

## One Flesh, One Team

### I. Be the Spouse God Created You to Be

- Genesis 2 introduces us to the first family — Adam and Eve. Previously in the chapter God has said, *“It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”* Upon seeing Eve, Adam said, *“This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”* And then we read, *“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.”* If you want to be one flesh in life and one team in parenting then you both have to understand and respect why God put you together. God has a role and plan for each of you in the relationship, and as long as you fight to do a job that was never given to you, or you refuse to do the job that was given to you, you’ll never be one team.

### II. Be Committed to Your Spouse

- The second and third times “one flesh” shows up in Scripture is in Matthew 19. The fourth one appears in Mark 10, and in both of these passages Jesus is talking about divorce. In Matthew He says, *“Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”* They said to him, *“Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?”* He said to them, *“Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.”* You will never function as one flesh and a unified parenting team if you’re constantly thinking about or threatening with divorce. Listen, it needs to be a non-issue. You don’t consider it. You don’t talk about it. It’s not allowed. It’s off the table. Are there biblical allowances for divorce? Sure. But in those situations at least one of them has to be wicked and sinful enough to say, “I don’t care what God says, I’m doing my own thing, and I’m out of here.” This is why in Mark 10, Christ can say, *“Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”* But as long as you both are at least attempting to live the way God commanded, then you need to be committed to the team and stop imagining leaving the team.

### III. Be Sexually Engaged with Your Spouse

- I Corinthians 6 takes it a step further and references the “one flesh” relationship within a discussion about sexual immorality. This passage is specifically warning against adultery, but it makes an amazing observation about sexuality and its power. Paul writes, *“Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.”* Many of us aren't living like one flesh and one team because we're not engaging in the beautiful, holy sexuality God created for us to enjoy, and which He created to be part of the mystical unification of our bodies. You cannot expect to present a united parenting front if you're not selflessly uniting as husband and wife in a Christ-honoring way. I'm going to save the specific discussion about sex between spouses for another day, but for now let me say that if you're truly serving one another in the bed, your relationship will be stronger.

### IV. Be Spiritually Engaged with Your Spouse

- Ephesians 5 is the last time “one flesh” is used in the Scriptures, and it's a powerful one. I believe this is the quintessential passage for husbands, but — to be honest — there's a significant take-away for the ladies. Let me read the whole passage because it's very reminiscent of the Genesis command to understand our roles, but it develops those roles and fleshes them out in the most beautiful way possible. *“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”* There is so much here to unpack on at a later date, but for now I want to focus on the placement of the “one flesh quote.” Paul has just finished comparing the marriage relationship to the relationship between Christ and the church. He gave Himself up for her so that He could sanctify her by washing her with the water of the Word of God, so that He could present her spotless before His Father. Husbands are then commanded to love their wives as Christ loves the church and nourishes and cherishes her. I believe the picture of one flesh in this passage is highlighting the spiritual unity the husband and the wife are to have. If we're brothers and sisters in Christ, we've been commanded to admonish and encourage and edify and rebuke and sharpen and bear and pray for and teach and correct and assist in each other's sanctification. And within the marriage relationship, this washing each other with the water of the Word is a beautiful symbol of Christ's work in us. That's powerful.