

Husband and wife must delight in the love and company, and lives of each other. When husband and wife take pleasure in each other, it unites them in duty, it helps them with ease to do their work, and bear their burdens; and is a major part of the comfort of marriage. [Prov 5.18,19] (Richard Baxter)

There is no society more near, more entire, more needful, more kindly, more delightful, more comfortable, more constant, more continual, than the society of man and wife, the main root, source, and original of all other societies. (Thomas Gataker)

- *In marriage: you’ll need diligent work. It won’t be easy. It’ll take time, effort, serious thought and reflection, painful examination, confession & repentance, honest evaluation. But you will receive great benefit & blessing in so doing!* (Wayne Mack)

SOME OBSERVATIONS FROM GENESIS 1-2:

God’s original design & purpose for marriage:

- ✓ God created man in His image [Gen 1.26-27]— personality, communicative, emotion
- ✓ God designed gender: Male and Female [Gen 1.27].
- ✓ God told the man and the woman to be fruitful & multiply [Gen.1.28]
- ✓ God provided a helper for Adam [Gen 2.18]
- ✓ God gave Adam headship & authority over the woman [Gen 2.18-23; 1 Cor 11.3]
- ✓ Man was to love, work, protect, nurture & enjoy his wife [Gen 2.15-17; 2.23-24]
- ✓ God designed sex to be enjoyed with deep knowledge & no shame (pre-fall!) [Gen 2.24-25; 4.1]
- ✓ All God-honoring sexual relations must occur within the covenant of marriage alone [Gen 2.24; Prov 2.16-17]
- ✓ The first & foundational institution that God ever designed is heterosexual, monogamous, permanent marriage [Gen 2.23].
- ✓ Marriage is a mystery that points to the greater marriage of Christ & His Church [Eph 5.31-32].

So what is the definition of marriage?

- **Marriage is: a covenant between one man & one woman for life.**
- It is a man leaving father & mother & being joined to his wife & become one flesh” (Gen 2.24)
- Thus, “marriage is a total commitment and a total sharing of the total person with another person until death” (Wayne Mack).

• **When it comes to marriage — a few foundational “hooks”:**

1. YOUR **PURPOSE** must be *the glory of God*
2. YOUR **HOPE** must be *the gospel of grace*.
3. YOUR **HOME** must be *the local church*
4. YOUR **POWER** must be *the filling of the Spirit*

THESIS — *in Ephesians 5:22 - 33, God gives His plan to you...*

1. Christian wife! Submit to your husband in all things (22-24)
2. Christian husband! Love your wife as Christ loved the church (25-32)

I. CHRISTIAN WIFE! SUBMIT TO YOUR HUSBAND IN ALL THINGS (22-24)

A. The Exhortation

❖ God Calls you to **Submit** to your own husband (22-24)

1. The **Definition** of submission — the heart-sourced and deliberate placing oneself under the authority that God has put over you.
2. The **Motivation** of Submission
3. The **Illustration** of Submission
4. The **Proportion** of Submission

❖ God calls you to **RESPECT** your own husband (33) — with great awe, honor!

B. The Empowerment

C. The Enjoyment

1. Christian wife! Submit to your husband in all things (22-24)

II. **CHRISTIAN HUSBAND! LOVE YOUR WIFE AS CHRIST LOVED THE CHURCH! (25-33)**

A. **The exhortation** — God calls you to **love** your wife (25-32)

1. The **Duty** to love

2. The **Example** of love

How does Christ love?

1. an unconditional — free love (Rom 5.8)
2. a volitional love [intentional] (Deut 7.7)
3. an intense love (John 13.1)
4. an unending love (Rom 8.39; Jer 31.3)
5. an unselfish love (Phil 2.6-7)
6. a purposeful love (Eph. 5.26-27)
7. a sacrificial love (1 Pet 3.18)
8. a manifested love (Heb. 4.14-16)
9. a knowledgeable love (John 10.27; 1 Pet 3.7)

3. The **Purpose** of love

4. The **Sacrifice** of love

5. The **Master-Plan** of love

Your marriage is a walking gospel-sermon for ALL people to see!

B. The Empowerment

1. filled with the Spirit
2. fueled with Gospel glory
3. fixated upon Christ's love
4. fervent in exclusive passion

C. the Enjoyment

Some practical questions for you couples to reflect on *together*:

➡Talk thru the things that promote oneness, togetherness & unity in your marriage

- ➡Are you totally committed to your spouse? How do you react to their weakness, failures, needs, problems, faults?

- ➡What are the strengths of your marriage? What are the weaknesses of your marriage **RIGHT NOW?**

- ➡In one sentence, describe your marriage. >> And, ask your spouse!

A mutual duty between spouses is the provident care of one another's souls. If a believing husband, or wife, is married to an unbeliever, they ought to use all the means they can to win the other. And if either of you shall be a means of the conversion of the other, how entirely will it knit your affections one to another. If both husband and wife are in a state of grace, they should be watchful one over the other, as to prevent sin in one another, so to redress it the best way they can when either of them are fallen into sin, by seasonable admonition, yes, and correction also. Here the husband and wife should more respect the mutual good of one another, than fear the giving of offence. And it is likewise a special duty incumbent upon husband and wife to help the growth of grace in each other, as by a frequent conferring together of good things, especially of what they hear in the public ministry of the word, so likewise in constant performing of family duties, especially prayer. (Thomas Gouge)

Loving Each Other in Marriage. This is both the husband's (Col. 3:19) and the wife's duty (Tit. 2:4). Love is the great reason and comfort of marriage. This love is not merely romance, but genuine and constant affection and care for each other "fervently with a pure heart" (1 Pet. 1:22). Marital love cannot be based on beauty or wealth, for these are passing, and not even on piety, for that may decay. It must be based upon God's command which never changes. The marriage vow obliges "for better or for worse," and married persons ought to consider their own spouses the best in the world for them. Marital love must be durable, lasting even after death has severed the bond (Prov. 31:12). This true-hearted love brings true content and comfort in its train. It guards against adultery and jealousy. It prevents or lessens family trouble. Without it, the marriage is like a bone out of joint. There is pain until it is restored. (Richard Steele)