

# BECOMING ONE FLESH - IT'S A PARTY

## Marriage Mandate – Part 3

By Dr. Kevin Downing

*'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.'* Genesis 2:24-25

I got a good chuckle reading some of the Bible commentators who have written about this verse. They admit that the phrase “become one flesh” refers to sex between a husband and wife, but they are quick to say it is more than “just sex” and then take off on different ideas never to return to the topic of sex again. (Maybe they have spent too much time in the library!) We won't be too tough on them though. I know in training counselors throughout the years they too sometimes have a hard time talking about sex with the couples they counsel.

Perhaps it's an uncomfortable topic for many, but not here in the book of Genesis.

Let's begin by reviewing Marriage Mandates #1 and #2 and see why great love making is inevitable for those who follow this prescription.

**Marriage Mandate #1 – is to leave your father and mother.** In a prior article we explored how this 'leaving' includes making your mate #1 in your life above your parents and all others, as well as leaving old dysfunctional family patterns behind. This mandate sets us up nicely to be able to deliver the second mandate...

**Marriage Mandate #2 – is to unite with your wife.** The Hebrew word used here 'be united' is the word – Dabaq (pronounced daw-bak'). This word means the following:

- To cling
- Stick
- Stay close
- Cleave
- Keep close
- Stick to
- Stick with
- Follow closely
- Join to
- Overtake
- Catch

So what's so great about Marriage Mandates #1 and #2?

### The Man

Ladies, imagine a man who has long left his mother's apron strings behind, a man who can stand on his own two feet. He's not looking for you to be his next mother because his identity is in Christ – he knows who he is and where he's going. This is a real man. He has the courage to face God, himself and his brothers in honesty and truth. He has taken responsibility for addressing his own short comings and pursuing his own dreams. He is clear about his role as a provider and a protector of the home he is building and performs well in these areas.

Yet, he is sensitive and is able to nurture children and hear your emotional needs. This means he is both tough and tender. He is a spiritual leader. From this platform he peruses you because he finds you attractive above all others. He freely proclaims to the world that you are his only love. He delivers a lifelong commitment to you, the love of his life.

### **The Woman**

Gentlemen, imagine a woman who is full of faith and love for others. She is a true disciple – a “disciplined one”. Her platform of strength gives her courage, courage to leave her father and mother and to join with you. (That can be pretty scary) She also has the courage to face her own short coming and dreams and takes them head on. She knows who she is and she know her own worth. She is a force to be reckoned with. She commands respect. She is not afraid of hard work and labors with you to reach your family dreams. She appreciates your hard work and lets you know it in word and deed. She is not a complainer...she is an encourager. Most of all she is faithful to you. In a world full of betrayal she is steadfast in her love and affection to you and your family. Now there is a man and a woman who are very attractive – very sexy. They live out Marriage Mandates #1 and #2, so #3 - the sexual union of love making is inevitable. Perhaps “become one flesh” is not a mandate at all, but a joyous byproduct of following these principles.

### **The Party**

Sex is the party, the fiesta, of a wonderful union in marriage. It’s the ultimate party and coming together of soul and body. It’s a fantastic completion of who we are.

When is the height of human sexuality? It was thought to be at about 18 years old for men and about 30 years old for women. Today, there are those that disagree with this sharply. They argue that the height of human sexuality is at mid-life and beyond. Two 18 year olds don’t look into each other’s eyes and say, “After all the children we’ve had and years of hardship we’ve endured, I only love you more”. The relationship you have with your mate (Marriage Mandates #1 and #2) are the driving forces to having a great love life with your mate. When you are emotionally and spiritually available to your mate (free from addictions and spiritual strongholds) and you peruse them with healthy boundaries – great love making is the nature result.

### **The Formula**

One author made this prescription for men –  
The husband adores his wife;  
His affirmation ignites her passion, and  
She invites him sexually.

This party of passionate love making brings us into the presence of our mate. As worship is meant to bring us into the presence of our Maker – sex was designed to enjoy and embrace your mate in the here and now.

The reverse of the notions are true as well. If the relationship is poor and broken, it’s an empty party. The passion is gone and it loses its meaningfulness. I hear husbands say to their wives – “I want this to be fun for you. I feel best when you are turned on. If you’re not into it it’s not fun for me.” Wives sometimes say, “I feel like a prostitute, we are only going through the motions. This isn’t enjoyable to me – maybe it is for you.”

Several years ago Dr. Peter Robbins and I interviewed Sex Therapists Dr. Cliff and Joyce Penner. We did a radio show on, “Why All the People Who Aren’t Supposed to be having Sex Are and Why All the People Who Are Supposed to be Having Sex Aren’t”. You know, sex out of wedlock is ramped and sex among married couples is often non-existent.

Their point was that people use sex to initiate a relationship, instead of consummating it - in today's culture. The cart comes before horse. Sex comes before the relationship is established and hurt is inevitable. Once people do get married they have a hard time handling the intimacy and the multitude of other challenges that come with marriage – this may result in couples stopping their sexual relationship or greatly minimizing it.

## **Sex as a Barometer in Your Marriage**

### **“How is the Love Making in Your Marriage?”**

This is what I often ask couples. One wife responded forcefully with...”Don't call it love making! It's just sex. Sex is all it is!”

Void of much of any kind of emotional or spiritual intimacy in their marriage, this couple was going through the physical act, but without a relationship – the empty party we have spoken of.

### **“When is the Last Time You Made Love with Each Other?”**

Is another question I ask. If it's been weeks – it's dangerous. If it's been months then something is very wrong. If it's gone over a year or is into multiple years something is desperately broken. Seek out some help – you don't need to keep going like this.

### **“How Frequently do the Two of You Make Love?”**

Across America the general opinion is that having sex twice a week is a good sex life. There are some that disagree, but this seems to be the general thought.

### **“Do You Experience any Pain or Discomfort When You Have Sex?”**

If you do your body is speaking to you. Don't ignore these signals. Let your spouse know and seek out the help you need from a qualified professional. Sometimes the answer is as simple as the need for some lubrication because of dryness. Other times it is more complex.

### **“What Would Make Your Sex Life Better?”**

I like to ask couples this questions and I encourage you to ask it of your mate on a periodic basis. (Get ready to talk about your relationship.)

### **“Where is the Most Enjoyable Place for You to Make Love?”**

(No, it's usually not something bizarre – like on top of the refrigerator.) I've heard that the average American couple makes love after 11:30 at night with the TV on! It takes energy to have sex and the fatigue that comes along with this type of scenario can be the beginnings of a disaster. I've heard a good number of couples say the ONLY time they have great sex is when they are away at a hotel – far from the distractions and projects at home.

Some couples don't have a lock on their door. The anxiety of having their children enter their bedroom un-expectantly kills the romance! So, create a great place to make love with your mate. Going to a hotel is a great idea on a periodic basis. My wife and I like to get away every couple of months or so. If you shop around you can find some great deals! Make sure your bedroom is secure and get to bed early. Plan on having a time when your kids are away. (Yes, you need some baby-sitters!)

## **Pursing Your Mate with Passion (summary)**

1. Make yourself available to your mate by being free from addictions, strongholds and dysfunctional family entanglements.
2. Know who you are – i.e. your place as a child of God. Know your life's calling and mission in life.
3. Have realistic expectations of your mate. You married a human being – warts and all! Humans will always be imperfect so expect your mate to not always act the way you want, nor will they always understand you.
4. Fill your emotional and spiritual tanks and share the excess with your mate. (Your cup runneth over!)
5. Be intentional about investing your time and energies into your mate. This means quite time together, getting away and counseling together.

### **Build Your Marriage with a Plan!**

Marriage Mandates #1, #2 and #3 are a great blueprint for building.

And by all means - ENJOY THE PARTY!!

Dr. Downing is available to see clients at the Fullerton office. Call 1-800-998-6329 today to schedule an appointment! We have over 40 locations in southern California.

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