

How Satan Corrupted It

Genesis 3:1-19

Pastor John Miller

The subject or title of my series is quite intentional, “Marriage And The Bible.” We don’t study marriage and psychology, or marriage and philosophy, or marriage and current trends. Nothing more important than our knowledge of and application of God’s Word in our lives and in our marriages. I believe that if we fail to be properly related to the Bible and fail to have a knowledge of the Bible and yield to obedience to the Bible, all of life will be out of whack; we can’t be in harmony with God, we can’t be in harmony with our spouse, and we don’t know really what life is about, what’s going on, so we need this foundation that is laid for us in the Word of God. In the thought of my title is what I wanted to do was simply look at what the Bible teaches about marriage. Some say, “Well, that’s not very practical.” Nothing could be more practical than knowing God, the creator and designer of marriage, what He expects us in our marriage, and what marriage is as God created it.

Just a quick review, marriage as God created it. Back up into Genesis 2:24-25. These are two of the most important verses in the Bible on the subject of marriage. They are quoted by Paul the apostle and were also quoted by Jesus. It says, verse 24, and this is Moses giving his commentary on the narrative of the creation of Adam and Eve and the first marriage. It says, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”

We looked at five building blocks of what a marriage is as God has designed or created it. I won’t tarry on them, but I want to mention them once again. The first, Genesis 2:24, is severance, that “...a man leave his father and his mother,” so there’s that lack of no longer depending on your parents. The relationship is now changed, and your spouse becomes the most important person in your life. That’s the number one person in your life after, of course, Jesus Christ, right? So, the priority is your relationship to God, then your relationship to your spouse, and you’re not to let anyone else, even a family member or parents, come in between you and your spouse.

The second building block was permanence, verse 24. We saw the phrase, “...cleave unto his wife,” so “...leave,” is the first block, “...cleave,” is the second block. That word “cleave” in the Hebrew we saw means to be glued together. In marriage, when you commit to the marriage covenant, God glues you together and it speaks of permanency. When Jesus was asked in Matthew 19, and we’re going to spend a whole evening on the subject of divorce and what the Bible says about divorce and remarriage, “Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause,”—any and every reason—“And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, 5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? 6 ...What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

Jesus actually said, “...but from the beginning it was not so,”—not God’s design, purpose, or

intention for there to be divorce, but divorce is a divine combined condescension to man's human sin in allowing man to have a divorce because of sin. We'll go into that in a few weeks, but it was never God's design that you can get married and part of My plan is if you try it out for a few months or a few years and if it doesn't work, then try another one, or try another one, or try another one. That's not God's design. He said, "No, I glue you together," and "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." The second block is permanence.

The third block is unity, verse 24, "...and they shall be one flesh," so the two now become one like two tributaries flowing into one river going the same direction, carrying the same burdens and responsibilities in life. It's not just thinking about myself and what I want—my career, what's good for me—it's the two of us as we do life together, the two become one.

The fourth block is intimacy, verse 25, "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." It speaks of the intimacy in the marriage relationship. A man by the name of Mike Mason has written an excellent book called, *The Mystery of Marriage*. He says this, "It requires the security of the most perfect reassurances," now, he's talking about intimacy in marriage, "and commitments into which two people can enter which is none other than the loving contract of marriage. Marriage is a contract. It's a covenant, and two people enter into that, and the two become one," which speaks of sexual intimacy in marriage.

The fifth block is not from the text in Genesis 2:24-25, it's from Ephesians 5:32 where Paul says, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church," so marriage is a mystery. R. Kent Hughes, in speaking about this, said, "Their one-flesh relationship reflected the eternal intimacy and order of the holy Trinity and foreshadowed the intimacy and order of Christ and His bride, the church." The picture in marriage that's pictured is that of the Trinity—one God, three Persons. In marriage, there's the husband and the wife, and the Trinity, which is reflected in marriage, is the fact that we are one, even though we are two distinct individuals, and that we are also picturing the relationship between Christ and His church.

Just in those facts we can understand that it is indeed holy matrimony. I love that concept of putting the word "holy" before "matrimony." The word "holy" means sanctified, set apart unto God. When you get married, you as a couple are being sanctified or set apart together unto God reflecting the Godhead Himself and reflecting the relationship of Christ and the church. When you realize that, is it any wonder that we see the attacks of the devil against the marriage relationship. Satan hates marriage, and he will do all he can to destroy your marriage. You need to realize what Paul said in Ephesians 6, "...we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers...spiritual wickedness in high places."

Marriage is very challenging and difficult for the first reason I want to point out is because of the corruption of Satan. I have only two main points tonight, we're going to look at three including next week: the corruption of Satan, the curse of God, and the culture or the current trends in the end of time before the Lord returns. Tonight, we'll look at just two. The first is the corruption of Satan. This is known as the fall of man. We move from Genesis 2, where Adam and Eve were living in paradise, and you might say that they had a marriage made in heaven, in this

case in the Garden and it was just heaven on earth. Then, of course, sin entered the world through Satan, and we see man's fall and then the curse of God and the reason why we struggle so much in our relationships in the marriages today.

Let's read the historical narrative beginning in Genesis 3:1. "Now the serpent,"—right off the bat it doesn't take much time to introduce the devil—"was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said." We're going to come back to these verses, but notice the first words out of the mouth of the devil, and the devil is represented by this serpent. The word in Hebrew means shining one or bright one. Some people think it might have been some kind of an angelic manifestation because Satan (we're going to come back to) was fallen and in rebellion to God. He's represented as a serpent, and wasn't at this time most likely crawling upon his belly, that was the curse. The first words out of his mouth recorded in the Bible, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The first thing he does is question the Word of God trying to put doubt in our minds.

Verse 2, "And the woman said unto the serpent,"—which is again another bad thing to do, just sit around talking to the devil. It's not a good idea. You need to just say, "I don't want to talk to you. Leave me alone." The Bible says, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." If the devil knocks on your door, don't invite him in to have a conversation, okay? "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." She starts dialoguing with the devil, and the mystery also is, where is Adam? He should be there protecting his wife as her spiritual head, and he was AWOL. Perhaps he was playing golf or something, I don't know. I'm sure they had beautiful greens there in the Garden of Eden. He should've been there protecting his wife.

"And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it,"—which isn't recorded in the Scripture, it would seem that she's adding to what God said, a dangerous thing to do—"lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree,"—now notice this carefully, this has great application to not just personal temptation but the attacks that will come upon our marriage, our homes, and our families. When she, "...saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

Verse 7, "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. 8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden." It's not hard to see that this marriage made in paradise is now in trouble, they're hiding from God. Whenever we, in our marriages, are running from God, we're going to have big trouble or there's going to be alienation and difficulties in our marriage. "...and they sewed fig leaves

together, and made themselves aprons,”—they tried to cover their nakedness—“And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.”

Verse 9, “And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?” Let me mention this in case I forget. God knew where they were. God is omniscient, so when God asks a question...I’ve always been fascinated by the questions God asks in the Bible because why would God need to ask a question when He knows all things. God wanted them to know where they were. He knew where they were, He wanted them to think about, “Yes, we’re hiding because of our sin and we’re estranged from You.” “And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?” verse 9. “And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid,”—first mention of fear in the Bible and alienation from God the minute sin comes into the world—“because I was naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?”

Verse 12, “And the man said,”—here it is, classic—“The woman,” (we should have all the men read this verse right now, right?) “whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” What a sissy, Adam. It’s not in the verse, I just threw that...it’s the white space. “And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.” She said, “The devil made me do it.” She blamed it on the devil, and the devil has nowhere to pass the buck, he just has to accept the fact that he brought sin into the world.

Your marriage has an enemy. I didn’t encourage you to grab a pencil and a piece of paper, but if you can do that, I want you to write down these points and some of these verses. I’m going to give you cross-references. The first thing I want to point out is that marriage has an enemy, and he’s represented here as the serpent. The serpent is, of course, the devil or Satan our adversary. What is the origin of the devil? That’s not our topic tonight, but he was an angel, probably the highest angel of all God’s created angels. His name was Lucifer. You can read about him in Ezekiel 38 and Isaiah 14. You get a lot of insight to this mighty angel created in beauty. He became proud and wanted to exalt himself above God. He rebelled against God, other angels rebelled with him, which is the origin of demons, and then he was kicked out of heaven—the fall of Satan. Satan is our archadversary, and he is the adversary of God, God’s people, and all that God has created and designed.

Marriage is designed to reflect the Godhead. If marriage is reflecting the relationship of Christ to the church, is it any surprise that the devil is doing all he can systematically to destroy marriage today in the world? From the time of the Garden of Eden to this very present day, he is attacking the marriage institution, the institution of marriage, and he’s trying to tear it down. If you don’t realize that, you’ll be vulnerable. Realize there is a devil.

If you’re struggling in your marriage, you don’t want to overplay or overemphasize the idea that, “The devil made me do it,” or “The devil is in our house,” or “The devil is in my husband,” or “The

devil is in my wife,” or “The devil is in the closet,” or something like that. There really is a devil, and you’re being pretty foolish to disregard that idea and the truth of the reality of spiritual warfare in your marriage relationship, so you need to, “Put on the whole armour of God,”—Amen?—“that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil,” Ephesians 6. I would encourage you to check out the series I did on Ephesians 6 on the armor of God (we looked at each piece of the armor, one a week) and bring that into your life and into your marriage. There really is a devil, and he is the origin of all evil.

Satan also has a strategy. Look at that in verses 1-5. It comes with subtlety. Notice verse 1, “Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field,” so he was a highly intelligent being and was coming with subtlety. The devil doesn’t knock on the door looking like the little demon on an Orange Julius cup. Is there such a thing anymore, anyway? Are there any Orange Julius’? Unless you’re over 60, you don’t know what I’m talking about, I guess. He comes as an angel of light, the Bible says, so that he might deceive. He comes with subtlety, “God wants you happy.” He comes with subtlety and a strategy, verse 1, “Did God really say that?” That, “ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” He also questions God’s Word. He has a strategy and it is with subtlety he comes with doubts and questions. Look at where he attacks—listen to me so very carefully—he questions the Word of God. “Did God really say that?” “Is that really what the Bible teaches?” “Is that really what the Scriptures say?” When we begin to doubt with our minds the validity and the authority and the clarity and the sufficiency and the inspiration of the Bible, we are in trouble. We become victims of the culture, and we’re not being shaped by the Scriptures, the Word of God.

We use the term of having a Christian worldview, and that means that as Christians we view all of the world through the lens of Scripture. Satan’s target is your mind, Satan’s tool is his lies, and he wants you to doubt God’s will, found in God’s Word. This is why it’s so important to be a Bible student, to read your Bible, to study the Word of God. If you get a husband and a wife both submitted to the Bible, reading the Bible and praying together, and obeying the Bible, a marriage made in heaven. But if you neglect your Bibles and discount the Word of God, you’re going to be in big trouble. If you don’t look at all of life and your decisions by prayerfully considering God’s Word and the Scriptures and bowing to their authority, you’re going to be in severe trouble. He questioned God’s Word and authority.

We also see that the devil denies God’s Word. In verse 4 he said, “Ye shall not surely die.” First he said, “Did God really say that?” just throwing some doubt out there in question. And then he says, “No, you’re not really going to die. God knows that when you eat that your eyes are going to be opened and you shall be as gods,” which is really what the devil wanted himself, he wanted to be like God and as God. This is what the New Age Movement focuses on, you are God. He comes with his doubts, and he comes with his own ideas, and then he doubts the goodness of God.

Verse 5 says, “For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” In other words, he’s implying that, “God’s holding something good back from you. God’s not giving you all the blessings that He

could, and there's more for you." Here's a very dangerous lie of the devil. In your marriage when the devil says, "God wants you to be happy." "Yeah, God wants me to be happy," so you're not happy, "So, get a divorce and be single, or find another mate." That's a lie from the pit of hell. Amen? You need to resist that, be aware of that, not listen to that when he comes and says, "No, God wants you to be happy."

I can't tell you how many times I've heard that with couples that say, "Well, I know that I shouldn't get a divorce, but God wants me to be happy." Really? God wants you to be holy. God wants you to be obedient. Amen? And when you're holy and obedient, happiness follows. When you are living in sin and rebellion and disobedience to God's Word, you will be unhappy. I can't tell you how many times I've had people look me right in the face and say, "I know it's not God's will, but I want to do what's going to make me happy, so I'm going to leave my spouse." I tell them, "You're headed for misery. You're not headed for happiness, you're headed for misery." The only way to be happy is to be holy and obedient to God. His strategy is lies, his subtlety is to come and get you to doubt God's Word, question God's Word, deny God's Word, and he wants you to doubt God's goodness. It was an attack on the goodness of God. Even though God had given them so much in the Garden of Eden and the blessings, they were tempted to doubt the goodness of God. Don't listen to the devil.

I heard this story of a wife that had a very stingy husband (don't say, "Amen," to that, ladies), and she was going out of the house one day. He asked, "Where are you going?" She said, "I'm just going to go to the mall." He said, "Well, don't buy anything. Just look around." She said, "Okay," and went out the door. A couple of hours later she came with a big bag with a dress in it. He said, "I thought I told you not to buy anything. What did you do?" She said, "Well, I saw this dress. I was looking at it, and the devil showed up and said, 'Try it on,' so I tried it on. When I tried it on he said, 'It looks so good on you!'" Her husband said, "Well, why didn't you say, 'Get behind me, Satan.'" She said, "I did, and when he got behind me said, 'Looks good from behind, too. It looks good from behind.'" Don't listen to the devil. Sorry about using you, ladies, buying a dress, by the way. That doesn't imply that shopping for a dress is demon possessed. That's not what I'm saying. The point is, tell the devil that he's a liar.

Temptation has its categories. So, we see that first of all your marriage has an enemy; secondly, your enemy has a strategy; thirdly, temptation has its categories. Go back with me to verse 6. The Bible says there, "...the woman saw that the tree was good for food." We don't know that the fruit was an apple. It doesn't say. I don't know how an apple got pictured as the forbidden fruit. Poor apple gets a bad wrap. It could've been a kumquat or a banana, I don't know, but the fruit, "...was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise." I want you to notice these categories that Satan comes to tempt us in. They are fundamental in Satan's strategy and the categories in which he tempts us today—lust of the flesh, "...good for food."

I'm going to talk in a minute about Satan's attack on marriage to get you to satisfy your sexual needs outside the covenant relationship of marriage. That must never, ever happen. The Bible says, "Drink waters...out of thine own well," not from someone else's. The Bible says, "Can a

man take fire in his bosom, and...not be burned?" Here we are to watch out for the lust of the flesh. How many people have been destroyed by the appetites of their sinful flesh, "...good for food."

The second category is the lust of the eyes, and we see that in verse 6, "...pleasant to the eyes." Whatever the fruit was, it was beautiful to look at, there was the eye gaze; and the pride of life, verse 6, is seen in, "...make one wise." We know these categories are mentioned in 1 John 2:15-17 where John says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away." The same categories existed all the way back as Satan attacked in the Garden of Eden—the lust of the flesh, "...good for food;" the lust of the eyes, "...pleasant to the eyes;" and pride of life, "...make one wise."

Remember when Jesus was tempted by the devil in the wilderness and the devil said, "Turn these stones into bread," the lust of the flesh. He showed Him all the kingdoms of the earth, the lust of the eyes; and then actually said, "Throw Yourself down from the temple and people will worship You and follow You," pride of life, which someone has described as the lust of the flesh is your passions, the lust of the eyes is your possessions, and the pride of life is your position. I've always loved that. These areas in your marriage need to be guarded and protected.

If you're taking notes, write this down. Satan, the deceiver, has a target, it's your mind; he has a weapon, he's the father of lies which is why we need to be grounded in the truth of God's Word; he has a purpose, to make you ignorant of God's will and disobedient to God's Word. He attacks your mind with his lies, he wants you to be ignorant of God's Word, and disobedient to God's will. That's a great summary. We could pretty much almost stop right here and just take these important points and hold onto them when it comes to protecting your marriage against the attacks of the enemy, against Satan.

Our defense is the Word of God. When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness and the devil came after Him, what did He Jesus say? "It is written." The best way to defend yourself against the devil is with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Amen? "It is written...It is written...It is written." "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Both the husband and the wife need to hide God's Word in their hearts that they, "...might not sin against thee."

Now we move to the tragedy in this section, verses 6-7. Go back there with me. We see that they, "...did eat," of the fruit. Verse 7, "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." They disobeyed God and sinned, and they brought sin, death, and destruction upon the entire human race and upon the whole creation, which is now groaning waiting for redemption. They also brought shame, verse 7, they covered their sin with fig leaves. This is man's self attempt to cover his sin which cannot take place. This is what religion does. This is typical of religion—trying to do good deeds to cover my fallen nature or my sin.

Notice the discovery, verses 8-13, sin separated them from God, which it does to us as well. In verse 9, God spoke to them; they heard the voice of God but were afraid, verse 10, fear and guilt in their marriage; then they started blame-shifting, verses 11-13. It's so important in your marriage relationship not to blame-shift, not to say, "It's my wife, she's the problem. If she would just learn to cook. If she'd just look a little better. If she would just meet my needs a little more. If she were just a little more loving and kind or more submissive." You know, it's funny, when we get into the role for the wife and for the husband, the wife knows the husband's verses, the husband knows the wife's verses, and we quote them to each other instead of focusing on your own verses and your responsibility. Don't blame-shift, "Oh, my husband, it's him." "It's my wife." They are blame-shifting or passing the buck. This is the first original cop out.

Really, in verse 12, too, when he said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me," I know you've heard me mention it before, but he's really in a roundabout way blaming God. Notice, "... whom thou gavest to be with me." "I was hanging out with the animals. Everything was fine. I took a nap, woke up, and there she was. Everything went downhill after that. Everything was cool until she showed up." The same guy who's blaming his wife, just a few verses earlier was saying, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." He was so excited about her, "She meets the deepest needs of my life." And now, "Well, it's her fault!"

It doesn't take long for sin to come into the world for us to start blame-shifting on one another, right? Be careful. This is one of the devil's tactics. Rather than taking responsibility for our own sin you might be here tonight and you have been just convinced by the devil that it's all your spouse's fault, the problems you're facing. It could be that's partly true, but don't focus on the other person, focus on yourself being right with God, being obedient to God, and fulfilling your obligations to them according to God's Word. Satan corrupts marriage, and it's destroyed.

Now, I don't want to tarry on this. Let me list for you in the book of Genesis the sin that Satan brought in to destroy marriage. The first is in Genesis 4, polygamy. Polygamy is a corruption of Satan. The book of Genesis is the book of beginnings, so here in Genesis 3, sin enters. The very next chapter we find polygamy. That is not God's design, that's not God's purpose, that's not God's intent.

Today, what's become quite popular is polyamorous, relationships of a group of people having sexual relationships with one another openly and not being married. This comes out of a polygamous concept. It is not God's will, it is not God's purpose, it's not God's design. It's unbelievable to me, and I know that some Latter-day Saints today deny it but in the early years of Mormonism and Latter-day Saints, that they practice polygamy. There are branches of it that still do today. That's not God's design. Even when you see it in the Bible, that's not God's purpose, that's not God's desire, that's not God's design, that's not God's intent for the marriage relationship. A man and a woman, it's a heterosexual relationship between a man and a woman, and it's a covenantal relationship between a man and a woman for life. Polygamy is something that's corruption of the devil, Genesis 4.

In Genesis 16 is adultery. This is glamorized by Hollywood today, and we see it so common in the movies. Adultery is, of course, someone who is married having sexual relationships outside of their marriage. That's a corruption of the devil. You should read Proverbs 6, by the way.

In Genesis 19, homosexuality, and we see the story of Sodom and Gomorrah in the book of Genesis. Let me mention just a couple things about homosexuality and marriage. The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19 brought destruction upon that city. There are some that try to get around this and say, "Well, the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was really a lack of hospitality." Really? Lot had brought the angels into his house and was protecting and taking care of them. Where's the lack of hospitality? Nothing could be more perverting the Scripture than saying that. When I see the open acceptance of homosexuality in our culture today, I'm thinking in my mind, Have they forgotten Sodom and Gomorrah? This is where we get the word "sodomy" from. "Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven."

Years ago Billy Graham said, "If God doesn't judge America, He owes Sodom and Gomorrah an apology." We've become such a perverted, wicked nation. How can we expect God to bless us when we have so accepted something that's an abomination to God? Write down Leviticus 18:22 where it says, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination," to God. It's clearly taught there that homosexuality is an abomination to God.

Thirdly, homosexuality is considered to be against nature and an example of a reprobate mind. Write down and please read Romans 1:18-32 that when men reject God, suppress the truth, and turn away from God, they degenerate; and the end of the degeneration is homosexuality. It's right there in the book of Romans where Paul says, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." We can be brainwashed. We can be polluted by the culture. It doesn't mean we hate them. It doesn't mean we have phobias about that, but we need to see, as God sees, that this is an abomination to God. It's an affront to God, it denies the glory of God, it's contrary to nature, it's sinful and will be the wrath of God poured out upon it.

If homosexuals are repentant, then God will forgive them and they can be transformed; but, unrepentant of, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 (write that down), it will bring judgment, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators,"—that's sexually immoral—"nor idolators, nor adulterers,"—and here's homosexuality—"nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." You can look it up and read it yourself, but as I said, the very next verse says, "And such were some of you,"—Paul speaking to the Corinthians—"but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." You can be forgiven; you can be transformed. The Bible says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." He makes us new creations in Christ.

Let me go back to my list: polygamy, adultery, homosexuality; and fourth is fornication and rape, Genesis 34. Fornication is the word we generally use for sex before marriage, premarital sex. You're not married, some people think, Well, I'm not married. I'm single. It's okay if I sleep around, if I have sex with whoever I want. It's acceptable and okay in our culture, but God says, "No, that's fornication," and it's condemned in the Scriptures. Write down 1 Thessalonians 4:3 where God says, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." The Greek word is porneia which is a general term for sexual immorality where we get our word pornography.

Fifth, in Genesis 38, we see incest and prostitution, which again would come under the cover of porneia or sexual immorality. And, of course today, I believe that pornography is also an attack of the devil upon the marriage relationship. It will not help your marriage. It will be detrimental and destructive to your marriage. Jesus said, "That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." That's a serious thought. Also, as we're going to look at in a couple of weeks, Matthew 19 where Jesus said that divorce is not originally God's purpose or design, but God allowed you to put away your wife, "...because of the hardness of your hearts."

Not only is marriage difficult today because of the corruption of Satan, but it's also difficult today because of the curse of God. You might kind of freak out on that thought, but bear with me. Let's read verses 14-19 and then we'll wrap this up. The first is the corruption of Satan, verses 1-13; secondly, the curse of God, verses 14-19. "And the LORD God said unto the serpent,"—now He tells them what's going to happen—"Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed,"—there's where we get the idea of the curse, the fall—"above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity,"—notice it—"between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Verse 16, "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." This is the problem in marriage. Because of the corruption of Satan, the fall of man, the curse of God, there's the battle of the sexes. So, He turns now from the woman to the man, verse 17, "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree,"—Eve was deceived by the devil, Adam listened to his wife and followed her lead—"Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed,"—there's our word—"is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb,"—or the vegetables—"of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Go back with me to verse 16. We can't spend a lot of time looking at every verse, but the focus is when He spoke to the woman in verse 16, He said, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children,"—here's the statement—"and thy desire

shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over you.” I’m going to cut to the chase. That phrase or statement doesn’t mean that you’re just going to love to submit to your husband, that because of the fall now you’re just going to do everything you can to be submissive, obedient, helpful, loving, a supportive, helpful wife. No, that’s not what it means. It means the opposite.

The phrase, “thy desire,” has the idea of dominate or rule over. The natural, sinful tendency of the fallen nature is going to manifest itself, not only in the woman, of whom the husband is the head, but also in the man to want to control and dominate the woman. The problem here is the woman wants to rule over her husband, but, “...he shall rule over thee.” The battle in marriage, the battle of the sexes, is the result of the fall. Thanks be unto God that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent. Amen?

Verse 15 is the first Messianic prophecy of the coming of the promised Seed, the Messiah, Jesus Christ, that seed of the woman. Maybe Eve’s sin led her husband into sin, but the New Testament makes it clear that Adam is at fault as the federal head for sinning and bringing sin and death and condemnation upon the whole world; but through the woman, the seed, the virgin birth, the virgin Mary, she would bring forth the promised Seed, Messiah, Jesus Christ, and that when He would die on the cross, He would bruise the head of the serpent—He would destroy his authority and power. Jesus reverses the curse.

We, who are living in this age of an unredeemed world, can actually have heaven on earth in our marriages if we resist the devil, we don’t yield to the flesh, we walk in obedience to God’s Word, and allow the Spirit to fill us. We may have struggles and battles because we’re still in our sinful bodies, but we can have a blessed marriage relationship. The thing is, there’s going to be this battle of the woman trying to dominate, control, and manipulate the man, but the husband, is the head, will rule over them.

One man said, “I wear the pants in the family, but she tells me which ones to put on.” I’ve heard people say, “Well, my husband’s the head, but I’m the neck; so I turn him wherever I want him to go.” As we look at the roles, we need to understand the headship is not dictatorship, and this is why it’s so important for us to think biblically, look at the world biblically. Don’t resist the clarity and the authority of God’s Word in the marriage relationship, if you want to be blessed.

Some of the ways that Satan tries to attack marriage, in wrap up, he seeks to reverse the headship in the home, Ephesians 5:23, “For the husband is the head of the wife.” In 1 Timothy 2:13-14, “For Adam was first formed, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.” The Bible is clear, Eve was the one who was deceived.

Another thing the devil does is that he seeks to lead husbands and wives into sexual immorality. This is clearly taught in 1 Corinthians 7:5. I’m going to spend a whole night on sexual intimacy in marriage from this passage, but it says that you should come together as husband and wife lest Satan tempt you for your lack of self control. Not only is intimacy in marriage for procreation and for pleasure but for protection, lest Satan tempt you for your lack

of self control.

Let me give you a third way Satan attacks the family. This is not going to make me very popular but I think it's true, he seeks to get the wife busy, husband as well but focus on the wife, busy and focused on outside of the home. This is not to say a woman can't work. This is not to say that a woman can't go out of the home for work or employment, but when that becomes the priority and you find more pleasure in getting out of the house, away from your husband, away from the kids, and getting out in the workforce, it can be dangerous. Let me give you the verse, 1 Timothy 5:14-15, speaking of young women who are widowed and their need to respond by getting married, having children, and guiding the house. It says, "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary,"—which is the devil—"to speak reproachfully. 15 For some are already turned aside after Satan."

I know this flies in the face of our culture. I'm old enough to have grown up in the "Leave It to Beaver" world where kids came home from school and mom was there cooking in the kitchen, cleaning the house, helping them with their homework, seeing them off in the morning, welcoming their husband home. You wonder, Why is the world such a mess today? Why is it so screwed up today? I think that years ago I realized that there was need for women to be liberated in some ways.

The classic women's liberation was pushing for women to be liberated from marriage and from male dominance, which is God's design in marriage, which they bought the lie—this is what would liberate them and free them—and it threw everything into an upside-down state. Ask yourself, "Do I find my full satisfaction and happiness away from the children, outside the home, away from my husband?" And, husbands, the same thing, "I don't want to go home. I don't want to see my wife. I want to hang out with the boys. I go to the Fuzzy Frog and drink before I go home. I gotta get liquored up before I go home and look at her. God, help me."

The Protestant Reformer Martin Luther said, "Our marriages should be such that you should live so your husband can't wait to get home, and once he's home, you hate to see him leave." It's that, "Oh no, he's coming home." Once he gets home, "Don't you wanna go somewhere?" Charles Haddon Spurgeon said, "If marriages were ruled according to God's Word, angels could be invited to dwell with us and not feel out of their element." I love that. Be careful. Satan wants to get you so busy outside of the home that you neglect your marriage, you neglect your walk with God, you neglect your own children.

Let me give you these bullet points. First, we end with the lesson, we are doing marriage in a broken and fallen world. We are doing marriage today in a broken and fallen world. Keep that in mind. Secondly, we are sinners married to sinners. You got that? Sinners married to sinners. That's why marriage is such a challenge. Third, don't listen to Satan's lies. Fourth, be obedient to God's Word. Fifth, God forgives us, we should forgive our spouse. Ruth Graham was quoted as saying that marriage that lasts is two sinners learning how to forgive each other. The Bible says, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." We're sinners, married to sinners, we need to forgive

one another.

Our homes need the same spiritual defense that we have as individual believers—the Word of God, the grace of God, the Spirit of God, and the intercessory work of the Son of God at the right hand of God the Father. Amen?