

## Some Thoughts on Leaving and Cleaving: Essentials to Oneness

### Genesis 2:24

*For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.*

#### The Institution of Marriage Genesis 2:24

- Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:7 Jesus considered it authoritative & inviolable.
- Ephesians 5:31 Paul taught it as authoritative & sacred.

#### God's Design for Marriage

- "For this reason..." - refers back in larger context to all of God's creation design
- "...they will become one flesh." - the mysterious union - "God has joined together"
- "...a man will leave his father and mother..." - God has designed for a man to do this
- "...and (a man will) be united to his wife..." - God's design for a woman as well
- **Leaving and cleaving are essential to oneness in marriage.**

#### Some Implications of Genesis 2:24

- Primary human relationship before marriage is with parents.
- Primary human relationship after marriage is with spouse.
- **A right understanding of leaving and cleaving are essential to right relationship to my parents and spouse and God, (since it is His design).**

#### What are leaving and cleaving?

- יָצַח (ya-ʾă-zāḥ) - from azab (aw-zab') - to leave, forsake, relinquish, leave behind, let go
- דָּבַק (wə-dā-baq) - from dabaq (daw-bak') - to cleave, to stick, as things that are glued together; to be closely joined
- καταλείψει (kataleipsei) - from kata, an intensifier, and leipó, "to leave behind"; means to forsake or abandon
- κολληθήσεται (kollēthēsetai) or προσκολληθήσεται (proskollēthēsetai) - both words are from kólla, "glue"; means to bond (cleave), adhere to, "glued together", join to

## **More Thoughts on Leaving and Cleaving**

- Leaving takes place over a period of time prior to marriage.
- Cleaving takes place over a period of time prior to and throughout marriage.
- When leaving takes place, cleaving accompanies it.
- When cleaving takes place, leaving will also occur.
- Leaving and cleaving have spiritual implications. (Eph. 5:25 – 33)

### **Leaving that is NOT according to God's Design:**

- Disobedience
- Dishonoring
- seeking autonomy in decision-making
- desiring freedom
- developing independence
- exploring identity
- Asserting self = willfulness
- shifting relational allegiance outside of the family

### **Cleaving that is NOT according to God's Design:**

- Fostering emotional attachments and attractions prior to marriage
- Pursuing exclusive, quasi-committed relationships without the intent to marry
- Prioritizing persons, activities, goals, interests, or commitments above family obligations and relationships

### **Leaving that IS according to God's Design:**

- Obedience → trustworthiness
- Honoring → security
- seeking maturity in decision-making
- desiring responsibility
- developing dependability
- establishing identification
- Denying self = "not-my-willness"
- shifting relational allegiance to spouse

### **Cleaving that IS according to God's Design:**

- Nurturing heart faithfulness to spouse prior to and throughout marriage
- Pursuing one marriage relationship until parted by death
- Preparing for and prioritizing the primary roles and identities of husband/father and wife/mother

### **Some Implications for Marriage**

- Am I honoring my father and mother?
- Have I left or am I leaving my father & mother according to God's design?
- Is my spouse (future spouse) confident that I have left (will be leaving) my father and mother according to God's design?
- Have I left (am I leaving) everything else that might compromise oneness in my (approaching) marriage?
- Am I actively seeking (preparing) to be united to my (future) spouse in all areas of our relationship?

### **Some Implications for Parenting**

- Am I pursuing strategies with the purpose of teaching my (future) children to leave and cleave according to God's design?
- Am I fostering or even encouraging attitudes, behaviors, relationships, or commitments in myself and my children that may result in those children leaving and cleaving in ways that are not according to God's design?