

Understanding Marriage - the Transformed Marriage

by David Guzik

The transformed marriage is built on the principles of submission, sacrificial love, and unity, which are essential for a healthy and fulfilling marital relationship.

Duration: 43:35

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 5:28-33

Topics: "Christian Marriage", "Sacrificial Love"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor David Guzik discusses the importance of having a close relationship with Jesus in order to have a successful marriage. He emphasizes the need for husbands to love their wives sacrificially, just as Jesus loved the church. Husbands are called to prioritize their wives and include them in their plans and aspirations. On the other hand, wives are encouraged to respect their husbands. The sermon concludes by reminding couples that following Jesus and living out His example is the key to transforming their marriage.

Transcript

This is the final message in the series, Understanding Marriage, from Ephesians chapter 5. The title of this teaching is, The Transformed Marriage. Let's join our teacher, Pastor David Guzik, speaking at Calvary Chapel, Simi Valley. Ephesians chapter 5, verse 33.

This is the last in our series, going through this marriage passage in the book of Ephesians, considering it very carefully. And I've been blessed with my own life to go through this series, and I trust God has something special for us here in this last part of this series. So let's take a look.

Ephesians chapter 5, verse 33. The Apostle Paul writes, and he says, Nevertheless, let each one of you, in particular, so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. The first word in this verse is, Nevertheless, which is kind of a strange word to begin this passage with.

The word means, despite all that. And it's referring to what he just said before. It's as if Paul is saying, Listen, moving on past what I just wrote, let me wrap things up here.

Now, what does he have to move past beyond? Why does he begin this verse with, Nevertheless? I think we have to go back a little bit and see Paul's train of thought here. Way back in the beginning of

Ephesians chapter 5, Paul was writing about the Spirit-filled life. And he said how when a person's really filled with the Spirit of God, it's going to show up in three characteristics.

It's going to be a life marked by praise. It's going to be a life marked by gratitude. And it's going to be a life of submission.

And then having brought up the aspect of submission in Ephesians chapter 5, verse 21, then Paul begins in three different sections to discuss submission in the Christian life in three important spheres. The first one is in marriage. The second sphere is in the parent and child relationship.

And the third one is in the workplace, the employee or employee relationship. And so he deals with marriages in Ephesians chapter 5. In the first few verses of Ephesians chapter 6, he deals with parents and children. And then in the next few verses in Ephesians chapter 6, he deals with the employee or employee relationship.

And so since he has the whole idea of submission and principles regarding submission in mind, he first speaks to the wives. I mean, Paul didn't first speak to the wives in the Ephesians 5 passage because they're the worst offenders in marriage and they really need to be focused on. No, that's not the reason at all.

Nor is it just out of some kind of polite, ladies first kind of consideration. No, his broader idea is submission. And so he says, let me talk to you about submission in marriage.

And wives have a special duty to submit. Remember, we'll just read it there. Ephesians chapter 5, beginning at verse 22.

He says, Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church, and he is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Now in this, Paul clearly emphasized the importance of a wife's submission by connecting it to a wife's obedience to the Lord. That's what he meant when he said, Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord. He didn't mean submit to them exactly in the same way you submit to God.

You know, God never commands that in a human relationship, does He? Never. Never does God say, here's two human beings, one in submission to another, and the one in submission to the other has to submit to them exactly as they would submit to God. No.

For example, God tells us, as Christians, that we should submit to the government. Be subject to the governing authorities, it says in Romans chapter 13, and we understand that. Christians are to submit to the government.

At the same time, it's not an absolute command to submit, because if the government tells me to stop preaching the gospel, I'm not going to submit to it. If the government tells you to stop praying or to stop following Jesus Christ, you're not going to submit to that. So you see, it's a general command to submit, but we understand there's exceptions to it.

The only person who demands our constant, unqualified, unquestioned, absolute submission is God in Heaven alone. And so we talked about exceptions to a wife's submission in marriage, and we talked about

four of them. First of all, if the husband commands the wife to do something that's sinful, that's just clearly disobedient according to God's Word, well, then the wife isn't under the command to submit.

She has a higher command to be obedient to God in that situation. Secondly, we saw that a wife does not have to submit to the husband if the husband commands her to abide in an adulterous relationship. Here's the husband, he's committing adultery, and he says, well, you just have to cope with it, dear.

That's all there is to it. No, the Bible says that she has the right to come out from submission to him and to divorce him. The Bible also tells us that the wife doesn't have to submit to the husband.

If the husband is incapacitated by mental or physical illness, if the man is beside himself, well, then the wife doesn't have that obligation. In the same way, the wife doesn't have to submit to her husband's physical abuse. Now, we know that these cases may be, or at least they should be, rare.

And if a wife finds herself in one of these four situations, she still must act like a Christian, but she doesn't have to submit to her husband's direction. This is simply the way submission works on a human level. Again, I just dropped before you again the principle of our submission to the government.

We're given a command in the Scriptures to submit to the government, but it's not absolute. Absolute submission is due to God and God alone. But apart from those hopefully rare exceptions, Paul gave a pretty strong command to the wives to submit, and pretty compelling reasons to do so.

I mean, he says in that text there that we just read, that first of all, she must submit just because it's part of her obedience to Jesus Christ. That's what he means as unto the Lord. You're to submit to your husbands as a part of your obedience to Jesus.

He tells you to do this. So wives, if you love the Lord, if you want to honor Jesus Christ, then submit to your husbands. Secondly, she must submit because of the husband's headship, and all that that headship means in the order of creation.

You notice that in Ephesians chapter 5 where he says, for the husband is the head of the wife. And he means an awful lot by that. Not the least of which is, this is a place that God has given the man in the marital relationship.

Wives, you need respect. That's why you need to come under submission to your husband. And then thirdly, the wife must submit to the husband because the marriage relationship is patterned after the relationship between Jesus and his people.

And the followers of Jesus are expected to submit to him, right? And so when Paul goes on in Ephesians chapter 5, and he says, therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Well, we understand what he's meaning. We have a pattern for the marital relationship, and consistent with that pattern, wives submit to your husbands.

Then Paul turned his attention to the husbands, didn't he? I mean, his larger topic was submission as an aspect of walking in the spirit. That's why he addressed wives first, because they have a special obligation to submit in the marriage relationship. At the same time, Paul knows very well that the husband has obligations to fulfill, right? Paul's no fool.

He looks at the marital relationship and he says, yes, the wife has her obligations before God, but so does the husband. And Paul says, I'm not going to talk just to the wives because if I talk only to the wives, I know those thick-headed husbands, they'll walk away from there thinking they don't have an obligation in the world in their marriage, just their wives. So he says, okay, I've dealt with the wives.

And then Paul says, now let me speak to you husbands. And so he addresses them, emphasizing the sacrificial love that a husband must have for his wife. Look at it there, Ephesians chapter 5, beginning at verse 25.

He says, Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her, that he might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that he might present her to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies, he who loves his wife loves himself, for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it just as the Lord does the church. We saw in this how first, Paul set a very high standard for the husband's love, didn't he? He said, husbands, agape your wives.

Agape, drawing on that ancient Greek word which describes a sacrificial love, a love that's based not in feelings, but in decision. And he said, husbands, you make a decision to show sacrificial love to your wives. That's a high standard.

But if it's possible, then Paul even set the standard even higher. Not just saying agape, but he says, let's go back to the pattern that he already mentioned before, this pattern of Jesus' relationship with his people. Paul said that a wife should submit to her husband the way that Christians should submit to Jesus, but at the same time, a husband should love his wife the way that Jesus loves his people, right? So then Paul draws the husbands into an understanding of how they should love their wives.

He says you should love them as a part of their own bodies or love them as himself. In other words, Paul really emphasized the point that a husband must see that God has made he and his wife one. And everything that they do in the marriage relationship should be done with an eye to that oneness, to that unity.

Paul follows hard on this point as he comes to Ephesians 5, verse 28. Let's pick it up at verse 28. This is what it says.

He says, so husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself, for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones.

For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ at the church. Now, do you see where Paul's kind of playing the ping pong match here? He's dealing with two issues at once.

On the one hand, he's dealing with marriage. And he says, let me teach you about what the Bible says about the Christian marriage. This ideal that God has for Christian husbands and Christian wives.

Here we go. This is the ideal over here. And then on the other hand, he turns and he says, let me teach you about this relationship between Jesus and his people.

Because really, the relationship between Jesus and his people is the pattern for the relationship between the husband and the wife. And so, part of the time he's talking about Jesus and his people. Part of the time he's talking about the husband and the wife.

And, well, he goes back and forth. The problem is, once Paul gets talking about the relationship between Jesus and his people, he gets pretty excited. And he's going on and on about it.

He goes on. He says, for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

In other words, when he's talking about two coming together into this unity, he's not talking about the marriage relationship, though it applies there. He's really talking about the unity that Jesus wants to have with you, his child. Think about that.

Have you ever seen a married couple that were so close that it was almost scary? They could read each other's minds. They thought of each other continually. And you know what I'm talking about.

They started looking like each other. You know, the years go on and pretty soon you look back and you go, they're starting to look alike. There's a oneness there, right? There's an incredible, profound oneness there.

Jesus wants to have that kind of oneness and even more with you. And so we think, wow, Paul, you're teaching us these deep, powerful things about this relationship between Jesus and his people. And then Paul says, whoa, whoa, wait a minute.

I was talking about marriage, wasn't I? That's where he gets back to verse 33. Look at it there. It's as if he's saying, now, I know I got off the topic a little bit, so let's come back to the matter of marriage and I'll sum it up for you.

Nevertheless, he says, let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself and let the wife see that she respects her husband. You see how he got to this point? Now, what's he saying in verse 33? Well, first of all, he speaks to husbands, doesn't he? He says, let each one of you in particular, and that's a little tough to say whether or not that phrase refers to both husbands and wives or just the husbands. I don't think it really matters one way or the other because the point of it is true for both.

Let each one of you means that everyone is included. We can say this about all the teaching on marriage. It's easy to say, well, you know, I'm just not that sort of person, so I'll never do it very well.

Husbands, don't we do that sometimes? We see this great command for sacrificial love and oneness and unity with our wives. And we just kind of say, you know, I'm not really that kind of guy. I'm more like the Marlboro man, you know, really tough and self-reliant.

I'm just kind of like that. I'm the loner type. Paul says, let each one of you.

Yeah, you. Marlboro man, you. I don't care if you look at yourself and say, well, I'm that kind of strong, silent, loner type.

I'll never open up to my wife that way. God says, no, I want you to do it. Let each one of you.

Each one of you. He's not letting anybody off the hook. You know, in the same way, sometimes wives do it.

Sometimes wives just, well, you know, I'm just not the submissive sort. She is over there, you know. I see she is.

That's fine, you know, but I'm just not that kind. I'm just not wired that way. But God looks at you and says, no, we're going to work on that in your life.

This is the command. It doesn't change for you. This is what I want to do in your life.

I want to build this submission in you. And we can excuse all sorts of things by our own disposition, right? Well, you know, it's easy for her. It may be easier for her.

Maybe it's just by nature she's a more deferring, a more submissive person. Well, then, great. It's easier for her, but it doesn't mean that command doesn't apply to you.

God says, here, take a look at this. This is what I want to make you. Here we go.

Let each one of you. It's a strong command. No matter what our natural disposition is, we all have a target to shoot for.

And let each one of you in particular means that we should all set our eyes on the target that the Bible points out for us. So what is it that men need to do? Look at it there in verse 33. Nevertheless, let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself.

You see that we're back on our emphasis. Paul is stressing the unity that a husband must recognize and let shape his thinking and his actions. He's saying, husbands, let's grab a hold of this now.

Love your wife as yourself. Now, it doesn't mean love her just the same way that you love yourself. What he means is love her because she is a part of yourself.

She's part of you. You are connected with her. There's a oneness there, a unity there, and what you need to do is understand it, appreciate it, and let it begin to fill your thinking and your actions.

And once the husband begins to grasp this essential unity between himself and his wife, once he begins to understand that the Bible says that two shall become one flesh, then a whole different area opens up in his mind and his thinking about marriage. You know, unity is the central principle in marriage and it's because so many people in this modern world have never had any conception of what's involved in marriage from the standpoint of unity that they ride to it so loosely and that they break the marriage covenant so easily. They've never really caught sight of this ideal of unity in the marriage, of a oneness.

And so what you have is you have two people living together but each with their own agenda. Each living together as individuals and each trying to bring each other into their side. Each trying to bend the other's will towards one another.

And so you have two people and they're still thinking in terms of their individuality and asserting their own rights. And therefore you get clashes and you get discord and you get separation. Paul says, listen, I've got an answer for all of that.

Die to self and understand this great principle of unity. See, when a man enters a marriage, he enters a new unity that breaks all previous bonds. I mean, before the man had an obligation to his parents, right? He was under his parents.

Look at it there. Verse 31, For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother. Once he was under them, he was under their headship.

No, now he leaves that and now he's joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh. You see, there was a previous relationship. Now there's a different relationship, a new unity.

No longer is the case that his chief obligation is towards his parents. No, he's left that. Now his primary obligation is towards his wife.

You know what I think is fascinating about this? This is so distant, this truly biblical way of thinking is so distant from us that we almost scratch our heads. What is he talking about? You see, this is the way we do it. A man lives at his mother and father's house as he's a young man growing up.

But he doesn't live under his mother and father. He lives unto himself. He lives that way for a while and then he goes out and he's single.

And for as many years as he wants to be single, he lives unto himself. Self-obsessed, self-consumed. He lives unto himself.

And then he gets married and what does he do? He lives unto himself, but with a wife. But the whole time, he's just living unto himself. He didn't live unto anybody else when he was in his home, nor when he was on his own, nor with his wife.

That's his no. You know, when you're in your parents' home, you're under their authority. Their head's over you.

They have a God-appointed headship. You're under the headship of your parents, period. And you need to recognize that and respect it and grant deference to your parents.

But that ends. You enter into this relationship with your bride and that old deference that the husband used to pay to his parents. Now, he still honors them because the biblical command honor your father and mother continues.

But he doesn't owe the same submission or deference to his parents. No, that's broken. Now, a new relationship is made, a relationship in which he is the head.

But there is never the thought of the man living unto himself. I mean, his chief loyalty is to his parents or it's to his wife. The idea that his chief loyalty would be to himself would make the apostle Paul scratch his head.

He'd say, you're a Christian, aren't you? What do you do living unto yourself? You say, well, I don't live at home. I don't live with the wife. He'd say, well, then your chief loyalty better be Jesus Christ and it better bleed out of everything that you do.

Everybody would be able to see that's a man whose chief loyalty is to Jesus. See, in practice, this man who's married now, no longer does he see himself primarily as a child of his parents, but now he sees

himself as a husband of his wife. And it's a staggering thing you see when you come to a marriage ceremony.

I mean, you see the actual breaking of an old relationship. You might say the modification of an old relationship. It's no longer the same as it was.

It goes and it modifies and it comes into a new and you see a new oneness, a new family formed right in front of your eyes. And that new married state has precedence over every other human relationship. That's what Paul's saying here.

Look at verse 33. So love his wife as himself. Husbands, understand.

Let your heart latch onto this principle of oneness and unity. Never again, husbands, should your thinking just be for yourself. No, you think about your wife.

Your planning, your future, your hopes, your dreams, your aspirations, everything that you set your heart upon, your wife has to be included because you're one now. What does he say to the wife? Look at it there. Verse 33.

And let the wife see that she respects her husband. Now, you notice the opening words there. Let the wife see.

He's calling the wife to pay special attention here. Let the wife see. In other words, this may be a point where many wives might excuse themselves for one reason or another, but Paul emphasizes, let the wife see.

We'll see what? Let the wife see that she respects her husband. I have to say, what I'm going to talk about right here is almost a little bit difficult to talk about, knowing the way our culture thinks and such. I'll just stand on the very safe ground of knowing what the Bible says here, though.

When Paul says, let the wife see that she respects her husband, respects is a pretty soft translation of the Greek word used there. You know, the old King James translated it reverence. In many passages of your Bible, the Bible takes that same ancient Greek word and translates it fear.

It's the ancient Greek word phobos, from which we get our term phobia from. It has to do with a reverential awe, with a deference, with a saying, I'm going to honor this man, I'm going to reverence this man. For example, when the disciples saw the majesty and the power of Jesus in calming the storm or in doing spectacular miracles over nature, the Bible says that they had this kind of phobos, this reverence, this respect for Jesus, except in the Gospels it translates it fear.

That's a very heavy word, isn't it? Of course, there's different kinds of fear, aren't there? I mean, there's the fear of danger, there's the fear of punishment, there's the fear of abuse. None of those kind of fears are we talking about in the marital relationship. What we're talking about is a fear or a reverence that comes from respect, that comes from honor.

It almost sounds laughable to say this today. I mean, could we say today that the wife is to respect the husband so highly that it points in the direction of a reverential awe? The wife would say, come on, what are you talking about? You know, one of the interesting things that shapes our thinking along these lines, I really believe, is the media. You know, when I was a kid, I used to love to come home from school and we

watched the programs on, I think it was Channel 5 back then, the afternoon programs.

And I loved it. You had the Rifleman, you had Highway Patrol, and Sea Hunt. Oh, I loved Sea Hunt.

And then you had Father Knows Best. Wasn't Father Knows Best a great program? Now, you know, in that program, the father, I believe the family treated him with what Paul's talking about here. With a respect.

With a reverence, oh, they didn't roll out the red carpet in front of him or bow down before him. But you could tell he was respected. He was honored in the home.

His decisions meant something. There was honor, there was respect. I mean, it was just, and this was just a depiction of a regular, everyday family.

Here it is. This is the family. Here they are.

Of course, it was Hollywood, but it was what Hollywood wanted to depict then. This was a popular television series for many years. Now, think about just about any television series in the last 20 years.

Think about what the husband and the father in that family looks like. He's the biggest dope in the family, isn't he? He's a fool. And he's the guy that needs to be rescued from every situation.

He's the guy that doesn't get any respect because he didn't deserve any respect. And people look at him, and they say, well, look at that. Now, I'm not trying to say that there's some kind of conspiracy or anything like that.

No, no, far from it. I'm just saying that this is the direction which our culture is thinking. That we have completely departed from this idea that the husband in the family or the father in the family should deserve some kind of honor or reverence because God has appointed him as the head in the family.

It comes in very subtle places. I almost hate to bring this up because you might think I'm making it sound like some vast conspiracy or something, which I don't think it is at all. But I even noticed it in kids' books that I would read to my children.

I mean, we'd sit down, and we'd read one series of books. We'd love to read them. It's a good moral story.

The Berenstain Bears. And I'd read the Berenstain Bears stories to the kids. And I know, out of about four or five of them, I noticed, this father bear is a stone-cold fool.

And you know what? It's the mom who's the competent. It's mother bear who's competent and sharp. And she's the one always fixing everything.

And I said, it started bothering me after a while. Why does the father bear have to be the biggest fool in the whole story? He's stupider than the kids. Ah, the mother bear.

Well, she was always wise and helpful, and she fixed up the messes. See, over and over again, it's just, well, reverential awe towards the father. What are you talking about? Friends, let's realize we don't have our thinking as Christians, we don't base our thinking upon media or upon books or upon television shows or anything like that.

All that stuff may pour into us, but we recognize if it pours into us, we have responsibility as Christians to say, no, we stop. This is the Bible. This is what's going to shape my thinking.

And when it says right here, let the wife see that she respects her husband, we recognize that. It says that the wife is to treat her husband with deference. She's to recognize the biblical and Christian view of marriage.

She's to regard her husband as the head. She's to say, listen, God brought me into a new oneness, a new unit, and my husband is the head of that. Now, they're both one, but there's a head to the unity.

Just as much as your body is a unity, right? Your body has a oneness. You cut off your arm and see how long it lasts outside of your body. No, I mean everything.

Your body is a oneness. It's a unity. But friends, that unity has a head.

There's only one head on your body. And that's how the Bible says that this is the conception which the biblical families offer. So what it means is that the wife is to have a deference that she formerly paid to her parents.

Now she's supposed to pay it to her husband. We see the same dynamic at work that we see growing up in so many homes and such a cultural dynamic here. I mean, here now we have a thing where a girl grows up and she has very little conception of headship from her father and mother.

I mean, she doesn't show deference or respect or honor towards them. And she grows up just thinking that she lives unto herself. And then she comes into a married relationship.

Do you think she's going to show deference or respect towards her husband? No. No, because her idea, I live unto myself. And here we go.

The husband, he lives unto himself. And the wife, she lives unto herself. You're never going to have the kind of biblical unity and oneness in a marriage that God has intended.

So there's to be no paying of deference to a third party. The husband and wife, they don't pay deference. They're not under submission to his parents or her parents or any other outside person.

No, they're a standing unit on their own before God. So they recognize that and they rejoice in it. The command goes out to the wife.

Let the wife see that she respects, honors, reverences her husband. And that's a tremendous adjustment that she has to make. She submits to him.

She must not strive with him. She must recognize that this is the essence of the married relationship that she pays this deference towards him. Now, if we could take verse 33 here and indeed the whole text that we've been considering.

If I could boil it down to two principles that must govern our thinking in all of our actions as married people, I'd boil it down to these two. Husbands, understand that you and your wife are one. That you're a unity.

That's how God has made you. That's what God has put together. God has put that together.

When you understand that, when you allow that to begin to transform your thinking and dominate your thinking and your actions, you'll notice a dramatic change in your marriage. Husbands, you're one with your wife. Think like it and act like it.

Then the great message to wives is simply this. Wives, you understand that that unity has a head and you're not it. Your husband is the head of that unity.

Sometimes a wife will want to say, well, we don't need to have a head. You know, let's just be 50-50. We're equal partners.

First of all, that's not what the Bible says. Secondly, you know that's not how it works. We don't have a head means I'll let him be the head sometimes and I'll be the head sometimes.

But the Bible says, no, the husband is to be the head in the home. I think it's amazing how in this marital relationship each one of the partners is very quick to grasp and want to have dominate the other's principle. Let me explain to you what I mean.

Wives are quick to embrace and understand the husband's principle, the principle of oneness. I think it's like instinctive within a woman. She understands, she has an instinctive understanding of this oneness and a desire for it and a desire to cultivate it and to have it together.

And she says, yes, come on, husband, aren't you going to understand this? Come on, get it through your thick head. We're one. Why don't you ever think like that? Why don't you ever act like that? Come on, husband.

And the wife says, I want that to be the governing principle of the marriage. The wife wants to shout from the house up, nothing ever is going to change in this marriage until you recognize the oneness, husband. Come on.

She's very quick to grasp on and to latch on to that. Then again, the husband, he's very quick to embrace and understand the wife's principle. And the principle to the wife is, hey, there's a head in that unity, right? And the head is the husband.

And so the husband says, look, this is it, wife. This is the principle we need to grab ahold of in this marriage. This is what needs to be the governing principle in our marriage, that God's put a head in this family and it's me.

And they want to shout it from the house up. They say, look, this is it. Look, we're never going to fix anything in this marriage until we understand who is appointed to be the head here.

Come on. We've got to get this settled first. So, which do you have to settle first? The oneness or the headship? Which has to be settled first? Yes, is the answer.

Listen, the simple answer is, you leave your spouse up to the Lord. So, wife, I know you have an instinctive grasp of the oneness and you think that that should be the most important principle. And it is the most important principle for your husband.

Why don't you think about what your most important principle is? That is, recognizing the headship of your husband. Now, husband, I know you, boy, you're excited about this headship thing. And you think, you know what? This is what has to get straight first.

You just leave that up to the Lord and you focus on what God says to you. And He says, grab ahold of this oneness. Let it dominate your thinking and your actions.

The whole key is we must let our principle govern us. When you have a husband who thinks, I'm one with my wife, and I have to think and act that way. And then you have a wife who thinks, my husband is the head of our oneness and I need to respect and to defer to him as the head.

You'll have a healthy biblical marriage. That's all there is to it. But as long as you have the wife trying to promote her side and the husband, oh, he's trying to promote his side.

Then what you have, you have individuals campaigning for their own rights. And that's all about self. It's not all about love.

You see in the true biblical marriage that the man is given headship and he loves his wife as himself. He never abuses his position because he realizes he loves his wife as himself. And then you have a woman, she's submitting to this glorious ideal and she's never afraid that she's going to be taken advantage of or that she'll be stepped all over.

Husband, wife, they're both dealt with. You've got a balance that's perfect, that's complete and you have a Christian marriage. A biblical marriage.

It's all built on that foundation. You know, God knew how to set it up this way. Because He knew that within the heart of that man, that man has a heart that just longs to know that he's somebody.

To feel that he's respected. That somebody honors him. And where he should be getting that first and foremost is at home.

But when he comes home and every decision he makes is called into question. Every opinion of his is counterbalanced. It just feels like he's snipped at and attacked.

When he's feeling like that, he says, well, I don't get any respect, any honor here at all. What's going to happen? His ear's going to be open to hearing that voice from the outside that would respect and honor him. And then you have that wife.

All she wants is to be close to somebody and feel a oneness with somebody. And God has intended that it should be that way with her husband. That's where the oneness should be.

But her husband's just blind to it. I mean, he doesn't see it in the same instinctive way that she does. And so he's blind.

I mean, he thinks they're doing great. But look at her. She's just dying because he's not caring for her oneness.

There's no concern there. And then she meets somebody who seems to be one with her. And you see how adultery, you see how difficulty in marriage so quickly arises.

Because God has intended that the marriage relationship meet these deep needs. But when they don't, trouble, profound trouble arises. So how can we do it? Well, we do it as we do everything in the Christian life.

This is what's great. It's really no different than anything else you do in your Christian life. You do it with a total yieldedness to Jesus Christ and to the Spirit of God.

You know, if a husband and wife are together considering Him, you have no worry about their relationship to each other. I've never had this counseling. I've never had this.

Never have I heard of a pastor having this one. Husband and wife come into the office. They sit down.

They say, Pastor, we are so in love with Jesus. Oh, I tell you, it's great. We pray together.

We read the Word together. We're so in love with Jesus. She's growing in the Lord.

I'm growing in the Lord. And we're here because we want to split up and get a divorce. It's just not happening.

That's just... You're just never going to have that counseling appointment if you're a pastor. No, the people who come in and their marriages are troubled, for whatever reason, in one or both of them, there's a deeply troubled relationship with Jesus Christ. And certainly, there's no unity in their relationship with Jesus Christ together.

They're not praying together. They're not reading the Word together. They're not in the Lord together.

So you see this? You see the great difficulty in all this? We need to just follow Jesus more and more carefully as married couples. This is the great principle of success in marriage. Ready? Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

And having been found in the appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death on the cross. Self, gone. Jesus Christ, enthroned as Lord.

That marriage is going to work. Then, you bring the biblical information into that marriage. Just what we've been talking about.

Just what we've been talking about these last several weeks in this marriage study. You get the self out of the way, you enthrone Jesus, you bring in the biblical information, and God works things out. And I think one of the most precious things about this is what all this teaching has shown us about our relationship with Jesus.

God has gone to great lengths to promote the idea that the relationship between Jesus and His people, the church, is the pattern for the relationship between the husband and the wife. I mean, think about it. At the very beginning, how did woman come into being? Because God cut open the side of the man and brought the woman out.

There was the man in a deep sleep, and there's our Lord Jesus Christ in a deep sleep, so to speak, on the cross. And His side is open. And it is, as it were, the church coming out of His wounded side just as Eve came forth out of the opened up side of Adam.

And just as the woman was taken out of Adam, so it's out of the Lord's bleeding, wounded side that we come as His people. Just as much as the man had to leave to join to his wife, so the Son of God has to

leave Heaven's glory to be joined to His bride. See the beautiful pattern here? Now, you know the kind of deep, close relationship that God wants for our marriages? He wants that to be just a shadow of the real relationship that you have with Jesus Christ.

Take the best marriage you know. The best one you know. I mean, there's a unity.

There's a oneness there between the man and the wife. I mean, it's amazing, right? I mean, these people have been married for 40, 50, almost 60 years, and there's a oneness there. They think alike.

They live alike. I mean, there's just a beautiful oneness there. It's unbelievable.

It's scary. They even start to look alike. Do you know what I'm talking about? They've been married so long, they start looking alike.

Well, that's the kind of oneness that Jesus wants to have with you, except far more. See, friends, that's what Jesus wants. In fact, I would even say that Jesus is incomplete without us, just as much as a man is incomplete without a woman, as Adam was incomplete without Eve.

So, the Bible says in Ephesians 1, verse 23, that the church is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. We make up His fullness. And so Jesus is our Savior.

Well, if you've got a Savior, there better be some saved people, or the Savior's incomplete. He's our mediator. Well, you better have some people that He's mediating for.

The mediator's incomplete. He's our intercessor. Well, you better have some people He's praying for, or the intercessor's incomplete.

We complete the work of Jesus. You can enjoy that unity with Him forever. So, friend, I don't know where to end this.

I really don't. I mean, I can end it on the marriage end. Husbands, you know what to do.

You know what to let dominate your thinking. This idea of oneness and say, God, fill my heart with this. Fill my mind with this.

I don't want to live under myself anymore. I want to live in light of this oneness. Or you could address the wives and say, Wives, you know what is saying you here.

You've got to recognize the headship in the home and show that proper deference, that reverence towards your husband. Show that. Maybe we could just end it where it applies to everybody in this room.

Man or woman, husband or wife, married or single. Jesus Christ wants to have a oneness relationship with you. And He laid down His life full of sacrificial love for you.

And His plan, His future, His destiny, He thinks about you in the midst of all of it. Come and join Him and draw closer to Him in it all. Let's pray together and ask that the Lord would do that.

Father, I do. I want to pray, Lord. I pray for every hurting wife here this morning, God.

I want to pray, Lord God, for that wife who aches because the husband doesn't understand her need, her longing for oneness. Lord, won't You comfort her and give her courage to fulfill what You've commanded

her to do. Pray for that husband, Lord, who feels so disrespected.

He doesn't even want to go home, Lord, because he just feels like he's going to get into it again and again. God, give that man Jesus' kind of love for the church. Help him to see, Lord, that the church doesn't respect Jesus an awful lot of the time, yet You still love us.

Fill his heart with that love, with that hope. Lord, for each one of us, I pray that You draw us into this real, intimate, close relationship with Jesus. Help us to see our oneness with Jesus in a way we've never seen it before that we can live it and be blessed by it both now and eternity.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. We hope you've been blessed by this teaching from God's Word, the Bible.

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