

To Have and to Hold

FBH National Family Life Education directors, Pastor James and Margaret Neely.

June Hunt, Founder. Hope for the Heart. Submitted by permission;

What Is God's Pattern for Marriage?

"A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame." (Genesis 2:24-25)

These two verses in Genesis establish the four elements in God's perfect order for marriage.¹

- **Separation**....."A man will leave his father and mother."
Both the husband and wife leave the authority of their parents and become a separate family unit. In marriage the loyalty to your parents should never be stronger than the loyalty to your spouse.
- **Bonding**....."And be united to his wife."
By an act of your will, bonding is a mental commitment to have a faithful, permanent relationship with your spouse regardless of difficulties.
- **Oneness**....."They will become one flesh."
Physical oneness is the consummation of sexual closeness. However, to achieve a lasting oneness, both of you should look for ways to bring pleasure to the other. Openly ask what is pleasurable and take the time to enjoy one another.
- **Intimacy**....."They felt no shame."
Emotional intimacy is encouraged when you seek to be vulnerable and transparent, honestly sharing with one another your feelings of frustration and failure and your deepest disappointments and desires. Spiritual intimacy is achieved when you continue to reveal to one another your unmet needs, praying together, praying for each other and sharing what God is personally doing in your lives. ²

What Are God's Purposes for Marriage?

God has a unique purpose for the marriage covenant. The marital relationship affords you the awesome opportunity to showcase Christ's relationship to His bride (the church). In the same way that Christ sacrificially gave Himself to the church, you and your mate should be willing to sacrifice your individual desires for the sake of your marriage covenant.

“He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.”

(Proverbs 18:22)

- **Partnership** – (Amos 3:3)

God has given you and your mate to one another as partners for life. True companionship grows within the marriage relationship when there is emotional, spiritual and physical unity.

- **Pleasure** – (Proverbs 5:18)

The marriage relationship and your mate are God’s special gifts to you. True enjoyment of your mate will grow out of self-control and a servant’s heart.

- **Parenting** – (Genesis 1:28)

God’s first command in Scripture was for Adam and Eve to be “fruitful and multiply.” God desires that the earth be filled with godly offspring.

- **Perfecting** – (Romans 8:29)

In the intimate relationship of marriage, you become well aware of your partner’s shortcomings. Your partner is also well aware of your shortcomings! God uses both your weaknesses and strengths to sharpen and conform you and your partner to the image of Christ.