

Title: Validating Marriage
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Introduction

Cover of *Time Magazine*, 2007



Four Elements

1. Validation – from Scripture

Hebrews 13:4 NLT

⁴ Give honour to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage.

- *Timios* = honour / precious / valuable
- Scripture is encouraging us to turn marriage into something worth aspiring (and perspiring) to by turning it into something precious and of value.
- The only way this is possible, is if we truly understand the purpose and importance of marriage as institution.

Genesis 1:1

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth

Genesis 2:18

¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him

Genesis 2:22-24

²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. ²³ "At last!" the man exclaimed. "This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken from 'man.'" ²⁴ this explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.

Genesis 3:16

¹⁶ Then he said to the woman, "I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you.

Mark 10:2-12

² Some Pharisees came and tried to trap him with this question: “Should a man be allowed to divorce his wife?” ³ Jesus answered them with a question: “What did Moses say in the law about divorce?” ⁴ “Well, he permitted it,” they replied. “He said a man can give his wife a written notice of divorce and send her away.” ⁵ But Jesus responded, “He wrote this commandment only as a concession to your hard hearts. ⁶ But ‘God made them male and female’ from the beginning of creation. ⁷ ‘This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, ⁸ and the two are united into one.’ Since they are no longer two but one, ⁹ let no one split apart what God has joined together.” ¹⁰ Later, when he was alone with his disciples in the house, they brought up the subject again. ¹¹ He told them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries someone else commits adultery against her. ¹² And if a woman divorces her husband and marries someone else, she commits adultery.”

Marriage is central to the Christian faith:

- Metaphor of the NT (Bride / Bridegroom)
- Defines the Christian Faith through the relationship between Christ & His church.
- Without it, no earthly reference and our ability to “stomach” the idea of unconditional love is seriously blemished.

2. Celebration

- Christianity stems from a rich tradition of festivals – some commanded by God Himself. We need them – they give us hope and inspiration!
- We need to do the same about marriage. We do so on the wrong day - not so much on the day of the wedding as on the anniversary of it!

3. Empowerment

- Our culture is getting more and more relationally challenged.
- Problem: We have become a generation of selfish Me-firsts; a toxic state when it comes to governing lasting relationships.
- Christ gave us Communion to empower us to fulfil our earthly calling – this includes marriage! Do this often, as married couples, households, but also as a congregation.

4. Support

- For us to give support to others in a Christ-like way, our hearts have to be aligned with His first.
- We need to be equipped by God to go much HARDER on sin and SOFTER on the sinner – it’s a technique which is closely associated with Godly authority – in short supply in the Body at present!

Romans 5:20 NLT

²⁰ God’s law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God’s wonderful grace became more abundant

Romans 3:23-25 NLT

²³ For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. ²⁴ Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.

John 8:11

¹¹ “No, Lord,” she said. And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.”