

Elder Vernon Johnson

Numbers

One Flesh

The marriage union established by the scriptures consists of a man and a woman joining together in a covenant to become one flesh:

1. Gen 2:24 "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."
2. Mat 19:5 "And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?"
3. Mat 19:6 "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."
4. Mark 10:8 "And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh."
5. 1 Cor 6:16 "What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh."
6. Eph 5:31 "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh."

Obviously, in a marriage a husband and a wife do not literally become one flesh so as they lose their separate identity. In a scriptural marriage, there are several ways that a husband and wife do become one flesh.

The biblical marriage relationship is patterned after the relationship between the Lord and his church: Eph 5:25 "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." The relationship between Christ and the church is illustrated by a human body whereby Christ is the head and the church is the body. Please note that the church is not to consider herself as being separate from her head. Likewise, the wife should not consider herself to be separate from her husband. Similarly, the husband is to leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife. This certainly teaches that they form a single family unit separate and apart from their parents. This certainly teaches us that parents should not try to dictate or pressure the decisions of their married children. While the married children may ask the advice and council of their parents, yet the decisions they make are to be together and to be their decisions.

In forming a biblical marriage unit, the husband and wife become one in at least the following ways:

1. They form a single financial unit separate and apart from their parents and what one

buys belongs to both and cost of the items incurs to both. Likewise, their financial status rises and falls as one unit.

2. They form a single governmental unit as it pertains to the government of the family. The laws that govern the family are agreed upon by the husband and wife and are maintained and executed by both the husband and wife. This includes the raising of the children and the discipline of the children. The husband and wife should speak with one voice.

3. The emotional care and intimacy of the married couple should be bound into the one unit of the marriage relationship. The husband or wife should not look outside the boundary of the marriage relationship to fulfill their emotional and intimate needs. "And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." God made the woman to satisfy the emotional and intimate needs of the man and likewise the man is to satisfy the emotional and intimate needs of the wife.

4. The goals and actions of the husband and wife should be unified. 1 Pet. 3:7 "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

5. In nature, God made the man to be the primary protector and provider for the natural needs of the family. Likewise, God made the woman to be the primary guide of the household and to lead the emotional stability of the family. Together according to God's pattern they are ideally made to be one unit.

When a man and wife first enter into the marriage covenant, they often times at first try to maintain their individuality to the detriment of the marriage. However, Godly couples who are dedicated to working to make their marriage patterned after the scriptural pattern, begin to lose their individuality and even to take on the personality and thought pattern of their spouse. From personal experience, I find that my wife often knows what I am thinking or what I am about to do or say and sometimes says it before I do. She knows my ways and habits just about as well as I do. Likewise, I know her ways, thoughts, and habits just about as well as she does.

It amazes me that often when I look at older couples, I notice that they even look like one another. What a blessing the unity of marriage is to those who experience the biblical pattern for a marriage.