

Theme: Marriage is a picture of Christ and the Church, and therefore must be centered on Him, and built on love and respect.

I. Making a Problem Worse

- A. I love exercise - and have worked our pretty hard through the years
- B. Eventually you get some injuries - problems crop up
- C. A couple of times I have tried to fix them - and made the problem worse!
- D. We can do the same thing in marriage - see problems, but our “fix” only makes it worse!
- E. How do we build our marriages?

II. The Basis For Marriage - Christ & the Church

- A. Note Christ centered nature of this “marriage” passage
“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”³² This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church.³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. Ephesians 5:31–33
 - 1. Paul is teaching on marriage in this section
 - 2. Quotes Genesis 2:24 - foundational marriage text
 - 3. Paul says this is really about Christ and the Church
 - 4. The mystery - marriage has always been picture of Christ & Church
 - 5. Christ and church is not an analogy of marriage - marriage is merely a reflection of Christ and the Church

- 6. Christ and the Church is the reality of which marriage is but a type and shadow
- 7. This is why Paul has based whole passage on Christ & Church
- 8. Even in marriage - it is all about Jesus!

B. The call to a radically Christ centered life

- 1. The reason we are here - to glorify God & enjoy Him
- 2. Marriage is not separate from that
- 3. A Christian marriage should be centered on Christ
 - a. It should be built on godly principles
 - b. It should have a conscious desire to extend the kingdom
- 4. We have made marriage about us - but it is about Jesus!
- 5. If we make it about Him - there is great joy for us!

III. The Goal of Marriage - One Flesh Union

- A. The goal - nothing less than total union
“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”³² This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church.³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. Ephesians 5:31–33
 - 1. Goal is not just avoiding killing each other
 - 2. Goal is not even relatively peaceful coexistence
 - 3. The goal is total union - two become one

B. Why one flesh union is the essential goal of marriage

1. It was the original intent - Paul quotes Genesis 2:24
2. Because this is the type of union between Christ & the Church

After all, **no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church — ³⁰ for we are members of his body.** ³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” ³² This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church. Ephesians 5:29–32

- a. We are Christ’s BODY - real union
- b. He is the Head, we are the Body - real union
- c. Marriage must follow this model - real union

C. The call to real marriage - real unity

1. Marriage is often more co-existence than unity
2. A real temptation to settle for mere ghost of marriage
3. To do this is the mar the image of Christ and the Church
4. To do this is to forfeit the real joy of marriage

IV. The Path For Marriage - Love and Respect

A. The call to practical application

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” ³² This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ **However, each one of**

you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. Ephesians 5:31–33

1. As always - God centered doctrine has practical application
2. Because marriage is based on Christ and the church - husbands and wives must act appropriately
3. Unity not automatic - flows from proper actions
4. In my experience these two actions are little understood - even by Christians

B. The call - love and respect

1. Husbands - love your wives

However, **each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself,** and the wife must respect her husband. Ephesians 5:33

- a. Note Paul is emphatic - “each one of you”
- b. Husbands commanded to love their wives
 1. Not based on whether you think she is lovable - it is a command
 2. Allusion to 2nd greatest command - love neighbor as you love yourself - closest neighbor is wife!
 3. Husband must act like Christ - and He LOVES the Church
- c. Love includes full range of words and deeds - to communicate deep, unchanging love to her
 1. Christ communicates love by word and deed
 2. We men must do the same - to the point of death
- d. Husbands have primary responsibility and should act first

1. They have the role of Christ - He initiated
2. They are the head - they bear primary responsibility

2. Wives - respect your husbands

However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, **and the wife must respect her husband**. Ephesians 5:33

- a. Respect is usually translated fear - but can mean to respect other humans

Each of you must **respect** his mother and father, and you must observe my Sabbaths. I am the Lord your God. Leviticus 19:3

Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if **respect**, then **respect**; if honor, then honor. Romans 13:7

- b. This respect is based upon our reverence for Christ - same word used in v21

Submit to one another out of **reverence** for Christ. Ephesians 5:21

1. Respect given because of reverence for Christ
2. This is a command - not a suggestion

- c. Respect includes full range of words and deeds - to communicate deep, unchanging respect to him

C. The reason - our core needs as designed by God

³³ However, each one of you also must **love** his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must **respect** her husband. Ephesians 5:33

1. Note the particular call - husbands love, wives respect
2. This is not random - it is linked to our deepest needs

3. This corresponds to the way God has designed men and women

4. Husbands - love your wives - this is their core need
However, **each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself**, and the wife must respect her husband. Ephesians 5:33

- a. They need respect - but love is deeper, greater need
- b. They must believe you would fight any dragon, pay any price - because they are worth it
- c. If husbands will love them like Christ, they naturally respond with deep respect

5. Wives - respect your husbands

However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and **the wife must respect her husband**. Ephesians 5:33

- a. They need love - but respect is deeper, greater need
- b. They must know you believe in them - that they can conquer anything for you
- c. They are never motivated by shame, belittling, negative comparisons - builds deep resentment in a man
- d. If you show respect for the man he is and can be, he will respond

V. Applying the Word

A. Am I building marriage biblically - or settling?

1. Marriage is a reflection of Christ and the Church
2. Marriage is about the deepest union of two humans
3. Is that what I am building - or have I settled for less?

4. If people see my marriage - does it look like Jesus and the Church?
5. If not - seek God in prayer, restore hope, and build together!
6. If your partner does not want this - continue to pray!

B. Are we walking in love and respect

1. Husbands - do you love your wife like Christ loves the church?
 - a. Do you tell her often how much you love her?
 - b. Do you show her love through kind, thoughtful actions?
2. Wives - do you respect your husband as the church does Christ?
 - a. Do you communicate respect in words and attitude?
 - b. Do your actions speak trust and respect - building him up rather than tearing him down?

Praying To Our Father

Ephesians 5:31-33

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Prayer

Jude 1:2

Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance. Jude 1:2

31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” 32 This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. Ephesians 5:31–33