

the Vision

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH OF SHALLOTTE—FEBRUARY 2020



Marriage: What It Is and What it Isn't

Pastor Bob

February is the month we celebrate romance, so the month begins with the Weekend of Encouragement Marriage Retreat. But these days in our culture, if you want to build a solid, biblical marriage, you're in the minority. Even for senior adults, typically considered more traditional than the younger generations, times have changed.

Last summer the Wall Street Journal published a story titled "More Older Couples Stay Together by Living Apart." The article interviewed Sharon Hyman and David Demetre who "celebrated their 20th anniversary of not living together." Demetre and Hyman, residents of Montreal, met through a dating service, and then talked about

living together or getting married. But instead, they chose to live apart and yet remain a "couple."

According to the article, he wakes up early, and is an introvert who cherishes private space. She is an extrovert who stays up late and likes to be with friends and family. "I don't think it would work as well if we lived together," said Demetre. Hyman agreed. "The assumption is that if you really love each other, you will live together. My question is 'Says who?'," she said.

Researchers say this is a trend, motivated in part by the rise of divorces among senior adults. Susan Brown, a sociologist, says it is "a new frontier in partnered relationships." Brown surveyed 2,166 adults ages 50 to 65 and

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Church Events

- Feb 2nd—Guest Speaker, Dr. Richard Blackaby
- Feb 9th—Baptism
- Feb 9th—Live Streaming Sunday Service Starts
- Feb 10th—Ladies' Ministry Meeting
- Feb 12th—Valentine's Banquet Fundraiser

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Marriage: What It Is and What it Isn't

found that nearly one-third of those in an unmarried relationship were in a committed long-term relationship but living apart. Academics call this arrangement "living apart together."

According to a 2017 study, unmarried partnered adults between the ages of 57 to 85 were twice as likely to have separate homes as to live together. That arrangement appeals to men and women for different reasons, research shows. Men want to protect their leisure time; women want to protect their autonomy. Both prefer to preserve their financial independence, routines and habits, and even personal privacy. But partners usually "step up to the plate" when the other needs care. One expert concluded that these couples "are fulfilling a lot of the function of family for one another."

It is important to understand that there is nothing wrong with two people deciding to live apart, to be friends, or to care for each other without being in the same household. Sometimes that is wise, and it can be a healthy relationship. What's wrong, however, is comparing that to a marriage relationship, or, worse, considering it a healthy replacement for marriage. It's not.

The reasons these couples give, as many others do, for living apart is to remain self-centered, to keep their personal lives separate, to share only what they choose to share. That's not marriage. Marriage, done as God intended, brings two people together in a glorious mess of incongruity and yet produces harmony.

Marriage is an inherently unselfish institution. It requires two people to sacrifice, to rise above their personal ambitions, and to undertake a lifetime commitment that few these days are willing to embrace. Marriage requires two people to honor someone else above themselves. Not occasionally, but for a lifetime. When both do this, it creates compatibility and harmony. That's a mystery. But it is a mystery that God allows us to participate in.

Christians should especially revere marriage as the institution God intended. Unlike any other relationship, marriage is woven into the created order (Gen. 2:23-25). It reflects God's intention. If a couple chooses not to marry when, in fact, they could, they are intentionally declining to participate in this sacred relationship, founded by God at the beginning of time. If so, fine. As long as that couple



understands the mysterious covenant they have declined.

And, even more so, Christians see the marriage relationship as a reflection of God's Church, another unique relationship that is reflected in the relationship between husband and wife. Marriage actually serves as a witness to the world that God has a Bride, and it shows that spiritual and eternal relationship, that covenant, in a very earthly illustration (Eph. 5:22-33). You don't have to be married to appreciate this remarkable institution or to protect and respect God's intention for marriage.

The trend of "living apart together," and assuming it is a good replacement for marriage, is not surprising given our culture's overall confusion about marriage. It isn't sinful in the way some replacements for God's design are, such as same-sex unions or cohabitation. But when it is likened to marriage as an alternative, it disrespects the union God created and every couple who submits daily to honor that union.

So, if you are not married. No problem. But be sure to respect and honor marriage. And if you are married, well, same thing. Respect and honor your marriage and all those around you. work on it, grow in it, and, if you need help, get it. Remember, we didn't invent marriage. God did. It is a privilege, a joy, a gift of grace, and a mystery.

And there are no substitutes.

With Love in Christ,
Pastor Bob

Visit Pastor Bob's Blog:
BOBWEATHERS.NET



Monthly Ministry Info

children

FUN DAY WEDNESDAY
WEDNESDAYS | 5:30PM
QUEST FIRST KIDS
WEDNESDAYS | 6:15PM
FIRST KIDS CHOIR
SUNDAYS | 6:00PM

fusion

FUN DAY WEDNESDAY
WEDNESDAYS | 5:30PM
BIBLE STUDY
WEDNESDAYS | 6:30PM
SMALL GROUPS
SUNDAYS | 5:30PM

youth

FUN DAY WEDNESDAY
WEDNESDAYS | 5:30PM
BIBLE STUDY
WEDNESDAYS | 6:30PM
SMALL GROUPS
SUNDAYS | 5:30PM
VALENTINE BANQUET FUNDRAISER
FEB 12 | 6PM
GREAT MEAL AND ENTERTAINMENT |
\$10/ADULTS AND \$5/AGES 10 & UNDER
GET TICKETS FROM A YOUTH OR AT THE OFFICE

men

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY
WEDNESDAYS | 6:30AM

ladies

MINISTRY MEETING
FEB 10 | 6:30PM

messages

CONTINUING SERIES: "DECISIONS THAT SHAPE YOUR LIFE: FIVE PRINCIPLES FOR MAKING PLANS FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE"
UPCOMING SERIES: "HE DIED FOR THEM TOO" | STARTS 2/23
LISTEN ONLINE AT
FBCSHALLOTTE.ORG/MESSAGES

prayer

PRAYER TIME
SUNDAYS | 9:30AM

baptism

FEB 9 | 11AM
CONTACT THE OFFICE IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE BAPTIZED

guest speaker

DR. RICHARD BLACKABY
FEB 2 | 11AM

DR. RICHARD BLACKABY IS AN AUTHOR AND A POPULAR INTERNATIONAL SPEAKER. RICHARD HAS A PH.D. IN HISTORY AND HAS CO-AUTHORED THE REVISION OF "EXPERIENCING GOD" AND SPEAKS OFTEN IN CHURCHES AND TO CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS. RICHARD HAS WRITTEN OR CO-AUTHORED OVER 30 BOOKS, INCLUDING "LIVING OUT OF THE OVERFLOW," "THE SEASONS OF GOD," "UNLIMITING GOD," AND "PUTTING A FACE ON GRACE". FIND OUT MORE AT RICHARDBLACKABY.ORG.

STARTING SUNDAY, FEB 9

**LIVE
STREAM
SERVICE**



**SUNDAYS
AT 11AM**

New to Our Family



Matthew & Tara Thompson
joined Jan 19



Jace & Amy Myers
Bodie, Hazel & Lola
joined Jan 26



Avery Richardson
joined Jan 19



Jennifer Spencer
joined Nov 3



Love God.
Love One Another.
Love the World.

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4486 Main Street
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910.754.4048 fbcshallotte.org

Office Hours:

M-Th 9am—3pm; F 9am—1pm

Sunday School	9:45am
Morning Worship	11:00am
Evening Worship	6:00pm
Wednesday	6:00pm

Read the Bible Beginning to End Reading Plan

1-Year Plan. It is important to understand the fullness of God's message to the churches, and a great way of doing this is reading the Old and New Testaments simultaneously. This plan, which can be completed in one calendar year, does just that. Readings from both Testaments are included from the beginning and although each reading does not contain both Testaments, the two are read effectively.

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/1 Exodus 27-28; Matthew 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/15 Leviticus 17-18; Matthew 27 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/2 Exodus 29-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/16 Leviticus 19-20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/3 Exodus 31-33 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/17 Leviticus 21-22; Matthew 28 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/4 Exodus 34-35; Matthew 22 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/18 Leviticus 23-24 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/5 Exodus 36-38 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/19 Leviticus 25; Mark 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/6 Exodus 39-40; Matthew 23 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/20 Leviticus 26-27; Mark 2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/7 Leviticus 1-3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/21 Numbers 1-2; Mark 3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/8 Leviticus 4-5; Matthew 24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/22 Numbers 3-4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/9 Leviticus 6-7; Matthew 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/23 Numbers 5-6; Mark 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/10 Leviticus 8-10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/24 Numbers 7-8 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/11 Leviticus 11-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/25 Numbers 9-11 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/12 Leviticus 13; Matthew 26 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/26 Numbers 12-14; Mark 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/13 Leviticus 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/27 Numbers 15-16; Mark 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2/14 Leviticus 15-16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2/28 Numbers 17-19 |