



By Design
One Flesh

Man is created in the image of God. God is a relational being. He created us to be relational beings. He created us to be in relationship with Him and with one another.

Of all the one another relationships, there is only one that God called a one flesh relationship; Husband and Wife.

Genesis 2:24

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

NKJV

Of all the one another relationships, there is only one that God said man must not separate; Husband and Wife.

Matthew 19:5-6

5 and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?

6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

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Of all the one another relationships, there is only one that God said is a metaphor of the relationship that Jesus has with His church; Husband and Wife.

Ephesians 5:31-32

31 For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

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By design, marriage stands alone as a unique relationship. By design, it only between a male and a female. By design, it is for life. By design, a man and a woman become one flesh.

When you hear the words one flesh, what immediately comes to mind? Sex! Children!

Having sex and bearing children are actions.

Being one flesh is a state of being!

Sex is a holy expression of being one flesh. Children are a fruit of being one flesh. But neither sex or children define what God meant by one flesh. Being one flesh is a state of being that means so much more than having sex or having children.

What does it mean to be one flesh?

Being one flesh is a unique partnership.

It is a partnership that is unlike any other business partnership on earth. It is one of a kind. It is so unique that when Jesus helped them understand it, they said, it would be better not to marry. (Matthew 19:10)

Matthew 19:10

10 His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry."

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Why is it one of a kind?

1. It is one of a kind because God is the authority that authorizes it. (Matthew 19:6)

Matthew 19:6

6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

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Every partnership requires a person in authority to authorize it. Unlike other business partnerships, when a man and a woman agree to become one flesh, God authorizes it.

2. It is one of a kind because God is the authority that designed it. (Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 2:24)

Genesis 1:26-28

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

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Genesis 2:24

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

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A business partnership, by definition, is a legal alliance between two or more people as joint principals in a business endeavor having specified and joint rights and responsibilities.

There are four relatively common business partnership types:

- general partnership (GP)
- limited partnership (LP)
- limited liability partnership (LLP)
- limited liability limited partnership (LLLLP).

Being one flesh is a partnership that gives a man and a woman unlimited ownership of one another and unlimited responsibility for one another.(UUP or OFP)

There is nothing to compare it to on the earth because there is nothing like it.

Being one flesh is a partnership that means each party has...

- **Unlimited ownership**

When a man and a woman get married, one flesh means they are co-owners of all physical property that they bring into the marriage and all physical property that they acquire during the marriage.

To be one flesh means that there is no such thing as yours, mine, and ours. There is just ours. Therefore, if one of them desires to give something away, it requires mutual consent.

One flesh means the man and woman are not only co-owners of one another's property, one flesh means they are co-owners of one another.

Paul was made aware of a problem in the church at Corinth. Some who were married were withholding their affection from their spouse. Based on his understanding of God's design for the partnership in marriage, Paul gave them the following instructions.

1 Corinthians 7:1-5

1 Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

3 Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

5 Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

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Notice in verse 2 Paul did not say have a wife or have a husband. Paul said have his own wife and have her own husband. Paul is using terms that are used to describe property rights in a business partnership.

Notice in verse 3 Paul emphasizes one of the specific property rights in the partnership.

Notice in verse 4 Paul declares the property rights of a husband includes his wife's body and the property rights of the wife include her husband's body.

Notice in verse 5 Paul said that any withdrawal of affection should only be done by consent. The word that Paul used for deprive means to commit fraud. It would be same word that would be used to describe a crime when a person in a business partnership steals from his partners.

Paul would not call it fraud unless the partnership called one flesh included personal ownership of the other person.

This is one reason why adultery and fornication are wrong. (Galatians 5:19).

[Galatians 5:19](#)

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness.... NKJV

Fornication is having sex before marriage. Adultery is having sex after you are married with someone other than your spouse.

Both are engaging in sex with someone that is not one flesh with you. Any form of sexual immorality is engaging in sex without the partnership of being one flesh.

Adultery and fornication are using someone to satisfy your lusts. It is toying with someone just to satisfy your desires. It is amusing yourself at someone else's expense. It is the opposite of love. It is the essence of evil.

Adultery violates your spouse by taking what belongs exclusively to your spouse and sharing it with another person.

Fornication and Adultery destroy your soul because one fraudulent act always leads to another. This hardens your heart to the truth and makes it possible for you to exchange your natural desires for unnatural desires. Paul called this the development of a reprobate mind.

[Romans 1:28](#)

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;
KJV

This partnership called one flesh and the idea of personal ownership of one another in marriage is the foundation on which true intimacy in marriage is developed. It is not just basis for physical intimacy but it is also the basis for spiritual, mental, and emotional intimacy. A husband and his wife do not just own each other's bodies. They own each other's entire being.

A married man and woman can commit fraud physically by withholding their affections from one another.

But perhaps the greatest fraud committed by married couples is withholding their inner being from one another.

If you are going to change this, you need to repent before God and embrace His design for marriage.

Being one flesh not only means unlimited ownership of one another, it also means....

- **Unlimited responsibility for one another**

Unlimited responsibility means that there is no limit to what you will do to care for one another. In His Word, God has prescribed specific responsibilities for a husband and a wife that provide the best order for the family in a fallen world. The husband is the leader, provider, and protector of the family. The wife is his executive assistant and his encourager.

Unlimited responsibility means that there is no sacrifice that is too great that you will not make to care for one another.

Paul said to husbands...

[Ephesians 5:25](#)

[25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, NKJV](#)

Paul said to wives...

[Ephesians 5:24](#)

[Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. NKJV](#)

What did Christ sacrifice to care for the church? What should the church sacrifice to care for Christ?

To be one flesh means unlimited ownership of one another and unlimited responsibility for one another.

Conclusion

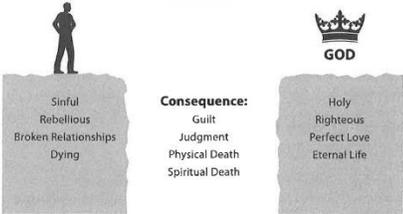
It is only by God's power that a husband and wife can fulfill God's design for marriage.

To receive God's power, God says you must receive His Son Jesus. Why Jesus?

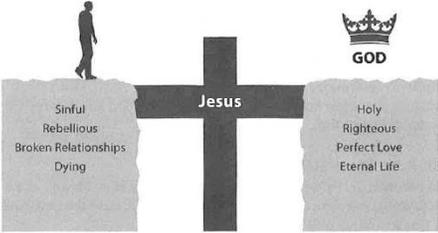
- God created you to be in relationship with Him.



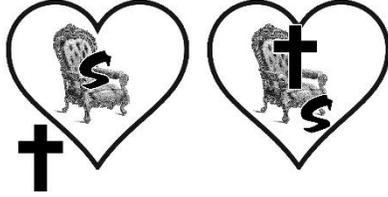
- You have rebelled against God and you are estranged from God



- God sent His Son Jesus to restore His relationship with you.



- You need to repent and believe upon Jesus to be reconciled to God.



If you receive Jesus, you enter a partnership with Him that is just like the partnership in marriage.

If you receive Jesus, everything He owns is yours and everything you own is His.

[Romans 8:16-17](#)

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

[NKJV](#)

[1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#)

19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

[NKJV](#)

If you receive Jesus, He takes on unlimited responsibility for you. You take on unlimited responsibility for Him.

[Romans 8:31-32](#)

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

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We fulfill our responsibility to Him by loving one another.

[John 13:34-35](#)

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

[NKJV](#)

He literally becomes one flesh with you by sending His Spirit to dwell in you. You become the body of Jesus Christ.

[Ephesians 5:30](#)

30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

[NKJV](#)

It is only by being one flesh with Jesus that you can have the kind of marriage that glorifies God.

Will you receive Jesus?

Paul said Christian marriages as the best metaphor of the relationship between Jesus and His church.

Is yours?

Will you repent for your failure to honor God's design for marriage? Will you repent for being a fraud in the way you have related to your husband? Will you repent for being a fraud in the way you have related to your wife?

This idea of one flesh is rejected by the world and by many couples in the church.

Will you repent?

Will you embrace God's idea of being one flesh and start portraying to the world the relationship that Jesus has with His church.