**Marriage Enrichment 001**

**Introduction: *Why are these talks necessary?***

A. Because Biblical marriage is under attack and in decline

 1. The numbers tell a part of this story

2. Yet numbers don’t tell the whole story

B. Because we have rising dysfunctional generation of young adults

 1. Teenage delinquency has skyrocketed in the last 70 years

 2. Question: *Did teenagers become more depraved?*

C. Because too many of our marriages are *mediocre* though *together*

D. Because Jesus prioritized marriage in His ministry (John 2:1-11)

 1. Foundation of the Kingdom is *solid marriage – family life*

 2. God’s Command is *to show love to ‘household of faith first’* (Gal. 6:10)

**The Basics of Marriage: Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18-25; Eph. 5:31**

I.  **What is a Marriage?**

 A. God’s institution designed to create provide us with

 companionship (Heb. 13:4)

 1. Since our fall in Paradise, marriage is *not just*

 *a romantic journey*

B. Marriage is *God’s calls to serve and love your closest*

 *neighbor* (Phil. 2:4ff)

 C. Marriage is *God’s school of refinement*

D. Marriage is *image-bearing of* God’s relationship in Christ to

 His Church (Eph. 5:31)

Closing Observations …

A. Marriage chief end is*to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever*

1. This is best done in *unity with other fellow human beings*

2. This is contrary to the ‘Me-Marriage’

● *Destructive to marriage is the self-fulfillment ethic that assumes marriage and family are primarily institutions of personal fulfilment, necessary for us to become happy and whole. However, this definition fails to appreciate the fact that we always marry the wrong person. We never know who we marry. We just think we do. Or even if we first marry the right person, just give it a while and he or she will change. For marriage means we are not the same person after we have entered it. The primary challenge is … learning how to love and care for the stranger to whom you find yourself married.* (Stanley Hauer)

 3. This ultimately is only possible if we are united by faith to

 Jesus Christ and filled with the Spirit of Christ

B. Marriage is so much more successful and satisfying when we

 *follow the Maker’s directions as well as honor the Maker’s*

 *distinctions of the male and female*

**Home-Construction Assignment:  *The soul of joy lies in the doing!***

1. Rate your marriage on each of the purposes for which God did institute marriage and discuss ways in which you are to aim to increase these numbers. Rate from 0 (bad) to 9 (near perfect).

 a. To provide companionship to each other

 b. To fulfill each other’s needs in the physical, emotional,

 sexual and spiritual areas of life.

 c. To be the promoter of personal growth in your spouse

2. Marriage is the union of two sinners so there will naturally be areas

of friction as we live together. Therefore, conflicting ideas or thoughts is not a bad sign but how we deal with them is important. Evaluate your relationship and discuss your findings on the following aspects.

a. your adaptability and flexibility (ability to change or adjust)

b. your empathy (ability to be sensitive to the needs, hurts

 and desires of your spouse and feel with them or experience their world through their eyes)

c. your ability to work through problems in a mature way, coming to a mutually agreed resolution

d. your ability to give and receive love in the way your spouse needs it

e. your ability to control your emotions instead of being controlled by them

f. your ability to do have satisfying and meaningful communication according the following scale

 **● Cliché conversation**: phrases such as “How was your day?” “I like your outfit.”

 ● **Reporting facts about others**: no personal information but

 “gossip about others.”

 ● **My ideas and judgments:** you share personal ideas,

 visions, and decisions

 ● **My feelings and emotions:** you share feelings about facts,

 ideas, judgments

 ● **Complete emotional and personal communication:** you

share absolute and openly all there is to be shared about your life; it is risky because it makes you vulnerable and risks rejection.