect peace and harmony between himself and his people. However, the freedom of human choice separated the ability to sustain such peace. Adam & Eve rebelled against God just as much as your own heart does at given times.

Husbands & Wives stay humble and honor each other (Mark 10:45; Romans 12:10)!

Gary Thomas in his book *Sacred Marriage*, writes “Husbands you are married to a fallen woman in a broken world. Wives, you are married to a sinful man in a sinful world. It is guaranteed that your spouse will sin against you, disappoint you, and have physical limitations that will frustrate you and sadden you. He may come home with the best intentions and still lose his temper. She may have all of the desire but none of the energy. This is a fallen world...You will never find a spouse who is not affected in some way by the reality of the Fall.”

So in other words, if you are entering or hoping marriage will make you happy then you have misplaced your hope. Marriage is not designed to make you happy but to give you an opportunity to grow in holiness—toward your greater relationship with God.



NOTES

FAMILY MATTERS: WHEN SINNERS SAY I DO Ephesians 1 - 6

Reality Check: Marriage is not a fairy tale or a romance novel! Marriage is the union of two sinners carrying the luggage of life. Sometimes the luggage gets opened on the honeymoon and other times it stays packed for months, even years before it gets opened. But the luggage is always there, sometimes tripping the owners with their stuffed content.

Spouses must not ignore their sin. It is when the couple, who were joined together for the sovereign purposes of God, come to the realization that the only thing that can sustain them is God's great grace through Jesus Christ. When marriages become gospel-centered they have a foundation that can build a home to withstand any storm and any sin (Matthew 7:24-27).

Marriage is for our good but it is first for God's glory (Ephesians 1:1-13).

"to the praise of his glorious grace with which he has blessed us in the Beloved" (1:6)

Marriage is waking up with the worst of sinners (Ephesians 2:1-8; 1 Timothy 1:15)

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God" (2:8)

"The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost." (1 Tim 1:15)

Marriage is magnificent, radical love (Ephesians 2:10 - 5:33).

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." (2:10)

"Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." (5:25)

Marriage makes disciples (Ephesians 5:31 - 6:9).

"This mystery is profound and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church." (5:32)

Marriage fights with faith (Ephesians 6:10-18).

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil." (6:9-10)

NOTES

FAMILY MATTERS: GOD ON SEX Song of Solomon

*Please note this session is likely PG-13ish. The content will not be graphic but will be matters you may not be ready to discuss with your children yet. So, parent/adult discretion is advised.

It seems that God is so interested and committed to the intimate aspects of marriage that He gave us an entire book of the Bible dedicated to the subject: Song of Songs or Song of Solomon (SOS). SOS is a collection of love songs from Solomon to his lover. It celebrates the vivid joys of devotion, love and intimacy in a marriage relationship. The author uses poetic and at times sensual language to portray the beauty and selflessness of their love relationship.

Marriage is the environment for sex (SOS 2:7, 3:5, 8:4).

Sex was God's idea (Genesis 1:28) but it is not a god (1 Corinthians 6:12-13).

Sex is relationally exclusive (Genesis 2:24; Proverbs 5:15-20, 6:28-32; Malachi 2:14).

*Note: Sex by nature is relational, therefore any attempts at making it solitary is a deviation from God's intended plan.

Sex is profoundly intimate / physical & spiritual (Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 6:15-16)

Sex is selfless & satisfying (SOS 1:1-4, 4:1-16, 5:10-16/6:4-7:10; Proverbs 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 7:3-5; Philippians 2:3-4)

Sexual Celebration

Attention with time

Affirmation with word & deed

Affection with touch

Adventure with experiences

Accordance with dreams, goals, purpose

Sexual Violations

- Immorality (immodesty, fornication/co-habitation, lust, prostitution, masturbation, animals, incest, child abuse, rape) (Leviticus 18:23-24/20:15-16; Leviticus 18:6; Leviticus 19:29/Deuteronomy 23:18; Matthew 5:28-30; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 10:8; Ephesians 5:1-5; 2 Timothy 2:22)

- Adultery (Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 20:10; SOS 2:7, 3:5, 8:4; ; Matthew 19:17-18; Hebrews 13:4)

- Divorce (Leviticus 21:7; Deuteronomy 24:1-4; Malachi 2:16)

- Polygamy (Deuteronomy 17:17; Leviticus 18:18; Jeremiah 5:8; Malachi 2:14-15)

- Homosexuality (see pp.6-7 and also title "Culture Wars" of this booklet)

- Polygamy (Deuteronomy 17:17; Leviticus 18:18; Jeremiah 5:8; Malachi 2:14-15)

- Deprival (1 Corinthians 7:3-5)

Marriage can be an environment for sexual conflict (SOS 2:15, 5:2-8)

“little foxes” represent those challenges & crisis that can creep into the marriage, almost unnoticed, and perform untold damage to the unity of your covenant

“Sex is a powerful gift. It is intoxicating. It has unbelievable potential for good or evil, to build up or tear down, to delight or destroy.” (Akin p.50)

Marriage, love and sex are sustained by the very flames of the Lord (SOS 8:6-7; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Hebrews 13:4; 1 John 4:7-13)



FAMILY MATTERS: SHEPHERDING A CHILD'S HEART

Proverbs 4:23

"Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flows the springs of life." Proverbs 4:23

Parenting cannot be reduced to an exact science as it deals with the complex dynamics of people and relationships. Apart from the Bible, there is no single "successful" method.

Teach children to worship (discipleship)

The heart of parenting, and all of life, is the heart. No one is neutral as we are all born with a worship orientation; in fact a worship disorder called sin! The goal of parenting is to shape a child's worship orientation toward the proper place—the person of Jesus Christ. This does not happen by mere behavioral correction but must go deeper to transform a child's heart.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

- Discipleship starts early.

It cannot be emphasized enough the need to expose children to spiritual truth during their earliest years. George Barna (Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions) says that a child's moral, spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional and relational foundations of people's lives are determined primarily before age 13.

- Discipleship takes intentionality.

Your child will not know or understand spiritual truth by default. In fact the opposite will happen, and perhaps disastrous consequences may occur. As parents, you must set some goals for your child's spiritual growth. You must also understand how to accomplish such goals. I believe in this area our expectations are too low. We need to be challenged to raise the expectations for our children and as we do I believe our children will rise to the occasion.

- Family Devotions: Reading Scripture, singing, praying and talking about issues of faith together should become a regular habit. Talk with your church leadership how to best lead this. Fathers, remember you are the spiritual leaders.

- Family Traditions: Special days like birthdays, anniversaries and holidays create a sense of family unity and point to greater realities for spiritual truth.

- Discipleship happens relationally.

When Jesus wanted to make disciples he called people to "be with" him (Mark 3:14). If spending time, talking with your children is routine in the early years then it will not be abnormal in the later years. Further, this is also where the partnership with other parents and the church fit well. By the family and the church relationally walking alongside each other we can set our sights on raising spiritual champions for Christ and growing godly generations.

Andy Stanley says that we are making our children experience rich but relationally poor. We give our children experiences in school, sports, competition, trips and travel but we cannot forget that our children long to just be with us

Teach children to obey (discipline).

Ephesians 6:1-4 “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise), that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Colossians 3:20-21 “Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children lest they become discouraged.”

- Discipline is loving and relational

Proverbs 3:11-12 “My son, do not despise the Lord’s discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the Lord reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.”

Proverbs 22:15 “Folly is bound up in the heart of a child but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.”

As parents are God’s representative authority to shepherd children toward right and wrong, they must remember that punishment should never be out of a anger, embarrassment or retribution. Correction is always for the purpose of teaching children about the consequences of sin, disobeying the authority of God and experiencing the forgiveness of God.

Correction is not to be feared for it does teach the reality of consequences. Ultimately, correction prepares children for that day when eternal destinies will be fixed. Will your child be ready for this day by the way you have disciplined them? Lovingly point them to their desperate need of God’s forgiveness for sin.

Parents should take their child’s age and unique personality and temperament into account and beware that some children may respond to alternative forms of positive or negative consequences and reinforcement. But remember, discipline is not conditioning by stimuli to behave a certain way—it must be in the context of a parent-child relationship shepherding the heart to know and love God.

- Discipline is a team effort

Proverbs 6:20, 23 “My son, keep your father’s commandment, and forsake not your mother’s teaching. ..For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life... to preserve you”

Remember:

- Correction must involve questions: Why did you do that? What makes you think that was a good choice? Where did you learn that? What do you think the next steps should be?
- Avoid delayed obedience tactics (counting or increasing voice tones that lead to yelling, wait until your father gets home....etc.). Consistency is central to correction.
- Joy is a byproduct of obedience. Show how obedience brings reward. Pointing out obedience in your children as Christ-likeness should be emphasized as much, if not more, as correction from ungodliness.

Tedd Tripp, SACH p.50

“Recognizing that God has called you to function as His agent defines your task as a parent. Our culture has reduced parenting to providing care. Parents often see the task in these narrow terms. The child must have food, clothes, a bed and some quality time. In sharp contrast to such a weak view, God has called you to a more profound task than being a care-provider. You shepherd your Child in God’s behalf. The task God has given you is not one that can be conveniently scheduled. It is a pervasive task. Training and shepherding is going on whenever you are with your children. Whether walking, talking or resting, you must be involved in helping your child to understand life, himself and his [or her] needs from a biblical perspective.”

- Discipline leads to righteousness.

Titus 2:11-14 “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”

God’s grace and forgiveness is not just pardon for sin but more power not to sin. Evidence of a child’s heart transforming to faith is a sorrow for sin, dislike for disobedience and genuine growth in godly character (Galatians 5:16-24).

FAMILY MATTERS: PEACEMAKING FOR FAMILIES

James 4:1-10

Controversy and conflict usually occurs because of unmet desires. Essentially, behind every case of unmet expectation is unrepentant sin. People do not fall out of love and charity as much as they fall out of repentance and forgiveness.

Conflict progresses from heart desires of selfishness (James 4:1-5).

Desires can be God-given but should not become God-substitutes.

Psalm 37:4 "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart."

Psalm 73:25 "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you."

Unmet desires often dive deeper into our heart as we dwell on disappointments. In turn, desires elevate into demands and the downward spiral of conflict continues.

God-substitutes or heart idols are things that replace God from His rightful place of bringing us celebration, contentment, freedom, fulfillment and security.

What is your desire?

Conflict resolution progresses from humble dependence on the grace of God (James 4:6-12).

- Pride is the root of conflict.
- Humble service to God and others leads to the intimacy we seek from relationships.

Addressing Conflict biblically

Matthew 7:1-5

Judgment starts with humility not hypocrisy

Removing logs to remove specks

Matthew 18:15-20

Approach directly

Involve others when necessary

Reconciliation is the goal of any discipline

Galatians 6:1-5

Christians are reconcilers (2Corinthians 5:18-19)

Ephesians 4:25-32

Honesty and truth are essential
Anger at principles not people is appropriate
Speak constructively not destructively
Bitterness bites, Forgiveness frees
Glean from the Gospel (Matthew 6:14-15)

A-B-C's of Conflict

Anger
Benevolence
Compassion & Contrition

Understanding Confession & Repentance

Address everyone involved
To whom do you need to confess?

Avoid "if, but and maybe"
What excuses or blaming do you need to avoid?

Admit specifically
Name sin as sin without minimizing actions

Apologize
Consider how others feel as result of your sin

Accept consequences
Can you help reverse the damage you caused?

Alter behavior
What changes need to be made?
immediate, verifiable and unconditional

Ask for forgiveness and allow time from offended
Forgiveness does not always mean trust

Additional things to remember in this process

- Repentance is a change of mind/heart that leads to change of actions. It contains hatred for and brokenness over personal sin. Read Psalms 32, 51; Joel 2:12-13; Luke 3:8; 2Corinthians 7:10.
- Forgiveness is the pardoning (not accepting) of wrong behavior. It does not mean forgetting wrong behavior but it will lead to freeing the other person from guilt and shame. The relationship may have security but the fellowship and intimacy need restoration. Read Matthew 6:14-15, 18:21-35; Luke 15.
 - Note: Forgiveness can remove eternal punishment but often temporal consequences remain; especially sexual sin (1Cor 6:18)
 - Forgiveness is saying, "I am not holding ____ against you. I will not purposefully bring it up in discussion with you or others."
- Restoration is a marathon not a sprint. It is a process of repairing something to its original or better condition. Learning to trust, warming to affection & intimacy take time.

FAMILY MATTERS: MARRIAGE, FAMILY AND CULTURE WARS Genesis 1, 18-19

God is God and God is good. His authority and charity remind us that His plan is holy and helpful for humanity. (Genesis 1-2)

Homosexuality and the World

- Genetic
I was born or God made me this way.
- Normal
I can love whomever I want.
DSM 1973
- Christian
Jesus never judges/condemns homosexuality.
The Bible has been misinterpreted/socialized.

Homosexuality and the Word

- Genetic
Sin is innate (Proverbs 14:12; Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:19; Romans 1:19, 3:23, 5:19)
- Normal
Sin is sin; Sexual deviation is characteristic of us all (Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8)
- Christian
Jesus can cleanse, sanctify and justify homosexuals (1 Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 5:24)

What does the Bible say?

Genesis 18—19 ; 19:4-11 Entire cities destroyed for ongoing homosexual practice (Sin of Sodom & Gomorrah is mentioned numerous times. See Isaiah 1:9-10, 3:9, 13:19; Jeremiah 23:14, 39:18, 50:40; Lamentations 4:6; Ezekiel 16:46-56; Amos 4:11; Zephaniah 2:9; Matthew 10:15, 11:23-24; Luke 10:12, 17:29; Romans 9:29; 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 7; Revelation 11:8).

- Revisionists have proposed that Sodom's sin was gang rape (if so then God is unjust in his judgment since the action never actually occurred). Another proposition is that Sodom's sin was inhospitality (To know them not sexually but cordially. Yet, context implies the former—see 18:32 for why could God not find 10 righteous people in the entire city and also 19:8 for Lot's unfortunate response of his daughters and the fact his life was threatened in 19:9. Further, if Lot was responsible for the sin of inhospitality then why was his life spared while the others judged? And why was the entire city destroyed for a sin in which they had no part?

Leviticus 18:22/20:13 “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination....If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.”

Romans 1:26-27 “For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.”

I Corinthians 6:9-10 “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

I Timothy 1:9-10 “understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine”

Jude 1:7 “just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.”

Further, in the Gospels, Jesus implicitly condemns homosexuality in his affirmation of the creation (Genesis) design. See Matthew 19:4-6;

Cultural Discussions

- Does same-sex marriage really affect society or even Christians?

The short answer is yes. Accepting such a re-definition of marriage will radically alter how society views marriage and the expectations placed upon Christians and their marriages. To illustrate: “If the definition of a Ph.D in History were altered to include anyone who watched a documentary on the History Channel, that affects those with a Ph.D in History, even though nothing has been done to their degree specifically.” (J.D. Greear) Further, numerous secular studies have shown that no nation or society has been able to flourish after 3 generations once “strict marital monogamy” was abandoned as the standard (Wayne Grudem, *Politics According to the Bible*, pp.216-217).

- Is homosexuality a civil rights issue?

States regulate marriage in multiple ways: age limits, exclusion of marrying blood relatives and first cousins; exclusion of marrying multiple partners along with exclusion of marrying non-human partners. Further, some states even restrict marriage of people suffering from various venereal diseases. Therefore, homosexuals are not the only people to be excluded from the right to marriage. This does not mean each of these scenarios are equivalent but simply illustrating that marriage has specific regulation and definition for good reason. If the government must redefine and recognize marriage based on the sole basis of individualism, then upon what criteria does it end? Can a person marry multiple partners because they are all in love? Can an adult romance and marry a minor because of personal preference? Can you discern the progression of such a radical redefinition of a sacred institution?

- Is homosexuality a genetic predisposition?

While there is no science to prove this, even if it could it would still not make it morally acceptable. A genetic predisposition toward an action can never be the proper basis for legitimizing such a behavior. To give but one example: a male with a genetic glandular condition resulting in the production of increased testosterone and thus a higher than normal sex drive, could not appeal to his genetic condition to validate the morality of rape, incest or pedophilia. People may experience same-sex attraction at varying levels or have a same-sex orientation (predominant attraction) without having a gay or lesbian identity (adoption of lifestyle and moral acceptance of behavior). In other words, a person may have an attraction or even an orientation toward homosexuality but not act on it.

- What is the church's responsibility to homosexuals?

Christians must love homosexuals more than homosexuals love homosexuality. Jesus' gospel to transform sinners and the Great Commission remind us to love all sinners alike. No one is beyond the grace and salvation of God. A church that holds signs of hatred or instigates hostility is far removed from the God who sent His only Son to die on a cross to rescue sinners. Christians must speak the truth in love. The secular option of tolerance equates personhood with lifestyle practices and mandates full acceptance of behaviors/views. The proposed secular option of intolerance equates disagreement with discrimination and is viewed as prejudice rather than principled. But Christians must speak of a third option—speaking the truth in love; differentiating personhood with practice, understanding disagreement does not negate compassion. This is the biblical option and the Christian responsibility. This option must come to the forefront if there is to be a gospel revival among the homosexual community and among secular society.

Christians must also recognize the secular world does not recognize the authority and relevance of divine revelation in Scripture. The defense of heterosexual marriage must indeed start with the God-ordained order and point people to His goodness and grace. However, Christians must also learn ways to communicate and contextualize these truths to unbelievers so they can see God's design.

In the end, God has not called the Church to win arguments or control the government but to win souls and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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FAMILY MATTERS: 21ST CENTURY FAMILIES

Singleness, Widows, Abortion, Adoption and Blended Families

Singleness & Widows

Jesus' example

Isaiah 53:8, 10, 54:1, 3, 5 "By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people... Yet... he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand... Sing, O barren one, who did not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud, you who have not been in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who is married, says the Lord... your offspring will possess the nations and will people the desolate cities... For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called."

Eunuchs

Isaiah 56:4-5 "For thus says the Lord: To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off."

Matthew 19:12 "For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it."

Matthew 22:30 "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven."

Paul's example

I Corinthians 7:8, 32 "To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single... I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord."

John Stott "Apart from sexual temptation, the greatest danger which I think we face [as singles] is self-centeredness. We may live alone and have total freedom to plan our own schedule, with nobody else to modify it or even give us advice. If we are not careful, we may find the whole world revolving around ourselves."

John Piper "Today singleness is cherished by many because it brings maximum freedom for self-realization. You pull your own strings. No one cramps your style. But Paul cherished his singleness because it put him utterly at the disposal of the Lord Jesus... The contemporary mood promotes singleness (but not chastity) because it frees from slavery. Paul promotes singleness (and chastity) because it frees from slavery—namely slavery to Christ."

Widows

Psalm 68:5-6 “[God is] Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. God settles the solitary in a home”

Psalm 146:9 “The Lord watches over the sojourners; he upholds the widow and the fatherless”

Luke 7:13 “And when the Lord saw her [a widow], he had compassion on her and said to her, ‘Do not weep’.”

Care and ministry for widows (1 Timothy 5:3-16)

Abortion

- In US, 45+million abortions since 1973; 1.4 million every year; 3000 every day; 1 every 20 seconds

- In world, 46 million abortions occur every year; with almost one every second

Psalm 139:13-14 “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”

Learn the facts.

Examine the Scriptures.

See the pictures.

Sympathize with the victims of abortion.

Affirm pro-life causes, pregnancy care ministries and abortion alternatives.

Birth Control (Mark Liederbach in God, Marriage and Family. P.141)

Acceptable	Unacceptable	Needs Consideration
General Principle: Methods that are contraceptive in nature; i.e., exclusively prohibit conception	General Principle: All forms of induced abortion	General Principle: Methods requiring special mention and extra care [theologically and pastorally]
Abstinence	Abortion	Sterilization (vasectomy, tubal occlusion)
Rhythm or calendar method	IUD	“The Pill” and its many applications (combined and progestin-only contraceptives)
“Barrier Methods” (diaphragm, cervical cap, condoms, spermicides)	RU-486 (“morning after pill”)	Issues involved: treatment of body as temple of Holy Spirit (sterilization), serious questions regarding the sanctity of life (“the pill”)

Adoption

- Over 140 million orphans in world, whom each have a name, a face and a need to know the gospel through a loving family. Adoption becomes a picture of the gospel for what God has done to rescue His children.

Psalms 27:10 "For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me in."

Galatians 4:4-5 "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons."

James 1:27 "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world."

Blended Families

Romans 12:9-13 "Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality."

1 Corinthians 12:26 "If one member [of the body] suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."

Galatians 6:10 "So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone and especially to those who are of the household of faith."

Ephesians 2:19 "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God"

1 Timothy 5:8 "But if anyone does not provide for his relatives and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Blended families come in various shapes and sizes. The church is often uncertain how best to minister; sometimes due to ignorance and sometimes due to apathy and neither are excusable. Essentially, single parents, children of divorce or deceased parents are not a ministry project but a people to love like every other person. These relationships will often require more time, increased tension and emotion, greater flexibility and support, yet the church has no greater calling to display the hope and healing of the gospel to broken situations.

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RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

General

Harvey, Dave. When Sinners Say I Do: Discovering the Power of the Gospel for Marriage.
Köstenberger, Andreas. God, Marriage and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation
Platt, David. Marriage, Family, Sex and The Gospel. Secret Church Study Guide. Disciple-Making International (www.disciplemakingintl.org)

Abortion or Adoption

Klusendorf, Scott. The Case for Life: Equipping Christians to Engage the Culture
Moore, Russel. Adopted for Life.
www.abort73.com

Conflict & Communication

Eggerichs, Emerson. Cracking the Communication Code.
Eggerichs, Emerson. Love and Respect
Sande, Ken. Peacemaking for Families.
Thomas, Gary. Sacred Marriage: What if God designed marriage to make us holy more than to make us happy?
Tripp, Paul. War of Words.

Husband & Wife Roles

Piper, John and Wayne Grudem. Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood.
Fitzpatrick, Elyse. Helper by Design.
Scott, Stuart. The Exemplary Husband.

Finances

Alcorn, Randy. The Treasure Principle.
Burkett, Larry. Debt-Free Living: How to Get Out of Debt & Stay Out.
Budgeting with Dave Ramsey found at http://www.daveramsey.com/media/pdf/fpu_qbudget.pdf

Sex

Akin, Daniel. God on Sex: The Creator's Ideas about Love, Intimacy and Marriage.
Piper, John and Justin Taylor. Sex and the Supremacy of Christ.
Smith, Robert. Biblical Principles of Sex
Wheat, Ed, and Gaye Wheat. Intended for Pleasure.

Parenting

Fitzpatrick, Elyse. Give Them Grace: Dazzling You Kids with the Love of Jesus.
Thomas, Gary. Sacred Parenting: How Raising Children Shapes Our Souls
Tripp, Paul. Age of Opportunity: A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens.
Tripp, Tedd. Shepherding a Child's Heart.

Family Issues

Adams, Jay. Christian Living in the Home.
Rainey, Dennis and Barbara. Growing a Spiritually Strong Family.
Rainey, Dennis. Starting Your Marriage Right: What You Need to Know and Do in the Early Years to Make It Last A Lifetime.

Addictions

Powlison, David. Pornography: Slaying the Dragon

Welch, Ed. Addictions, A Banquet in the Grave: Finding Hope in the Power of the Gospel

Other Helps

www.fltoday.org

www.family.org

www.heritagebuilders.com

www.homeword.com

www.cbmw.org

