

## "Till Death Do Us Part"

Have you ever wondered how people can remain married for fifty years and longer? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're exploring how we can remain married "till death do us part."

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. God's way is always the best way to bring happiness to our lives, our spouses, and our children and grandchildren. God's way is not only the best way in this life; it is the only way to eternal life. One of the greatest blessings is having a Christian spouse who will help you stay faithful to God and enjoy an eternal home in heaven. Next to our relationship with the Lord Jesus, our relationship with our spouse is the most important relationship of all. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and want to be a part of your life each week.

God was the one who designed and established the first home with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. God declared husband and wife should be one flesh. Since that time there've been, there's been good marriages and there's been bad marriages, but it was not because God had a faulty notion in creating marriage. You see there is still nothing that blesses society more than a husband and wife who love each other and are committed to each other for life and love God.

Sweet Jackie and I were married on May, 1974 and have remained married and together for 50 years. For better and for worse, for richer and for poorer, in sickness and in health, we have remained committed to each other till death do us part. I am certainly not the perfect husband, though God blessed me with the most wonderful wife. Our love and God's blessing and providence have kept us together through it all. We knew from the beginning that being committed to God would help us keep ourselves committed to one another. A solid marriage has also helped us to be godly parents to our children and grandchildren.

We offer this study on "Till Death Do Us Part" free! And if you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have many free programs and materials on our website, at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). You can also see us on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from Ephesians 5:25 to 31, and explore how marriages should remain together, and let no man put asunder.

Our reading today comes from Paul's epistle to the Ephesians chapter 5 verses 25 to 31. Talks about the relationship of Christ to the church and husbands to their wives.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.

That's God's will for husbands and wives. To love each other. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that in Your word You give us such wonderful instruction. To know how to treat one

another in our homes and in our family. Help us Heavenly Father to love You, to love our families and to love others the way that You have loved us. In Jesus name, Amen.

God's pattern for the family began at creation. The Lord God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Genesis 1:26 to 28).

God saw that it was not good for man to be alone (Genesis 2 and verse 18). And though Adam was surrounded by every living creature, "for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him" (Genesis 2 and verse 20). "So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed" (Genesis 2:21 to 25).

Now God showed his love and wisdom by giving a woman to Adam, giving him just what he needed. She was a helper designed specifically for him. He didn't need another male exactly like himself; he needed a female. And no doubt Adam realized that among the animals there was male and female of each kind. Man and woman need each other physically, socially, and spiritually. Like a lock with a key or a bow with a string, each needs the other to function properly. Alone neither can accomplish what God intended.

Now God uses this story of old, to speak to every age, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2 and verse 24). Now our Lord Jesus, in fact, quotes this very passage in Matthew 19 verse 5. And yes it's inspired of God. Marriage uniquely unites a male with a female physically and emotionally. The man and woman were to become one flesh, an intimate relationship that took priority over all others. Because of this physical bond, a man should loosen the bonds he has even with his parents and loyally hold fast to his wife.

1 Corinthians 7:1 to 2 says, "Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. But because of sexual immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband." Sadly, marriage has come upon hard times. According to USAFacts.org, "In 1949, 78.8% of all households contained married couples. But in 2022, 73 years later, only 46.8% of households had married couples." Nearly fifteen percent of all adults in America have been divorced. Now these changes in our society are because people have lost sight of the value and the beauty of marriage as God meant for it to be.

People who remain married usually have important characteristics in their lives. First, they are committed to the Lord's way. Psalm 37 and verse 5 says, "Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it." Again Proverbs 3:5 to 7 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil." We need to trust in God's way. David prayed in Psalm 86 verse 11, "Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name."

Some years ago, Mack Lyon noted that, "People who enjoy their marriages have been able to make the change from a "single" lifestyle in which each one does pretty much as he pleases, to one where another person is intimately involved. There are two now who must become one. Happily married people have learned that after the wedding it's no longer "I" and "me" and "mine" and "I want" and "I won't," but "we" and "us" and "ours," and "We'd like" and "we'll consider it."

And there's no place where this oneness is more important than in religious faith. Despite the fact that many couples have agreed that a difference in religious faith won't be a problem in their marriage, it's a statistical fact that it's one of the leading causes of trouble after the wedding. And this is why husbands and wives need to make a commitment together to the Lord and His church. And make it a priority in their lives.

Second, people who remain married commit themselves to marriage for life. They don't consider divorce as an option when difficulties arise. When sweet Jackie and I married, Jackie's mother told Jackie well, "If you can't get along and decide to leave your husband, don't come back home here." Now Jackie's mother was not trying to be mean. She was emphasizing the importance of working out your problems with your spouse. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians 7 verses 10 to 11, "But to the married I give instructions, not I, but the Lord, that the wife should not leave her husband (but if she does leave, she must remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife."

Most marriages face serious struggles, and learning how to forgive and to reconcile is what keeps marriages together. Divorce often takes place, when one spouse won't cease their offensive ways, and the other spouse can no longer forgive. Learning to please your spouse, learning to humbly repent of offensive ways for one and learning to forgive for the other is essential to keeping a marriage intact for a lifetime. Many times the inability to repent and to forgive kill what was once a loving relationship.

Mack Lyon observed many years ago that, "Some people are confirmed quitters. They've never learned to work through a difficult problem or situation. When they were in school, they quit sports or band when they didn't get to play the position they wanted. They dropped out of school when they no longer liked it. They ran away from home when mom and pop's rules became unbearable. They quit going to church when the church didn't condone their deviant behavior. They go from job to job. And when working hours or conditions aren't exactly to their liking, they quit. Some of them have been known to try to quit living and so they commit suicide when life got difficult. And, they'll walk out on a marriage when a spouse doesn't measure up to their expectations. You can count on it. They'll just get a divorce and quit. The world is always against them they think, they seem never to get a fair shake, so they just quit. Oh don't quit, my friend. Learn to work through the problem, talk it out, pray together, forgive and forget, seek a counselor, and do some things and go some places together. Don't run from marriage to another marriage. Grow up and settle down. And try real hard to make your marriage a happy and lasting one. You can do it and you'll be oh so glad, Mack says, if you do!"

Now almost any married couple could list things that might help another couple to have a happy and meaningful marriage. A marriage counsellor or minister could compile an almost endless list that would enhance a marriage relationship, such as spending time together, being good listeners, working through conflicts, being less critical and more appreciative, never embarrassing your spouse, never abusing your spouse verbally, and always communicating with one another, and a lot of things like this. Some years ago I did a series on marriage called, Together for Life. And you can download a copy free from our website.

Nearly thirty years ago, Mack Lyon said, "But, I believe more than any or all of that, (of course those suggestions) we need the counsel of God. God has a lot to say about marriage which needs to be heard above everything else. In counselling couples preparing to marry Mack often read to them the 127th Psalm. It begins, 'Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain.'"

Marriage is such a sacred union it's used many times in the Scriptures to describe that high and holy relationship between Christ and His church, as in the passage we read at the beginning of this program. And it seems to be the only analogy that's entirely adequate to describe that heavenly human relationship. Some messages came through loud and clear from Ephesians 5:22 to 33. First of all the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. Second, as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Third husbands are to love their wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. So ought men to love their own wives. Forth husbands ought to nourish and cherish their wives just like Christ loves and cherishes the church. Fifth men ought to leave their fathers and mothers and hold fast to their wives. And sixth wives are to respect their husbands.

The Scriptures teach the husband is the head of his wife, and she is to be subject to him. In our day, when equality seems to be so important, some think it's unfair that God gave authority to husbands over their wives. But this authority, however, never gives men the right to abuse or to dominate their wives. And any man who treats the woman he married unkindly, unfairly, is breaking God's law. He's not only disobeying God, he's also deceiving himself. Only a fool believes abusing his wife will benefit him. Wise husbands understand the better that they treat their wives, the more their wives will respond with love and respect.

When husbands fail to love their wives, their wives react with disrespect. When husbands sense a lack of respect from their wives they often act in ways that are unloving. So these feelings of being disrespected or unloved tear apart the marriage. When husbands show love and wives show respect, the marriage prospers and strengthens. My friend you can make your marriage better, husbands, if you can learn to demonstrate Christian love to your wife.

Because if a disrespected husband will love his wife anyway, and if an unloved wife will respect her husband anyway, they can start putting their damaged marriage back together. A wise husband loves and pays attention to his wife. He's able to see what she needs to be happy. And every woman needs to feel her husband is close to her and cares about her. Some husbands keep their distance from their wives, and their wives feel unloved because of it. Wives need husbands who will open up enough to share their thoughts and feelings. She feels unwanted or unneeded when he closes up and shuts her out of his life. When he keeps secrets from her, she feels he doesn't love her enough to trust her. Wives need to know their husbands are loyal to the marriage and not looking elsewhere. She also needs to know that he sees her as the most important person in his life (except for God). She needs to know that he cherishes and honors her. And both people must cherish each other.

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father help husbands and wives to love each other, to cherish each other, to honor each other as You have taught in Your word the bible. And Father may our love for You, our love for one another, grow more and more. In Jesus name, Amen.

If you want a better marriage, then start looking at yourself. How are you treating your spouse? And instead of constantly criticizing, start evaluating yourself. You can help your marriage by improving yourself, rather than putting down your mate. Let's clean up our own lives before we focus on the faults of our spouses. Women, do you show respect to your husbands? Men, do you show love to your

wives? Men are you meeting your wife's needs for love and attention, and women are you honoring your husband by meeting his needs?

We can't change our spouses by making unreasonable demands, but we can change ourselves. When we change for the better our spouses will appreciate those changes and will want to change as well. Improving our marriages begins with improving our hearts. You can have a more loving heart by entering into a loving relationship with God. When God's love is in your heart, you'll become more loving and respectful to your family.

Does the love of God live in you? Are you committed to Christ? To become a Christian you must have love for and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Loving God means turning away from the sinful and hurtful ways of the world and embracing the loving and righteous ways of Christ. God calls this repentance, a change of heart that leads to a change of life. Upon your repentance and the confession of your faith the Lord asks you to be baptized in His name, immersed in water, for the forgiveness of your sins. In baptism you'll be united with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection according to Romans 6:3 to 7. The Lord will wash away your sins (Acts 22:16) and He'll add you to His church (Acts 2 and verse 47). And then you'll be in God's family. Oh I hope you'll come to Christ and do it today.

Well we hope that today's study about remaining married till death do us part has encouraged you to make a better marriage in your home and make it as strong as possible. Now if you live in the United States and you want a free printed copy, send your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there's a schedule of our programs and a map of churches in your area at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). And you can watch SEARCH on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry" and like the programs. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

We do ask that you show God your love by worshiping at church. I tell ya you need a church family. And if you can attend, then go there, don't neglect worshiping at church. There's probably a church of Christ near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. Well we'll be back next week, Lord willing. And so we ask that you keep searching God's Word with us. And not only search God's word but tell a friend about this program. Let them know that you watch and you want them to watch. And as always we say to you, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.