

## Meeting the Ups and Downs of Life – Week 20

### Lesson 6.4 – When Our Children Marry

We're picking up where we left off last week with Mark and Amanda. Since we will be touching on some specifics about their situation again today, I'll share the paragraph again here:

*Mark and Amanda have had many issues in their marriage. They were not well off, which was a constant stressor; they had gotten pregnant while they were dating—marriage felt like the only next step; they never seemed to agree on much. Over time, they grew apart. Amanda she got a job and opened her own bank account; they never checked schedules; she refused to go to church with Mark; out of shame, he eventually stopped attending, too. They agreed to stay married until their youngest (third of three) child left home. One month after their youngest's wedding, Amanda filed for a no-fault divorce. She said it was time for them to get on with their lives. "We did our duty," she said. "God wants us to be happy now."*

#### Light from the Word

1. This would not be a proper marriage Bible study without looking at **Ephesians 5:22-33**. Rewind five years with Mark and Amanda. They are already talking about their impending divorce after their youngest marries, whenever that may be. Which of these words or phrases would you use to help Mark and Amanda see the "one flesh" aspect of marriage?
2. Still five years earlier, what are some proactive and practical steps that Mark and Amanda could take to save their marriage, even in the midst of all their turmoil?
3. Many people feel that the main problem empty nesters face is the problem of focus. They don't know what to focus on once their children get married. Agree or disagree and explain: once a couple has children, the main focus of their marriage, time, and energy is on raising their children.
4. What can couples do to avoid neglecting their marriages to concentrate on raising children?
5. How can grandparents help their children maintain the focus on building their marriages?

6. Under what kinds of circumstances would it be okay for elder parents to “interfere” (to assert one’s own thoughts, advice, and counsel) in their child’s marriage...
  - a. ...according to **Proverbs 12:15**?
  - b. ...according to **Matthew 18:15-16**?
  - c. ...according to **Matthew 28:19-20**?
  - d. ...according to **Hebrews 10:24-25**?

What other questions and comments do you have about this topic?

*Here’s the plan (for now) moving forward with Sunday morning classes – Pastor Proeber will do two more weeks of the Ups and Downs (February 11 and 18). Then Pastor Plagenz (for as long as he is available) will lead discussion on the Passion History readings which we will hear from Mark’s Gospel during the midweek Lent services. That means the reading from the midweek services on February 21 will be discussed at Bible class on February 25, and so on. Bring your own questions about different details or things you’ve heard, but never had explained in these important chapters of Scripture.*

**Closing Prayer** Gracious Savior, Grant Your Blessing v. 5  
**Father, you created Adam, crafted Eve, and made them one;**  
**Jesus, from their sin you saved us, as God’s true incarnate Son;**  
**Holy Spirit, you forgive us; from our sins we are released.**  
**Bring us, Lord, at last to heaven, to the endless wedding feast. Amen.**