A Biblical Definition of Marriage

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I. What is marriage?

A. Definition: A lifelong, covenantally bound union between one man and one woman, which is the heart of the family and the foundation of human society.

B. Marriage is… a lifelong, covenantally bound union.

i. Nature: marriage is lifelong because _____ is lifelong.

ii. Scripture: "What therefore _____ has joined, let not man separate" (Mt 19:6).

1. Sidenote: Are there legitimate grounds for divorce and remarriage?

a. Yes: _____ (Matt 19:9) and _____ (1 Cor 7:15).

b. Ex 21:10–11: deprivation of _____ (food, clothing, marital rights).

c. Not a verse for everything, apply _____ from Scripture.

d. Principle: _____ + legal dissolution = divorce.

C. Marriage is… between one man and one woman.

i. Nature: no other relationship can _____, marriage's key natural purpose.

ii. Scripture: God _____ marriage between 1 man and 1 woman, any divergence is sin.

D. Marriage is… the heart of the family and foundation of human society.

i. Nature: Marriage produces _____, and _____ make up cities, nations, cultures.

ii. Scripture: God used marriage to build up the entire _____ and his holy nation.

1. In the NT, marriage remains the heart of family and the foundation of human society, but marriage is not foundational to the church like in the OT.

II. What do we know about marriage from nature?

A. Marriage has natural _____.

i. Two categories: nature and grace.

1. _____ is God's work pre-fall; _____ is his work post-fall.

2. _____ grace preserves nature, saving grace perfects nature.

ii. Marriage is a _____ institution, but its preservation is God's common grace.

B. Marriage has natural and penultimate _____.

i. The natural institution of marriage has natural purposes.

1. Including: childbearing, childrearing, _____, building society.

ii. These natural purposes are penultimate.

1. They are concerned with this world, not _____.

2. And if they are penultimate, then marriage is _____ and temporary.

C. Marriage has a natural _____ (see above).

D. Marriage has broad but natural _____.

i. Men primarily protect, _____, and _____.

ii. Women primarily nurture, _____, and _____.

III. What is different about marriage for Christians?

A. Some preliminary notes:

i. Natural purposes have a supernatural & ultimate purpose added: God's _____.

ii. Our marriages have the unique calling to reflect Christ's _____ to his church.

iii. Since marriage is _____, not all Christians will be a husband or wife.

1. But all Christians can perform their natural gender roles in _____.

B. What do we know about marriage from Scripture?

i. Genesis 1:27–28: Men and women are _____, both bear God's image.

ii. Genesis 2:18–23: Men and women are equal but they're also _____.

1. Sidenote on "Helper": To call Eve Adam's "helper" is not an _____.

iii. Genesis 3: the fall of mankind came from a _____ of the first marriage.

1. Sidenote on the curse of Genesis 3:16b: _____ of continuity or curse of strife?

a. For more, see "Restoring Eve" by Kendra Dahl in Modern Reformation.

iv. Ephesians 5:22–33: The unique roles of husband & wife reflect _____.