



## Biblical Foundation of Marriage

1. **Marriage is Ordained by God**
  - *Genesis 2:18, 24* – God created marriage for companionship and unity.
2. **Marriage is a Holy Covenant**
  - *Malachi 2:14* – Marriage is a lifelong commitment before God.
3. **Marriage Creates One Flesh for Divine Purpose**
  - *Malachi 2:15* – God desires godly offspring and faithful marriages.
4. **Marriage Affirmed by Jesus Christ**
  - *Matthew 19:4-6* – Marriage is sacred and not to be broken.
5. **Biblical Prescription for Marriage**
  - *Colossians 3:18-19, Ephesians 5:22, 25* – Husbands love, wives respect, both submit to Christ.

## Scientific Support for Biblical Marriage

1. **Attachment Theory** (Bowlby, 1969)
  - Early experiences shape relationships.
  - Secure attachment leads to healthy marriages.
2. **Modern Research on Marriage**
  - Strong marriages show unique brain patterns (Fisher, 2005).
  - Spousal support reduces stress (Coan, 2006).
  - Secure attachment lowers anxiety (Younger, 2010).
  - Long-term couples experience neural rewards (Acevedo, 2012).

## The Emotional Bank Account in Marriage

- **Building Positive Balance:** Show interest, empathy, and affection.
- **Requiting Emotional Responses:** Match joy with joy, affection with warmth.
- **Understanding Affect Override:**
  - *Positive:* Assumes good intentions.
  - *Negative:* Assumes bad intentions, leading to conflict.

## Conflict and Its Impact

1. **The Four Horsemen (Gottman)**
  - **Criticism:** Attacking character.
  - **Defensiveness:** Avoiding responsibility.
  - **Contempt:** Disrespect, strongest predictor of divorce.
  - **Stonewalling:** Emotional withdrawal.



## 2. **The Anger Cycle**

- Trigger -> Core Hurt -> Anger -> Escalation.
- *Proverbs 15:1* – A gentle answer turns away wrath.

## 3. **The Negative Spiral**

- Emotional disengagement → Parallel lives → Loneliness → Divorce.

### **Five Strategies to Strengthen Marriage**

#### 1. **Create a Home-Field Advantage**

- Make Christ the center, pray together, attend church, and seek spiritual guidance.

#### 2. **Die to Yourself & Cast Out Grievances**

- *Matthew 21:12-13* – Forgive past wrongs and let go of bitterness.

#### 3. **Stop Shopping**

- *Ephesians 5:3, Colossians 3:5* – Be content, avoid comparisons, and honor your spouse.

#### 4. **Share, Bare, and Repair**

- *1 Peter 3:7* – Share openly, be vulnerable, and repair through forgiveness.

#### 5. **Speak Life Over Your Spouse**

- *Colossians 3:16-17* – Encourage, affirm, and commit to the covenant of marriage.