



## A Model for Marriage

### 2 Corinthians 11:1-3

*"I hope that you will put up with a little of my foolishness; but you are already doing that. I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to Him. But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ."*

1. This passage will give you a completely different view of your marriage and what God has planned and purposed for it. In effect, what Paul is saying is this: I understand that I have been a little hyper. I have been hovering over you an awful lot. You have been gracious. But I am very concerned for you. I am concerned because I have promised you to a husband, and I'm afraid you are going to wander away!

Now what in the world is Paul talking about? Earthly marriage is a preparation for a greater, more wonderful wedding. All of us will be THE BRIDE when we finally and eternally unite to THE GROOM, Jesus Christ. Earthly marriage is not God's goal. It is rather God's means to a greater, deeper, fuller goal.

If you miss what Paul is saying here, your marriage will never make sense. Marriage was never meant to make complete sense in the context of this world only. IT IS THE PREPATORY MARRIAGE FOR THE ULTIMATE MARRIAGE.

1. Your View of Love

Isn't it true that pure and true love is always appropriately jealous? Wives, what if your husband sat next to you on the couch, took your hand in his, looked you in the eyes, and said: "Of all the women in my life, at this moment, I love you the most."

The epicenter of true love is unchallenged devotion of heart. Here is the point. God loves you and me so much that he is utterly unwilling to share us. **THE MOST SIGNIFICANT QUESTION OF THIS EARTHLY NOW MARRIAGE IS NOT, "DO WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER ENOUGH?" THE MOST SIGNIFICANT QUESTION IS, "ARE WE ACTUALLY, FUNCTIONALLY, AND PRACTICALLY DEVOTED TO CHRIST?"**

The sweetest gift you can give your husband/wife is to love Christ more. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:15 that Jesus Christ came *"that those who live would no longer live unto themselves but unto Him who loved them and gave Himself for them."*

Paul gives a wonderful promise and a terrible warning in Galatians 5:13-15. First, he holds out something unimaginably good: *For you were called to freedom, brethren, only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love, serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

Now listen to the warning: *If you keep on biting and devouring one another, watch out, or you will be destroyed by one another.*

That kind of horizontal battle, motivated by self-love will take our eyes away from the Lord Jesus Christ.

## 2. What Rules Your Heart?

2 Corinthians 11:3 says: "But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the spirit's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ." This is really the drama of marriage. It is not simply about habits of communication, strategies for conflict

resolution etc. IN EVERY MARRIAGE THERE IS A BATTLE FOR WHAT LOVE WILL RULE YOUR HEART AND WHAT DESIRE WILL SHAPE YOUR LIFE.

Consider taking this as your goal: I want to be a part of what God is doing in my marriage. I want to be a part of what God is doing in my spouse. I want to be an instrument in His hands. This is how I want to live. I want to be humble, gentle, forgiving, forbearing, gracious and loving. Why? Because as I do these things the work of Jesus will thrive in my marriage.