Becoming One in Marriage: What It Means and How to Attain It

Richard B Miller, Ph.D.
School of Family Life
Brigham Young University
Plan for the Week

* Tuesday
  * Oneness in Marriage

* Wednesday
  * One Mind: Unity in Goals and Expectations

* Thursday
  * One Heart: Harmony through Resolving Differences

* Friday
  * One Voice: Parenting Together as a Team
Be one;
and if ye are not one ye are not mine.

D & C 38:27
Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

Matthew 18:19
Unity is strength. ‘How pleasing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!’ [Psalm 133:1.] Let the Saints of the Most High ever cultivate this principle, and the most glorious blessings must result, not only to them individually, but to the whole Church.

Joseph Smith (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith, (2011), 271–280)
Unity is power.

Joseph Smith (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith, (2011), 271–280)
There should be greater union in our midst than we find today. There is a perfect union in the quorum of the Twelve. Should there not be a perfect union in that quorum? Most assuredly, every one would say Yes, a perfect union in the quorum of the Twelve Apostles. ... And there is also a perfect union with the First Presidency, and should there not be? Every one will say, certainly, there should be....
Unity in the Church and Families

Should there not be a perfect union with the presidencies of Stakes? Certainly, and if I were a president of a Stake, I would not rest day or night until I had union with my counselors...
Well, what is more important? Should there not be union in the family? ... Most assuredly there should. And why should any man be satisfied, why should any husband and father of a family rest satisfied until he effects a perfect union, that is, just as far as a perfect union can be accomplished?

And in this matter the father should make himself just as perfect as a man can in this life be made perfect before his family. And the wife should make herself just as perfect as a woman can possibly do in this life.  

( Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow, 2011, ch 16)
My message this morning is to return to the God-ordained fundamentals that will ensure love, stability, and happiness in our homes. May I offer three fundamentals to happy, enduring family relationships. First: A husband and wife must attain righteous unity and oneness in their goals, desires, and actions....

The Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, said of those who would be part of His Church: “Be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine” (D&C 38:27). And at the Creation of man and woman, unity for them in marriage was not given as hope; it was a command! “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:24). Our Heavenly Father wants our hearts to be knit together. That union in love is not simply an ideal. It is a necessity.

It is only with the companionship of the Holy Ghost that we can hope to be equally yoked in a marriage free from discord. I have seen how that companionship is crucial for felicity in a marriage. The miracle of becoming one requires the help of heaven, and it takes time.

Henry B. Eyring, To My Grandchildren, October 2013 General Conference
And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: (Ezekiel 11:19, emphasis added)
And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. (Acts 4: 32, emphasis added)
Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

(Philippians 2:2, emphasis added)
And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them. (Moses 7:18, emphasis added)
One Mind

And now that my soul might have joy in you, and that my heart might leave this world with gladness because of you, that I might not be brought down with grief and sorrow to the grave, arise from the dust, my sons, and be men, and be determined in one mind and in one heart, united in all things, that ye may not come down into captivity. (2 Ne 1:21, emphasis added)
And he commanded them that there should be no contention one with another, but that they should look forward with one eye….

Mosiah 18:21
Now, when the multitude had all eaten and drunk, behold, they were filled with the Spirit; and they did cry out with one voice, and gave glory to Jesus, whom they both saw and heard. (3 Ne 20:9, emphasis added)
And they all cried with one voice, saying: Yea, we believe all the words which thou hast spoken unto us; and also, we know of their surety and truth, because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually. (Mos 5:2, emphasis added)
Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.
Being One

- One mind
- One heart
- One voice
- One eye
- One flesh

- Being One does not mean being identical
  - Harmony
7 But the manifestation of the \textit{Spirit} is given to every man to profit withal. 
8 For to one is \textit{given} by the \textit{Spirit} the \textit{word} of \textit{wisdom}; to another the word of \textit{knowledge} by the same Spirit; 
9 To another \textit{faith} by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of \textit{healing} by the same Spirit; 
10 To another the working of \textit{miracles}; to another \textit{prophecy}; to another \textit{discerning} of spirits; to another \textit{divers} kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of \textit{tongues}: 
11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. 
12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 

1 Corinthians 12 7-12
Why Oneness in Marriage is Important

- Marital distress is a risk factor for mental and physical health problems.
- Marital distress is a risk factor for poor child functioning.
- Marital distress is associated with lower work productivity and higher absenteeism.
Leaving and Cleaving

Therefore shall a man *leave* his father and his mother, and shall *cleave* unto his wife: and they shall *be one flesh*.

*(Gen 2: 24, emphasis added)*
Loyalty

Determine that there will never be anything that will come between you that will disrupt your marriage. Be fiercely loyal one to another.

(Gordon B. Hinckley, Ensign, Feb. 1999, page 2, 4).
Leaving and Cleaving

Frequently, people continue to cleave unto their mothers and their fathers, and their chums. Sometimes, mothers will not relinquish the hold they have had upon their children, and husbands as well as wives return to their mothers and fathers to obtain advice and counsel and to confide, whereas cleaving should be to the wife in most things, and all intimacies should be kept in great secrecy and privacy from others...
Leaving and Cleaving

Your married life should become independent of her folks and his folks. You love them more than ever, you cherish their counsel, you appreciate their association, but you live your own lives, being governed by your decisions, by your own prayerful considerations after you have received the counsel from those who should give it....

(President Spencer W. Kimball, 1977 Ensign, p. 4, 5)
Leaving and Cleaving

Being human, you may someday have differences of opinion resulting even in little quarrels. Neither of you will be so unfaithful to the other as to go back to your parents or friends and discuss with them your little differences. That would be gross disloyalty. Your intimate life is your own and must not be shared with or confided in others. You will not go back to your people for sympathy, but will thresh out your own difficulties.

(President Spencer W. Kimball, Marriage, p.25)
Well-meaning relatives have broken up many a home. Numerous divorces are attributable to the interference of parents who thought they were only protecting their loved children. Live your own life.

(President Spencer W. Kimball, Marriage, p.17)
Leaving and Cleaving

* Shift in loyalty
* Shift in confidant role
* Creation of marital boundaries
* Independence