



Sermon on the Mount Series

The Birds and the Bees

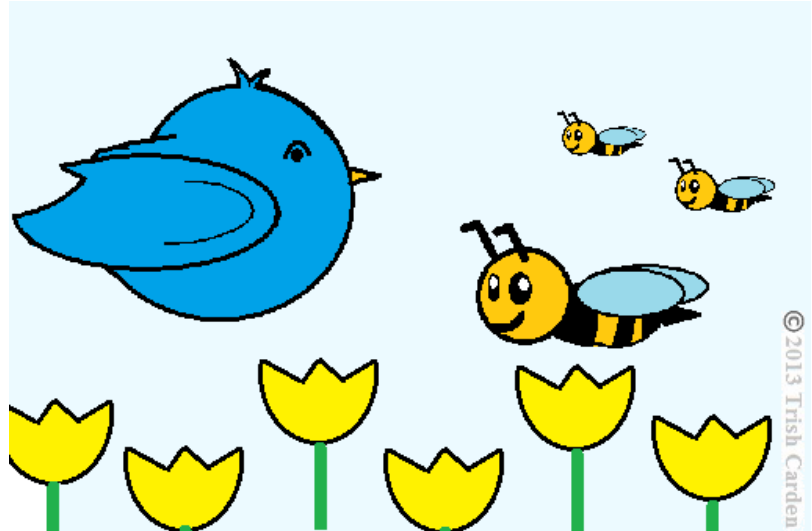
Adultery avoidance and marriage preservation - a course for ladies

Course Text: Matthew 5:27-32

This course has two versions, one for men and one for women. It is recommended that if you are taking this course as a group that you either let each person do this lesson as homework or that the men and women go through this lesson in separate groups.

Outline

Lesson	Topic
Lesson 1	- Adultery
Lesson 2	- Divorce
Lesson 3	- Submission
Lesson 4	- Love



It used to be when parents told their children about sex they called it talking about "the birds and the bees." The idea was to use natural figures of speech to keep the discussion from becoming vulgar and crass. I'm going to try to do the same thing. We need to have some plain talk about sex, marriage, adultery, and divorce, but I don't want it to descend into something unsuitable for mixed company. I hope you will forgive me where I fail. Generally speaking women are better at being women, than men are at being men.

Suggested methodology for each course:

1. Allow time for greetings and fellowship (Save most of this for the end of class.)
2. Take prayer requests (Try to keep it from becoming a competition to see who has the most or the worst.)
3. Pray (The idea here is to leave our troubles with God so we can give His word our attention with a clear mind.)
4. Read the text aloud from the Bible one question at a time.
5. Answer and briefly discuss the "fill in the blank" questions. Let those who prefer to listen, listen. My answers on the next page are just one opinion; you may have a better answer. Repeat 4 & 5 for all questions except the "Think & Pray" questions.
6. On the final "Think & Pray" question everyone should take a few minutes to pray over it and jot down their own thoughts before the discussion. **This gives the Holy Spirit a time to speak, so don't rush it.** The class leader should watch for the pencils and pens to quit moving. Others can look at the "For Further Thought" questions while waiting for everyone to finish.
7. Discuss your "Think & Pray" answers. Never force anyone to share theirs. As with the other questions, my answer, when provided, are just one more opinion; you may have a better answer.
8. Close in prayer (It is best to call on others to pray, but try to get their permission ahead of time.)
9. Fellowship (Leave this as open ended as possible for the time and place you meet.)

Depending on the number of people, each lesson is expected to take about one hour. Steps 4 thru 7 are about half of that. If you take longer, let each lesson take more than one meeting, or consider breaking into two groups. If you take less time, extra questions are provided for discussion called "For Further Thought"

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Lesson 1 - Adultery: (Text: Matthew 5:27-30)

Generally speaking women are better at being women, than men are at being men. When I wrote this lesson for men, it was pretty easy. Most of my marriage counseling work has been with women. It is usually frustrating to me, because almost all of the time while I'm trying to help them, I think about what I would like to say to their husbands, who are the ones who really need to make some changes. Nevertheless, it is a universal truth that happiness in marriage comes from being a good spouse, not from having a good spouse. So people being what they are, sinners, I can usually help the ladies find some way to cope with the dope they are married to, by becoming better wives, while their so-called husbands continue on in their self-centered ways. Hopefully, your circumstances are better.

Keep in mind I'm a man, so I really don't know very much. Men are pretty simple minded on this topic, but the main points apply to both genders equally. My wife and some lady friends have read it and given me some advice all of which I took, making some revisions. Women are more complicated than men in this area. So much of what I say may not apply to you. However, a little self-examination is always a good thing. It might help to know, the men's lesson I wrote on this passage is pretty tough on them.

Read Matthew 5:27-30.

[1A] What does Jesus say is the same as committing adultery in the heart? _____

[1B] What does Jesus say you should do with your eye if it causes you to stumble? _____

[1C] It seems impossible that we should be able to do what Jesus suggests here. Gouge out our own eyes? Really? Are there actually people who can avoid lusting? What is He really saying?

Think & pray _____

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Then out came a woman to meet him, dressed like a prostitute and with crafty intent. **Pr 7:10**

----- ANSWERS -----

Lesson 1 - Adultery: (Text: Matthew 5:27-30)

[1A] What does Jesus say is the same as committing adultery in the heart?

Lusting for someone Mt 5:28

[1B] What does Jesus say you should do with your eye if it causes you to stumble?

Tear it out Mt 5:29

[1C] Jesus says a couple of startling things in this passage. They were surprising to his listeners and they are to us as well, but probably for different reasons. First he says a man is committing adultery just to look at a woman, with lust in his heart, and if he does that sort of thing he should mutilate himself to prevent it. Remember the theme of this chapter. It is about running the other way from sin in order to prevent it. It is about not going near the edge, staying away from that place where you might fall into sin. Adultery is a sin. Looking at members of the opposite sex and thinking about how they might look unclothed is where adultery starts. Jesus is not saying we should gouge our eyes out. It is a figure of speech called a hyperbole. He just means do what you have to do to not start down that road towards adultery. Do whatever it takes to avoid it.

One of the things that might be noticed here is that Jesus doesn't address women in this verse. I believe there is a reason for that. Certainly a woman can look and lust after a man, but it is not really the same thing. When she does, it usually means something else is going on in her life. Her husband is not treating her right. Or he is treating her properly, but she is greedy. Or she doesn't have a husband, but she has become addicted to sex. Or she is sinfully discontent. Or she thinks of sex as power over men. Or any number of a thousand other things. In other words, looking and lusting after a man is a symptom of some deeper problem that should be addressed.

With men it is different. We can be happily married and totally in love with our wife, but if a woman comes into view our minds are drawn in the wrong direction. It doesn't even have to be a woman, it can be a statue, or a photograph, or even a cartoon. If it looks like a woman our searching and seeking instincts are aroused. Good Christian men have developed the habit of suppressing this instinct, not looking where we shouldn't, and not allowing ourselves to dwell on it, but it is our constant battle.

If you do find yourself looking at men and lusting for them, I recommend you try to find out the root cause and deal with it. Pray, read your Bible, and ask Jesus to reveal it to you, and cleanse you from it.

You might also remember that men struggle with looking and lusting and so dress modestly. I'm not suggesting you cover yourself in some kind of Muslim burka, or dress like a nun. Nothing you wear can prevent men from having this problem. If every woman covered herself from head to foot, we would just learn to lust after that. What I am suggesting is that you be just a little more modest than the women around you, so that it is not you that becomes the object of his sinfulness. I'm not suggesting you are in any way responsible for him, his thoughts, or his sins. Not at all. I'm urging it as something you do as a kindness to the men fighting this battle in their hearts and minds. (See 1st Timothy 2:9-10).

For further thought:

(1d) Read the story of David, Bathsheba & Uriah in 2 Samuel 11:1-27. It begins with David looking at Bathsheba in 2Sm 11:2 and ends with murder 2Sm 11:24. What was David's first sin in this sad series of sins? How would this story have turned out if David had heard and heeded Jesus' words in Mt 5:27-30?

(1e) In Proverbs 7:6-23 we read the story of a man who looks out a window and ends up dead. How would this story have turned out if he had heard and heeded Jesus' words in Mt 5:27-30?

(1f) Read Job 31:1. What do you think Job's understanding of this issue was? Why? Does he give us a useful idea?

(1h) Read Proverbs 4:25 and 2nd Peter 2:14. Are these talking about this same issue or are they about something else? How do you know.

Lesson 2 - Divorce: (Text: Matthew 5:31-32)

[2A] According to Deuteronomy 24:1-4 what did a man have to do to divorce his wife? _____

[2B] According to Matthew 5:31-32, if a man divorces a woman without just cause what does he cause her to do? _____

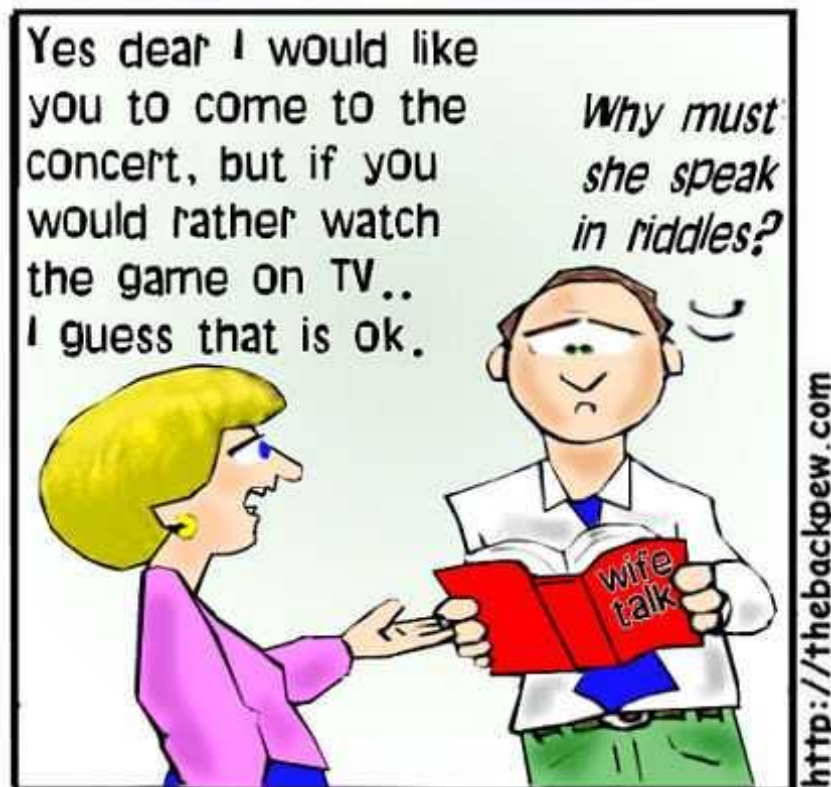
[2C] According to Malachi 2:16 what does God think of divorce? _____

[2D] If God hates divorce, why does he allow it? (Read Matthew 19:3-9) _____

[2E] If you are not happy in your marriage how can you avoid divorce?

Think & pray _____

THE BACK PEW - *JEFF LARSON*



Marriage: Like being stranded in a foreign land.. so much is **LOST IN TRANSLATION.**

----- ANSWERS -----

Lesson 2 - Divorce: (Text: Matthew 5:31-32)

[2A] According to Deuteronomy 24:1 what did a man have to do to divorce his wife?

Write a certificate Dt 24:1

[2B] According to Matthew 5:31-32, if a man divorces a woman without just cause what does he cause her to do? Commit adultery Mt 5:32

[2C] According to Malachi 2:16 what does God think of divorce? God hates divorce Mal 2:16

[2D] If God hates divorce, why does he allow it? (Read Matthew 19:3-9)

Because of our hard hearts Mt 19:8

[2E] You need to do what you have to do to make your marriage work. You can not control what he does, only what you do. If you are depending on him for your happiness, you are depending on the wrong person. God is the source of happiness, not your husband. If you want to have a satisfying marriage, be a good wife. I have seen too many people go through several marriages before it finally occurs to them that they themselves are the one who is the common factor of all their problems. You are not perfect. Your husband is not perfect. Changing husbands will not fix that.

"But," you say, "He is not being a good husband." I believe you, but that is beside the point.

I'm not suggesting you stick around to get beat up and/or watch him have a series of affairs. Nor do I expect you to be a doormat for him to wipe his feet. I am suggesting that if you are unhappy it might not be his fault. I am saying that if there is not another woman, and he is not using you to physically vent his anger, then your unhappiness is between you and God, not your husband. Yes, certainly he could be a better man and a better husband. But your happiness does not depend on that. It can't. No man is perfect. Your happiness depends on you doing God's will.

For further thought:

(2f) In Ezra 10:1-19 divorce is sanctioned as not only allowed, but necessary. How can we reconcile this to Malachi 2:16?

(2g) How do Romans 7:3 and 1st Corinthians 7:11 speak about divorce and remarriage. Does this add clarity for you? If so, how?

(2h) Two more verses that often come up in this discussion are Genesis 2:24 and Ephesians 5:31. Do they help you or just cloud the issue? Why?



Lesson 3 - Submission: (Text: Ephesians 5:21-33)

OK, you say, what is it God expects me to do? What is God's will in my marriage? I'm glad you asked that question. Let's look at a passage that addresses that issue.

Read Ephesians 5:21-33 and write the verse numbers below to show which verses go with which idea.

[3A] Verses that apply to the husband _____

[3B] Verses that apply to the wife _____

[3C] Verses that apply to both _____

[3D] Why is all this mixed up together? It seems to be more about husbands than wives. How does this help?

Think & pray _____

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson

Oh hun.. more chips and salsa pronto. Submit, submit!



Taking Ephesians **5:22** out of context was bad enough, but using a bell to summon his wife was both stupid and dangerous.

For further thought:

- (3e) According to 1 Corinthians 7:2 what is the purpose of marriage?
- (3f) Can 1st John 3:16 be applied to the love of a husband for his wife?
- (3g) In Genesis 2:18 why did God make women?
- (3h) In Malachi 2:13-15 what caused God to stop accepting their sacrifices? How does that apply to us?
- (3i) In Revelation 19:7-9 who is getting married? So what?
- (3j) In Revelation 21:1-2 who are the husband and wife? So what?
- (3k) What does Proverbs 18:22 tell us about marriage?
 - (3l) What does 2 Corinthians 6:14 tell us about spouse selection?

----- ANSWERS -----

Lesson 3 - Submission: (Text: Ephesians 5:21-33)

Read Ephesians 5:21-33 and write the verse numbers below to show which verses go with which idea.

[3A] Verses that apply to the husband 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 32

[3B] Verses that apply to the wife 22, 24

[3C] Verses that apply to both 21, 23 (mostly husband), 31 (mostly husband), 33

[3D] I realize it says a lot more about what the husband is supposed to do than what the wife is supposed to do. But this lesson is for women, not men. I focus on the other verses in the men's lesson. It doesn't say anything here about you respecting him only if he never does anything stupid. It doesn't say anything here about you manipulating him into being the kind of man you want him to be. It doesn't say you desert him or insult him when he fails in his duties to you. The call here is for you to submit yourself to him, not as some kind of a slave, but as an enthusiastic assistant. It says here you are supposed to do whatever it takes to help him in what he is doing. Why? "... but I am talking about Christ and the church." Marriage is supposed to be the living example on earth of Christ's love for His church. Your marriage is supposed to be the gospel for others to see, and be attracted to Jesus Christ. *It is not about you.* It is about Jesus Christ. Your life is not about you. It is about Jesus Christ. Your marriage is not about you. It is about the Lord. **It is about glorifying God.**

"But, he doesn't treat the children right," you say.

He doesn't treat the children right in God's view, or yours? If he is abusing the children, run. Take them and run far and fast. But if he just isn't raising them the way you think they should be raised, you are making a big mistake to interfere. That child or those children will always be yours no matter what. They came from your body, but if you do not let him raise them his way, they will not be his children. They will be your children. They will grow up without a father, even though he is in the same house with them, because you did not want to share them. Is that what you really want?

One of the most interesting things about Christian leadership is it is supposed to be by example, not force. "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." 1st Cor 11:1 (See also John 13:15; Philippians 3:17; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9; 1 Timothy 1:16; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7; 1 Peter 2:21; 1 Peter 5:2) If you want your husband to be a Christian, or be a better Christian and father, show him what submission is supposed to be. Show him how he is supposed to submit to Christ. Submit to your husband the same way you want him to submit to Christ. That is leadership by example. He might catch on sooner or later. Or he may not. Either way, you will be doing what God would have you to do. 1 Peter 3:1-2 "In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior." (See also 1 Corinthians 7:1-5)

"But, but ..." you say, "What about if he wants me to ..." (Fill in whatever you most don't want to do.)

It is not about you or your husband. It is about Jesus. I'm not saying you should risk the wrath of God, death, injury, or prison to satisfy the whims of your husband. Certainly not. But I am saying that if you never feel uncomfortable for your husband's sake, he is probably not leading the marriage, you are. That is not God's will.

Lesson 4 - Love: (Text: 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 & 1 Corinthians 7:1-5)

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 and answer the following questions:

[4A] If my "spiritual" talk is not founded on sincere love what is it? _____

[4B] If I am "spiritual" but no love our neighbors, what am I? _____

[4C] If I give away everything for motives other than love, what good is it? _____

[4D] What is love? _____

[4E] What is love not? _____

[4F] What does love not do? _____

[4G] What does love do? _____

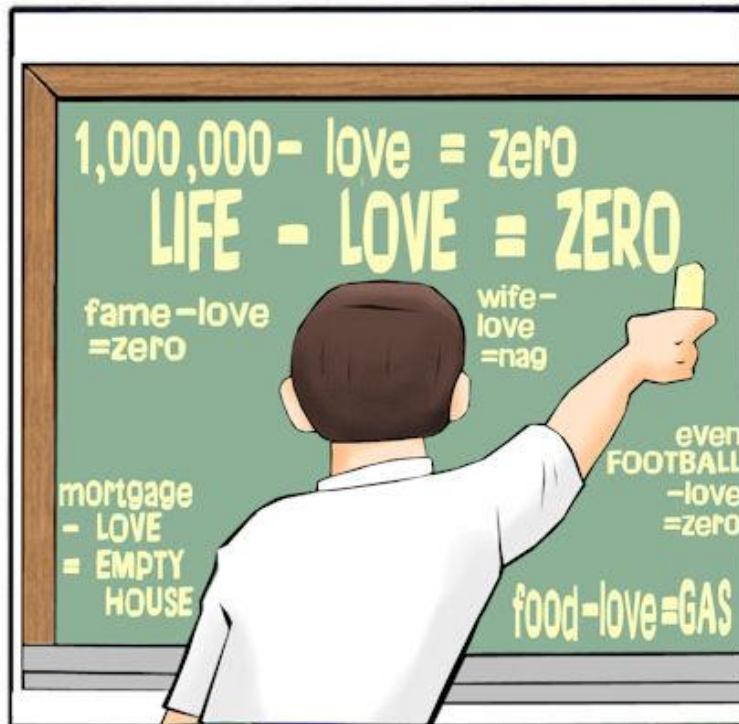
[4H] When the partial is gone, what will remain? _____

[4I] Faith, hope and love are all good, but which is best? _____

[4J] Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-5. What is it talking about? How obligated is a wife to obey her husband and yield to him?

Think & pray _____

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



MATH.. made easy. 1 Cor. 13:1-3

----- ANSWERS -----

Lesson 4 - Love: (Text: 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 & 1 Corinthians 7:1-5)

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 and answer the following questions:

[4A] If my "spiritual" talk is not founded on sincere love what is it? Noise 1Co 13:1

[4B] If I am "spiritual" but no love our neighbors, what am I? Nothing. 1Co 13:2

[4C] If I give away everything for motives other than love, what good is it? No good 1Co 13:3

[4D] What is love? Patient, Kind 1Co 13:4

[4E] What is love not? Not Jealous, Not Arrogant, 1Co 13:4

[4F] What does love not do? Brag, Act Badly, Seek Selfishly, Get Provoked, Remember Wrongs, Rejoice in Unrighteousness, Fail 1Co 13:4-8

[4G] What does love do? Rejoices in truth, Bears, Believes, Hopes and Endures all things 1Co 13:6-7

[4H] When the partial is gone, what will remain? The perfect 1Co 13:10

[4I] Faith, hope and love are all good, but which is best? Love 1Co 13:13 Once the perfect comes we will no longer need faith and hope. Only love will remain.

[4J] Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-5. What is it talking about? How obligated is a wife to obey her husband and yield to him? If it is not illegal, immoral, obviously stupid, or impossible, wives need to try to obey.

"You can't be serious. You don't really expect me to ... ?" you ask. Well, I'm glad you asked.

Remember what we just read in Ephesians 5:31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." You are one flesh. He is the head. If I tell my hand to do something, it does it. On the other hand, if I do something stupid with my hand that hurts it, I certainly feel the pain. Just as my hand tells me when it is in pain, you need to communicate with your husband, especially if he is leading you into things you find very uncomfortable. Please, please, do not take this as a license to be a nagging, complaining, wife. (Proverbs 21:9 "It is better to live in a corner of a roof, than in a house shared with a contentious woman.") Once you are sure he really understands how you feel, be cooperative if possible, even cheerful. But don't just blindly do whatever he says without giving him the benefit of your perspective. Nor are you his conscience. It is not up to you to straighten him out. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. Not you.

"But" you say, "This is not humanly possible. No one can do this. I can't do this."

You can. It happens first in the heart. Starting right now make your husband more important than you. If that is your heart, he will see it. It is simple, and yes, difficult. Love your husband like Christ loves you. Jesus Christ gave it all for you. You give it all for your husband for Christ's sake.

You can't give this kind of love, until you have received this kind of love. When my wife and her friends read this lesson, this was what they emphasized in their remarks. This kind of love requires God in your heart. You must repent of your sins and accept Jesus Christ as your savior. Then you can have this kind of love to give.

Birds & Bees Conclusion:

{W} Is there a verse or passage from this course that you would like to commit to memory? Which one? Are you going to?

{X} If someone asked you what Matthew 5:27-32 is about, how would you explain it?

{Y} If you were going to re-write this course for men, what would be different?

{Z} What did you learn from this course that you would like to remember?