

# MARRIAGE MAKE-OVER: SESSION 4

## Leaving Your Family at The Altar



### TO GET YOU TALKING:

**Check in with each other and share how your discussions went this week with your spouse. Did you learn anything new about your spouse? About yourself?**

1. Growing up in my family was:
  - **Disengaged**- everyone did their own thing and there was little emotional closeness or commitment to the family.
  - **Rigid**- one parent ruled the home and everyone else towed the line or else!
  - **Enmeshed**- everyone was overly close, co-dependant, and reactive to each other. Family loyalty was demanded. Few outside relationships/activities.
  - **Chaotic**- erratic leadership, impulsive decision making, family roles were unclear and often shifted between family members
  - **Balanced/Flexible**- interdependence family members, emotional closeness yet able to engage in separate activities and time alone when needed.
2. What parts of your family of origin's structure did you bring into your current family? What did you leave behind?

### DIGGING DEEPER:

#### A LOOK AT FAMILIES IN THE BIBLE:

Choose 1 or 2 passages from the following list and discuss your insights and thoughts about healthy and unhealthy characteristics of these particular Biblical families:

- Gen.4:1-9 (Cain & Abel)
- Gen.9:18-27 (Noah's Sons)
- Gen.16:1-2;21:9-10 (Ishmael & Isaac)
- Gen.27-40 (Jacob & Esau)

#### LEAVING YOUR PARENTS:

1. The extent to which your parents treat you as a child is the extent to which they still exert control over your life. In what ways do/did your parents treat you like a child?
2. Read Genesis 2:24. What does it mean to "leave your parents"? Where should your loyalties be placed?
3. What boundaries do you or your partner need to put in place so that your parents no longer control you or your family life?

#### LEAVING YOUR PEERS (*siblings and extended family*):

1. To what extent is your family being influenced by friends and extended family?
2. In what ways do you show honour and respect to your spouse when you are with your friends and extended family.

3. In what ways might you still need to "step up to the plate"?

#### LEAVING YOUR PAST:

1. Who had the most negative impact on you from your family of origin?
2. How has this person's influence impacted you emotionally (*at the time and now*)?
3. What decision ( or life vow) did you make as a result? (*eg. I'm going to harden my heart. I can't trust people. I'm worthless. I don't exist.*)
4. In what ways does the healing power of God need to intervene to let you leave this part of your past behind?

#### ACTION STEPS:

Pray through the areas that the Holy Spirit is highlighting for you, individually and with your spouse., throughout the week.

#### PRAY FOR EACH OTHER:

**Please take some extended time in your life groups for prayer and ministry time**, giving room for God to work in your hearts which still may be wounded, from family circumstances (past or present).

Pray for each other's families, asking God to provide strength where there is weakness, joy where there is sorrow and healing where there has been pain.

## SERMON OUTLINE

March 10 & 11, 2007

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The term: \_\_\_\_\_ describes a legal relationship

#### **A Look at Families in the Bible:**

- The \_\_\_\_\_ Family: Genesis 4:6-7
- The \_\_\_\_\_ 9:20-23
- The \_\_\_\_\_ 16:1-2; 21:9-10
- The \_\_\_\_\_ 27-40

There is \_\_\_\_\_ for Your Family! *For we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purposes. Rom. 8:28*

#### **A key truth for Marriage and Family \_\_\_\_\_**

*For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. Gen..2:24*

#### ***3 Things that Impact the overall Success of our Marriages...***

\_\_\_\_\_The need to \_\_\_\_\_, the needs, desires and interest of our spouses over our parents.

\_\_\_\_\_(siblings) The need to create safe and secure boundaries in our family relationships.

\_\_\_\_\_The need to deal with family hurts and pains so they do not hinder our growth together.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 Cor. 5:17*