

# God's Purpose in Marriage - and at Present

by Zac Poonen

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*God's purpose in marriage is to take us to a much higher level, and appreciation and detachment are key principles for building a strong and healthy relationship between husband and wife.*

**Duration:** 1:25:25

**Scripture:** Proverbs 22:28, Matthew 7:12, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, Ephesians 5:21, 1 John 4:20

**Topics:** "Marriage Counseling", "Christian Relationships"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of love and respect in marriage, highlighting the need for patience, kindness, and appreciation towards one's partner. It encourages treating others the way you want to be treated, covering their faults, and believing in their potential for growth. The sermon also stresses the significance of forgiveness, trust, and endurance in maintaining a strong and loving relationship.

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## Transcript

Okay, we were thinking about how God ordained it in the beginning. There are many things in the New Covenant where God's purpose is to lead us actually beyond the beginning. That means what Adam and Eve were in the time they were created was much less than where Christ brings us when he fills us with his Holy Spirit in the New Covenant.

So even if you get back to where Adam and Eve were, you haven't got to where Christ was. There are God, it's not just that when Adam sinned, he dipped down and Christ brought us back to that level. That itself would have been great, but Christ has taken us to a much higher level than where Adam was in Genesis 1 and 2. If we don't see that, we'll just be satisfied with that.

Today the example for us is not Adam and Eve, but it's Jesus Christ and the Church. That relationship is our example. So that's a much higher standard.

But there are certain principles that we were looking at, and here let's turn back to Genesis 2. I mentioned how God created a woman to be a helper for Adam, and like someone has said, God didn't take Eve out of Adam's head, or a bone in the head, because he didn't want her to rule him, and he didn't take her out of a bone in his feet, because he didn't want him to rule her. But he took her from a rib on the side so that he would always recognize that she is equal to him. But there are certain principles he laid down.

Have you ever wondered why there's a verse like this? First of all, before I come to that, notice it says in verse that before God made Eve, God made Eve in the latter part of the sixth day. The first part of the sixth day he made the animals. See, on the fifth day, he made all the fish and the birds, but why didn't he make the animals also, the earth animals, on the fifth day? He could have done it, fish, birds, animals, but he didn't.

You notice that? You notice it if you read the Bible? Slowly, right. On the fifth day, he made the fish and the birds, and on the sixth day, he made the animals in the first part of the sixth day. And the second part of the sixth day, it's all in Genesis 1, he made man.

And I think the reason was to tell man, it's very easy for you to descend to the level of the animals if you're not careful, because you're made from the same dust that they're made from. But in that, after God made Adam, we read here, just in those few hours before he made Eve. It says here, Genesis 2:19, out of the ground, he made all the beasts, birds, and he brought them all to the man and asked man to name them.

And the man gave names, verse 20, to all the cattle, to the birds, to every beast of the field. Now, any zoologist will tell you how many, is it hundreds of thousands of animals and birds there are. Imagine if you were asked to give names to every single bird, I think you'd forget after whether you're repeating some name after you've even done 25 names.

It shows what a fantastically intelligent person Adam was. And God created him, before sin came into the world, just think of his capacity there, his brain. Now, this is the 150,000th name I'm giving, and I know I have not said this name before in the last 149,999 times.

And then, he still doesn't have a wife. And the interesting thing is, the way this is written, man gave names to all the cattle and the birds of the sky, to every beast of the field, but, let me read it like this, none of them were suitable to be a helper for Adam. That's the way it says, that means Adam is saying, hey, these guys, these animals have all got pairs, I'm the only one all alone.

And how's that? None of them were suitable. Adam looked at all of them, said, no, no, what about that beautiful lioness? No. Thank you.

And after he said no to all that, then God gave him this one. So remember, he had seen, what, 200,000 animals and birds, and he said no to all of that. And when he finds this, then God says, okay, what about this one? And in the living Bible, it's beautifully paraphrased, in Genesis 2:23, he says, this is it.

This is it. He's rejected 150,000, or 200,000, or a million, I don't know how many there are, and he says, this is it. Now, what I want to say is, have you ever said that about your wife? This is it.

Not on the other 200,000 I've met, but this one. And, do you continue to say that, later on, even if you did say that on your wedding day? You know, there are many people who ask me, in different, only in Indian churches, Brother Zach, was your marriage a love marriage? As if it's one of the biggest crimes in the world. I say, yes, it was, sure.

I said, this is it. And, even if you didn't, you should say it when you get married, and continue to say it. It's very important to have that appreciation, which Adam had right at the beginning, which he lost pretty quickly.

He lost it so quickly, that in a day or so, he was blaming the same wife for leading him into sin. And, there you see the difference between unfallen Adam, and fallen Adam, who looks at his wife before he tells her, this is it, boy. It's better than everything I ever saw.

As soon as he falls, to get out of trouble, he tells Adam, my wife, she's the one to blame. This wife you gave me, as in blaming God for giving you. You see how from light to darkness, he went so suddenly in his relationship with his wife.

That's what sin does. Don't ever forget that. So, sin is the thing that makes you stop appreciating the husband or wife God gives you.

It's not a crime to love your wife or husband. I had a piece of poetry here, which, let me read it to you. Amid the cares of married life, in spite of toil and business strife, if you value your sweet wife, tell her so.

There was a time when you thought it bliss to get the favor of one kiss. A dozen now won't come amiss, tell her so. Is that shocking? Do Indian husbands kiss their wives, or expect a kiss from their wives? You know, a lot of our thinking, I want to tell you, is influenced by the non-Christians surrounding the religion.

That's the problem. Read the Song of Solomon. Okay.

Don't act as if she's passed her prime. That's for those whose wives are getting older. As though to please her were a crime.

If ever you loved her, now's the time. Tell her so. You're hers and hers alone.

Well, you know that she's all your own. Don't wait to carve it on a stone. Tell her now.

Never let her heart grow cold. Richer beauties will unfold. For she is worth her weight in gold.

Tell her so. This business of appreciation is another area where we, as Indian people, are big misers. We are so careful to give appreciation to anybody.

I mean, we'd say to a doctor who did some wonderful surgery or treatment to save our child from certain death, boy, we'd never hesitate to say that. But so many other things we take for granted. Let me see if I can find it.

I had written here about, I don't know if it's here, but maybe I can't find it immediately. But I had copied down from somewhere the number of hours a wife works in her lifetime in a house cooking meals. It's some 10,000 hours or something like that.

She walks about 10,000 miles in the house during her lifetime. It's all for you. So we don't appreciate that.

Imagine a person who walks so many miles in a few years. And vice versa. I mean, look at the way a husband slogs in the office, works, bosses shouting at him, etc.

And it's for a family. The need for appreciation. And I've noticed that in the way people sometimes come to appreciate me for a sermon.

They always introduce themselves saying, brother, I hope this won't fuck you up. This is the introduction. I'm not trying to swell your head.

I'm not trying to flatter you. And after about two minutes of introduction, there's one sentence. You appreciate the message.

I say, what's the problem with us? As if you're so concerned that other people shouldn't be puffed up. You know, other people are not like you, brother. They don't get puffed up like you.

They've learned to walk in humility. They're a little different. They're a little better.

Why not acknowledge that? They're not all like you. When you want to appreciate, just go and say appreciate. Just like Jesus appreciated the military, Roman military man.

You know that military man who said, I know speak the word and my servant will be healed over there in Matthew chapter 8. What did the Lord say? He didn't say, well, I don't want to puff you up. I know you're a military man and you're probably used to this, but I just don't want you to be swollen headed. But I want to say that this is the greatest faith I found in Israel.

Did he say it like that? We are most unchrist-like. Because we don't know how to express appreciation. He looks at Nathanael and says, there's a man without guile.

No introduction, nothing. No will he get puffed up. Nothing like that.

To the Romans and children. Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah. Flesh and blood has not revealed it to you.

Brothers, sisters, forget all introductions and just say, I really appreciate that. Do that to your children. That spirit of, this is it.

God gave me something which I don't deserve. The words of your husband and wife, there's almost nothing better than that to preserve a marriage in the way it should be. Otherwise, you'll be admiring other pretty women.

It's very true what the proverb, beauty is skin deep. When you see a pretty woman, just imagine what she looks like when the flesh is taken away from her face. Think of that.

There's nothing left. It's only skeleton. Hideous.

And I remember one person calling this just an interesting arrangement of molecules. That's what a pretty face is. If you know chemistry.

All matter is made up of molecules. You just arrange it a certain way and it's an ugly face. You arrange it another way, it's a pretty face.

It's an interesting arrangement of molecules. So whenever a man, there's a person who whenever he saw a pretty woman, he said, that's an interesting arrangement of molecules. It's a chemical thing, you know.

So, and you're pretty stupid. If you say, ha, if it were arranged like this, I wouldn't look at it. But if it's arranged like this, boy, it's great.

The stupidity of man is amazing how he would destroy what God has given him. A beautiful relationship and marriage for something which one day he'd see is all empty. So never lose that sense of this is it.

Always appreciating, you know. In Malakai, there's a beautiful verse which I often think of. Malakai chapter 2, verse 14.

The Lord has been witness. He says in verse 13, the last part. It's no use weeping tears before the Lord because he doesn't accept your offering.

Like Peter says, he doesn't listen to your prayer anymore. Because, what reason? Because the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth. Against whom you have dealt treacherously.

Though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. But those who have a remnant of the Holy Spirit, they don't do it. Verse 15.

They are in the business of producing, verse 15 in the middle. Godly offspring. So take heed to your spirit.

That no one deals treacherously with the wife of your youth. Why does he use that expression twice? The wife of your youth. The wife of your youth.

That's because what the Lord is trying to say is that you must always look at your wife the way she was when she was young. When she was a youth. When she was young.

And that's important that we keep that in mind. Always think of your wife as the wife of your youth. Whenever I look at my wife I say she is the wife of my youth.

My favorite picture of her is when something taken when she was around 25 or 26 years old. I mean the grey hair and all that is just a fact of nature. The wife of your youth.

Always look at your wife as the wife of your youth. Then you won't be attracted to anybody else. You preserve yourself in that and God will be with you.

You listen to your prayers. Many of our prayers don't get answered. Because you are not faithful in your thoughts to the wife of your youth.

You could have been a man of God today. But God saw you were treacherous to your wife in your thought life. I often tell people the way you talk to some women in your office.

Maybe you don't even touch them. But would you continue to speak to her in the same way if your wife walked in at the same time? If not, there is sexual infidelity there. Even though you didn't touch her.

There is a lot of sexual infidelity in the way men talk to women in their place of work or other places. They are being treacherous to the wife of their youth. That's the reason why we don't have more men of God in the pulpits.

Because God is not with you. The tragedy is that men who should have been anointed by the Spirit are not. Because they are unfaithful in their married life.

So I encourage you brothers and sisters. Be faithful with your eyes. Be faithful with your thoughts.

Always have that said out of 150,000 or a million, God picked out one. This is it. And always look at her as the wife of your youth.

God has really chosen her for you and appreciates that. There are many weaknesses in her. There are weaknesses in you.

The perfect husband is who? The one who does not expect a perfect wife. The perfect wife is the one who does not expect to have a perfect husband. That's the perfect husband.

The one who expects a perfect partner is a new perfect person himself. So the wife of your youth. This is very, very important.

Ezekiel. You know that Ezekiel was a great husband? Can you tell me the verse that teaches about Ezekiel's attitude towards his wife? You would have known it if you had read the Bible slowly. Okay.

In Ezekiel, the Lord speaks to him about chapter 24. You know, his wife was going to die. It's about the only place in the whole book where his wife is mentioned.

And his wife is going to die. And the Lord was going to do it. The Lord is going to take away his wife.

But he warned him in advance. But see what he says. In Ezekiel 24, verse 15.

The word of the Lord came to me saying, verse 16. Son of man, I'm going to take away from you. What does he call his wife? The desire of your eyes to the Lord.

What a testimony. I said, Lord, can you say to me that my wife is the desire of my eyes? This is God speaking. God knew that Ezekiel was such a faithful husband.

With his eyes. Some of us glory in the fact that we have not sexually been unfaithful to our wives. What about your eyes, brother? Can God say to you, I can testify your wife is the desire of your eyes.

You could have been a prophet. If you were just faithful in that area. People go, no, God doesn't give that gift only to somebody.

I'll tell you what. He gives it to those who are faithful with their eyes. That's why I didn't give it to you, perhaps.

The desire of your eyes. God takes these things seriously. He doesn't listen to your prayers, he says, because you're dealt treacherously.

So this is it. This is a very important thing. Okay, let's go back to the beginning again.

Genesis 2, verse 24. Because, verse 23, she was taken out of the man. A man must leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife.

You know, it's very interesting as to where a couple of things here. One, why in the world is the verse come in Genesis 2 when Adam didn't have a father and mother? Adam didn't have a father and mother to leave. Why does that verse come there? Because it was a principle that God laid down for all future marriages.

Ever after Adam and Eve, everybody else would have a father and mother. And it was not written for Adam. But they had to leave their father and mother.

And it's something like, the best example whenever you have a doubt is look at Jesus. You see, there was a day in Jesus' life when he left his mother. Then you understand what leaving means.

And his mother told him to do something in Cana. Right at the very first, he said, woman, what do I got to do with you? It's that attitude. I'm sorry.

I'm not in a new relationship. My father in heaven had to fulfill his ministry. And I can't do what you say like I did for 30 years.

No. And it must have been a shock to Mary who had sacrificed so much. You know, Mary sacrificed more for Jesus than any mother has ever done for a child.

She bore the stigma of having what people thought was an illegitimate child. But she bore that stigma. And yet Jesus would turn to her and say, Don't try to interfere in my life.

I can't listen to you anymore. And I believe there comes a time when we need to take that position with our parents when we get married. Both husband and wife.

You see, it doesn't say that the wife has to leave her father and mother. Well, it's true in one sense. But Jesus and the scriptures are written in a culture.

Genesis is written by Moses. And God speaks in a situation where it was commonly accepted that a woman, like in Indian culture, a woman leaves her parents' home and comes to her husband as soon as she's married. She takes her husband's name and everything else.

Things are changing because the world is drifting away from God. But that detachment is necessary from both sides. In fact, in Psalm 45 and verse 10, it says to the bride of the king, forget your father's house.

So there is a word there for the women to forget your father's house. So shall the king greatly desire your beauty. Verse 11, Psalm 45.

So there has to be a leaving from both sides, husband and wife. There has to be a cleaving. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, Genesis 2, 24, and cleave to his wife.

Why is that? It says for this cause, verse 24, for this cause. Because, verse 23, she was taken out of the man. Therefore, so he was taken out of Adam, his rib, part of him, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.

You know that even a mother cannot say that about her own child, even though she carried her for nine months in the womb. She cannot say this is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. I mean, she contributed a little egg and some nourishment for nine months, but it wasn't an integral part of her body.

It was another body being supplied. But he was not like that. He was an actual bone of Adam's body.

Made into, that's why it says bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Now bone of my bone, verse 23, flesh of my flesh. Because she was taken out of man.

Therefore, a man must leave his father and mother. In other words, the relationship there is supposed to be closer, deeper than the one we had with our parents. That's why the relationship between Christ and the church is not symbolized by father-son, but by husband-wife in Ephesians 5. And there you see what an intimate relationship God wants husband and wife to have.

And there has to be a detachment from other attachments. That's the principle of leaving father and mother. It doesn't mean we have to ignore them because Jesus did not ignore his mother, even though he was hanging on the cross.

He had four younger brothers and two younger sisters who could have well taken care of Mary. But he still knew he's the eldest son. He's got a responsibility while hanging on the cross with all that agony and suffering.

He's thinking of his mother. It's good to be like that in the midst of all your suffering. You think of your parents who cared for you and helped you, both husband and wife.

So you see the balance in Jesus. He didn't tell his parents I've got nothing to do with you. He cared for them in the moment of his greatest agony.

He was totally selfless, but he would not let them interfere in his ministry. That's the point. He didn't tell his mother I don't care for you.

What he told his mother was please don't interfere in my ministry. But of course I'll care for you. When I'm dying, I'll provide for you.

And I'll make sure that one of my disciples takes care of you. To make sure that your parents are well taken care of, both husband and wife, is a responsibility. They took care of you when you were helpless, a helpless baby.

You would have died if they didn't take care of you. So take care of your aged parents. That's necessary.

Provide for them. If they are in need financially, you must help them. But leaving them, what does it mean? Leaving is emotional.

You know, in many cases in India, sometimes people are so poor that they cannot physically leave. They may have to just live in one room in their parents' house due to financial necessity. But even there, it's possible to emotionally leave without having physically to leave.

There are people, some of us, maybe well off, most of us are, or all of us perhaps well off enough to have our own home. Because we earn enough. But there are many in the villages in India who are poor, who cannot afford to leave their own home.

They don't despise that. God trained me for working in the villages of India by having to stay, by being very poor in the first three years of my married life, first of all. And at least a couple of those years, I found I had to stay with my parents.

I had to quit my naval job. I had no income. Extremely poor.

And there was no other way. And I didn't understand. It wasn't easy.

And I don't recommend it to anyone. But I didn't realize that God was training me and preparing me not to despise poor people in the villages in India who are in that situation. But if you are staying with parents just to make more money, you may not get that much grace.

We were not staying with our parents because we had no money at all. But that's an important principle that even if you have to live with your parents, you must not be emotionally attached to them. Because parents, particularly our Indian parents, have a tremendous way of interfering in married couples' lives.

It's traditional, non-Christian Indian culture, which Christians have absorbed, to interfere in the affairs of their parents and for children to consult their parents more than they consult their husbands. Or wives. That is corrupt culture.

I don't say Western culture is right. Western culture is just as bad. These are two cliffs.

Christian culture is in between. I don't follow Western culture. I think it's rotten to the core.

It's like every culture in the world. There's a Christian culture, which is in the Bible. That's what I seem to follow.

And that's balanced. So that requires a leaving and a cleaving. And if you find today that your cleaving is not pretty tight and good, it's perhaps because your leaving is not good.

You may have physically left your parents, but emotionally you're attached to them. And if you take the side of your parents against your wife or against your husband, boy, that's the clearest proof that you're attached to your parents. You may find situations like that where God shows you.

You'll never have a happy marriage because you're attached to your parents. Are you? Love them. Care for them.

Even if you're dying on a cross, provide for your parents like Jesus did. But don't be attached to them. You have to break that connection.

It's like when you say, I've been so close to them all these years, I can't give that up. It's like when a baby is born, the mother says, no, no, no, don't cut that umbilical cord. It's been there nine months.

We've been attached to each other. Don't cut it. Please don't cut it.

Keep it. Keep it. Keep it.

What will happen to that baby? It'll die. And so will your marriage die. You have to cut that umbilical cord.

And some people haven't cut it for years. And they're wondering why their marriage is dying. It'll keep dying till it dies permanently.

Till one day you decide the umbilical cord that ties you to your parents has to be cut. So, and then you'll be able to bless your parents more. Sometimes it's hard to tell your parents you've done so much for you.

Dad, Mom, see, we want to run our own life. Will you please allow us to do that? We love you, respect you tremendously. I love you.

You've done so much for me. I'll never be ungrateful. But the Bible says, I'm going to run my own life, my own life.

Don't let them bring up your children. Don't let them tell you how your children should be brought up. Grandparents ruin friendship.

Unless they are very wise grandparents, which you may find one in a billion. There may be about seven of them. I don't know what that means.

You don't find that. Very rare. I think I'm one of the seven.

I'm not being proud. It's because I've decided to obey the Bible cover to cover. That's the only reason.

I do not interfere in the lives of my married children one bit. It's like, I got a lot of training in the churches we planted. I'd go to those churches and sit on the floor and never interfere in the way they're running it.

I mean, once upon a time, we started this church, whether it's Tutankhamen or Kottayam or anywhere. But I said, there are other elders out there running it. My job is to sit on the floor and do what they tell me to do.

So I got a lot of practice for that. And that's exactly what I do now when I visit my children. Dear brothers and sisters, don't let outside forces come and destroy your marriage.

You can cleave if you leave. It may not be, as you say, I don't, I'm not attached to father and mother. I'll tell you, you may be attached to your computer.

Have you heard of computer widows? Therefore, shall a man leave his computer and cleave to his wife? Cleave to his wife, do you need that commandment? I don't mean neglect it. You need it for survival. Probably that's the means of earning your living.

That's fine. Go ahead and do it. But don't get so attached to it.

I have to keep saying that to myself many times. We have to, you know, particularly those of you who are working away from home, I've had the privilege of being able to work from home. So if I work at the computer, quite a lot with emails and various things.

But still I'm at home all the time. There's a lot of opportunity to interact with my wife. But those of you who are working away from home, 70 hours traveling, coming back, almost 12 hours away from home, then try your best to leave your computer and cleave to your wife.

It could be something else, you know. Leave your cricket game or whatever it is that you've got a tremendous attachment to that's taking away from time with your wife. There are necessities and there are things which are luxuries.

We can afford to do without that extra. You know, I'll tell you, this internet is one of the greatest snares. If you're not careful, I'm not talking about pornography.

That's absolutely evil. I'm talking about all the other information that we can go searching, looking for and browsing and things like that. These are for people who have plenty of time.

Nothing to do. I mean, with all these, I don't know what they call those sites, Facebook and things like that. If you're spending more time with the Bible than with Facebook, have it.

But if you find you're spending more time with Facebook than the Bible, brother, you better seriously consider whether you're a born-again Christian or not. That's all I say. I'm saying keep these things in their proper place.

Keep them as servants. Don't let them rule you. Everybody in the world doesn't know what you're doing or what you had for breakfast or things like that.

Stupid things they write in all these blogs and whatnot. A lot of, you know, the devil has got a lot of things by which to sidetrack people from being effective for God. And it's not always the same.

And having a good married life, take time with your wife. You know, spending time with your wife is like putting a little bit of money in a bank. One day in time of trouble, it'll help you.

It'll save you from a lot of conflicts with your wife. You know, if you have a large reserve of money in your bank account, suddenly there's a big need, you have enough to draw on. Who are the people who have clashes with their wife? Those who have never spent any time in previous years making any deposits of time spent together.

Then suddenly there's a clash, there's nothing in the bank at all. You just clash. Now, don't think, oh, Brother Zach, he's done this wonderful thing all 41 years.

No, I started as a stupid, idiotic husband 41 years ago. And I had to learn the hard way because I didn't have anybody to sit and talk to me like I'm talking to you now. I wish I had.

I longed for a spiritual father when I was a young man. I never got one. The great man I admired in India was Sadhu Sundar Singh and Brother Buck Singh, both of whom did not have family lives, and I could follow.

I said, who's the family man I can follow who's serving the Lord? I couldn't find one who could be an example. So I sort of struggled through this to defeat and the mire of defeat and failure and anger and selfishness and not knowing. But gradually I found my way through this maze as I understood the scriptures more and more and said, Lord, I want to follow this.

I want to live a godly life on earth. I want to fulfill your purpose for me, my personal life, my family life. And I can honestly say what I'm saying is absolutely true in my life today.

It's wonderful. My life is wonderful. My personal life, I really know what it is to walk with the Lord.

But it's taken many years. But what I want to say is for many of you who have the benefit of, you know, they say if somebody else already invented the wheel, you don't have to reinvent the wheel. That's already been invented.

You can get the benefit of that and move on from there. We can move on from the advantages we got through somebody else having gone through something. I mean, for example, I don't have to invent the computer today.

It's already there. We can move on to something else and many other things like that. I mean, we get the benefit of all these fantastic programs that are on a computer, which many others have labored and which 50 years ago they couldn't have, which are so useful for me.

So we are benefiting in our secular life and our family life for the use of a car, for example. Somebody invented the car over 100 years ago, which we are very thankful today. So we must get the benefit of what we can learn from other people who have gone the hard way and learned some things that we don't have to make those mistakes again.

So if I tell you that, well, I took so many years after I got married to really understand what these things are. You don't have to take that long. It's like somebody saying it took me 25 years to discover the silicon chip that the computer is made from.

You don't have to spend that time now. You can just take it straight away. Somebody has already invented it.

So we don't have to go through the many years of defeat that somebody else went through. Because now we have the truth shall set you free. We are very blessed.

So learn these things and value them. I'll tell you this. The number one problem in India is that people don't leave.

And they try to flee. There's something they're not leaving, which is more important to them than their wife. Something that they spend so much time on.

It must be so perfect and all that. No time for that. I'll tell you something.

Even neatness and tidiness in your home, though it's a very valuable thing, is not as important as happiness in the home. I don't know whether you believe that. It doesn't matter if your home is a little untidy if you're both happy.

Neatness and tidiness is good. Very often it's more for the sake of others. They don't come to a cluttered up sitting room at least.

And also it's a luxury that people who have grown up children can have. Or people who have no children can have. People with small children don't have that luxury of having a neat, tidy home.

So even that is not as important as fellowship with your partner. Remember that. Have your priorities right.

To work is essential because otherwise you won't be able to pay the rent. You won't be able to pay the bills. You won't be able to have a home at all.

So there are certain things essential like having to go to work. But then there are a lot of other things you've got to knock out in life in order to be able to be together with our partners. Take time.

Fellowship. Cleaving. Fellowship, companionship is the number one purpose of marriage.

And then they shall become one flesh. The sexual relationship also is a very essential part of what God has said right at the beginning. It's not a sort of a... And it's not only for the purpose of having children.

Because if it was only for the purpose of having children, then a woman should be able to become pregnant any day of the year. But you know it's not true. Why has God made it such that a woman can become pregnant only about 3 or 4 days in a month? That's all.

Any doctor will tell you that. Was it because God intended that the man and woman should have a sexual relationship only 3 or 4 days in a month? Just think of it logically. No.

If they are married, they can have sexual relationship every day. But yet they are not going to have children. Children are not going to be born out of that.

Which to me is the clearest proof from Almighty God himself that the sexual relationship was not intended only for children. Which is another heathen concept that many so-called Christian wives have in India. No.

It was to express one's affection for one another. I believe that these are desires that God created in our body. Desire for food.

Are any of you embarrassed to say, I'm hungry? No. Or desire to sleep. Rest.

We are not embarrassed to say, I'm feeling sleepy. I need to go to bed now. But when it comes to sexual desire, we sort of are embarrassed to almost admit that we have any desire like that.

As if we are some type of eunuchs. Why are we embarrassed? Because we think, oh that's sinful. You know why? Because we got this concept from the devil.

The filthy movies and all the filthy stories and everything have influenced us. The devil has brainwashed us. I tell you, I'm talking about Christians.

The devil has brainwashed most born-again believers to say that to have a desire for food is okay. To have a desire for sleep is okay. But to have a desire for sex, that's wrong.

I'll tell you where it's wrong. If you have a desire for food and you sleep, that's wrong. And if you have a desire to sleep and you're driving a car, that's wrong.

Please don't. But I'll tell you this. Do you know that sleeping in a meeting is not wrong? It happens to me many times.

Because many people think I'm not listening to them. I may not be listening, but that's because I'm just trying to get over a 12-hour jet lag when I'm sitting in some meetings. And those folks who sit in the other people's meetings don't even know.

I'll give you one example. Most times in the months of July and August, I'm usually traveling for meetings in the West because it's a rainy time here in India. We don't have meetings.

And then the conference in Kottayam is always at the end of August or early September. So for the last, I don't know, 10-15 years, 10 years at least, I always come straight from a 12-hour jet lag into a conference. And the Kottayam conference is the one conference where most of the time I'm sleeping in the meeting.

And the brothers at Kerala are the ones who say, Brother Zak doesn't listen to any of the other speakers. He's sleeping on their speakers. It's one of those classic examples of don't judge by what your eyes see or your ears hear.

There could be a reason behind it. The reason is this. So I know sleeping in a meeting is not sin because one man did sleep in a meeting and dropped dead.

God raised him up to prove for all time that anybody who sleeps in a meeting, don't worry, even if you drop dead, I'll raise you up. I say, praise the Lord. So God Himself has certified that part.

So, you know, but to sleep in your driving, sleeping in your driving is evil because you kill somebody, yourself and somebody else. So it's wrong sometimes to sleep. If you're driving a car, you should be alert.

Drink some coffee or something like that. And the same way, sex is wrong if you want to, even if you want to have it with someone other than your wife. Or you want to have it and you yield to it, even in your mind, before you're married.

Then it's wrong. If you want to have it, and God's given you a wife, and you don't want to have it with her, you want to have it with somebody else, and you're thinking always about somebody else, like all these filthy movies provoke you to do, then that's evil. And if you have watched sufficient of those evil movies in your unconverted days, and perhaps in your converted days also, like a lot of believers do, then, I don't know whether they're believers, first of all, but then, of course, you get this, the devil has brainwashed your mind.

I'm absolutely convinced that the devil has brainwashed the minds of many, many born-again believers in this area of sex. Because they're not careful to keep their mind and thoughts pure, even after they are born again. They watch movies where there are just about five seconds of some type of filth.

They say, only it's five seconds. But I tell you, 20 years later, you will forget the story in that movie, but you'll remember that five seconds. Why is that? Test it.

Think of some of the old movies you've watched. Don't you remember that five seconds of filth more than the story? Why is that? Because there's an inner desire in you, particularly in men, a great longing for sexual provocation. That's why you've got to be doubly careful.

Keep it. See what it says in Hebrews 13 and verse 4. Let marriage be held in honor. Let marriage be held in honor among everybody, just like the honor that you would give to the president of the country or the governor or the prime minister.

Treat marriage as something honorable. And let the marriage bed be totally undefiled. Don't defile your marriage bed with thoughts of other women or with other women, because the reason is, if you don't have any other reason for it, fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

It's an amazing word. Fornicators, those who have sex before marriage. Adulterers, those who have sex after marriage.

God will judge before marriage. But you say he hasn't judged. There seem to be a lot of fornicators and adulterers in the world seem to be flourishing.

That's right. Because it is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment. So God is going to judge them after they die, not before.

But it's absolutely certain that every fornicator and adulterer God will judge in some way or the other. And some of that judgment will come right now in terms of AIDS or other diseases like that, or just that you can't be a prophet. Sorry.

Because your wife is not the desire of your eyes. Somebody else is. And you keep blaming God saying, Oh, God hasn't given me that gift.

God wanted to give you that gift, but one, you didn't study the scriptures. And second, you allowed your eyes to wander all the time. Okay.

You'll discover, imagine standing before God one day. God saying, Son, I wanted you to be my prophet. But you never controlled your wandering eyes and wandering thoughts.

So I had to set you aside. And you kept saying, God hasn't given me the gift, God hasn't given me the gift. And that wasn't the reason at all.

The reason was your wandering eyes and your wandering thoughts. You know how much the church in India has lost, the church worldwide? Dear brothers and sisters, take married life seriously. Leave, cleave, and become one flesh.

Now let me say a few words from 1 Corinthians 13. It's a wonderful chapter on love. Husbands, love your wives.

Wives, love your husbands. Both are in scripture. Husbands, love your wives.

Christ loved the church. Ephesians 5, 25. Wives, love your husbands.

Titus 2, verse 4. Both are there. And wives, be subject to your husbands. And husbands, be subject to your wives.

Have you seen that? Are you wives eager to find out that verse? I'll show it to you. I'll be popular with all of you today. Ephesians 5, verse 21.

Husbands, be subject to your wives. And wives, be subject to your husbands. In the fear of Christ.

Tell me if I quoted the verse wrong. Read it carefully, slowly. You missed it because you didn't read it slowly.

Husbands, be subject to your wives in the fear of Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands in the fear of Christ. Am I right or wrong? Slow to say.

Right. Then it says, wives, be subject to your own husbands. The point is, we have misunderstood it when we think that subjection is all one way.

Because subjection is not slavery. No, it's not slavery. It's because of the way God has made us in society.

God has said, women must bear children. Man must be the head. Man is not inferior because he can't bear children.

And a woman is not inferior because the man is the head. No. They are equal but different functions.

Man is the leader and the woman bears the children. So, in 1 Corinthians 13, I would encourage you to read verses 4 to 7. It's a wonderful passage where it speaks about love is patient. Making allowance for the fact that your wife or husband comes from a completely different background.

Used to different value systems. Now you got to sort of learn to adjust together and take time. It's not going to happen overnight.

Don't be impatient. Don't try to force her to be like yourself. No, let her be herself.

Love is kind. Respect your partner. Appreciate the good points.

Think about the rest yourself. Anyway, there are a number of things here. Love is not jealous.

Love does not brag. Is not arrogant. Does not act unbecomingly.

That means always be respectful to each other in public. Does not brag means don't give your wife an inferiority complex by showing off or showing how smart you are or clever you are or any such thing. Does not seek its own.

Always seeks the good of the other. Means finds out the need of the partner. Is not provoked.

That means its mercies are new every morning. Your mercy should be new every morning like God's. Mercies are new every morning.

And does not rejoice in unrighteousness. Remember, truth is not something you should sacrifice even to please your wife. That's what Adam did.

He sacrificed truth to please his wife. Don't ever do that. Stand for the truth but in a gracious, humble way.

Covers all things. Never expose your partner's wrongs publicly. Make sure that you cover whatever you see.

Don't talk about it in public. Don't go and talk to other people unless you are talking to an elder brother who knows how to keep confidences. Or someone who can help you.

But don't go tom-tomming it all over town. Believes all things. It means you must believe.

A lot of women are suspicious. Men can be suspicious too. My wife is secretly giving some money to her parents.

My husband is looking another way. Trust the Lord. Trust the Lord.

Don't destroy your married life. Supposing one day the Lord shows you all your suspicions were false. And you discover in heaven everything you suspected was false.

And the Lord says you had a miserable 30 years of married life. Because you allowed the devil to feed your mind with suspicions. By the fruit you shall know that if there is something evil, then ask God to expose it.

But till then say, Lord, I will not suspect. I will not suspect anything. If God clearly manifests it.

And don't judge by mistakes. We all make mistakes. Don't read too much into a mistake.

You are destroying your own married life. It is like cutting off your head. A lot of wives and husbands are like that.

They take a saw and cut off their suspicions. Believe. Hopes all things.

And even if things are not too good. Hope that things will get better. Endures all things.

In other words, willing to pay any price for a happy marriage. And thereby you would have set up in your home a little manifestation of heaven on earth. Where your children can grow up.

And one day produce another home like yours. To extend the kingdom of God on earth. This is God's will for every single one of your families.

Not just for one or two outstanding families. All of your children must be wholehearted disciples who set up homes that will themselves be tastes of heaven on earth. Not just one or two of your children.

All your children. You got to train them from the beginning. And the best way to train it is the greatest thing you can do for your children is to love your partner.

Did you hear that? The greatest thing you can do for your children is to love your partner. Your husband or your wife. And build a home where they can see what heaven is like and be drawn to it.

These are not theories. 34 years ago I made a decision before the Lord that I would never preach what I did in practice. I would never tell other people to climb a mountain.

I was not climbing myself. Even if I have not reached the peak, I would say follow me as I follow Christ. So brothers and sisters, we need many, many homes in India that demonstrate the glory of Christ.

Let's sit. Lord, I want to be one of them. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, thank you for the privilege we have of being witnesses for you not only in our personal life but in our home. Give us grace to be the type of husbands and wives that you want us to be. We humbly ask in Jesus' name.

Amen. Okay, then the best thing for me to do would be to expand on what I shared from 1 Corinthians 13. Because, you remember what Jesus told the church in Ephesus? That was his bride.

He's a bridegroom, she's a bride. And says, if I were to paraphrase it, you make wonderful chapatis, wonderful chicken curry. You keep the house so neat, you iron my clothes so well, but you have left your love for me.

That's what he's telling the bride of the church in Ephesus. You do so many things. And maybe a wife could tell her husband, you provide for the house so well, you work so hard.

Come earn money and buy everything that you need. But you never express your affection for me. Except when you want to have sex.

You never express your affection with words and appreciation. And it could be the other way around. A husband has to tell his wife, you do so many things so well, you look after the children so well, you keep the house so well.

You make the meals on time, but you never express your affection. Let's learn to do that. Let's learn to appreciate one another.

Jesus, as I said, appreciates a major aspect of love. And I believe that if you're unable to express your appreciation for your wife or husband, it proves that you're unable to express your appreciation for Jesus also. What you call praise and worship is just a few empty words.

But really appreciating Christ. The more you appreciate Christ and love him, the more you will love your fellow believers. Number one, your wife or your husband.

John says that. If anyone says, I love God, and he doesn't love his brother, he's a liar. I would say that.

If you say you love Jesus with all your heart and you can't love your wife, the name for you is not believer, but liar. Liar. It's a strong word.

John, you the apostle of love, that's right. The apostle of love calls you a liar if you say that you love God with all your heart, but you can't love your wife. That's very clear in the last verses of 1 John 4. So that's why 1 Corinthians 13 is a very great passage.

You can have all types of gifts. It says gifts to earn so much money and you're so smart and you're so clever. Whatever gifts you have, first three verses, but you don't have love, you are zero.

You provide for your home and you do this, that, and the other, but you don't have love. You're zero. It's the most important thing.

I've been in homes where people are extremely poor. They don't have much, but their husband and wife really love one another for many years of marriage. It's great.

I mean, the other day I was at the airport to receive my wife a couple of days ago. And I saw these old ladies coming out, and their husband or somebody would be there and smile at them. When my wife came out, I just hugged her.

And cheek to cheek and all that. Which is strange for Indian culture, right? Is it scriptural? Is it holy? Greet one another with a holy kiss. We are such slaves to our culture.

That your wife be the wife of your youth, the desire of your eyes to the end of your life. Let's look at this then again. Love is patient, first of all.

And just look at these qualities. This is number one. Don't forget that.

It's mentioned love is patient is number one. Almost the same as the last one, where seven endures all things. It's almost as though both are... It's like the one end and the other.

The other is tolerant and recognizes that a woman has varying emotional states, unlike a man. A man is more or less steady emotionally, but a woman seems to go up and down. And love is patient.

And part of this is to give your partner freedom to be himself or herself. You know, I believe this is one of the ways in which we can build fellowship. If we can get an interest in the thing that your husband or wife are doing.

I mean, I used to watch my wife being fellowshiping with our children when they visited America. She has zero interest, I think, in American football where they climb on top of each other. And I don't know what they're doing, trying to catch one ball.

And that is, it's called American football. I don't know if you have seen it. It's not worth seeing in any case.

But that's supposedly the craziest game they all watch in America. Just to throw one ball from one end, they jump and suddenly have broken bones and necks and everything. But it's the thing people watch.

But, you know, my boys used to come back from a very hectic day's work, their mind all exhausted with computer work. And they'd sit down and relax watching this. I suppose it was a relaxation for them.

But my wife had no interest in it, would sit and watch it with them. Just to have fellowship with the children. And I think she probably appreciates it now too.

But, I don't even know the rules of the game. But I saw something there, you know, that when you begin to take part in an activity which you have absolutely zero interest in, just for the sake of little fellowship with your children or your husband or wife in something which they have a great interest in, you really build fellowship. And that's ultimately the thing that's important in a home, fellowship.

So, in both ways, you know, from husband to wife, wife to husband, that's the thing. Second, love is kind. Which means, I think there's a great need for respect for one's partner.

Like, I heard of a wife who said, if you can just speak to me as kindly as you speak to the strangers who come to the door, that'll be enough. How do you speak to a stranger who comes to the door? I mean, if somebody knocks at the door, even if it's the wrong person, came to the wrong house, Hey, what do you want? You never speak like that. But, very often, we, you know, we, the ones we say we love the most are the ones, very often, we use the most hurtful words for.

We use kind words to strangers in a bus or in a train. But we hardly know, we never even met them. We'll probably never see them again for the rest of our lives.

But we're so kind to them. When it comes to our wives, we're so, can be so rude to our husbands also. Wives can be unkind to their husbands when they speak.

There's a great need for repentance, I believe. A lot of destruction of homes is done by our tongue. Death and life are in the part of the tongue.

And so we need to learn how to be kind because we are not naturally like that. We need to understand, you know, a wife is most of the time like a prisoner within four walls of our house. A routine is so monotonous.

And a husband comes back and doesn't recognize that. Or a wife doesn't recognize that. My husband had a tough day at work.

So there's a need for, you know, recognizing that the other person is, probably had a tough day just like you. So be kind, never compare your wife's cooking with your mother's cooking. Did you ever do that? I've heard this said about Adam and Eve.

They had one big advantage which other married couples don't have, that she never had to hear how Adam's mother cooked food. And he never had to hear how many wonderful boyfriends she had before she met Adam. Why can't we be like that? So don't compare your wife's cooking with anybody's.

Yeah, love, and it could also, you know, apply to being helpful with different things, wherever you are able to. Some things you're not able to. I don't help my wife with her cooking because it'll spoil the whole thing if I go in there and try to help.

So sometimes the best way to help is to steer clear of areas where you have no clue what is to be done next. Love is not jealous. Verse four, not possessive.

That she can't have freedom to have a few friends of her own. Give freedom to your husband to meet his friends sometimes, for your wife to visit her parents. Don't be jealous and so possessive.

There's a jealousy there that can prevent, you know, when it says husbands be subject to your wives and wives be subject to your husband, one part of it is that give that person room to move in her boundary, and you and your boundary don't invade each other's boundary and occupy that country like all these invaders, like the Mongols and the people who invaded India. Don't invade another territory which God has drawn. You know, there's a verse in Proverbs, have you read it? Don't move the ancient landmarks.

That means these stones that are kept, you know, to mark a border of a property. Don't move them. I would say that in relation to your wife also.

Don't move them and say, hey, this area is mine. It's not yours. God has drawn an area for your wife.

Let her be there. Let her have some freedom. God has drawn an area for her husband.

Let him have some freedom. I believe that's important. It's jealousy which prevents that.

Another is number four, does not brag. Is not arrogant. I think very often that can happen when a husband makes his wife feel small.

Makes her feel that she's not as spiritual as he is. Or make your husband feel small, that he's not as spiritual as you are or don't know the Bible like you know it. There's so many ways in which one partner can make the other person feel small and that's a form of bragging.

You know, the wonderful thing about Jesus is that the most sinful prostitutes and crooks could feel comfortable. He never made anybody feel small. He never made anybody feel inferior to him even though he was almighty God.

The best person on earth was inferior to him. Let's follow his example that you never make anybody feel inferior to you. You know, even in our relationships in the church, I have tried my best to never make anybody feel inferior to me in any way.

Young people, I mean, I love when children talk to me freely. I don't mean your own children, other people's children. If your own children talk to you freely, that's great.

I want to ask you, how freely do other people's children talk to you? Maybe you make them feel so small they don't come anywhere near you. Maybe you treat your wife like that too. You give her inferiority complex by constant criticism.

You know, you're not doing this properly. You're not doing this properly. It could be a husband where ultimately you could be like that wife who said to someone, my husband thinks there are only two people who are perfect in the world.

One is God and the other is he himself. Because he acts like that, you know, criticizing everybody. So that's what I mean by bragging.

And then number five is, does not act unbecomingly. To be courteous is a Christian characteristic. And it's not something you switch on in public and switch off at home.

That is, other children of Adam do like that. I mean, they switch on this thing called courtesy in public. When they come home, they switch it off.

Why is that? I mean, it's all right. You can take off the better clothes that you wear when you're going out and dress in simpler clothes or in pajamas when you're at home. But courtesy must never be switched off.

It's to be part of our nature. To be courteous. In Kerala, for example, most Kerala, even believers, born-again, spiritual tongue-speaking believers also have another tongue by which they call their wives, Eddie.

I don't know whether you know what Eddie means. I don't know the right translation for it in English. But something, it's like a despised, hey! That'd be the closest I could translate it in English.

It's not hi. It's hey. Okay.

Eddie. So I have tried my best to teach people in our church in Kerala, don't call your wife, Eddie. And one husband said to me, brother, that is an expression of love.

I said, really? Why don't you allow her to call you Allah? Also, you don't want her to love you. You don't want her to call you in a loving way. I said, it's all hypocritical nonsense.

This type of justification. I said, you can't, don't even call your children. Eddie, Eda.

No, treat, call them by some better name, like in Malayalam, Mone, Mone. I was so delighted to see in one brother's house, notice on this, on the wall, in handwritten. Nobody must call another person Eddie Eda in this house.

Great. It's all Mone, Mone. It does something, you know, courtesy.

Don't switch it off when you go home. I'm very careful with that, even with other people's children. Even little boys, when I go to conferences and all, I never call a small little boy Eddie.

I respect him. There's a little boundary around him which God has drawn. He's got a dignity.

He's a human being created in the image of God, even if he's three years old. And I want to respect that. I want to tell you, he's gone well with me when I respect other people.

God respects you. Okay. The other thing is, does not seek its own number, the sixth point.

Love always seeks the good of the other person. And it finds out the need of the partner. It's concerned about the other person.

So, if your main aim in marriage, I mean, if your main aim in life is to be happy yourself, you don't worry about the happiness of others, I have one advice for you. Don't get married. Because when you get married, you've got to be concerned about the happiness of the other person too, not just your own.

Ask yourself whether your actions and words are making other people happy, your partner. Look at this lovely verse, which Jesus said is the, in one sentence, the sum and substance of the whole teaching of the Bible. Isn't that great? To have the whole Bible in one sentence? Sentence, Matthew chapter 7 and verse 12.

It says, by the way, the law and the prophets is an expression which Jesus used to describe the Old Testament Bible. The law was the first five books. The prophets were the remaining 34 books.

That was the only Bible they had in those days. So, the phrase the law and the prophets means the Bible. So, he said, however you want people to treat you, treat them in the same way, for this is the message of the whole Bible.

There it is. The whole Bible has got one message. Treat other people the way you want to be treated.

If you don't want to be called Ada, don't call Eddie. If you don't want people to insult your parents, don't insult her parents or his parents. If you want her to treat your mother kindly, treat her mother kindly and vice versa.

Treat people the way you want to be treated. Do you want people to forgive your mistakes? We all make mistakes. Yes, then forgive the other person's mistakes.

What a wonderful verse for marriage especially. You know, to think of, is this how I want to be treated? Then I want to treat the other person like that. Okay.

Then number seven, love is not provoked, does not take into account the wrongs suffered. It doesn't keep a record of all the wrongs done. Like somebody said, love is a very poor mathematician.

He cannot keep an account of the wrongs done. Do you keep an account of the wrongs done? I heard them say about that man who went to the marriage counselor and said, whenever my wife gets angry, she becomes historical. Historical? He said, you mean hysterical? He said, no, historical.

She remembers all the things that happened 25 years ago, 24 years ago, 23 years ago. It's historical. What do you do? So I want to say, even if you get hysterical, don't get historical.

Okay. Does not remember a wrong done. Because God doesn't remember the wrongs we have done.

He says, I will not remember them anymore. And that's wonderful. It says in Lamentations 3, his mercies are new every morning.

I look at it like this. God looks at me every morning and says, you've never sinned in your whole life. You've never sinned in your whole life.

And so today if you sin, it will be the first time I'm forgiving you. That's what it means to have mercies that are new every morning. I believe that.

That's how I'm justified. God declares me righteous because the blood of Christ has blotted out my past. He looks at me as if I've never sinned.

It's like the clean feeling you get after you're washed away, a filth from your body from a good shower. And be fresh. No sin.

And now the Lord says, are you willing to treat your partner the way I treat you? Or do you want me in future to treat you the way you treat your partner? Yes, God says. You can be historical with your partner. I can be historical with you also.

Don't forget that. And I can be historical for much longer than you can be with your partner. Do you want that? I've noticed one thing through the years.

God treats us as we treat other people. If you want God to be good to you, be good to other people. Be good to the servants who work in your house.

Be good to them. If you like to get a bonus from work, give your servants an unexpected bonus sometimes. I'm not preaching what I have not practiced.

Every person who ever worked in my house will tell you that. I fear God. My Christianity is not in the pulpit.

This is a very 1% of my Christianity standing up here. 99% of it is elsewhere, mostly in my home. So remember this.

Your public, what you are in public is 1%. 99% is what you are at home. That's your Christianity.

If it doesn't work there, throw it away. The garbage. You got the wrong version.

So, doesn't take no for an answer. Number eight, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. That means, you know, we are not to ignore things that are wrong in the house.

But I say, when you correct something in your wife or husband, make sure you spent enough time appreciating all the good that they have done before, before you give that one word of correction. So, you rejoice in the truth. I mean, something wrong being done, we have to correct it.

But correction must always be in the background of appreciation. The background, I say, is a blackboard. If you don't have a blackboard, that means you spent so many years never appreciating, then don't correct.

Don't use a chalk to correct and there's no blackboard. The blackboard is appreciation. Have you done that for a number of years? By all means, now use the chalk and write something.

And I tell you, your wife or husband will accept it. And one or two bits of advice, don't sow seed when there is a storm. Got it? No farmer sows a seed when there is a storm.

And when there is a storm in the house, cover your head and pray. But don't try to sow seeds. It will all get blown away.

Pray that the storm will pass. And make sure it will really pass. Check the weather report.

And then, and then. So, there is a time to correct also. There must be appreciation.

Then, number nine, covers all things. Love covers a multitude of sins. As I said, that is what I said earlier, that we never expose our partner's weaknesses in public.

Never. When I say never, never. Except when you want help from an older person, who you know will not gossip, who can advise you in what to do.

There is nothing wrong in going for advice. To seek counsel from godly people is a very godly thing to do. To humbly acknowledge.

It is like going to a teacher and saying, Sir, I don't know how to do this problem. Can you please, out of mathematics, this problem, I don't know how to do it. Can you help me? There is nothing wrong in that.

So, you need help. Seek advice, but cover sins. Believes all things.

I have mentioned that before. Trust your partner. Put the best interpretation.

A little bit of advice. When you see something, don't judge by what your eyes see or your ears hear, but put the best interpretation. That's part of believes all things.

There may be a better reason than that. Maybe the devil is just feeding me with suspicion. Put the best interpretation.

Hopes all things, which means, I remember once when I was thinking, this was many years ago, I was thinking of a particular brother, about giving some responsibility, and I said, Ah, but he was like this five years ago. I can't trust him. And immediately, the Lord spoke to me.

What about you? How were you five years ago? Do you want people to remember you like you were five years ago? And I say, No, Lord. I know the days in CFC when I was such a legalist. I preached the same truth, but with a different tone of voice and a different spirit.

I was young, struggling through legalism, struggling through law to find grace. And so, I don't want people to remember me like I was in those days. A lot of tapes of my, those messages way back then, which truth wise, it's absolutely correct, but not spoken in the right way.

That's why we don't put them on the web for other people to hear. So the Lord said to me, if you don't want people to, if you think you've improved in the last five years, consider the possibility that that person's improved too. Don't think of him as he was five years ago.

Don't think of your wife or husband as he was, she was, even last year. Could have improved. Hope's all things.

And finally, love endures all things. Love never fails. That means it holds on to the end.

Let me say this, finally. A happy marriage does not depend entirely on finding the right person. You know how much effort people make before marriage to find the right person? A happy marriage depends on being the right person, not just finding the right person.

A wedding is an event, and a marriage is an achievement. There's a lot of difference. Any idiot can go to get married, but to build a happy home requires a godly man and woman.

And I pray that all of you will be that in the days to come. Praise the Lord. Let's bow our heads and give thanks.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for helping us in these sessions to understand something of truth in your ways. Please help us to really cry out to you for our homes, that we shall build homes that honor you and please you. Help us each one.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/gods-purpose-in-marriage-and-at-present/>

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