

Marriage Isn't For You

By Seth Adam Smith | November 2, 2013 | Love and Family



Kim and me after cutting the cake.

"Seth, you're being totally selfish. So I'm going to make this really simple: marriage isn't for you. You don't marry to make yourself happy, you marry to make someone else happy. More than that, your marriage isn't for yourself, you're marrying for a family. Not just for the in-laws and all of that nonsense, but for your future children. Who do you want to help you raise them? Who do you want to influence them? Marriage isn't for you. It's not about you. Marriage is about the person you married."

Seth's full story can be found here: <http://www.forwardwalking.com/marriage-isnt-for-you/>



There's another picture that surfaced last year in a blog post that went viral. Seth Adam Smith was unknown to most people until he wrote "Marriage isn't for you". He repeated advice his dad gave him, when he was having cold feet about marriage. The post was so popular the server crashed, and he featured on US TV news.

As the wedding approached Seth asked himself: "Was I making the right choice? Was Kim the right person to marry? Would she make me happy?" His dad's response was sharp:

Another picture of marriage

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There's more to marriage!
Is marriage for you?

Author Tim Bulkeley Design Gayann Phillips

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We're confused about marriage. We want ceremonies with vows "till death parts us", yet every year half as many divorce as marry.

How do you picture "marriage"?

Weddings, like Hollywood productions, present the dream of perfect couples, it's all about love and fulfilment. **But that Hollywood self-fulfilment picture of marriage isn't true.**

Core Bible teaching on marriage

The foundation for marriage is summed up at the very beginning of the Bible, in Genesis 2.

“For this reason” refers back to the story in Genesis 2; of how God made a human being, planted a wonderful garden and put the human there to cultivate and care for it. God also recognised that it is not good for man to be alone so He made a suitable helper for him. Let’s examine what that means:

- a **helper** is not subordinate. In the Old Testament, almost always the strong “help” the weak. This speaks of our human need for each other.
- **suitable** implies both “like” and “appropriate”

Animals didn't fit the need... So God made a woman who really was: “bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh” - *a helper who matches.*

FOR THIS REASON
a Man
WILL LEAVE HIS
FATHER AND MOTHER
AND BE UNITED TO
his Wife,
AND THEY WILL
BECOME ONE FLESH.

GENESIS 2:24

That's the Creator's plan. Genesis 2 tells us that woman and man were “made for each other”, but Genesis 1, telling of the creation of humans, talks about the image of God.

“So God created humanity in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

- Genesis 1:2

Love and partnership between man and woman echoes the love within the Godhead. We are to love our wives or husbands as God loved us, but we are also to love and share as God does!

Living in a broken world: Marriages in the Bible

Talk of loving like God seems idealistic. Since Genesis 3, the world is broken by human sinfulness. Think of Abraham and Sarah, they seem a perfect couple, but Sarah has Abraham sleep with a slave-girl (Gen 16:1-3), and then gets jealous (Gen 16:5). The only perfect marriages in Scripture are the ones we don't see close enough to see the cracks.

Just as all humans are broken (sinful) and need to repent, all marriages need repentance and God's grace - as does every other sphere of life.

*Marriage can only work with forgiveness and grace
- between spouses.*

Marriage is a spiritual discipline

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, chapter 5 deals extensively with marriage and specifically quotes Genesis chapter 2. He goes on to say:

“This is a profound mystery - I am talking about Christ and the church.”

- Ephesians 5:32

Marriage echoes God's love for us in Christ. In marriage we should love as God loves us. Marriage is a “spiritual discipline”.

Seth's dad expressed deep truths about God's intentions for marriage.

“Marriage isn't for you.

It's not about you.

Marriage is about the person you married.”

- **If you are thinking of marriage:**

Are you asking “Is marriage for you”, or are you ready to live for your future spouse and children?

- **If you are married:**

Are you behaving as if the marriage was “for you”? How can you change that?

- **If you prepare people for marriage:**

How do you help people understand what marriage really is, and to aim for the real thing?

