



IS YOUR MARRIAGE LIKE HEAVEN OR HELL?

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hello this is Mark and Grace Driscoll with the Real Marriage podcast and we are doing a series on Genesis and this is part three of Adam and Eve we're answering the question what are the four biggest causes of marital pain and um I just got a Bronco I'll share this story I that's painful no no no no no no no no no no no I love the bronos is amazing it says in Revelation Jesus is coming back riding a white horse he's probably in a white Bronco not like OJ's but more like mine and uh and one of the cool things you were driving the Bronco with me recently is that it's got this huge screen in it it's like it's like a iPad and on it is the manual used to we used to have to kill trees to get a manual how to run a vehicle and what I love about it you can just scroll through it and it tells you exactly how everything works and when I first got in the Bronco I had no clue I couldn't get the lights on I couldn't I couldn't figure anything out you did the owner's manual I did the owner's manual and lo and behold if you do it the manual says it works it works perfect it's amazing so when it comes to marriage um the Bible is God's owner's manual it's like hey this is I made marriage I created it I'll tell you how it works and if you do it you know the way tell you to do it it's actually going to work if you don't do it that way uh you're going to end up in the ditch and so the uh kind of the owner's manual from God for marriage is in Genesis chapter 2 and it's um it's Moses breaking in and commenting on marriage and it's something that's so significant I'll read it in a moment that Jesus quotes it in the New Testament and Paul quotes it so Moses well the Holy Spirit ultimately writes it through Moses if Jesus quotes it and Paul quotes it and they keep pointing back to it that tells you it's super super super important deserves being repeated yeah it's very important so Genesis 2 uh 24 you want to read it pabe therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife and they shall become one flesh and the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed or as I like to call it the Texas International Version naked were naked without shame so Pastor Jimmy Evans has got a great teaching on this called the four laws of Love he's got his book is outstanding super practical and helpful and if you want to dive deeper into this we'd wholeheartedly recommend the four laws of Love by Pastor Jimmy um but what God is saying is these are the priorities in sequence and Order and if you will follow the manual it will work um the first is and so conversely these would be the four causes of most marital pain if you violate any one of these laws or get them out of order that's when marriage gets very very painful so the first is uh law of priority leave your mother and father we know that this was written for us it was written to Adam and Eve but he couldn't have been speaking to them because they didn't have a mom dad mom or a dad or a belly button or you know for them doing the family tree was pretty easy um and so what this means is first and foremost um for you to start your new family you need to change your priorities in relationship to the people and things that were in your life prior and often times what happens is before you get married uh let me just so let's let's use one of our kids let's use uh we won't name any but we've got we got two kids that are married and we've got uh one in college one heading into college and one in high school school so let's take the youngest the high school kid what would his priorities be right now doing well in high school okay so first Rel first God so we want to be a Christian and uh then he needs to be in relationship with his you know his parents needs to honor and obey his mother and father and siblings and siblings and his kind of his role in responsibility as school so you got to get up you got to go you got to pay attention and uh and you got to graduate so those are his priorities for our married kids those were their priorities until they got married and then their priorities shifted so for our married kids you know honoring and obeying their mother and father is not it's not the highest priority no so for our married kids what would their relational priorities be it's always God first and then their husband or wife yeah and so you and I we got moved and uh you know I so like with our our married

daughter I was the most important man in her life until I wasn't and I had to get repositioned um her husband is now her highest priority and my goal is that they would have the best friendship and marriage they possibly can and what I can't do is look at him and say hey I was here first or you know I had a good 20-some year run of being the most important man in her life and so you know when we're raising our kids the whole goal is to raise them to be married knowing that we are a relational priority but once they get married the relational priorities shift yep and uh honestly I think um I think I'm doing better at this than I thought I was going to do when you've got a daughter and all of a sudden she's got a husband you've got to understand like my my role in place has changed um and how hard is it sometimes though not only to leave your mother and father but to let your for the mother and father to let you leave yeah I think that can be harder sometimes um codependency can always play a role in that on either side which can be uh unfortunate but um yeah I think if the mar If the parents marriage is good then it's not as hard to let your kids go but if you are dependent on your any of your kids for your joy and happiness um then it makes it all the more challenging to let them go and I think there is a normal grieving process it's not like a death grieving but a like you said you're in a new place in their life and so there's a bit of a grieving just because you've invested so much for so long in them and now they're transferring um into a new relationship but it's for a good thing as long as they are marrying a Believer and um planning on loving and walking with the Lord together as a couple it's actually a very beautiful thing so for us it was a shift there was some emotional challenge in in it not for bad reasons but for good reasons and then now there's a lot of joy in seeing them flourish as couples and leaving your mother and father means physically moving um so you know it means financially figuring out your own stuff doesn't mean your parents can't help you and help you get a house or get established but you're you're a responsible adult and just practically like you got to find your own job you got to you know wash your own car you got to pay your own bills you got to figure out how to do your own laundry you got to figure out some stuff and um college is like a half step so we've got a kid in college and so part of the year he's at school part of the year he's home he's not fully financially independent he is working he's good with his money but as long as he's in school he's not fully launched and so you know college is like a half step but the the the first place that uh causes marital pain is when the husband the wife Andor the extended family or former friends don't agree with the priorities the new priorities and sometimes uh dysfunctional family systems will put a lot of pressure on a married couple to uh have the extended family set their priorities and sometimes they'll try and control with finances or with information or access um Andor they'll try and divide the married couple trying to get one to a line with them against their spouse they're becomes a lot of division that can happen and in this as well um you know when you're single your friends are a priority you get married your single friends are no longer in that same position you may have um some hobbies and some people you enjoy doing things with and then you get married priorities shift you no longer have time and energy for that extended family similarly and so um how hard is it though for a couple if the usually it's the extended family or an unhealthy member of the extended family maybe it's Mom or Dad they keep trying to put themselves as the priority they they want to be you know we need to do vacation together we need to do holidays together you need to run that bias you know you need to get our approval uh you need to consider us you need to work around us what does that do to a married couple when other people don't honor those boundaries and priorities well it keeps them from becoming their own family um because they're always feeling pressured to be part of the family they grew up with and it it doesn't help their marriage become stronger it pulls at one of them to stay with the extended family and you should do everything you can to

encourage the marriage to be strong um not necessarily still connected in the same way to the extended family and so it can be very hard on the couple um the pressure can feel overwhelming at times and sometimes there are cultures that the way they see marriage and family isn't biblical they're like well when you get married you know we're adding someone to our family it's no no no we're launching you to start your own family and and and so that leads to the second point and that is the law of pursuit that the husband uh is going to hold fast to his wife in the some translations would say cleave it's it's a little bit of archaic language but what it means is actively aggressively intentionally pursue and so it's like your energy and your focus is not going toward a whole bunch of relationships it's really toward your spouse becomes uh where your energy goes and and if you don't allow that so the the first law sets up um I'm leaving my mother and father I'm creating new boundaries I'm an independent adult I'm going to make my own decisions if my parents are wise and godly or my friends or extended family are wise and and godly I'll invite them in I'll seek them for wise counsel I'll have them praying for me uh but if they're going to overstep their bounds if they're going to insert themselves if they're going to tell us what to do or try and control us through fear or finances then we're going to clear boundaries with them um but the goal is that you would start a brand new family and so maybe even use our married kids as an example what does that mean that they're they're you know like they're they're not marrying into our family but they're starting their own family yeah I mean they're living independently of us they have their relationship where they do things together they don't have to spend every holiday or or you know run every decision by us um they tell us information that they want us to know we aren't going digging for information um we offer whatever you know help they want regularly and encourage them but we don't we don't ever insert ourselves when they haven't asked us to be yeah and one of the couples they they'll share more information the other couple share less information different couples say this is what we're going to share this is where you're welcome like um you know I don't I would never show up to their house right if they invited us I would go otherwise I would never show up they can show up at our house anytime they want they don't impose yeah try not to and when it comes to holidays like here's our plan you're welcome yep but if you don't want to come or you want to do something else that's your family you make your decision our door is open our life is open you're always welcome but we're not offended if you don't yeah don't show up and um and we just even had that recently with uh we had Easter and then we all got together for you know Easter brunch and one of the couples that's married is like hey we're taking a break heading out of town great y you're a family yep you get to make your decisions go do that we love you God bless you and uh if you change your mind you're always welcome yeah um to na to nail cover TI a new surround your tail cover truth [Music] truth I do not know the man [Music] my you my brother Cur [Music] my but what happens then is um if you don't allow the couple to be a family and make their own decisions and their own Traditions what you end up doing is you end up really damaging that marriage um because you're putting let's say let's say it's a child you're putting your child between sort of their birth family and their newly married family and they're really torn in a lose lose yeah where they're going to suffer great pain or loss on either side they're trying to honor but they don't have to obey still well yeah really dysfunctional parents will weaponize the Bible and say you need to obey your mother and father it's like yeah the word there is for children little children is little children not grown children so like if I'm 80 and I'm telling our kids who are in their late 50s need to obey your father it's not talking about that correct um but where it causes a lot of pain then is you you haven't as a couple defined this is what our family is and does this is how we make our decisions and there is a boundary there is a

line to where that's extended family but it's not immediate family there's a difference between immediate family and extended family and uh and what this leads to as well at some point it leads to a lot of conflict and it means that the holidays become very painful the vacations become very painful the times that you should be making memories and setting Traditions as a married couple become points of pain or conflict because it's like the the extended family is usually intruding and telling us what to do and it makes it really Dreadful yeah and it becomes worse when kids enter the picture so making those decisions early on and what you want your marriage to look like and how you want to celebrate different you know opportunities throughout the year um and and how you want to communicate with family and all that all that is helpful to come to those decisions as a married couple so that then you can hold to that and keep that boundary you can always loosen up a boundary but if you start with No Boundaries it's a lot harder to put them in place and so when kids come and you're trying to make those decisions and you don't have any boundaries then you're pulling kids every direction that you feel like you're supposed to go with extended family and it's exhausting and it's not fun for the kids it's not fun for you it's not building your marriage um so really coming to some decisions and you can change those from year to year if you want you don't have to you know stick to one if you feel like that wasn't helpful um but yeah discussing those boundaries and discussing those things that build your marriage specifically and then that leads to the third which is a law of partnership he says that they'll become uh one one a Cod and yeah that word there is really significant in the in the Hebrew not totally nerd out it's one it's the same word that's used in Deuteronomy 64 that hear us thr the Lord Our God he is one m and so the husband and the wife are to be one kind of like the father son and spirit are one God uh you are to become one now um what's really weird in our day we're seeing even Christians not being one you'll see people that live in different cities and are still married you'll see people that attend different churches you'll see people that sleep in different bedrooms you'll see people that have completely separate finances and they don't even really talk about it um and they're not really one uh cuz they haven't put everything together right and why is it so important but why is it all so complicated and hard if you're going to be one to put it all together so you you have one life well because that's what God commands he said they shall become one flesh and that includes where they live their bed their Bank their Church their schedule um but it's it's hard right if you're selfish yeah but that's the point is marriage is serving one another and it gets rid of selfishness if you but if it's two selfish people and they're like well what does it mean to be one it's not which one it's a new one that's right sacrifice on both parts how do we do our finances how do we you know do our schedule how do we do our vacations how do we do our holidays where do we go to church and uh and it's putting life together so that I you are one but what happens in our culture often times it's two selfish people and the result is they just put together parallel lives rather than one yeah which isn't marriage no and um but let me ask you this so to be one uh it negates against Independence yeah absolutely I mean it's okay to be strong and have strengths um but to be independent from one another is not that's not what God says so I I think that's 100% Bullseye is in a marriage being a strong personality is not a problem it's an independent personality that is a problem so I'll ask a question you're free to answer honestly and if I don't like it we'll edit it out so which one of us has a really strong personality well we both doen but yours is more evident probably to people yeah but would you say you're a strong personality you have strong opinions you have strong convictions always vocalize them to everybody but yes I do have strong convictions and opinions yes I would I would testify that you do and for us both of us are strong personalities with strong convictions but that's not a problem as long as we're one and we come to agreement and we work

it out together yep if we uh were independent both of us being strong personalities I don't think we'd be married MH right you know I don't think the marriage would have I mean we're going to have 30 years of faithful marriage this year I don't think it would have made it and a lot of times what happens in a marriage it's like well you're just too strong no no no that's not the problem Independence yep and stubbornness and stubbornness Independence so the first way that a marriage really uh C gets a lot of pain you don't really leave your mother and father you don't really you know launch as an independent uh you have a codependent relationship or financial dependent relationship number two you don't put all your energy into your spouse someone or something cuts in line and takes it number three you're not one you're more stubborn and more independent and more selfish and the two of you have not figured out how to put life together and then it culminates with what Pastor Jimmy calls a law Purity naked without shame and it's interesting because basically this marriage manual in Genesis 22 four is that sex is the result good sex is the result of getting the other things in right order it's like Ready Aim Fire it's like you got to get it in sequence um naked without shame is possible if you've left your mother and father you're actively pursuing one another and you're doing life together then sexual intimacy and freedom is going to occur cuz it's in a safe context explain how important that is for a woman that she knows he's left his mother and father he's a grown man uh he's pursuing me and uh we are one uh we're doing everything together we're we're one I I can trust that he and I are not adversaries but we're allies yeah I mean it brings security to a woman she knows that emotionally and relationally um she's being looked after as far as he cares about her emot her wellbeing he actually wants to be with her he wants to be one with her he's pursuing his responsibilities as a man um it's it's key to being one flesh and for a man you know in the priority or it's she's left her mother and father and sometimes it's very hard for a woman to emotionally draw new boundaries with her mom because if you have a healthy relationship with your mom and your woman you know you run everything by her you talk and cry and pray and process then you get your husband he's like hey we need to talk we need to pray you can't just start with your mother you got to start with me we we need to start you know we need to have some some healthy boundaries with Mom and then for the husband if he feels like a lot of the energy is going towards someone or something other than the marriage usually it's the children then that becomes another pain Point yep and if they're not one if she's got her stubbornness and her independence um then it makes it very hard hard for a man to really be sexually attracted to and desires of his wife because outside of the bedroom he feels disrespected and so disrespect outside of the bedroom affects desire in the bedroom and so a lot of times marriages will have a they'll have a sexual problem but the result starts outside of the bedroom and then it manifests itself in the bedroom yep um and these are God's intended order of priority and the problem in it in our culture we've inverted it mhm uh we're like uh sleep together and then live together and then maybe get married yep you do your life your way I'll do my life my way we'll live together and try it out but you're not practicing being married because you're not one well in the the statistics for couples who cohabit before marriage meaning you you still have two last names you still have two bank accounts you still have two lives but you're living and sleeping together if they do get married the divorce rates are high the couples that have statistically the lowest divorce rates according to Bradford Willcox and other sociologists are the couples who actually do it God's way they leave their mother and father they um they then you know pursue marriage they put their marriage together as one and they don't start living and sleeping together as one until they're married those have the lowest divorce rates but in our culture we've got it completely upside down and backwards so what would your encouragement be to a couple that's just realize the

reason we're having a lot of problems we did all of this out of order and we did it wrong and most couples that's the case and we we started sleeping together and we had to stop so we had it all backwards we didn't get it right the first time acknowledge the sin acknowledge that you started wrong and or you're doing something wrong acknowledge it with the Lord and seek wisdom and how to recreate restart reboot and get back on track with God's order of things and repent so even if you've been married 10 20 years you're like okay we need to just we need to have a real conversation about how do we leave our mother and father yeah you know meaning they've got their family we got our family um how do we take our energy and put it toward our marriage not other people and things and we love our kids and we want to raise our kids but our marriage is our first priority and what are the areas in our life that we're not one that we've just kind of been stubborn and independent we just sort of stick to our our own and um you know as a pastor I see this often times at church I I'll see this with with even guys it's like hey tell me about your wife oh well she she goes to another church it's like okay you guys have got a serious problem I mean if you can't even if you can't even hold hands in the same church like there's a serious problem um and um and then ultimately uh if you're not regularly intimate naked without shame healing from past trauma and pursuing new Pleasures your marriage is in a crisis spot and so usually in most marriages they didn't do it according to God's Divine Design and his owner's manual it's not working and they keep trying to make Minor Adjustments which doesn't work and I guess what we're encouraging you it's just it may just be time to just go to Genesis 2:24 and just say you know what let's just do not not that we get divorced but like let's just start over let's like if we were to do this right what would this look like Y and then make those practical adjustments and we had to do that cuz we got it wrong um new marriage same spouse yeah and that that's what a lot of times people say is I need a new marriage no no no I need a new spouse rather yeah the answer is no no you don't need a new spouse you need a new marriage and you can have a new marriage with the same spouse yep yep so let me close with this if it's hard conversations with extended family who really don't want you to leave your mother and father who don't want you to start your own family who don't want you to be one um they really want you to be connected to them uh who should have the conversation with each side of the family the with their own parents so me with my parents you with your parents your side of the family um generally I mean if there's if the wife has like a physically abusive family or something like that then the man needs to protect as a rule rule what happens if like I were to go engage your family you were to go engage mine like hey guys these are the rules you guys are over it then you look like the bully or someone who's you know domineering over the wife and you made the decision and she's maybe not on board that would be the the guess of the family they're control freak they're trying to steal you know our baby from us so it's yeah so I would go talk to my side of the family thankfully I don't have to so thank you mom and dad being great with us and and if there was an issue would go talk to your mom your dad's passed away but thankfully your mom's great and we don't have to have that conversation but we would encourage you guys have the conversation together and then game plan the conversation with the people you need to have it with so that you can live according to God's priorities and what you will find is unhealthy people are going to throw a fit yeah unhealthy people are going to make demands unhealthy people are going to create a hostage situation where they get everyone else involved but you if you're saying well the reason we've never had this conversation or drawn these boundaries is we don't want all the drama then what you're saying is we're going to deal with Decades of pain rather than maybe days of drama yeah yeah so I'll pray father I pray for the couples to have the conversation about maybe the ways that they didn't architect it right and they're not working according to the

owner's manual of Genesis 20 2:24 for marriage uh pray God for a lot of Grace in those conversations uh but God some of them are Breaking Bad Habits some of them are breaking generational curses some of them are needing to uh to to really just start fresh because the way that their family does marriage and family it's not it's not healthy and it's not working and God we would just submit to you that that's kind of the American problem or maybe the global problem marriages aren't doing great uh Generations are not blessed families are not healthy and there's a lot of Brokenness and there's a lot of Crisis and as a result God sometimes we can settle for less than what you would call us to uh but I pray for the couples Lord that they would lovingly Graciously humbly seek your best and draw the lines and start the habits and have the conversations that need to be had so that they can be obedient to you in Jesus good name amen