

Book	Ephesian – Study 16
Topic	Marriage
Reference	Ephesians 5:22 – 33
Date	8 August 2018
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If you look throughout the world, marriage is in decline all over the world. United Nations says

- In 100 countries 1970 to 2005. Marriage rates fell in four-fifths of them.
- Among countries that experienced a reduction, the average rate fell from 8.2 marriages per 1,000 to just 5.2.

Marriage is not doing well, marriage is on the rocks. Malaysian figures by Boo Su-Lyn in 2014, rate of divorce is sky rocketing. We are still getting married, but we are just splitting up a little bit more often than usual.

Does marriage actually make you happier and more satisfied?

There is a study in which they looked at marriage, divorce, bereavement and childbirth. They looked at 65911 people and 11 of these studies were based on people who stayed married. So if you look at data from people who stayed married. That means this data set is biased. All the divorce guys got kicked out and they looked at their attitudes towards marriage. There was an index,

Just before marriage and just after marriage the happiness index stayed the same. After marriage for the rest of couple of more years, it stayed the same. So the happiness didn't really change.

What about satisfaction with life?

Satisfaction with life just before marriage jumps up after marriage and then after that there is a steady decline throughout the rest of their lives.

Satisfaction in relationships, just before marriage is good, right after the marriage when wake up is down and then it goes down on average for the rest of their lives as well. So, this sort of data is not very good. So that's why marriage is kind of on the decline.

- Marriage did *not* result in getting happier or more satisfied
- Life satisfaction and relationship satisfaction decreased with time

These are realities, and this is biased.

Ephesians 5:18-32 (ESV) And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, 20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. 25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way husbands should love their 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 Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. 33 However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

The context of marriage is filling with the Holy Spirit. So basically, if you are filled with the Holy Spirit you will be singing, you will be giving thanks and you will be submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. So, marriage comes under that rubric of mutual submission.

*Ephesians 5:22-24 (ESV) Wives, **submit** to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 Now as the church **submits** to Christ, so also wives should **submit** in everything to their husbands.*

So here we have understanding of submission. There have been a lot of misunderstandings about the S word. In fact, if you look at history, Susan B Anthony one of the great crusaders for woman's right in the United States. She says, *The worst enemy women have is in the pulpit.* Which means she blames religion. Helen Hamilton Gardener, another of her compatriots, she says,

This religion and the Bible require of woman everything, and gives her nothing. They ask her support and her love, and repay her with contempt and oppression ... Every injustice that has ever been fastened upon women in a Christian country has been 'authorised by the Bible' and riveted and perpetuated by the pulpit

There is a recent publication at Guardian by Cath Elliot

Christianity is and always has been antithetical to women's freedom and equality, but it's certainly not alone in this. Whether it's one of the world's major faiths or and off the wall religion means one thing and one thing only for those women unfortunate enough to get caught up in it: oppression. It's the patriarchy made manifest, male-dominated, set up by men to protect and perpetuate their power

You can see in a feminist movement that they are less religious

- One in 10 identified with a major world religion (mostly Christianity).
- >50% atheist or had no religion.
- One in six was agnostic.
- One in 12 considered themselves spiritual but not conventionally religious and the rest answered in other ways (there were a couple of pagan atheists and Buddhist Christians, for instance).

So as the woman's movement rises, religion falls. However, on the other side, they have got some man who are rather poorly informed. Evangelist Pat Robertson in 1992 said

"Feminism is a socialist, anti-family, political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians".

So where is the truth, it must be somewhere in between. Are we supposed to be traditionalist as Christians where the man will bring home the bread and the woman bake the bread.

So what does mutual submission actually look like. Here you actually have the household codes of mutual submission,

Submit to one another.

How is it expressed?

Wife is to submit to husband, slaves are to obey their masters and children are to obey their fathers. These are examples of how this mutual submission is worked out. In fact, the Greek word for submission is **Hupotassoo** and in this context it is used for the wife and **Hupakouoo** is actually used for children and slaves. However, if you look at other passages in the scripture

*Titus 2:9 Bondservants are to be **submissive** to their own masters in everything;*

*1 Peter 2:18 Servants, be **subject** to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust*

The word here is Hupotassoo. So therefore, if you are looking at this, bond servants are actually supposed to obey, but here it is translated as submit, here same thing as well. So therefore, we actually conclude that submit and obey are the same thing. You cannot get away from it, from the original language. It is the same thing.

THE REASON FOR SUBMISSION

*Ephesians 5:22-27 (ESV) Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For **the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.** 24 Now as the **church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.***

The basis of this submission is headship and the manner is as when we submit to Christ as if we submit to husband as if they submit to Christ. So now we have got this great theological controversy. What is the meaning of the head? There are three different interpretations.

- The major one is basically leadership or authority.
- The second one is pre-eminence, which means you are like the most eminent or the most representative part of the body. The egalitarians would say the source or sustainer as it were. There is very little in Greek classical literature to support his last one.

So basically, it is either leadership, authority or basically preeminence, which means the problem is they have interpreted authority control, submission versus submission as superiority. That means I have control, I have the authority, you have to submit means I am bigger than you, I am stronger than you. So, I think we have to understand the Bible in terms of design and semantics.

Univocal use of words, same meaning all the time. Tasty breakfast, tasty food, always mean the same. It only has one meaning.

Equivocal means, you have got two or more meanings. The bark of a dog or bark of a tree are two different things, but the word is same.

Analogical use of words, which is partly the same and partly different. God is good, grapes are good. Do we think God is the same way good as the grape is good? It is different. God grieves, is it the same way you grieve. It is not the same, it is analogical. So you have got to understand headship from that point of view. So the analogical use of words

Jesus is head and husband is head are two different things.

*Ephesians 4:15-16 (ESV) Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way **into him who is the head**, into **Christ**, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.*

Here it is obviously authority, because the head makes the whole body grow up.

*Ephesians 1:20-23 (ESV) when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as **head over all things** to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

Obviously, this head means authority, because it is above all things. So when you apply to a man,

Genesis 1:27 (ESV) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

There is no hint that one is more superior than the other, we are absolutely equal.

Genesis 2:18 (ESV) Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

The entire scheme of creation is good, there is only one thing that is not good, man alone. It will also imply if woman alone is also not good. It is a reciprocal meaning. So therefore, it does testify the fact that they are equal. They are no good alone, they have to be together. So headship doesn't mean your superiority and submission is not inferiority. In 1-Cor chapter 11, talks about the woman having to come and wear a veil.

*1 Corinthians 11:8-12 (ESV) For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. 9 Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. 10 That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. 11 Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man **nor man of woman**; 12 for as woman was made from man, **so man is now born of woman**. And all things are from God.*

So just as Eve comes from Adam, all of us men come from our mothers. So therefore, it cannot use this argument to say one gender is greater than the other. So there is this issue of being subjugated which the feminist fight against is actually their right. You shouldn't be subjugated, because you are equal in the eyes of God

*Galatians 3:26-28 (ESV) for in Christ Jesus you are all **sons of God**, through faith. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is **no male and female**, for you are **all one in Christ Jesus**.*

He is not saying, there are no gender differences. The emphasis here is different. He calls the woman sons of God. Why would he do that? The sons are the one who inherit everything. In Jewish culture the elder son gets two third more than everybody else. To be called the son is to inherit the father's lands, occupation, prestige and name. So now you are saying that goes to the woman as well. So, the women are also called the sons of God through faith. So, submission is not inferiority. You submit not because you are less.

So there is intrinsic value and not diversity role. So here you actually have slaves

Ephesians 6:5 Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling,

They have to submit by obeying.

Ephesians 6:9 (ESV) Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him

So therefore, God is the master of both of them. As far as the slaves are concerned, they express their submission by obeying. The masters can do anything they like to do with the slaves, but he is actually curbing his authority, so that he looks into the welfare of the slave. Most owners never look after the welfare of the slaves. So now he considers the slaves as their brother. So mutual submission is here, because it submits his natural desire to rule over into something that considers the livelihood and wellness of his subordinate.

*Ephesians 5:25-26 (ESV) Husbands, **love your wives**, as Christ loved the church **and gave himself up for her**, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,*

Here you actually have got, when husbands love the wife as Christ loved the church, there is sacrificial submission of personal desires for her spiritual good. So therefore, she will submit and obey to what he says in the end, but he has to submit his personal desires to the good of his wife. So, you actually see a beautiful mutual submission in play. Here you have got mutual submission, the woman submits to her husband and the husband submits to wife by sacrificing everything for them. That is a submission. They are both basically 'S' words.

We need to examine gender differences in their respective roles.

*Genesis 2:18 (ESV) Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a **helper** fit for him."*

Some of you think that the helper is like a maid. The word is 'ezer' and if you look in Deuteronomy

*Deuteronomy 33:7 (ESV) And this he said of Judah:
"Hear, **O Lord**, the voice of Judah,
and bring him in to his people.
With **your hands** contend for him,
and be **a help** against his adversaries."*

So, it is actually applied to God and then you have got

*1 Samuel 7:12 (ESV) When Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen and called its name Ebenezer; for he said, "Till now the Lord has **helped** us."*

So therefore, it is not necessary inferior word, because it is used for God. So basically, if you look who should rule. People usually think the smarter one should rule, but the data shows that the IQ of woman and man are exactly the same. The difference surprisingly is signs is that EQ is different. EQ shows that woman are far superior.

"Emotional intelligence is responsible for 58% of performance in all types of jobs, and 90% of top performers are high in EQ"

This means bad news for guys, that we have less EQ. We are more aggressive, but we've got less EQ. If we look at the brain. One of the largest studies in brains in the University of Edinburgh, looking at 3000 man and woman. You find that the women have thicker cortex, which is the stuff at the top. Man have larger subcortical brains. The cortex is responsible for higher score in cognition and general intelligence. Whilst the subcortical ones are more for automated, so you run very fast and you got good reflexes, but it is the women who kind of think a little bit more than we do.

The women brain has huge number of connections between the two halves of the brain, which means they have got better social skills, memory and making them better equip for multitasking, because they have got all the connections in between. Man have got good connections between the front of the brain and the back of the brain, so the perception and coordinated actions are far superior. So, saving a person from a burning building, a man is a better option.

GENDER ROLES:

How does a woman become a helpmeet and submit?

The same way as you would teach your child mathematics. When you teach your child mathematics, you sit next to the child and you teach them the five times table or 10 time table and then they do it. You don't do it for them. So basically if you are talking about helpmeet, you are

better than the child in terms of mathematics. So woman are clever than the man, they have a higher EQ, but they don't do it for them. They come behind them and support them and then hopefully the fellow makes the right decision. So that's how submission and helpmeet will work out. Someone actually wrote

But when together, their difference opens something up, unlocking something fuller and deeper about the human experience. Brett MacCraken

So therefore, if you actually understand gender differences, it will actually open up a whole dimension of human experience. However today we have got a confusion of gender roles. We each think the other gender is better than ours. So, the woman try to be man and man try to be woman to prove a point.

What makes you feminine and what makes you masculine?

It is not what you do, it is what you are. Because what you are is designed and given by God as a creation role. So, whether you actually bake the bread or buy the bread or you look after the child, it doesn't really matter. It is what you are.

In the preindustrial couple, they both work on the farm together. It is only during the industrial revolution where the man has to go off to work and work in a factory and the woman stay at home to bake the bread. So, we actually see a description of a super woman which is written in proverbs

- Feeds her family getting up early
- Engages in business –buys field
- Invests in land -Build vineyard farms and sells the produce
- Sews through the night
- Feeds the poor
- Clothes entire family
- Clothing business ..makes and sells
- Teaches her household

So gender roles shouldn't confine woman to any particular role, because here woman is actually involved in all sorts of things.

Choosing the right partner.

Data shows that maybe we are not going so well because we didn't choose the right partner or then people fight over that. Data shows that durability of relationships are not due to how much you are in love. You can be very-very much in love but that doesn't translate to the longevity of relationship or you could be compatible or not compatible, it doesn't make any difference at all. Neither does personality traits. You can examine everybody personality traits, you will find that there is not even a recipe for success. Mahathir Mohammad is in his 90s and he says

We learn to tolerate each other. Initially, of course, we quarrelled quite often. I am very strict about time and all that and she takes a lot of time, is late and all that. We used to quarrel over that, but I

realized that I could not change her and she could not change me, so we accepted that we are different.

She feels in the same way about the kind of things that I believe in -- about loyalty, the country, about working for the country and all that. She accompanies me wherever I go and she is, in a sense, quite as dedicated to this idea of loyalty, patriotism that I have.

So here you actually have a model of marriage by Karney & Bradbury, looking at your initial satisfaction. You start off with marriage, initial satisfaction and then you have got enduring vulnerabilities which are basically you come to the marriage because you are a slob. You leave your toothpaste undone or your toilet seat up or you pee on it, it is all wet. These are the things that you cannot help, you come in it with your vulnerabilities and then external stressors. Maybe you have got job problems or health problems, and this causes the satisfaction to be affected. So you have got to adapt. Whether you adapt or not will affect your change in marital satisfaction. If that's not addressed, then you will find out having a divorce. If that is change, you have got to adapt, because it has dropped and has gone up and then therefore if it is dropped then it becomes another stressor in your relationship, but the most important thing in this model shows is actually adaptive responses. It is the adaptive responses that are responsible for the enduring relationship inside marriage.

George Levinger is a professor of psychology at University of Massachusetts. He says, *"What counts in making a happy marriage is not so much how compatible you are, but how you deal with incompatibility."*

We are all incompatible, we are all sinners, we have all failed all this. It is when you fail, how you deal with incompatibility.

Ephesians 5:28 (ESV) In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Paul is emphasizing an aspect in relationship that is most underseigned. The most underseigned relationship part in a relationship for woman is not to love, is for to submit, she cannot do that and the same thing is for the man, he cannot submit in terms of sacrifice. That's why he brings that up. Each one have their weaknesses and if you look at how sin creeps into the marital relationship.

*Genesis 3:16 (NIV) To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe, with painful labor you will give birth to children. **Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you***

That is the biggest problem there because of the sin. The word desire in Hebrew is the same thing as repeated here in Genesis

*Genesis 4:6-7 (NIV) Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; **it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.***

So the word desire is like metaphorically a leopard outside your door, waiting to pounce on you. So the woman's temptation is to fight for control to basically control the husband and the husband's problem is that he will rule over her tyrannically, not for her good but for his good. That is what the effect of sin that contaminates every single marriage.

Men are different. There is an observation by Tim Keller. He says,

*Man looks to be completed by moving out powerfully subduing the world ...desire of impact.
Woman looks to be completed by being interdependent setting up networks her. desire to nurture.
Neither is the best way it is both. Men nurture in order to have impact and women achieve in order to nurture*

We are made completely differently.

What does sin do?

Independence, interdependence, she manipulates, he extracts service, tyranny and dependence. So, the influence of sin is the desire to control and desire to oppress. The influence of Christ sacrifice and submission.

The nature of submission and love redemption of marriage

*Ephesians 5:22-30 (ESV) Wives, submit to your own husbands, **as to the Lord**. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 **Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.** 25 Husbands, **love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her**, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way husbands should love their 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 Christ does the church**, 30 because we are members of his body.*

Submission is

- Not obedience to everything
- Not thinking
- Avoiding the effort to change or influence the spouse
- Getting all of her spiritual strength through her husband
- Acting in fear

A lot of men fear a successful woman. Leadership is about design not competency, it is decision making not superiority. Stephen Hawking was asked once what he thought most about during the day. He said, "Women. They are a complete mystery."

Leadership in a family isn't about competency.

THE NATURE OF MARRIAGE

We actually have transactional marriages, or we have covenantal marriages and all of us are a mixture of both. We think that both must be equal in value. We value a man through his pocket and we value a woman through her looks and that is a recipe for disaster.

The first question that we ask, what am I going to get out of the other person?

Everybody brings something to the marriage. That's how people usually get married, but the thing is that happiness lies within the individual and expecting your wife or spouse to change that is unfair. You cannot depend on your wife to give you happiness. If you come into marriage simply because you are unhappy, you will make everybody unhappy.

What about falling in love?

That my partner finds something in me to love. So transactional view of marriage or love is conditional and non-vulnerable, I give you some, you give me some and that's a fact.

The real love is unconditional and radically vulnerable. That's the only kind of love that can make the marriage sustain. The real love is loving Christ. In that way, we are able to submit to the husband as onto the Lord and love the wife as Christ love the church. Either of these two options are very-very difficult.

Why are they difficult?

Because we all go into marriage having needs. You need to be affirmed, you need to be loved, you need to be treated right and nobody whom you marry is going to fulfill all those needs, because if you depend on them it will crush the other person and will make them very sad. So, what happens when the gospel comes in?

When the gospel comes in, it transforms you. You no longer look to your spouse for affirmation. You no longer look to your spouse for self-esteem, because your self-esteem is filled up, because it is not the most beautiful woman in the world that kissed you, but it is Jesus Christ who kissed you. It is Jesus Christ who died for you. So therefore, you become strong, you are able to give and not sit down and receive. You are also humble, because Jesus Christ died for you, because you are such a horrible sinner.

So when your wife points out all the nasty habits that you have, you have nothing to hide because you are a horrible sinner anyway. So actually, it negates this transactional issue in a husband or wife situation, because that is negated, because Christ came and showed you that both of you are useless. Both of you are sinners and I fill you, you both have no merit. The only merit you have is what Christ has done for you on the cross.

COVENANTAL NATURE OF MARRIAGE

Ephesians 5:29-33 (ESV) For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This mystery is

profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. 33 However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

This is a covenantal nature of marriage. Marriage is not based on the fact that you both like each other, it is on a covenant. The two shall be called one flesh. Covenant in the Old Testament is me and you get together, we have a contract. It is an agreement. There are stipulations on both sides. So it is not declaration of present love but a binding promise of future love. That I promised that no matter what happens to love you into the future. You can actually base your marriage on covenant or you can base it on feeling.

If you base it on feeling that lot of people do, you got great problems. If you base it on the feeling, it means here is how much I want from you because you give me that feeling, or love is an affection.

Covenant says, how much am I willing to give, love is an action. The Bible always looks at love as action, not necessarily a feeling. There is a study on cohabitation and marriage, looking at three parameters, consolidation, intimacy and commitment. They looked at 15000 man and woman in United States, comparing cohabitation and marriage and you will find that married couples reported a higher level of consolidation, intimacy and commitment. Marriage is better than cohabitation because you don't have the same kind of commitment.

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN:

A couple becomes more committed and the marriage becomes more durable when you get a child. When you actually get a child, you will find that marital satisfaction drops, but the likelihood of divorcing also drops, because it is solidified by the passage of the child and the bond that the child creates between the two of them.

ARRANGED MARRIAGES:

The data shows that divorce rates among arranged marriages range about 4-6% in United States and divorce is 44%. Why do arranged marriages last longer? It is commitment. Because it is your father and mother who gave and make arrangements, so you can't disappoint them, especially in an Indian setup. So therefore you have to stay married.

There was a show, 'Married at First Sight'. What they did was, get single people and the first time they met each other, they got married. So the first time they met each other and then they were asked to marry each other. At the end of the series, did they stay together. They were also given option to divorce any time they like. If the option was there, that's why at the end of it,

- US success rate 22% in six seasons.
- UK 0
- Australia less than 46%.

Most of the marriages broke off because they were given option out. I want to highlight one couple I saw, Jamie Otis who was basically a nurse with a broken background and her husband Dough Hehner

"I was not at all interested in my new husband,". "He was nice enough but there was literally zero chemistry. No connection. To me that was a huge sign. I just assumed it'd never work out. Boy, was I pleasantly surprised by this process. I'm SO happy that I was able to be open-minded and I'm so thankful that the experts gave me my husband.

So here her attitude was different, she actually hated the husband the moment she saw her and she cried at her wedding. But because she actually put herself into the marriage, she still remain married even to this day, but the point is the covenant.

The whole series had a whole panel of psychologist and they worked up compatibilities, they choose the most compatible people to be. It took three to four psychologist, with a huge questionnaire and yet most of the them divorced. It is not about compatibility, it is about commitment. So the point is, if you got the feelings of love, will always follow the actions of love. If you actually have reciprocal bargaining in your marriage and your spouse disappoints you all the time you got to have decreasing love, because your commitment is reciprocal to how much loves he gives back. If he doesn't give you much love back, then I won't love her as much. I won't be committed as much. If that happens then you are going to have decreasing levels of love. Now Tim Keller pointed out the opposite occurs when you actually have children. The moment the little fellow comes out, you got a bond. The more you commit, the more you have increasing feelings of love.

No matter what the child does, he can grow up to be a monster, but you still love him, why, because there is a commitment there. Commitment brings love. So therefore adaptability, commitment is the basic thing behind marriage. If you look at the typical example of the cross where you are hanging up there like Jesus Christ and you are looking down at those guys.

We were the most unlovely people on the face of the earth and yet he proceeded with death. That's why Jesus said, love your enemies. It is not asking to fall in love with your enemy and then have his picture in front of you every day. He is asking to treat them well and then your feelings will come.

PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE

Ephesians 5:26-27 (ESV) that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Purpose of marriage is to move you closer towards Christ. That's the whole idea.

Ephesians 5:31 (ESV) Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

It is developing oneness and that needs affirmation and confrontation. Studies have shown for every nasty word you say to your wife or your husband, you need five good words to bring you back, but you still have to affirm, and you actually have to confront. You cannot leave things as they are because you want to create oneness. Confrontation is good because it cleanses and meshes you together unless you are honest with each other, you are never going to work out your

differences. Confrontation helps us in getting rid of our sin. It moves us towards a godly live. The most important thing in this basically communication. So lastly

*Ephesians 5:29-33 (ESV) For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become **one flesh**.” 32 This **mystery is profound**, and I am saying that it refers to **Christ and the church**. 33 However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.*

The Greek idea of ‘mysterion’ is something that is hidden from the beginning of time until now and then God reveals. The previous mystery in chapter 3 was that Jew and gentile were fellow heirs, the same word. Today, the mystery is husband and wife, is one flesh the same way as Christ and church is one. That’s the mystery which God has now revealed through Jesus Christ, through Paul. Beforehand we thought people get married, it is just about two people getting married, having children, procreating, but a Paul is telling you there is a new paradigm that you don’t even know before. Husband and wife relationship is supposed to mirror very faintly the oneness that is in Christ and the church. That’s why when Christians divorce it is an absolute anathema, because God says in Malachi he hates divorce.

The picture of Christ is one with the church, actually one body. He is the head and we are the body, it is a spiritual unity. If we are not one, we cannot receive his righteousness and he cannot receive our sin. It is a mystery before that. Nobody knew how we are going to be saved. In the Old Testament they thought we should kill a few sheep and the blood will cleanse them and you will be alright. They didn’t realize that this sheep represent Christ. We are joined together. That’s why marriage is so important because it is a paradigm of the relationship with Christ and the church and that’s why at the end of time,

Revelation 19:6-8 (ESV) “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; 8 it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

It is not your jewelry, it is your righteous deeds. The deeds performed because you are transformed by Christ. When you go to heaven, that is what is going to adore you. That’s the picture. So therefore the intimacy, the oneness, the love that is inside marriage is a dim reflection of the true magnitude of the union which will come in heaven. That is what it means. That’s why marriage is sacred in the eyes of God. You cannot come and say, I am not getting along with my wife anymore, she doesn’t make me happy, it is not about happiness, it is about honoring and reflecting God and showing this profound mystery to the world, in which we are not doing well. Because even among the Christians the divorce rate is so high.

Marriage is only an analogy of Great Marriage of Jesus to the church. The best marriage is not even a shadow of what it should be

Our real spouse is Jesus Christ. Marriage is a calling. You are either called to marriage or you are called to be single and if you are called to be single, it is a gift. 1-Cor chapter 7. You need to find you fulfilment and your love and your service in Christ and then serve the church. If you are in

marriage, yes you serve husband, serve wife, submit in order to grow the marriage, so there would be a paradigm in what other people can see. All marriages are not perfect, but we are all at work in progress. As long as we adapt, and we have that goal in mind then no matter how difficult it is, we work to glorify our lord Jesus Christ.