

Ephesians 5 vs 21-23

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[0 : 00] Since our sermon is going to be the primary New Testament text about marriage, I want to supplement it with the first passage in the Bible about marriage.

I'm going to read Genesis 2, 18 through 25. And just so you feel how this is all connected, this is going to be one more example of our Lord reigning over all.

Even something as concrete as marriage. We've been singing about the Lord reigning over all things. And we're going to be learning about the Lord reigning over our marriages. So I want to first read when God instituted marriage in Genesis 2, 18 through 25.

This is the word of the Lord. Then the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helper fit for him. Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them.

And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.

[1 : 14] So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man. And while he slept, took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man, he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

Then the man said, This is the word of the Lord.

Well, we're continuing the series in Ephesians this morning with chapter 5, verses 21 through 33.

So if you have a Bible, you can begin turning to those verses to look at while I teach them. This is the most extended teaching on marriage throughout the whole Bible.

The longest discussion about marriage. And I'm glad to know, more confident to preach, knowing that you woke up this morning thinking, Boy, am I excited to hear a man who's been married for five years tell me all of his wisdom on how to do it.

[2 : 38] You know what they say about raising kids. If you ever want to know how to do it, ask someone who's never had any. And I think the same could be said of marriage. Everyone, before they get into marriage, has grand theories about how it should work.

But then, not long after we say, I do, We realize that the raw material we're working with is not quite what we thought it was. We're surprised to find out that our spouse is a sinner.

And then, almost to add insult to injury, Our spouse claims that they've discovered we are a sinner too. And how are we supposed to work with this now? This is not what I dreamed marriage was going to be.

Two sinners working together. But it's not funny over time, is it? Over time, it actually gets hard. It starts to become painful at times to work with another sinner in marriage.

It's very easy in marriage to just start letting things slide and compromising and coming apart Instead of working together towards some kind of goal for the marriage, for some kind of goal for the relationship.

[3 : 41] Well, I'm actually thankful that you did not wake up this morning to hear my experience on marriage. You're here for our Creator's wisdom. And thankfully, God didn't bring us here just to give us a little more inspiration to live out our own theories on what marriage is.

God brought us here to crush our self-absorbed dreams and instead replace them with His glorious plans for our lives. That's what it means that He's Lord over all.

And I'm thankful that God's Word is also not written as an ideal that's so far out of our reach that we can just read it and think that would be a nice thing. But instead, God's Word is written to redeemed sinners like you and me.

So this that we're going to hear, this is a gospel blueprint for marriage. It's something that sinners can live in. It's a gospel blueprint for marriage. So please, while I'm reading God's Word, let's listen with the respect and the humility, but also the hope for what God has for marriage.

While I'm reading Ephesians 5, 21 through 33. Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

[4 : 50] Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her.

That He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word. 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. In the same way, husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it just as Christ does the church. Because we are members of His body.

Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

[6 : 14] However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Please pray with me briefly here. Father in heaven, we just want to ask you now to accomplish in us what Christ died for.

We just read that He gave Himself so that He could present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle, so that she would be holy and without blemish.

Father, we want that. Our hearts long to have every spot and blemish removed. We long to be made holy and without blemish. We want to be presented to Christ on the last day in the holiness that He deserves, that He's worthy of.

So Father, please use Your Word now to do work in our lives, to bring us one step closer to that holiness and unblemished life. Father, we ask for You to do that for Jesus' sake.

So we ask for it in the power of His name. Amen. Amen. Well, it's really easy, I think, for us to be reading through the book of Ephesians and forget when we hit this that we're actually in the rest of Ephesians.

[7 : 27] Since marriage is such a day-to-day experience, such a day-to-day reality, it feels like Paul was flying us around in an airplane in the clouds, talking about things like salvation by grace through faith, and then all of a sudden just crash lands and starts giving his advice on how to do marriage.

But that's not the right way for us to think about it. This is all one continually flowing letter. So I want to start by explaining why marriage belongs here.

Why this is actually a very natural place for Paul to start talking about marriage after he's been talking about the doctrines of the gospel. So our first clue in our passage is that John McKinnon asked me to preach starting from verse 21, not verse 22.

You might have thought it was weird. I think it felt strange to start our passage at the end of a sentence, right? It wasn't even at the start of a sentence. Verse 21 is the end of a longer sentence. Why didn't we start in verse 22?

Well, it's because verse 21 and verse 22 can't be separated. In the original language, verse 22 actually only has these words, wives, to your own husbands as to the Lord.

[8 : 40] It doesn't say, it doesn't have the command submit in it. And that's because it's borrowing that command from the verse before it, from verse 21. This is actually really common in the original language that the Bible was written.

It'll leave out verbs because it came right before it. We actually do this a little bit in the English language. You'd understand it. If I said something like, she went to the mall and he to the football match.

You know I mean that he went to the football match. I didn't actually say went, but you know that it's in there. Well, that's what's going on here. Paul's saying submitting to one another, wives, to your husbands.

Well, that helps us see that our section and the section before it are connected in Paul's mind. So just as I suggested, I don't know if anybody remembers my sermons.

I have a hard time remembering them. But last time I was here, I said, if you believe Ephesians 1 through 3, then you will do Ephesians 4 through 6. They're not separate.

[9 : 37] They're connected. Something about the glorious gospel truths in Ephesians naturally flows into instructions for marriage. And here's why. It's because salvation, the gospel, it's the framework for all of life.

It's the framework for all of life. That was one of my main points when I introduced the book of Ephesians in the first sermon in this series. There's not a spiritual aspect to our lives that salvation governs.

And then I'm left to pick and choose how I want to govern all the other aspects of my life. When Christ raised our souls from death to life, he began pulling all of the aspects of daily life with us.

Out of death into life. Everything. Not just our souls. All of life is being pulled from death into life with Christ. Verse 21 in our passage is what brings this out.

He says, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. He's saying that my relationship with Christ transforms my relationships with other people.

[10 : 42] They can't be unaffected. It has to affect that. So when we're learning how the gospel pulls my relationships from death to life, it would be unnatural to ignore a relationship as common as marriage.

It would be unnatural to not say, okay, this is one of the most fundamental relationships in human society. I want to show you how the gospel brings that out of death and into life.

In fact, the command we've got here in verse 21 to submit to one another is actually introducing a whole section about three kinds of relationships. Today we're looking at marriage.

But after this, you'll look at parenting. And then you'll look at the workplace. And this isn't just particular to Ephesians either. Paul mentions the exact same three relationships in the book of Colossians.

The book of Romans teaches how citizens should relate to their government. First Peter talks about marriage, the workplace, and government. So I just want you to see it's very natural for the gospel to transform these details of our lives because salvation is the framework for everything we do.

[11 : 49] It gets into all of the details. And the gist, the basic idea of how the gospel transforms me, transforms us in our social stations, is to submit to one another.

That's what they said, submitting to one another out of reverence. Use the social station that you have been given to bless and serve others. So that means people under authority submit to that authority in a way that blesses them.

People in authority use that position to serve the interests of those below you. So the gospel's first impulse is to transform sinners.

It's not social revolution. It's not to undo social stations, but to transform us in our social stations. It's transforming us to be more like Christ in where he's called us.

One place that Paul had to address this really specifically to make this point clear was in the Corinthian church. The Corinthians thought, okay, I've got this relationship with Christ.

[12 : 55] And so that means I need to abandon all of my other social stations like marriage or like the workplace so that I can have just a purely devoted heart to Christ.

It's all Christ and nothing else. And so Paul says, note, in 1 Corinthians 7.24, he says, Brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God.

These social stations are not separate distractions from God. God is there in the social station with us, calling us to live in that social station.

The gospel is transforming me into a person who serves others in whatever social condition I've been called. Wherever I'm at, whatever authority relationships I have, I'm a person who serves others' interests within that social station.

So back here in Ephesians 5.21, when Paul says, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ, that's what he means. Now that Christ has brought us out of the selfishness of sin, now that we revere Christ, our new life, the new life he's given us, is now spent for others within the social stations that we've been called to.

[14 : 11] So that's why marriage comes up here. It's why the gospel has a blueprint for marriage. It's because the gospel is transforming all of me wherever I am.

And the social station that I have is going to determine the particulars of how I show my reverence for Christ. So Paul gives two different sets of instructions for the two different rules in the social station of marriage.

First, he teaches the unique way that wives are meant to show their reverence for Christ in that social station. And in a word, it's to submit. Submitting means putting my will under the guidance and authority of someone else's will.

Yielding my will to another will. That's in verses 22 through 24. In Paul's instructions for wives, he's going to explain two things, I think. He's going to explain how a wife should submit and why she should submit.

It's verses 22 and 24 that explain how a wife should submit. It's kind of a sandwich here, talking about the same thing, though. In verse 22, wives, he says, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord.

[15 : 27] So Paul's giving, he's got a model here. I want to give you a model for how you should submit. As you submit to the Lord, in the same way you do that, submit to your husband. And he gives a similar model down in verse 24.

Look at that one. Now, as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. So wives shouldn't just use their own personal submission to the Lord as a model, but should look at their other brothers and sisters in the church and say, in what ways do they submit to the Lord?

And I'm going to use that as a model to strive to submit to my husband in a similar way. That's how a wife should submit. The most practical instruction Paul gives is with the little phrase, in everything.

Did you see that? Wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Now, I imagine that may bring up a lot of objections. I've had lots of conversations in Bible training and with other people.

That brings up a lot of objections. And some of them are good, serious objections. But if you would, set those aside for a moment until we get to verse 23 and talk about why a wife submits.

[16 : 38] I think that verse will address at least some of those objections and those concerns. But we can't start with qualifications and try to empty the offensiveness of this command because that's not where Paul starts.

Paul says, submit in everything. He's trying to show how the gospel, if you are submitting to the Lord Christ, that relationship gets into everything.

The gospel doesn't just get into religious activities. It doesn't just lead wives to attend church and read their Bible. The gospel also gets into a wife's relationship with her husband.

So now every interaction with her husband reveals how she's relating to Christ. When Paul says that she should submit in everything, he's infusing hundreds of daily decisions with gospel significance.

So think of wives' times when your husbands ask you for something trivial and annoying. I do that to my wife all the time, I'm sure. That moment, though, where you feel like, he's so immature, so foolish, this is such a waste of my time.

[17 : 48] That moment is when you have an opportunity to show your reverence for Christ by joyfully submitting to it. Or think about the times you might just feel bored by the mundane expectations of your husband, perhaps washing his clothes.

That's the most mundane thing my wife does for me. I'm very grateful for it. But think about that constant repetitive expectation. A wife's faithfulness in those moments reveals spiritual life that Christ raised out of spiritual death.

That's gospel being revealed there by submitting to that expectation. Even when your husband's being foolish and maybe makes a poor decision for your family, your willingness to put your will behind his and push in the same direction with him shows, I trust in the Lord and not in myself.

I'm submitting as he's called me to submit. Even a wife's attitudes have gospel significance. Just as the church, he uses the church as an example, just as the church rejoices in knowing and following Christ's will, so should a wife rejoice in and seek to know her husband's will.

She's not meant to be a robot. That's one of the broken ways this passage gets interpreted. That she's just empty of any will and any personality and just waiting for orders to be put into her and then she just carries them out without any will.

[19 : 16] That's not what submission is here. Submitting in everything doesn't destroy a will. It can even express a difference of opinion. There's still two wills alive when submission is happening.

Just like the church is seeking to submit her will to Christ's will, so a wife is. Submission instead is freely yielding our will to the authority of another will.

So if we're asking, how should a wife submit? It's like the church does to Christ in everything. But why? Why does the wife have to do this?

That's what verse 23 is going to address. Why is it the wife who must submit her will to the husband's will? Well, can't they just make their own arrangements? In fact, why does anyone have to submit at all?

If we disagree, can't we just go do our own things, go our own way? A wife submits because her husband is her head. That's what Paul says.

[20 : 15] Verse 23 says, 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. So Paul's using a metaphor here that he's already used in Ephesians.

Elsewhere in Ephesians, Christ is the head, meaning he has the authority, and the church is his body. So marriage, likewise, we have another model here, unites a head to a body.

We sometimes say that marriage is a union of two complementary roles, is the word that's often used for this. Paul's logic here is that wives should submit because that's the nature of the social station they're in.

God designed marriage in Genesis 1, like I read a moment ago, to place a wife under the authority of her husband. And in God's perfect design, remember, we believe when God created the world, it was perfect.

This is God's perfect design. He determined that your sex would determine what role you take in marriage. The husband would take the role of leader, and the wife would take the role of support, head and body.

[21 : 27] So when a gospel transformed wife, a wife that's been brought from death to life, when she is in that union, she embraces the authority of her head because it's God's call on her life.

That's how she shows the gospel in the social station she's been given. I want you to notice what he's not saying here, okay? Paul's not just being pragmatic.

He doesn't say, wives, submit to your husbands because at the end of the day, someone has to be in charge. It just, someone has a picture. It doesn't matter to me. He's also not being misogynistic.

He doesn't say, women, submit to men because women are dumb. That's not the logic of Paul's mind. In fact, he even says, it's only wives to their own husbands.

He's very specific that it's because of the nature of this relationship. He's not being overbearing. He doesn't say, wives, submit to your husbands because he's the dictator and you're his slave.

[22 : 27] But he's also not being compromising. He doesn't say, wives, submit to your husbands when it's convenient, but just go do your own thing if that's what it takes to keep the peace.

So even though he's not saying these things, this command has still been abused many times. And it's that abuse that probably brings up a lot of objections in our minds, a lot of fear.

So I want to point out two things from these verses that protect wives from that abuse. First, did you notice who Paul is addressing here? It's the wives, isn't it?

He says, wives, this is the command for you. This is not a command for husbands to force their will on wives. See, in Paul's day, there were a lot of things written like this.

They were called household codes, but they were always written to the father of the home. They say, fathers, do this. Make your wives act like this. Make your children act like this. Paul's not saying that.

[23 : 27] He's saying the gospel speaks to the wife and this is the wife's responsibility. Christ will hold her accountable for this, not her husband. So this is not meant to be a weapon that husbands use to force their wives.

Submission is something that a wife willingly does because she's submitting to her Lord. Second, did you recognize that the Christian wife has two heads in this passage? Her husband, yes, but also Christ because she's part of the church, isn't she?

Christ is her head. So another way this passage gets abused is by thinking that a husband is a wife's only head. He's her only authority and that's wrong. A wife's will is ultimately and supremely submitted to the will of Christ.

Paul says it. Christ is her savior. He's the savior of the body, not her husband. In fact, the main reason a wife submits to her husband is because she understands that's to be Christ's will.

It's his will that she's submitting to and that's only derivative for why she submits to her husband. So this means a couple of things. If a wife's husband wants her to disobey Christ's will, either in explicit sin or just going against her conscience, she has a duty to disobey her husband.

[24 : 47] If she must choose, a wife should always submit to the head of the church instead of the head of her marriage. And this also means that a wife must recognize that her husband is also under authority.

If he is abusing her, doing things that God or the government prohibits, this passage is not calling her to submit to that by concealing it.

In fact, we are only a few verses away from Ephesians 5.11 where all Christians are called to expose the unfruitful works of darkness. That would include abuse.

Sadly, in our sinful world, many husbands use their position of authority to abuse their wives, but this passage is not calling wives to submit to that. He is also under authority.

So, just to summarize for wives, a gospel blueprint for marriage is a challenge. It's a challenge to wives to submit to their husbands in everything because her fear of Christ freed her from using her social station to serve herself.

[25 : 56] She no longer uses the social stations in her life to serve her, but because now she fears the Lord, she uses it to serve his interests, and his interests are submit to your head.

Then in verses 25-32, Paul's now going to give instructions to the husbands. If the wife's responsibility in one word is submit, then the husband's is love.

I think it's interesting that Paul doesn't say husbands lead your wives, but love your wives. You see, it's not that husbands don't lead their wives, but that's not what Paul wants husbands to focus on, even though he's just reminded the wives that the husband is in a position of authority.

He doesn't teach the husbands about that authority. He doesn't want them to become consumed and obsessed with their authority. He wants them to focus on love because that authority, the authority he has is only a tool that serves the interests of love.

His main goal is love, and his authority is just a tool that helps him do that. So just like Paul did with the wives, he's going to show how a husband should love and why he should love.

[27 : 05] So look at verse 25. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. That's how a husband should love.

Similar to his instructions for the wives, Paul gives husbands a model here. Husbands are meant to think about how did Christ love the church, and then I'm going to use that as a model for how I love my wife.

A husband's love, if Christ is my example, a husband's love should be sacrificial and particular. So let me show you where that is.

Paul says it means to give yourself up for her. He says this actually three times throughout his letters. Christ loves and gives himself up.

Love and gives himself up. Those two things can't be separated. So that means that love is not fundamentally a feeling. See, husbands, we get this mixed up.

[28 : 07] We think this command is just keep a warm affection towards your wives. That's easy. She has to submit to me and all I have to do is feel good feelings about her. Nice.

Love it. That's not what this is saying. Love is not fundamentally an emotion. That's not the half of it. Love is fundamentally a sacrifice. A self-sacrifice.

If I am not regularly dying to my self-interests for her, I'm not loving her. It doesn't matter what I feel toward her.

If I'm not sacrificing me so that she can flourish, it's not love. And here's the real perversion. Here's when the sin in our hearts flame up and really take hold of it.

We often think I have authority. I'm the head. That means she is supposed to give herself up for me. We take the very command that's given to us and then force it upon her.

[29 : 05] She needs to give herself up for my expectations, my needs, and my desires. That is what spiritual death looks like in a husband.

That is not a gospel transformed husband. That's a husband who's become obsessed with his authority and forgot that love was the goal and the authority was just the tool. Love from a gospel transformed husband means I give myself up for her.

This doesn't just mean I'm willing to take a bullet for her. It means my pride dies so that I can lose another argument with her. It means my comfort dies so that I can help her with the household chores.

It means my hobbies die so that we can have quality time. It means my jealousy dies so that she can flourish in other relationships inside the church and in ministry.

That's sacrificial love. But love is also particular. Christ gave himself up to meet the church's particular needs. Christ had a specific bride with specific needs and his sacrifice met those needs.

[30 : 19] Look at verses 26 and 27. It says that. Here's why. This was his goal. That he might sanctify her having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word 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.

See, the church had a particular set of needs that Christ sacrificed himself to meet. A husband, this is often me, here's five years of experience speaking, a husband who makes a big sacrifice for his wife that has nothing to do with what she needs is not loving his wife.

Big sacrifices that don't honor who my wife is are not self-sacrificial. They're just self-expressive.

I'm treating her like a paint canvas to paint myself on. It needs to be connected. I need to know my bride. I need to know her needs and then sacrifice myself to meet those needs.

A husband's love must be a sacrifice and it almost must be particular to his wife's needs. So, let's pose the same question. Why? Why does a husband have to love his wife in this way?

[31 : 39] That's the next thing Paul addresses. Starting in verse 28, Paul teaches that a husband ought to love his wife because she is his body. Look at verse 28. In the same way, again, he means in the same way that Christ did this, in the same way, husbands should love their wives as their own bodies.

He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it just as Christ does the church.

Paul continues using the body metaphor here to explain why the husband must be sacrificially committed to his wife's splendor.

marriage is not just the nature of his social station. That's what it meant to sign up for marriage for a husband in the first place. Marriage is not just two individuals who have made a contract about how they best like to interact with one another.

It's not a dictator gaining a slave for his selfish demands. Marriage is a union like the head has to the body. Of course, the head has authority over the body but that authority is never used to harm the body.

[32 : 56] That authority is only a tool that the head uses to nourish and cherish the body. Husbands love particularly by sacrificing themselves because their wives are part of them.

Do you see Paul's logic there? He says, he who loves his wife loves himself. He doesn't say love your wife as you love yourself. It's not two separate people. He says, he who loves his wife loves himself.

So a wife's needs has a higher demand on a husband than any other person including himself. If a husband has any strength and any time left, those belong to his wife because she is his body.

But there is one final reason in our passage not just for husbands, this is actually for why the gospel has a blueprint for marriage.

Because marriage is not just one more social station where Christians can display the power of the gospel. Marriage is different from parenting, different from the workplace, different from the government.

[34 : 08] Wives submit and husbands love because the purpose of marriage is to reflect the gospel. That's what Paul closes this section teaching.

So just look at verse 30 with me. He says, because we are members of his body, therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.

this mystery is profound and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. So by this point in Ephesians we should be somewhat familiar with the metaphor of the church being Christ's body but here Paul quotes from Genesis chapter 2 and pushes it a little further.

There's more than a metaphor going on here. That verse that I just read, I read it earlier, is from the first marriage in the Bible between Adam and Eve and you think Paul's quoting it so he can say, see, Christ's relationship with the church follows that earlier pattern that was set up there in Genesis.

But he's saying, no, I'm going to be clear with you. That's what he says in verse 32. This mystery is profound and I'm saying that it refers to Christ and the church. He's saying Genesis 2, 24 refers to Christ and the church first, not to marriage first.

[35 : 33] Christ didn't leave his father and become one with the church in order to look like marriage. God created marriage in order to foretell what Christ would do to the church.

That's the purpose of every marriage. The reason we have marriage is to illustrate Christ's union with the church. And so when we, as the church, see the depth of Christ's love for us and being willing to come and make that kind of union to become the head to our body, that's what transforms us into the husbands and wives that we're called to be.

Christ bound himself so closely to us that whatever happens to Christ also happens to us. That's how tight the relationship is.

There's no part of Christ that says, you know what, things are getting hard, I'm going to keep you at arm's length now. Let's just make a contract, let's make things a little bit easier here because it's hard to be close to someone like you.

He bound himself so tightly that all of Christ's welfare is also the church's welfare. And this is what Ephesians has been trying to teach us. Think back to Ephesians 1.20.

[36 : 52] In Ephesians 1.20 it says, Christ was raised from the dead. Well, in Ephesians 2.5 we are also raised from the dead. In Ephesians 1.20 it says, Christ was raised to the Father's right hand.

Ephesians 2.6 says, we were raised to the Father's right hand. Do you see what's happening there? Do you see what happens to those who believe the gospel?

We have not remained individuals who are distinct from Christ and then we just make exchanges through some kind of gap between us, through some kind of contract. Christ left his Father, held fast to the church and now the two have become one.

Christ died and was raised, we died and were raised. Christ tore down any wall of division and hostility when his body was torn on the cross. Now the church has no walls of division because it was torn in us too.

The two have become one. That's how close this union is. All of Christ's blessings are now the church's blessings. Remember what Paul said at the beginning of this letter.

[38 : 02] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ. The church and Christ have become one. Everything we have is only because of our union to Jesus.

He did that for us. This mystery is profound and I'm saying it refers to Christ and the church. So if you are a Christian that is what Christ did to you.

If you're not a Christian you can repent and believe now and instantly gain access to all of those blessings. And if you're a Christian who's married this is what your marriage is meant to display.

This is the purpose of your marriage. A Christian marriage exists to reflect that reality. That's why Paul ends this section with a final review of what he's already said.

Verse 33 says, however, let each one of you love his wife as himself and let the wife see that she respects her husband. It's as though he's saying marriage is mainly about what Jesus has come and done for the church.

[39 : 10] However, that still gives us focus for what our little metaphors are supposed to do. Husbands, love your wives like Christ loved the church.

Wives, respect your husbands like the church respects Christ because that's the whole purpose of marriage. That's what that social station was created to show. This relationship was uniquely designed to illustrate the gospel.

So the goal of marriage is not, first of all, our happiness. It's not our romantic expression. Marriage is not for our convenience.

It's not for society's stability. It's not for our selfish needs to be met in some kind of contract. Marriage was given to humanity so that we would be surrounded by thousands of little illustrations of Christ leaving his father, holding fast to his wife, the two becoming one.

taking her through death and into new life. So, husbands and wives, let the way that Christ sacrificially bound himself to you fill you with the love to live out this gospel blueprint for marriage.

[40 : 28] Let me pray to that end. Father, we just ask for you right now to humble us you are bending trees right now with your wind outside, the storm that you've brought.

Father, I want all of us to be like that, trees that bend easily. Don't let us be hard and stiff-necked and hear these challenges and resist your will.

Let us be submissive to it. Just bend us with your commands. Let us move in the directions you ask us to. Let us do these things. And Father, let us do it in faith that this is what's best for us too.

You're a Father who's wise and good. Help us to trust that and then ambitiously live out the power of the gospel in our lives. Let Christ reign and be Lord of all.

We don't want Christ to just be Lord of Sunday mornings. Let him be Lord of tiny details like our marriages. Father, we ask for that.

[41 : 38] Ask for you to make that grow in us this week. Ask for more and more of that kind of obedience. We ask for it in Jesus' name. Amen.