

# **Marriage As It Was Meant To Be**

*EXALTING CHRIST PUBLISHING*

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# OUR FOCUS AND OBJECTIVE

The title of this marriage seminar is intended to communicate its focus and objective. The objective is to see our marriages become what God intended them to be in our new life in Christ. This objective can only be accomplished when a marriage is Christ-centered. Mere marriage principles not centered on our relationship to Christ are not enough. If this were not so, our marriages would be no different than what the world could do at its best. God was at the center of the first marriage before the fall was brought on by sin. In our new life, we must see our marriages as a central part of how we live out our relationship with Christ. We must never forget this. In other words, we are first of all persons who have made an eternal commitment to Christ's Lordship, and then we are partners who have made a lifetime commitment in marriage. Having said that, it is indeed true that God desires that our marriages be a growing and fulfilling experience. He has created marriage with unique roles and principles that truly work.

It is my desire that Christ will work in your marriage to bring Him glory as you find fulfillment in His perfect plan.

## BASIC EXPECTATIONS

1. Faithful attendance at all eight sessions. This will help you get the most from the lessons.
2. Faithfulness in doing the reading and other assignments.

**NOTE:** Before you read, ask God to teach you and give you understanding, and a desire to be open to learning and change. If you are only focused on your partner, you will hinder what He wants to teach you (Psalm 119:18, 129-133).

3. Seek to apply what you learn, humbling yourself before the Lord if He reveals attitudes and areas where you need to adjust and change (James 1:21-24).

## THE BOOKS

Reading will come from the following two books:

MEN:            *Christian Living in the Home*, by Jay Adams  
WOMEN:        *The Excellent Wife*, by Martha Peace



# **THE FUNDAMENTALS OF MARRIAGE, Part 1**

## **– Genesis 2:18-23**

### **I. THE BEGINNINGS OF MARRIAGE: IT WAS CREATED BY GOD’S OWN INITIATIVE.**

#### **A. It Is Beneficial To Man (Genesis 2:18a).**

- 1. Aloneness was not good. Man is deficient, unfinished, lacking. It is essential to his basic need, it is essential to his fulfillment and happiness.**

The normal relationship: Marriage is designed to be a blessing and a joyful experience.

- 2. Celibacy: The unmarried state is not necessarily the best state unless gifted.**

Sexual relations are good and to be enjoyed (Hebrews 13:4).

#### **B. It Is Basic To All Cultures And Human Relations.**

- 1. It is not a cultural advancement or socialized necessity.**
- 2. It is foundational to all other relationships.**

#### **C. It Is Built Upon Specific Principles And Patterns.**

- 1. Internal attitudes towards mate and roles.**
- 2. External activities.**

## **D. The Purpose Of Marriage.**

### **1. The threefold corporate purpose:**

- a. To master God's creation (1:28).
- b. To mediate God's rule.
- c. To multiply a Godly seed (1:27-28).

### **2. The fourfold individual purpose:**

- a. Companionship.
- b. Communication/intimacy.
- c. Complementer.
- d. Sexual fulfillment.

## **II. THE BLUEPRINT FOR MARRIAGE: IT HAS COMPLEMENTARY AND INTERDEPENDENT ROLES (vv. 18-22).**

### **A. There Is A Provision Of A Complementary Partner (Genesis 2:18b).**

#### **1. The emphasis on equality, suitable . There are two aspects to the term suitable:**

**Corresponding:** *"Similar in form, constitution and disposition"*, qualified, sufficient, constitutionally equal; vital to the fulfillment of.

**Contrary/complementary:** Different, opposite, separate qualities, yet complimentary.



**2. The emphasis on mutuality: A helper.**

- a. A mutuality of purpose and ambition. Seeking the same over-arching goals.
- b. A partnership. Assisting another to reach complete fulfillment.

Used of God in Psalm 33:20, 146:5 of lifting up, protection, provision deliverance, etc.

**3. The emphasis on diversity: A helper suitable.**

- a. The role orientation is different.
- b. The constitution is different.
  - (1) The general differences. Men and women think differently.
  - (2) The particular differences.

**B. There Is A Process Of Consciousness Of Need (Genesis 2:19-23).**

**1. The awareness of the need is brought to mind.**

- a. Survey of domesticated animals
- b. Animals which already had been created. Beasts of the field. Different from beast of earth (i.e. wild animals).

**2. The actual fulfillment of his need.**

- a. God caused a deep sleep. Suspension of all nervous function.
- b. God took a rib. The side or piece of the side.

- c. God made the woman. Built; involving care and skill, "formed."

**3. The appreciation for the provision.**

- a. This is it. This is emphatic - now, indeed, at last. This is the now the very thing that hits the mark.
- b. Woman. Maness; She-man.
- c. Mutuality. Oneness.

**C. Conclusion: How A Christian Couple Can Destroy Their Marriage.**

- 1. Refuse to accept the mate God has given you.**
- 2. Refuse to accept the fact the God made your mate different.**
- 3. Refuse to adjust.**
- 4. Refuse to accept the role differences.**
- 5. Refuse to lead as a husband.**
- 6. Refuse to be in a support role as a wife.**

# **THE FUNDAMENTALS OF MARRIAGE, Part 2**

## **– Genesis 2:24-25, 3:16**

### **I. THE PRINCIPLES OF MARRIAGE.**

#### **A. The Covenant Nature Of Marriage Is Foundational (Genesis 2:24).**

- 1. The definition of a covenant.**
- 2. The aspects of the covenant (Malachi 2:10-16).**
  - a. Spiritual: Before God.
  - b. Social: Before man.
  - c. Personal: With yourself.

#### **B. The Components Of Marriage Are Foundational (Genesis 2:24).**

*Leave Father and Mother and cleave to his wife.*

- 1. Leaving: Parting.**
- 2. Cleaving: Permanence.**
  - a. Permanence: To glue or cling to.
  - b. Prioritizing.
  - c. Perspective: It is not a child-centered relationship. There are two processes that must *never* be started prematurely, embalming and divorce.

**C. The Continuum Of Marriage. They Shall Become One (Genesis 2:24b). The Goal Of Marriage Is To Glorify Christ By Becoming One. This Involves:**

- 1. The challenge of incorporating another into your life.**
- 2. The catalyst for spiritual growth.**
- 3. The conscious acceptance of major adjustment.**
- 4. The challenge for real love.**
- 5. The confronting of our basic sinfulness and selfishness and becoming Christ-centered.**

**II. THE PROBLEMS THAT CONFRONT A MARRIAGE.**

**A. The Subversion Of Roles (Genesis 3:16).**

- 1. The woman resists with a bitter spirit.**
- 2. The man rules with a cruel spirit.**

**B. The Solidifying And Hardening Of A Heart (Matthew 19:8; Colossians 3:19).**

- 1. Towards God.**
- 2. Towards your mate.**

*Not one has done so who has a remnant of the spirit! (Malachi 2:15).*

# **THE FUNCTIONS OF A MARRIAGE: THE HUSBAND – Ephesians 5:22-33**

## **I. THE CALLING IS TO BE HIS WIFE’S LEADER AS CHRIST IS HEAD OF THE CHURCH.**

### **A. The Arrangement Is Ordained By God.**

#### **1. It was established by God at creation.**

- a. He created the roles. Leader and helper (Genesis 2:18).
- b. He constituted the man and woman for the roles. *Male and female He created them* (Genesis 1:27).

#### **2. It is explicitly asserted in the New Testament.**

- a. The order and structure of the relationship is asserted (1 Corinthians 11:3).
- b. The original design and source of the relationship is asserted.

#### **3. It is exemplified by Christ. Gave Him as head over all things to the Church; As Christ also is the Head of the Church (Ephesians 1:22- 23, 5:24).**

### **B. The Authority Involved In Headship Is Patterned After Christ. As Christ Also Is The Head Of The Church (Ephesians 5:23).**

#### **1. What it is not: It is not inherent power or superiority**

- a. It is not information power.

- b. It is not referent power.
- c. It is not expert power.
- d. It is not coercive power.

**2. What it is: It is positional power granted by God.**

- a. It is a calling to an office and status.
- b. It involves a mutual submission in regard to needs (Ephesians 5:21).

**II. THE CONTROLLING PRINCIPLE IS THAT HE IS TO BE HIS WIFE'S LOVER AS CHRIST LOVED THE CHURCH.**

**A. The Perversions Of Headship That Don't Manifest Christ's Love.**

- 1. The abdicators who refuse to lead.**
- 2. The dominators that abuse their leadership.**

**B. The Practice Of Headship That Manifests Christ's Love (Ephesians 5:23-32).**

- 1. The meaning of love.**
  - a. It isn't primarily feeling oriented.
  - b. It isn't involuntary. Companionship/compatibility, or sexually oriented.

- c. It is an intelligent voluntary decision to act on someone's behalf and to meet their need (Luke 10:25-37; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8).
- d. It is God-like and a fruit of the Spirit's power (Matthew 5:43-48).

**2. The model of love is Christ. The Savior of the Body (Ephesians 5:23, 25).**

**3. The measure of love and headship is to nourish and cherish (Ephesians 5:29).**

- a. Described.
- b. Demanded.

**III. THE CONSEQUENCE IS THAT HE IS HIS WIFE'S LIBERATOR AS CHRIST LIBERATED THE CHURCH.**

**A. She Sees Herself As A Prized Woman (Ephesians 5:26).**

**B. She Becomes A Perfected Woman (Ephesians 5:27).**





# **THE FUNCTIONS OF MARRIAGE: THE WIFE – Ephesians 5:22-24, 33**

## **I. THE CONTEXT OF SUBMISSION IS A WORLD IN REBELLION TO GOD'S STANDARD.**

### **A. The Corruption Of Marital Roles By Sin (Genesis 3:16).**

#### **1. The distortion of the original roles.**

NOTE: The curse in each case continues the original relation; only distorted (for example man cultivates the ground, only now in toil!).

#### **2. The "desire" is clarified in a parallel passage (Genesis 4:7).**

### **B. The Culturally Perverted View Of Women Often Has Influence On A Woman's Attitude.**

#### **1. The cultural view of a woman's role accepted at the time.**

a. The oppression of women.

b. The rebellion of women.

#### **2. The continual problem within the church.**

## **II. THE CALLING OF SUBMISSION IS UNDERSTOOD IN THE CONTEXT OF GOD'S WISDOM AND LOVE.**

### **A. What It Is Not (Ephesians 5:22-24).**

- 1. A passive response to authoritarianism.**
- 2. A compliant acceptance of inferiority.**
- 3. A demeaning servitude and noninvolvement.**

### **B. What It Is (Ephesians 5:22-24).**

- 1. An acceptance of God's order (1 Corinthians 11:3).**
- 2. An assumption of a role, not the imposition of a rule. You yourselves be subject.**

Submission involves:

- a. The authority element: "to be arranged under, to be assigned a role"**
  - b. The protective element: "to post in the shelter of"; "to draw up behind"**
- 3. An assignment designed to bring about the best for a wife and her marriage. Christ also is the head of the Church ... the Savior of the body"**
  - 4. An acknowledgment of Christ's lordship in your life. As unto Christ.**

### **III. THE CONDUCT OF SUBMISSION INVOLVES FAITH IN GOD IN TIMES OF TESTING.**

#### **A. The Peril Of Role Reversal That Must Be Avoided.**

- 1. The peril of becoming a usurper.**
- 2. The peril of becoming a manipulator.**
- 3. The scenario that Satan seeks to unfold.**

#### **B. The Practice Of Submission Involves Faith That God's Way Is Best (1 Peter 2:19-3:6); Respecting And Supporting Your Husband.**

- 1. The aim (1 Peter 2:19-22, 3:1).**
- 2. The action (1 Peter 3:2-3).**
- 3. The attitude (1 Peter 3:4).**



# **THE FRUSTRATIONS OF MARRIAGE: LIVING WITH A DISOBEDIENT HUSBAND – 1 Peter 3:1-6**

## **I. THE ASSIGNMENT AND CALLING FROM GOD OFTEN INVOLVES LIVING WITH A DISOBEDIENT OR INSENSITIVE MAN.**

### **A. Recognize Your Fundamental Relationship Is With God.**

- 1. Faithfulness under misused authority is a common Christian experience (1 Peter 2:12-25).**
- 2. Focus upon God's promise to be your shield and refuge (1 Peter 2:19-24).**

### **B. Respond In Like Manner As Christ. Likewise (1 Peter 3:1).**

- 1. His submissive example.**
- 2. His sure expectation that God would enable and help him.**

### **C. Relate To Your Husband In A Way That Softens And Draws (1 Peter 3:2-3).**

- 1. Recognize his maleness and the desire for respect.**
- 2. Recognize his misperception of your normal efforts.**

## **II. THE ADJUSTMENT NECESSARY TO INFLUENCE A MAN TOWARD GOD.**

### **A. The Outward Change In Behavior (1 Peter 3:2-3).**

#### **1. The characteristics of the behavior.**

- a. A general manner of life.
- b. Pure in regards to yourself.
- c. Respectful in regards to your husband.

#### **2. How to know when your not respectful.**

- a. You show more appreciation and admiration for other men: **"Have you noticed how considerate he is?" "Did you see what he bought her?"**
- b. You belittle his abilities, character or activities.
- c. You exert pressure to get things done.
- d. You question his explanations, decisions and advice (never ask his advice).
- e. You constantly complain about money pressures.
- f. You never remember his requests and desires.
- g. You never remember his positive qualities.
- h. You don't give any appreciation for his work- belittle it.
- i. You show no concern for his personal goals- no support to reach them.
- j. You never genuinely ask for his forgiveness when you have wronged him.

k. You are negative and a dream killer of his ideas.

**B. The Inward Change Of Attitude (1 Peter 3:4-5).**

1. **Continue to be concerned for appearance, but in balance.**
2. **Cultivate the right inner spirit.**

**III. THE ASSURANCE YOU WILL HAVE WITH CHRIST.**

**A. The Promise Of His Blessing (1 Peter 3:4-5).**

**B. The Precedent In Others Who Have Done It Before (1 Peter 3:6).**





# **THE FRUSTRATIONS OF MARRIAGE: LEARNING TO UNDERSTAND YOUR WIFE – 1 Peter 3:7**

## **I. THE ASSIGNMENT IS FOR A HUSBAND TO UNDERSTAND HIS WIFE.**

**A. He Is To Respond In Principle The Same Way He Expects From Her. Likewise.**

**B. He Is To Relate To Her In A Way That Produce Togetherness And Harmony. Dwell With Her.**

**1. There are principles that produce togetherness.**

**2. Understanding removes tension and division.**

**C. He Is To Recognize That Understanding His Wife Is A Spiritual Priority. In An Understanding Way.**

**1. The imperative command.**

**2. The implication is that men have a fundamental deficiency in this area**

**3. The incentive is to have God's blessing on your life.**

## **II. THE AREAS WHERE UNDERSTANDING IS NECESSARY.**

### **A. Her Constitutional Differences. As With A Weaker Vessel.**

**1. The physical differences.**

**2. The mental/emotional differences.**

- a. Personal vs. practical.
- b. Emotional identity vs. intellectual identity.
- c. Process oriented vs. product/object oriented; conquer oriented vs. conquered oriented, (for example, gifts).

### **B. Her Functional Differences. Since She Is A Woman.**

## **III. THE ATTITUDE THAT MUST PREVAIL IN UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE.**

### **A. Actively Pursue Her Honor As A Co-heir Of Christ.**

**1. The Definition: A valuing, a thing prized, a price paid, hence prized.**

**2. The decision to honor her.**

### **B. Areas Where A Husband Can Model Christlikeness In A Concrete Demonstration.**

- 1. Actively listen to her. Don't listen to fix, listen to understand.**
- 2. Be more interested in her ideas.**
- 3. Develop feelings of togetherness.**
- 4. Give her more praise and encouragement.**
- 5. Be the spiritual leader. Take the initiative in spiritual things, church, children.**
- 6. Allow her to live in a safe environment: Control your temper.**
- 7. Protect her at times from things that can over stress and burden her (money, people, children).**
- 8. Be sensitive to her emotions and needs (menstrual cycle, etc.).**
- 9. Concretely demonstrate she is #1 at times (change schedule, etc.).**



# **COMMUNICATION IN MARRIAGE – Ephesians 4:23-29**

## **I. THE PRIORITY OF COMMUNICATION: IT'S A BASIC NECESSITY TO ALL RELATIONSHIPS.**

### **A. It Deals With Root Attitudes That Affect The Key Areas Of Christian Living.**

- 1. The spirit of our mind is to be renewed.**
- 2. There are spheres of relationships affected (Ephesians 5:21-6:9).**

### **B. It Is The Development Of The Fundamentals Of Godliness And Christlikeness.**

- 1. The putting off of old patterns of communication.**
- 2. The putting on of new patterns of communication.**

### **C. It Concerns The Dynamics Necessary For Establishing And Maintaining Relationships.**

- 1. It is part of our walk (Ephesians 4:1, 17, 5:8, 15).**
- 2. It is essential to our being members of the Body (Ephesians 4:25).**

**D. It Is A Decision To Pursue God's Way, Not Satan's.**

- 1. A commitment to follow Christ in a specific area (Ephesians 4:20-22).**
- 2. A refusal to give Satan an opportunity (Ephesians 4:26).**

**II. THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION THAT DEMONSTRATE CHRISTLIKENESS IN MARRIAGE.**

**A. Determine In Christ's Power To Be A Person Of Integrity And Honesty (Ephesians 4:15, 25).**

- 1. Avoid falsehood with your mate.**
- 2. Affirm the truth to your mate.**
  - a. Speak it in love.
  - b. Pursue honesty at all costs.
- 3. Avoid gossiping about your mate.**

**B. Deal Promptly With Anger And Unresolved Problems (Ephesians 4:26).**

- 1. Recognize the presence of anger as a normal part of relationships.**
  - a. Righteous anger.
  - b. Unrighteous anger.

**2. Recognize mishandled anger as an ongoing barrier to communication.**

- a. Blowing up is sinful.
- b. Clamming up is sinful.

**3. Restore the relationship by redirecting your anger towards reconciliation.**

- a. Reconciliation if your are the offended: Granting forgiveness (Matthew 18:15-18, 21-22, 33-35).
- b. Reconciliation if your are the offender: Requesting forgiveness (Matthew 5:22-24).

**III. PUT YOUR ENERGIES TOWARD SOLVING THE PROBLEM, NOT ATTACKING THE PERSON.**

**A. Concern Yourself With Overall Spiritual Priorities (Ephesians 4:20-22, 26).**

- 1. God's glory. Not Satan's schemes that divide and embitter.**
- 2. Christlikeness and humility of spirit that trusts God's way.**

**B. Commit Yourself To Christ's Way Of Communication (Ephesians 4:26, 30).**

- 1. Communicate promptly so it doesn't develop into a deeper problem.**
  - a. Initiate the process.

b. Intercede for wisdom and humility.

**2. Cultivate an attitude that is conducive to mending a relationship.**

a. Control your spirit.

b. Control your tongue.

**3. Concern yourself with the relationship, not your rights or your wounded pride.**

a. Focus on the real problem and ultimate issue at stake.

b. Focus on edification and peace.



# **SEXUAL FULFILLMENT IN MARRIAGE – 1 Corinthians 7:1-5**

## **I. THE PURPOSE OF SEXUAL RELATIONS IN MARRIAGE.**

### **A. Propagation.**

### **B. Perfection.**

- 1. An expression of a covenanted relationship.**
- 2. A completion of a relationship.**

### **C. Pleasure.**

## **II. THE PLAN IS FOR MARRIAGE TO BE THE PLACE OF SEXUAL FULFILLMENT.**

### **A. It Is Ordained By God To Be The Relationship For Sexual Fulfillment.**

- 1. It is a provision for dealing with immorality and  
sexual temptation (v. 2).**
- 2. It is the place to find satisfaction of the God-given  
sexual drive.**
  - a. The possession of a partner for sexual satisfaction is  
inherent to marriage. Each “has” their own mate.
  - b. The peril of unmet sexual need is to be recognized (v. 5).

**B. It Is The Obligation Of A Christian Mate To Meet Their Partner's Need.**

- 1. The focus is on each one's responsibility before God as first priority.**
- 2. It involves giving instead of getting.**
- 3. The principle of agape love is the basic motive. The orientation is to meet your partner's need.**

**III. THE PRINCIPLES OF MARITAL SEX.**

**A. The Principle Of Authority (v. 4).**

- 1. There is a volitional choice.**
- 2. There is an emotional challenge.**
- 3. There is an intellectual commitment.**

**B. The Principle Of Availability To Meet Your Partner's Need (v. 5).**

- 1. Resist the temptation to deprive.**
- 2. Recognize the greater spiritual issues at stake.**
- 3. Rely on God to enable you to respond in a Christ-like manner.**