

Marriage as God Designed It
Ephesians 5:25-33
Dr. Steven R. Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

INTRODUCTION

Today is a very special day in the life of our church as we witness the uniting of Chuck Budd and Kelly Samonte in marriage. As we celebrate this day with them, I want us to see *Marriage as God Designed It* from the beginning. To do that, I want to look at the greatest treatise on marriage ever written that is found in Ephesians 5:22-33. Here we see marriage as it was before the Fall, where a wife submitted lovingly to her husband's care, protection, and leadership, and where a husband lovingly and sacrificially gave himself to meet every need of his wife, whom he lifted up and exalted with all his heart.

Now if we're going to see that kind of relationship in our marriages, Christ must be at the center, and the Spirit of God must be controlling us. In other words, once a person is "in Christ" (Eph. 1-3) and "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18), it becomes possible for a wife to submit to her husband and a husband to love his wife. The Christian marriage as God designed it and as Paul discusses it in Ephesians 5 is a reverse of the Fall. Notice what it says in Ephesians 5:22-33.

Here in Ephesians 5, Paul uses the picture of marriage to illustrate the relationship Jesus has to His church. He says in verse 22, that wives, like the church, are to submit to the one who is in authority over them. In this case it is her husband. In the case of the church it is Christ. Verses 23-24 says, "For the husband is the 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." In verse 22 then, we see that God calls all wives to submit to their husband's

headship. In the words of Colossians 3:18, they are to “submit to [their] own [husband], as is fitting in the Lord.” In verse 25, the husband is to love his wife “just as Christ also loved the church.” And how did He love the church? Paul says He “gave Himself for it, that He might cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish” (vv.25-27). Just as Jesus gave up His life for the people He would save, the husband is to give up his life for his wife. In other words, he is to “love” his wife as he loves himself. Paul says in verse 33: “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.”

When you look back at Genesis 2 where God said that “it is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him” (v.18), you then read in verse 20 that Adam gave names “to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him” (NASB). Then in verse 21-22 God provides a suitable helper to aid Adam as he rules the pure and undefiled world of creation. Notice that from the beginning, God designed someone to be in charge and someone to help; someone to be in authority and someone to be submissive; someone to be the leader and someone to be the follower; someone to take care of the provisions and someone to be provided for. The man protected, provided, preserved, and cared for the woman. She was a fitting, or suitable helper for him. In verse 23 Adam meets his wife and says, “This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man” (NASB). The chapter concludes by saying, “For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed” (vv.24-25, NASB). Here was a perfect relationship. Adam saw his wife, Eve, as one with him in every sense—that was God’s design. He was the leader, and she was to follow his lead. He had

responsibility for her, and she was under his responsibility. The woman's submissiveness was willing, and the man's provision was willing. There was no animosity—no struggle or fighting—nothing but a perfectly glorious union. In Ephesians 5:25-33, we see a return to this. The apostle's instructions to husbands are simple: Love your wives. Love them as Christ loved the church. Cherish them. Honor them. Protect them. Serve them. Lead them. You are the head of the wife in the same sense that Christ is the head of the church. Let's examine that more closely as we look at verse 25 and *the meaning of love*. He says, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it."

I. The Meaning of Love (v.25)

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it."

A. What It Does Not Mean

"Ask many Christian husbands to summarize their biblical duty in one word, and they will answer, 'leadership.' Scripture answers the question with a different word: 'love.' There is no doubt that God's design for husbands includes the aspect of leadership. But it is a leadership that flows from love and is always tempered by tender, caring affection" (John MacArthur, *What the Bible Says About Parenting*, 162).

D. Martyn Lloyd Jones says husbands are "the head, [they] are the leader, [they] are as it were the lord in this relationship; but because [they] love [their] wives the leadership will never become a tyranny, and though [they] are 'lord' [they] will never become a tyrant...So as the husband exercises his privilege as the head of the wife, and the head of the family, he does so in this way. He is to be controlled always by love, and he is to be controlled

by discipline. He must discipline himself. There may be the tendency to dictate, but he must not do so—‘power, love, sound mind’ (discipline). All that is implicit here in this great word ‘love’” (Life in the Spirit, 132).

B. What It Does Mean

The word Paul uses here for “love” is the familiar Greek word *agapao* (verb, pres.act.imp.). This is a word that means “to demonstrate or show one’s love” (Louw-Nida).

1 John 3:18 uses it in this way: “Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth” (NASB).

1. *Agapao* refers to self-sacrifice which is the highest expression of love.

A.T. Robertson calls it “the high-water mark of love” (Robertson’s Word Pictures).

- a) John 15:13 defines it as “to lay down one’s life for his friends.”
- b) Romans 5:6, 8 takes it further to describe those “friends” as those who are “ungodly” and “sinners.”

God sent Christ to die on the behalf of those who were “ungodly” and “sinners.”

Paul has already this kind of picture in chapter two of Ephesians:

- c) Ephesians 2:1-3

(1) Before God made us alive in Christ we were dead in trespasses and sins (v.1)

(a) The word “Dead” is the Greek word nekros which refers to “an inability to respond.” You were a “lifeless, useless [spiritual] corpse” (UBS, LN).

In Ephesians 4:18 it says we were “alienated from the life of God.”

Phil Johnson says, “We are born objects suited only for the wrath of God. There’s nothing we can do for ourselves to remedy the situation because we are spiritually dead, spiritually lifeless; we’re spiritually inert, and worse, we’re like spiritual cadavers: decaying, disgusting, obnoxious to everything good and holy. That’s the imagery Paul means to convey here” (Message - “My Resurrection from the Dead”).

(b) The phrase “in trespasses and sins” gives us the sphere of this spiritual death

“We were not dead because we had committed sin but because we were *in* sin. In this context *trespasses and sins* does not refer simply to acts but first of all to the sphere of existence of the person apart from God.

He does not become a liar when he

tells a lie; he tells a lie because he already is a liar. He does not become a thief when he steals; he steals because he is already a thief” (John MacArthur, Ephesians).

“Committing sinful acts does not make us sinners; we commit sinful acts because we *are* sinners” (MacArthur).

Jesus confirmed this when He said in Matthew 15:18-19, “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”

Before God destroyed man and all living creatures from the earth with a worldwide flood, Moses said in Genesis 6:5 says, “Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

Jeremiah came to the same conclusion when he said in Jer.17:9 that the “heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?”

Paul gives the sphere of our past spiritual deadness in two words: *trespasses and sins*

- (1) The word “Trespases” (paraptoma) means, “to slip, fall, stumble, deviate or go the wrong direction” (MacArthur). It is “a deviation from uprightness and truth” (W.E. Vine).

Friberg adds, it is “a deviation from living according to what has been revealed as the right way to live.”

- (2) The word “Sins” (hamartia) is used 173 times in the NT and means “missing the mark, falling short of any goal, standard or purpose.

In the spiritual realm it refers to missing or falling short of God’s standard of holiness.

Romans 3:23 - “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

This does not give two truths but two views of the same truth. “Sin is falling short of God’s glory, and falling short of God’s glory is sin” (MacArthur).

Paul does not use the two terms here to point up different kinds of wrongdoing but simply to emphasize the breadth of the

sinfulness that results from spiritual deadness” (John MacArthur, Ephesians).

(2) Before God made us alive in Christ we were also living according to World and the Satan (v.2)

(a) He identifies our conduct by saying we “walked according to the course of this world, according to the price of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience”

“Walked” Gr.peripateo, from pateo, “to walk,” and peri, “around or about.” It means, “to walk about...to make one’s way, conduct one’s self or order one’s behavior” (Wuest)

(b) This conduct was in accord with the world and Satan

(1) Paul says we walked according to the “course” (aion), “age, world order” (UBS), “world system” (LN)

(2) “World” is the Greek word kosmos, which does not refer here to the physical world but to the “evil system of which Satan is its head” (see 2 Cor.4:4)

The course of this world follows the leadership and design of

Satan, the prince of the power of the air and it is characterized by futility of mind (Eph.4:17), hate (Jn.7:7), immorality (1 Cor.5:10), and evil (Gal.1:4).

- (3) The “prince” (archon) refers “to the first in an order of persons or things” (Wuest), “a ruler” (Vine). Satan is the archon, the prince and ruler over this world system.
- (4) “Power” Gr.exousia, means “authority.” Here it refers to “demons.” It occurs in 6:12
- (5) As with the *world*, the *air* (aer) represents “the sphere where demons move” (MacArthur). It’s “the lower, denser atmosphere” (Wuest).

In this context *world* and *air* would be almost synonymous, both of them representing a realm, a sphere, of influence. Paul has in mind here the fact that Satan rules the *power* (demons) who occupy the air (the heavenly sphere around the earth).

“Men are not free and independent; they are totally dominated by the hosts of hell” (MacArthur).

- (6) “the spirit” is used here as an expression or as a reference to the nature of the prince. He “now works” (energeo) or is “at work” or “operative” “in the sons of disobedience.”

If that were not enough, Paul continues by saying:

- (3) Before God made us alive in Christ we were also living according to the flesh (v.3)

“Flesh” is mentioned 2 times in this verse referring to the totally depraved nature.

- (a) We “conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh”

- (1) “conducted ourselves” is anastrepho which means “to live.” We “lived” in the lusts of our flesh.

- (2) “lusts” Gr.epithumia, “a passionate longing, a craving, good or bad depending on the context” (Wuest). Therefore it could refer “to strong inclinations and desires of every sort, not simply to sexual lust” (MacArthur).

[1 Tim.3:1 and James 1:14 illustrate the two uses of the term]

- (3) “flesh” Gr.sarx, “refers to the totally depraved nature” (Wuest) [See Rom.7:5]

“By the flesh, however, is not to be understood merely our sensuous nature, but our whole nature considered as corrupt” (Charles Hodge, Commentary on Ephesians).

“The 'lusts of the flesh' are those irregular desires which have their origin in the flesh” (Hodge). [See Gal.5:19-21]

- (b) We were “fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind”

- (1) “fulfilling” Gr.poieo, “to do, perform” (Wuest). It implies “carrying out or accomplishing” (Vincent). The NASB translates it “indulging”

Kenneth Wuest says, “It speaks of the habitual performing of acts that satisfy the desires of the evil nature and of the evil thoughts, thus a fulfilling of those desires. We went the limit in sin. The evil nature had full sway” (Word Studies in the Greek NT).

- (2) “desires” here is not epithumia but thelema which “emphasizes

strong willfulness, wanting and seeking something with great diligence” (MacArthur). This is “desires that come from the emotions” (Wuest).

We were “swayed by the emotions rather than the reason” (Wuest).

- (3) “mind” Gr.dianoia, “used in 1:18 translated “heart.” It refers to the “understanding” (Wuest)

(c) We “were by nature children of wrath, just as the others”

- (1) By “nature” Gr.phusis, “natural condition” (UBS). This is what is “inherent, not acquired” (JFB)

Ps.51:5 - “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.”

Ps.58:3 - “The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.”

- (2) “children” “emphasizes the connection by birth” (Vincent)

So the “inherent” condition was we were “children of wrath, just as the others.” We were no

different than the rest. We were “dead” in our sins and the objects of God’s wrath.

Since Paul is using the past tense to describe our former life, what brought about this change?

Was this something that we did? Did we pray a prayer or walk an aisle or get baptized to bring us out of this dead condition?

No, it says in verse 4, “But God.”

You were “dead in trespasses and sins” but God according to verse 5 “made [you] alive.”

You were living according to the world and Satan but God made you alive.

You were living according to the lusts of the flesh but God made you alive.

How did He do that? Ephesians 1:4 says first He “chose [you] in Him before the foundation of the world.”

Second, 1 Cor.5:21 says, “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Third, he called you through the preaching of the gospel. 2 Thess.2:13-14 says, “But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,

to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Fourth, he called you to repent and turn to Him. Acts 17:30-31 says, “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”

This is the meaning of the word “love” in Eph.5:25.

John MacArthur, says, “That sort of self-less, undeserved love is completely beyond human comprehension. Yet that is the love that the just and infinitely holy God had toward us even while we were yet sinners. The God who hates every sinful thought and every sinful deed nevertheless loves the sinners who think and do those things, even while they are still hopelessly enmeshed in their sin. Even when men openly hate God and do not have the least desire to give up their sin, they are still the objects of God’s redeeming love as long as they live. Only at death does an unbeliever cease to be loved by God. After that, he is eternally beyond the pale of God’s love and is destined irrevocably for His wrath” (The MacArthur NT Commentary, Romans).

This is the highest expression of love and this is how husbands are to love their wives—“just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it.”

2. Husbands are to love in this way. They are to love as God loves.

“The husband who thinks God ordered the family so that his wife would be at his beck and call has it backwards. He is to love and serve her. The father who thinks of his wife and children as personal possessions to be under his command has a skewed concept of the responsibility that is his as head of the family. His headship means first of all that he is to serve them, protect them, and provide for their needs” (John MacArthur, *What the Bible Says About Parenting*, 164).

II. The Manner of Love (vv.26-33)

Referring back to verse 23, notice again that the whole idea of the husband’s headship is a comparison to Christ.

The husband’s headship over the wife is likened to Christ’s headship over the church: “For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church.”

The husband’s love for his wife is supposed to be like Christ’s love for the church.

Notice Christ’s kind of love for His church:

A. It is Sacrificial (v.25)

Look again at verse 25 and I will not labor the point but just to remind you that this is where it all begins.

If the husband is to love his wife like Christ loves the church, then he is to have the same kind of love that is sacrificial.

“Sacrificial love is undeserved, yet it goes to the furthest extremity, as exemplified in Christ. It says, ‘You don’t deserve anything, but I’ll give you everything. You don’t deserve anything, but I’ll die for you. You don’t deserve even My best, but I’ll give you My life. And Paul is saying that we are to say to our wives, ‘You may not deserve all those things, you may be a sinner, and you may not be all that you could be, but that is never the issue. I love you and commit myself to you, even if you are the least deserving. And I will give you everything I have—even to the point of dying for you’ (Taken from John MacArthur’s sermon, “The Duty of the Husband” Series: The Fulfilled Family).

John Chrysostom, a great preacher in the early church, said this to husbands who might have been tempted to preoccupy themselves with defining the measure of obedience they expected from their wives:

“Hear also the measure of love. Wouldest thou have thy wife obedient unto thee, as the Church is to Christ? Taken then thyself the same provident care for her as Christ takes for the Church. Yea, even if it shall be needful for thee to give thy life for her, yea, and to be cut into pieces then thousand times, yea, and to endure and undergo all this, yet wilt thou not, no, not even then, have done anything like Christ. For thou indeed art doing it for one to whom thou are already knit; but He for one who turned her back on Him and hated Him. In the same way then as He laid at His feet her who turned her back on Him, who hated, and spurned, and disdained Him, not by menaces, not by violence, nor by terror, nor by anything else of the kind, but by his unwearied affection; so also do thou behave thyself toward thy wife. Yea, though thou see her looking down upon thee, and disdain, and scorning thee, yet by thy great thoughtfulness for her, by affection,

by kindness, thou wilt be able to lay her at thy feet...Yea, though thou shouldest suffer anything on her account, do not upbraid her; for neither did Christ do this” (Homilies on Ephesians, Homily 20 [Ephesians 5:25]).

Many men are constantly quoting Ephesians 5:22, “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord” but how many men are willing to fulfill all that is demanded of *them* in verses 25-33?

1. Love as it is used here is a command

Agapao is a present active imperative verb which means that the love that Paul is calling for from husbands to their wives is to be *continual* and it is a *command*.

In general, believers are commanded to love one another but specifically believing husbands are commanded to love their wives. This is not an option nor is it based on certain feelings that you have for your wife. It is based on the command of Scripture.

2. The key to this entire chapter is *submission*

- a) Verse 21 says that when believers are “filled with the Spirit,” they will be “submitting to one another in the fear of God.”
- b) Not only are wives to “submit” according to verse 22, but husbands are also called to submit by *how* they love their wives.

Notice the second kind of love that Christ has for His church which is also to be true of Christian husbands:

B. It is Purifying (vv.26-27)

“26 That He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 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.”

1. Christ’s love for the church included purification

The greatest and highest kind of love is that which seeks to purify and not defile the one loved.

When you love someone, his purity is your goal. No one loves something and then want to defile it. Christ loved His church, so He wanted to purify His people.

2. Christ purifies His church

a) He does that *initially* at salvation

The very moment a person believes he is “sanctified” and “cleansed” from his sin.

“Sanctify” Gr.hagiazō, means, to “set-apart, ” “to make holy, consecrate” (GING)

“Cleanse” Gr.katharizō, means to “make clean, cleanse, purify” (GING)

At salvation, Christ makes you holy and clean from your sin.

The Bible says:

(1) Christ has “forgiven you all trespasses”

(Col.2:13).

- (2) Christ has cleansed you so that “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool” (Isa.1:18).
- (3) Psalm 103:12 says that He has removed your sin “as far as the east is from the west.”
- (4) Micah 7:9 says that He then cast them “into the depths of the sea.”

Sanctification and purification occur *initially* at salvation but it also occurs daily in the believer’s life.

b) He does that daily

In John 13:10 Jesus says to Peter, “He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet” (NASB).

“In the Orient, a man would get up in the morning and bathe himself. Then, as he went through the day and his feet got dirty, he would wash them as they needed it” (MacArthur).

When you were saved you were totally cleansed positionally before God. But everyday that you walk through the world you need your feet washed. 1 John 1:9 teaches that Christ keeps on cleansing us from all sin.

In other words, you were bathed once, and you’re continuously kept pure.

3. The husband is to purify his wife

That means that he wants only the best for his wife. He cannot bear for her to be corrupted or misled by anything evil or harmful.

As her husband, he seeks to love her, lift her up, draw her to God, pour virtue into her life, and make her, in every possible way, like Christ.

He will never put her in a compromising situation or do anything to defile her. His love will always seek to purify her.

C. It is Caring (vv.28-30)

“28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.”

1. Husbands are to love their wives in the same way they love themselves

With the same care you show your own body you are to show toward your wife. When you wife has a need you are to meet it just as you would for your self.

2. Verse 29 points out a basic truth: “no one every hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it”

“Nourishes” Gr.ektrepheo, means, “to nourish” or “feed.” It was primarily used in reference to nurturing or raising children. It simply means ‘to mature.’

Men were called to nurture their wives, to bring them to maturity, and to provide for their needs. The word *ektrepho* also literally means “to feed.” This means that the husband is to be the provider. This is never said of the wife. She is not the provider. She is the one who is provided for.

“Cherishes” *Gr.thalpo*, literally means, “to soften or warm with body heat.” It is used to describe a bird sitting on her nest (cf. Deut.22:6).

Husbands are to literally provide a secure, warm, soft place as a provision for their wives. Husbands are to provide security. This is relinquished in the case of the working mother. She should not be the one who nourishes and feeds; she should receive that provision.

This is the kind of care that Christ has for His church. He feeds and provides for her.

D. It is Unbreakable (vv.31-33)

“31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 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.”

1. This is a direct quote from Genesis 2:24
2. It emphasizes the permanent union that Christ has with His church and the husband to his wife
 - a) The Greek word *leipo* means, “to leave” but the

word here is used here is in an intensified form, katalaipo, and means, “to abandon completely.”

Married couples run into a big problem if they don't leave their mothers and fathers and completely when they step into the marriage relationship. This doesn't mean that you stop talking to them but it does mean that you don't run to them anymore for everything. Your dependence has now shifted from your parents to your partner.

- b) The word “joined” is proskollao, which is an intensified form of the word kallao which means “to connect up.” Proskollao means “to glue together.”

“The idea is that you are to leave, and then you are to glue the new relationship together. It is a new relationship, absolutely unbreakable. Two become one” (MacArthur).

- 3. Paul describes this “great mystery” as the church and charges the husband to “love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband” (vv.32-33).

CONCLUSION

As we close this morning, let me ask you a few questions of the husbands in here this morning: Are you loving your wife in this way? Are you sacrificing your life by putting your own likes, desires, opinions, preferences, and welfare aside in order to please your wife and meet her needs? Are you seeking to love her, lift her up, draw her to God, pour virtue into her life, and make her, in

every possible way, like Christ? Are you seeking to provide a secure, warm, soft place as a provision for their wives? You are to “love” your wife in this manner. Let’s pray.

I. Address to the Couple

Chuck & Kelly, both of you have come to me signifying your desire to be formally united in marriage. Being assured that no legal, moral, or religious barriers hinder this proper union, **I ask you now to join your hands and answer the following questions:**

A. Questions to the Groom

Chuck, in taking the woman whom you hold by the right hand to be your lawful and wedded wife, I charge you by the Living God, who is judge of all, to promise to love and cherish her, to honor and sustain her, in sickness as in health, in poverty as in good that may light your ways, and to be true to her in all things until death alone shall separate you. Do you so promise (If so, say, “I do”).

B. Questions to the Bride

Kelly, in taking the man whom you hold by the right hand to be your lawful and wedded husband, I charge you by the Living God, who is judge of all, to promise to love and cherish him, to honor and sustain him, in sickness as in health, in poverty as in good that may light your ways, and to be true to him in all things until death alone shall separate you. Do you so promise (If so, say, “I do”).

II. Exchanging of Vows

In 1 Corinthians 13:1-8 Paul gives us the definition of love. He says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails" (1 Corinthians 13:1-8).

Love, as God defines it, is much more an action than an emotion (cf. John 13:3-34; 1 Cor. 13:4-7).

The world says, "When the feeling stops, the love is over."

That kind of "love" creates serial monogamy; it's not the love of the Bible.

Divine love is an act of selfless sacrifice. When you love in that way, you'll do what is needed without counting the cost or analyzing the need's merit. And your love will continue to meet the need no matter if it is received or rejected, appreciated or resented.

The husband who loves his wife as Christ loves His church will give up everything he has for his wife, including his life if necessary. He will die to self.

Someone once said, "When you are forgotten, or neglected, or purposely set at naught, and you don't sting and hurt with

the insult or the oversight, but your heart is happy, being counted worthy to suffer for Christ, that is dying to self.

When your good is evil spoken of, when your wishes are crossed, your advice disregarded, your opinions ridiculed, and you refuse to let anger rise in your heart, or even defend yourself, but take it all in patient, loving silence, that is dying to self.

When you lovingly and patiently bear any disorder, any irregularity, any impunctuality, or any annoyance; when you stand face-to-face with waste, folly, extravagance, spiritual insensibility and endure it as Jesus endured, that is dying to self.

When you are content with any food, any offering, any climate, any society, any raiment, any interruption by the will of God, that is dying to self.

When you never care to refer to yourself in conversation, or to record your own good works, or itch after commendations, when you can truly love to be unknown, that is dying to self.

When you can see your brother prosper and have his needs met and can honestly rejoice with him in spirit and feel no envy, nor question God, while your own needs are far greater and in desperate circumstances, that is dying to self.

When you can receive correction and reproof from one of less stature than yourself and can humbly submit inwardly as well as outwardly, finding no rebellion or resentment rising up within your heart, that is dying to self.

A. Chuck Repeat After Me

I, **Chuck**, in taking **Kelly** to be my wedded wife

Promise to love her as Christ love the church.

I promise to “suffer long” to be “kind.”

I promise not to “envy” or “parade myself” or be “puffed up.”

I promise “not to behave rudely,” not to “seek [my] own”, be “provoked” or to think “evil.”

I promise “not [to] rejoice in iniquity, but [to] rejoice in the truth.”

I promise to “bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, [and] endure all things.”

I promise to “never fail” you according to God’s holy ordinance.

B. Kelly Repeat After Me

I, **Kelly**, in taking **Chuck** to be my wedded husband

Promise to love you and submit to your headship.

I promise to “suffer long” to be “kind.”

I promise not to “envy” or “parade myself” or be “puffed up.”

I promise “not to behave rudely,” not to “seek [my] own”, be “provoked” or to think “evil.”

I promise “not [to] rejoice in iniquity, but [to] rejoice

in the truth.”

I promise to “bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, [and] endure all things.”

I promise to “never fail” you according to God’s holy ordinance.

III. Exchanging of Rings

From time past the ring has been used to seal solemn events. It’s a beautiful picture of what God intends this marriage to be while on the earth. It has no ending.

Give Chuck the Bride’s ring.

A. Groom

Chuck, please place the ring on the third finger of **Kelly’s** left hand (and hold it there), and give heed to the questions now asked of you.

Do you **Chuck** give this ring to **Kelly** as a token of your love for her? (If so, answer, “I do”)

Will you **Kelly** take this ring as a token of **Chuck’s** love for you and will you wear it as a token of your love for him? (If so, answer, “I do”)

Chuck, repeat after me:

With this ring, I thee wed, and with all my worldly goods, I thee endow, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Give Kelly the groom’s ring.

B. Bride

Kelly, please place the ring on the third finger of **Chuck's** left hand (and hold it there), and give heed to the questions now asked of you.

Do you **Kelly** give this ring to **Chuck** as a token of your love for him? (If so, answer "I do")

Will you **Chuck** take this ring as a token of **Kelly's** love for you and will you wear it as a token of your love for her? (If so, answer "I do")

Kelly repeat after me:

With this ring, I thee wed, and with all my worldly goods, I thee endow, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

IV. Prayer

V. Address to the Groom and Bride

Having pledged your faith in, and love to each other, and having sealed your solemn marital vows by giving and receiving the rings; acting in the authority vested in me by the laws of this state, and looking to the Lord God of heaven and earth for divine sanction, I pronounce you husband and wife in the presence of God and these assembled witnesses. Therefore, let all men take care in the sight of God this holy covenant shall ever remain sacred.

VI. Kiss

Chuck, you may kiss your bride.

VII. Introduce Husband and Wife

I present to you Mr. and Mrs. Charles Eugene Budd.

VIII. Husband & Wife Departs

IX. Announce Reception

On behalf of Chuck & Kelly and their families, thank you for coming.

Family members please remain for photographs.

Everyone else is invited to stay for the reception.

You are dismissed.