

CHAPTER 7

What Does Marriage Picture?

There is a more important relationship in life than the man-woman relationship. A person can share in a more joyful and blessed kind of fellowship than even the close fellowship of a man and a woman. There is a greater kind of love than the love for a member of the opposite sex.

Who did the Lord Jesus say we are to love first of all (Matthew 10:37 and 22:36-38)?

_____ The most intimate and joyous kind of fellowship is truly with whom (1 John 1:3-4)? _____

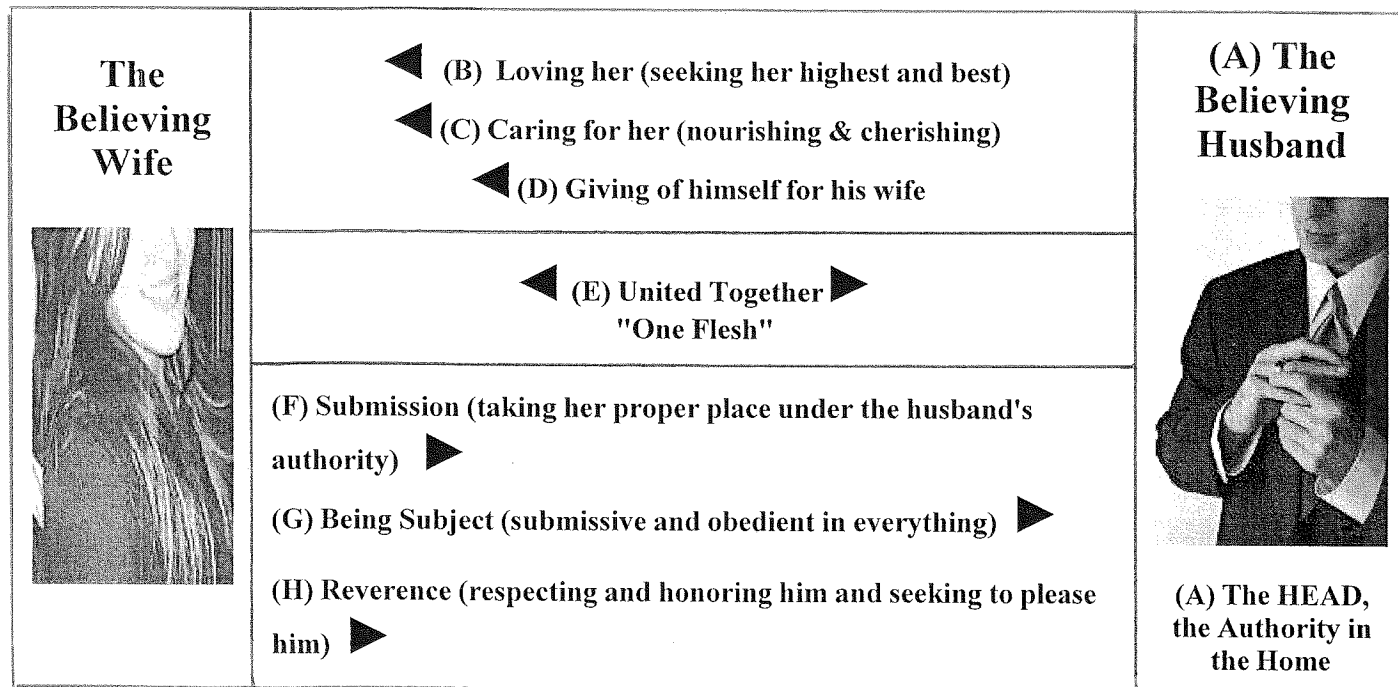
What is the most important relationship a person can have, both now and forever (John 17:3)?

_____ Yes, the living God wants to be your **most important Person** (the One who is closest to you, the One who is loved supremely, the One who is Number One, the One who is the Dearest and the Best).

This wonderful relationship between a believer and his or her God can be illustrated as follows:



God's desire is that Christian marriage might picture this precious and intimate relationship between the believer and his/her God. We have already studied how the parent-child relationship should picture a far greater relationship (see Chapter 5). Now we want to consider how the husband-wife relationship should picture and portray something far greater and far better than even the human relationship:



Read Ephesians 5:22-33 and find the verses which correspond to the letters above:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____
- G. _____
- H. _____

God wants marriage to portray the proper picture. Consider the following hypothetical situations and show how each of these corrupts and distorts what marriage should really picture. The following sentences describe situations which are contrary to what God would desire for a husband and a wife. Following this you will find a numbered list which makes false and absurd statements about the relationship between the believer and God. Remember, the marriage relationship is supposed to be a picture of the relationship between God and the believer. If the marriage relationship is not right, then it will present the wrong picture.

Consider the following illustrations of the husband and wife presenting the wrong picture by living contrary to God's order and contrary to God's commands for the marriage relationship. Remember, the husband is supposed to represent God and the wife is supposed to represent the believer:

- 1) The husband is too lazy to work and provide for his family.

Wrong picture: The Lord does not provide for His own (but see Philippians 4:19).

- 2) The wife doesn't listen to her husband and often does not do what he says.

Wrong picture: The believer does not need to hear and obey God's Word (but see James 1:19-22).

- 3) The husband separates from his wife and lives in an apartment complex miles away.

Wrong picture: It is possible to be separated from the love of the Lord (but see Romans 8:38-39).

- 4) The wife leads the household and tells the husband what to do.

Wrong picture: Believers should tell God what to do, and God should go along with whatever they say. (Peter tried this in Matthew 16:22, but it did not work!)

- 5) The husband submits to the authority of the wife, and lets her be the boss and the head of the home.

Wrong picture: God should submit to man because man is Lord and God is not (but see Romans 14:9).

- 6) The wife goes around with other lovers and the husband does not even care.

Wrong picture: God is not a jealous God (but see Exodus 20:3-5).

7) The husband divorces his wife and says, "I don't love you anymore and you no longer belong to me!"

Wrong picture: God sometimes casts out those who come to Him and refuses to be their God (but see John 6:37).

8) The wife demands "equal rights" in the home, and refuses to be under the husband's authority. She wants to be the co-authority!

Wrong picture: God is Lord and so is the believer (but see Ephesians 4:5).

9) The husband tells his wife not to go to church.

Wrong picture: Sometimes God's commands are not for our highest and our best (but see Deuteronomy 6:24).

10) The wife obeys her husband 90% of the time. (The husband's requests are fair and reasonable, even in the requests that she disobeys.)

Wrong picture: God does not expect us to obey Him **in everything** (but see Matthew 28:20 and compare Ephesians 5:24).

11) The husband never leads the family devotions, but instead the wife always does this.

Wrong picture: The believer should teach God all about spiritual truth (but see Romans 11:34).

12) The wife criticizes her husband in public.

Wrong picture: Believers should let the world know what a terrible God they have (but see Mark 5:19).

13) The husband gets a sprained thumb and he goes to the nearby hospital to get the finest of medical care. His wife has suffered for years with back pains and he does nothing for her.

Wrong picture: When a believer suffers, the Lord does not feel it (but see Acts 9:4-5--when the body suffers, the Head feels it!).

14) The wife gives the orders, and the husband does whatever the wife wants.

Wrong picture: God is the believer's willing slave (but see I Corinthians 6:19-20).

15) The husband comes home from work and does not even show an interest in his wife (how she feels, how her day went, what her problems are, etc.).

Wrong picture: God does not care for the believer and is not really interested in his problems (but see 1 Peter 5:7).

16) The husband and wife rarely spend time together. They keep their distance and each do their own thing.

Wrong picture: God and the believer do not enjoy a very close relationship (but see John 14:20).

17) The wife wears short hair and the husband wears long hair, thus showing the man's submission and the wife's authority (1 Corinthians 11:14-15).

Wrong picture: God must submit to the authority of the believer, because this is the proper order (but see 1 Corinthians 11:3).

18) The woman complains every day about her duties as a wife.

Wrong picture: The believer should murmur and complain about serving the Lord (but see Philippians 2:14).

19) The husband says, "Wife, whatever you say, that I will do!"

Wrong picture: God says, "Whatever man says, that shall I do!" "Not My will; but man's will be done!" (but see Luke 22:42).

20) The wife wants to please herself, not her husband.

Wrong picture: The believer wants to please himself not the Lord (but see I John 3:22).

In the next two chapters we shall see how man has perverted the picture of marriage even more, by turning something very beautiful and precious into something very ugly and distorted and sinful.

TO THE QUESTION, A FORTHRIGHT ANSWER

