

Recap of 12/4/22 message by Joe Ricchuiti (“Threats to Oneness”)

1. The essence of the Fall in Genesis 3 was separation. *That is what death is, and the Fall brought death into the world. There is now separation and alienation where there once was harmony. Mankind is separated from God and from each other. The Fall brought about estrangement in relationships especially that of marriage.*

“In every marriage more than a week old, there are grounds for divorce. The trick is to find, and continue to find, grounds for marriage.” (Anderson)

2. The four biblical purposes of marriage: *suitable face to face companionship, the God-given right to enjoy sex and to have children, to encourage self-control, to control immorality and to promote morality, to illustrate the loving and intimate relationship between Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:22-33)*

3. God invented sex for the continuance of the race and for the pleasure of the marriage partners.

- a) *Sex is good, a part of God’s “very good” creation. Genesis 1:31; Proverbs 5; Song of Solomon (Which celebrates the joy of sexual expression in marriage)*
- b) *God designed the physical relationship in marriage to build intimacy, instead it often builds distance.*
- c) *In 1 Corinthians 7:1-7, Paul (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit), warns married couples to not withhold their bodies from each other except in rare instances and then only for prayer. To violate this instruction is to invite Satan’s destructive work into a marriage.*
- d) *The sexual relationship is meant for married couples only. (1 Corinthians 7:1-7)*
- e) *Sex is wrong outside of marriage. 1 Corinthians 6:9-20.*

4. The key word in marriage is commitment:

- a) *“For a marriage to survive today, a man and his wife must be at least as equally committed to the institution of marriage as they are committed to each other as individuals. If the institution of marriage itself is not a highly regarded value, then sooner or later, when one partner starts to feel unloving thoughts, there is no moral framework to motivate working through the problem. (Patrick Morley)*
- b) *“Unfortunately, too many couples are going to the altar with the thought in the back of their minds that if the relationship doesn’t work out, they will get divorced...It is normal to want to quit when we get discouraged or feel overwhelmed, or when a situation feels hopeless. Every relationship will have experiences that yield discouraging, hopeless feelings.... Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that marriage is difficult and to make decisions that will help us succeed. We believe that making a nonnegotiable decision to never divorce is essential to keeping at bay the temptations that inevitably try to threaten all marriages.” (Tirabassi)*
- c) *“Linda and I married just over a quarter century ago, and we had not a whit of an inkling of what those twenty-five-plus years would bring.... But we didn’t need to. We made a promise. We recited a vow. Out of the whole world, we chose each other. And the power of that choice, that promise, has kept us.” (Stu Weber)*