

The following sample pages are extracted and condensed from the workbook. This section in the workbook is 21 pages.

BECOMING ONE

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. Gen 2:24

What does it mean to become one flesh? How do two people become one? Is there a process or a method? In the making of plywood, heat, pressure, and glue are applied to multiple layers of thinly cut wood in order to bond them into one piece of plywood. Thereafter, the once-individual pieces cannot be separated without each layer being destroyed. Since marriage is a bonding process, does it require heat and pressure to make it happen? Does each person have to give up something or sacrifice him or herself in the process of becoming one?

Jesus commands you to follow Him in being a servant, losing your life for the sake of the kingdom of God, laying down your life for your friends, and dying to self as a seed dies to bear much fruit. The process of sanctification—of becoming like Jesus, of putting off the old man and putting on the new man—involves all these things, and it doesn't happen without struggle. Likewise, the process of bonding with your spouse doesn't happen without at least some struggle, conflict, and resolution.

Understanding your spouse's heart and needs is a major key in resolving conflict and overcoming other obstacles to bonding. If you don't understand the essential needs of men and women in general and of your spouse in particular, you are apt to attribute wrong motives to their thoughts, feelings, responses, and actions—thus hampering your oneness.

Scripture tells husbands to live with their wives in an understanding way. (1 Peter 3:7) Whatever else this might mean it at least includes seeing things from her point of view. Men, do you seek to understand and empathize with women and with what they experience in just being female? Because women experience a vast range of things men don't experience, their perspectives on life necessarily differ from those of men. God designed women to view life differently than men do. If we men don't take the time to learn, understand, accept, and appreciate this, we will miss good relationships by a mile and not even know why.

Similarly, there are things about men that women must understand, accept, and appreciate. God designed men for the roles they are to play. Traditionally, men are the breadwinners and protectors. It's a man's duty to work, to provide for, and to protect his family (1 Tim. 5:8).¹ God has designed men with a certain mindset and approach to life that is different from women—the hunter, the warrior, the solver of problems, the conqueror of nature, and, of course, the football player!

Bonding, therefore, requires both spouses to live with each other in an understanding, empathetic way. Marriage is the act and process of bonding two people together for life. The topic of bonding raises some questions, and in the next few pages, we seek your views on them.

¹ Women, of course, nowadays often experience the stress of obtaining jobs and of filling the provider role. Society changed dramatically in the 1960's. Before that time, it was generally not as necessary, nor was it expected, for women (especially mothers) to work outside the home.

BONDING



Gen. 2:23-25 Gen. 3:1-24 Mal. 2:13-16 Matt. 19:4-6 1 Cor. 7:10-11

1. What Old Testament scripture does Jesus quote in Matthew 19:5? _____

What does that tell you about His view of the book and its author? _____

2. What does Genesis 2:23 say to you about what God intends for the general relationship between all men and women? _____

3. What does Matthew 19:6 tell you about Jesus' view of marriage? _____

4. In light of Genesis 2:23 and 1 Pet 3:7, how should a husband look upon and treat his wife?

How should a wife look upon and treat her husband? _____

5. How did sin affect the relationship between Adam and Eve? (Gen. 3:1-24) _____

6. How has sin affected the general relationship between all men and women? _____

7. How has sin influenced *your* attitudes, behavior, and general relationship with the opposite gender?

8. How has sin affected *your* attitudes, behavior, and relationship with your fiancé(e)? _____

9. Genesis 2:24 specifically states that the *man* is to leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife. What does that say about the man’s responsibility and role? _____

10. What does God mean when He says “*one flesh*”? (Gen. 2:24) _____

11. How is it that God does the joining—how is marriage God’s deal—if we (you) do the choosing either to marry or not to marry? _____

12. What does Jesus mean “What, therefore God has joined together, let not man separate”? (Matt 19:6).

13. In Malachi. 2:16, what does God say about divorce? _____

14. What does 1 Cor 7:10-11 say about divorce? _____

15. Does each person lose something in the process of becoming one? _____

If so, what do they gain? _____

16. Does bonding mean that you hold nothing of yourself back? Explain. _____

17. What are the differences between a couple who live together and/or are being sexually involved and a couple who marry? _____

18. Since marriage is only for this life, why go through all the fuss—the headache, pain, sorrow, care, and concern—of bonding to become one flesh? One of you might die in the middle of raising a family. Why, then, put your heart out there for such a tenuous thing? Why put your whole self into it? It's like the lyrics of a song once popular, "*Who needs a heart when a heart can be broken?*"² Comment.

19. Would you be incomplete without *this* person? _____ Do you need a mate in order to be or feel complete? _____

20. Some people, although married for many years, have never bonded. Why do you suppose that is?

² *What's Love Got to Do with It?* Tina Turner 1984.
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