

Foundations for Marriage Part 3

Cake + Biscuits=Cookies

Genesis 2:24

Here are the ingredients for Chocolate Cake and Biscuits

The development of a marriage is a three-step process.

First, the man (and woman) must leave their parents.

In biblical times a son stayed at home after taking a wife because he would inherit his father's home.

However, he was to leave his parents and cleave to her.

In other words, she became his primary focus.

The first year of marriage was so important that soldiers were allowed to stay home one year to cultivate their new marriage (Deut. 20:7).

The second step consisted of "cleaving", or "being joined" to your spouse.

Both words mean to be close to your spouse – keep very close as in protecting.

Your spouse, upon marriage becomes the closest person to you.

If the first two are done correctly, then the third part literally becomes reality: they two shall become one flesh.

This means more than just physically.

This is the goal that God has for a couple when they marry – that they would leave their parents, be joined (or cleave) to one another and become one flesh.

The perfect union.

There are two terms I want you to concentrate on in this message – Direct and Indirect Teaching.

Is it possible to really leave your father and mother and cling to your spouse?

Now if you are like me and my wife, your answer would be "yes".

We have never lived in our hometown.

In a physical sense, we left our parents to be joined together.

We can't run to our parents when we get into an argument.

Likewise, we're not always at our parents' house instead of spending time with each other.

So, have we met the first requirement? Yes and no.

To leave father and mother and be joined to your spouse is more than just physically moving away and living in your own home.

It also means that there are some things that we have learned from our parents that we have to walk away from in order to be completely joined to our spouse.

This is the question that I want you to consider: What influence do your parents have on your marriage right now that needs to be "removed" in order for your marriage to move forward?"

I'll start with this story. When I was a child, there was a time when the street we lived on was not paved as it is today. Whenever my father washed the car, he would spray the street to keep the dust from flying up from other cars. Whenever he cleaned his car, he liked for it to remain clean. When my brothers, sisters and I would get in the car, he hated for us to put our hands on the windows, especially in the winter when the windows would fog up. You know that kids can't pass up an opportunity to draw on the windows whenever they become foggy. Once after he had gotten on me about doing that, I told him when I was grown, married and had my kids, I would let them draw on the windows as much as they liked. Lie, lie, lie! Although I meant it when I said it, it turns out that I am just like my father; I hate to have my kids drawing on the windows in the car. Did I get that from my father or is it just natural for an adult to want to have clean car windows?

Let's take it to the next step.

Have you ever heard the saying "An apple does not fall far from the tree"?

We are products of our environment. Whether good or bad, that is who we are.

Although you would look the same, had any of you grown up in a different house, you would be a totally different person.

When we are born, we are the physical genetic makeup of our parents.

We are the raw ingredients like flour.

Now what we become depends on what is done with the ingredients and what is added to it.

So if I start with just flour (the core of a person) and I add sugar, eggs, cocoa, butter and a few other things, I could end up with a chocolate cake.

If I added something different, I could end up with biscuits.

When two people with different background marry, it's the same as a cake marrying a biscuit.

According to the word of God, the cake and the biscuit must now become one. How is that done?

In marriage, that is exactly what God is asking us to do – combine two into one.

Remember I said that, as babies, we are like flour and it's the other ingredients, both good and bad, that make us into cake or cookies.

What would happen if you were able to remove some of those ingredients and mix the others?

You would not necessarily have chocolate cake and biscuits, but you could end up with something else.

By changing a few ingredients and not adding more, you take what was chocolate cake and biscuits and make sugar cookies – something just as good.

We are the physical result of our parents coming together.

Once we were here, other things were added to make us who we are today, primarily influence from our parents or the individuals taking the role of our parents.

These ingredients may not have all been the best or positive, yet they continue to influence us.

When we marry, we must choose the ingredients we will keep and those we will give up in order to be joined to our spouse.

God's word points to the importance of the parents' role in the development of a child.

Pr 22:6 - "Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it."

Eph 6:4 says "Fathers do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (NAS)

Parents have the primary responsibility for training their children.

This training comes from direct teaching and indirect teaching.

Direct teaching is when a parent sits down with a child and teaches them something – how to eat right, dress, talk, showing respect, etc.

Indirect teaching occurs when a child learns to do something just by watching the parent.

For example, no parent sits down and teaches their little boys how to smack their future wife, which would be direct teaching.

However, they learn to smack their wives by watching dad, which is indirect teaching.

The father did not set out with the goal of teaching this to his son.

A mother does not teach her daughter how to take a punch from her future husband, but the daughter learns it through indirect teaching.

These are the extreme cases to make a point.

We learn as much from our parents through direct teaching as we do through indirect teaching.

And oftentimes it's the indirect teaching that causes trouble in our marriages.

When we marry, we bring two people from two different backgrounds together.

Each of us brings our "normal" with us.

What we grew up with and were exposed to on a daily basis is what is normal to us.

Things are abnormal when they are different from what we are accustomed to.

Understanding this is the beginning point for bringing oneness to the marriage.

Have you ever asked your spouse "why do you do that?" Or, "why do you cook it that way?"

A lot of times we develop habits based on what we have seen our parents do – indirect teachings.

Your marriage and how you view your marriage is comprised in some ways of what you learned from your parents indirectly.

We are teaching our kids now, directly and indirectly, what to do in their marriage and we must be aware of this.

When you think of your marriage and how you do some things, think about your parents. Did they do it the same way?

For example, how did your parents handle conflict?

Did they address it openly, or did they ignore the true issue and hoped that it went away?

Now, consider how you deal with conflict.

Did what you witnessed from your parents have any impact on what you are doing now?

What about how you express emotions?

Are you like your parents or have you made different choices based on what you saw in your parents?

What about how your parents celebrate holidays and take vacations?

Have their actions had an impact on you?

These are all fairly safe questions to ask and answer, yet there is much more that lies beneath.

All of us at some point in time reflect back on what we know about our parents' relationship.

We think about the positive and the negative.

We make decisions about what we want and don't want in our marriage based on what we

witnessed in our parents relationship.

We hold secrets from our spouse about our insecurities based on things that happened in our families when we were growing up.

These insecurities become personal trials for us on a daily basis.

Our spouses wonder why we do certain things and we can't explain it, or refuse to because it would reveal a side of us that we need to protect.

Sometimes when they have been around our family and us for an extended period of time they begin to understand.

As I close I need you to think about the ingredients that have been added to you which make you who you are.

What will you have to give up, unlearn or walk away from in order to be one with your spouse?

Can you do it? Can you keep the positive from your parents while modifying some things in order to build something new, different and wonderful?

It's never too late to start building your marriage into what God wants it to be.

If you're the chocolate cake and you're married to a biscuit, you have the making for sugar cookies which is just as good.

All you have to do is remove some ingredients and join the rest.

Are you willing to do this?

If you are not married and planning to get married, are you willing to become something else while keep the core you in order to build something new?

Chocolate Cake + Dinner Rolls = Sugar Cookies

Flour

Baking Powder

Salt

Sugar

Shortening

Eggs

Vanilla

Cocoa

Milk Flour

Baking Powder

Salt

Sugar

Butter

Eggs

Baking Soda

Milk

Yeast

Flour

Baking Powder

Salt

Sugar

Shortening / Butter

Eggs

Vanilla

If each person gives up a little of themselves, something new and beautiful can be the result.

