

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Marriage is not primarily about your happiness, but about your holiness. In Ephesians 5:22–33, you see that God designed marriage to reflect the relationship between Christ and the church. Through mutual submission and sacrificial love, both husband and wife are shaped to become more like Jesus. Even when marriage feels difficult or one-sided, you are called to walk faithfully with Christ through prayer, grace, and perseverance. Love that lasts is not built on a perfect spouse, but on your daily walk with a faithful Savior.

MAIN POINTS

- 1. Marriage Begins with Mutual Submission** (Ephesians 5:21). You are called to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Healthy marriages are marked by humility, not competition. You are to “race to the back of the line,” putting your spouse first. Submission is an act of worship to Jesus. Spirit-filled living produces gratitude, humility, and unity (Ephesians 5:18–20).
- 2. Wives Reflect the Church Through Respectful Submission** (Ephesians 5:22–24) You are called to willingly and humbly support your husband’s leadership. Biblical submission is not weakness, but strength under control. Submission is “as to the Lord,” meaning it is ultimately about trusting God. It reflects Christ’s relationship with the church. It is expressed through love, humility, and faith in God’s design.
- 3. Husbands Reflect Christ Through Sacrificial Love** (Ephesians 5:25–30) You are called to love your wife the way Christ loved the church. This means laying down your life, leading spiritually, and serving daily. You are responsible for nurturing and cherishing your wife. Your leadership should promote her spiritual growth (sanctification). You must first submit yourself to Christ to lead well.
- 4. Marriage Displays the Gospel** (Ephesians 5:31–33; Genesis 2:24). Marriage is a covenant where two become one. It is not about completing each other, but becoming one in Christ. Marriage was God’s design before sin entered the world. Your marriage is a living picture of Christ’s love for His church. Love and respect are essential for reflecting the gospel.
- 5. Walking with Jesus in Difficult Marriages** (Philippians 4:6–7; James 1:19–20; Galatians 6:9). Choose prayer over pressure. Choose blessing over bitterness. Choose resilience over resentment

Big Idea: Marriage is more about sanctification than satisfaction.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Why does Paul connect marriage to Christ and the church? (Ephesians 5:32)** *Possible Answer:* Marriage is meant to reflect the gospel, Christ’s sacrificial love and the church’s response. Your relationship becomes a visible picture of God’s covenant love.
- 2. What does biblical submission truly mean according to Scripture? (Ephesians 5:21–24)** *Possible Answer:* Submission is a voluntary, humble yielding out of reverence for Christ. It is not about inferiority but about trusting God’s order and design. Here’s another: submission is a willing, joyful disposition to follow a husband’s leadership in the marriage relationship.
- 3. Where are you currently seeking satisfaction more than sanctification in your relationships?** *Possible Answer:* you may focus on what you’re not getting instead of how God is shaping you. Scripture calls you to grow in Christlikeness (Romans 8:29).
- 4. How can you actively reflect Christ’s love in your relationships this week? (Ephesians 5:25; 5:22)** *Possible Answer:* you can serve sacrificially, speak kindly, forgive quickly, and prioritize your spouse’s spiritual good.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Marriage ultimately points you to Jesus. Where you fail to love, submit, or serve perfectly, Christ has already succeeded on your behalf. He loved the church sacrificially, gave Himself for sinners, and continues to sanctify His people by grace.

If you are a believer: repent where you have made marriage about your comfort instead of Christlikeness. Believe again that Jesus empowers you to love beyond your strength (Galatians 2:20). If you are not yet following Jesus: see that your deepest need is not a better relationship, but a restored relationship with God. Turn from sin and trust in Christ, who gave His life for you (Romans 5:8). Love that lasts begins with receiving the love of Jesus.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Monday – Mutual Submission (Marriage Begins with Humility)

Key Verse: “Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (Ephesians 5:21 ESV)

Reflection: Healthy relationships begin with humility, not control. When you submit to one another out of reverence for Christ, you reflect a heart that is surrendered to Jesus. Submission is not about losing; it’s about loving like Christ.

Application Question: How can you “race to the back of the line” in your relationships today?

Possible Answer: You can choose to listen first, serve willingly, and prioritize someone else’s needs over your own (Philippians 2:3–4).

Prayer Response: Jesus, give me a humble heart. Help me to serve others in a way that reflects Your love and honors You, in Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Tuesday – Respectful Submission (Wives Reflect the Church)

Key Verse: “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.” (Ephesians 5:22 ESV)

Reflection: Biblical submission is a willing and trusting response to God’s design. It is not about weakness, but about strength under control and faith in the Lord. When you live this out, you reflect the church’s loving response to Christ.

Application Question: Where is God calling you to trust Him more deeply in your relationship with your husband or someone else?

Possible Answer: You may need to release control and trust that God is working through His design, even when it feels difficult (Proverbs 3:5–6).

Prayer Response: Father, help me trust You fully. Teach me to walk in humility and confidence in Your perfect design, in Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Wednesday – Sacrificial Love (Husbands Reflect Christ)

Key Verse: “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” (Ephesians 5:25 ESV)

Reflection: Christlike love is sacrificial and intentional. Jesus didn’t lead with power, but with surrender and service. When you love this way, you reflect the heart of Christ and help others grow spiritually.

Application Question: What is one way you can lay down your preferences to serve your wife or someone else today?

Possible Answer: You can give your time, attention, or energy to meet someone else’s needs instead of focusing on your own (Philippians 2:5–7).

Prayer Response: Lord, teach me to love like You. Help me to serve sacrificially and care deeply for others, in Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Thursday – Gospel-Centered Marriage (A Living Testimony)

Key Verse: “This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.” (Ephesians 5:32 ESV)

Reflection: Marriage is meant to display the gospel to the world. Your commitment, forgiveness, and unity reflect Christ’s love for His church. Even in imperfection, God uses your relationships as a testimony of His faithfulness.

Application Question: How can your relationships better reflect the gospel this week?

Possible Answer: You can choose forgiveness, extend grace, and stay committed even when it’s hard (Colossians 3:13).

Prayer Response: God, let my life be a testimony of Your love. Use my relationships to point others to Jesus, in Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Friday – Faithful Perseverance (Walking with Jesus in Difficulty)

Key Verse: “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.” (Galatians 6:9 ESV)

Reflection: When relationships are hard, God is still at work in you. Your calling is not to control outcomes or even the circumstances, but to remain faithful in obedience. Love that lasts is built through perseverance with Jesus.

Application Question: Where do you need to choose resilience over resentment right now?

Possible Answer: You may need to keep praying, serving, and trusting God even when you don’t see immediate change (Philippians 4:6–7).

Prayer Response: Father, strengthen me to remain faithful. Help me trust You and continue doing good, even when it’s difficult, in Jesus’ Name, Amen.