

Missional Marriage
Colossians 3:18-19 and Ephesians 5:22-33

READY

Can you think of any celebrity marriages? Why do you think celebrity marriages are so prone to failure?

SET & GO

Primary Text: Colossians 3:18-19 **Supporting Texts:** Ephesians 5:22-33

Set 1 *Read Colossians 3:18-19 and Ephesians 5:22-33. Answer the following questions:*

What two objectives does Christ have for the church as indicated by “so that...” in Eph. 5:26 and 28?

What two ways does a man love his own body (Eph. 5:29)?

What are the two concluding reminders Paul gives to married couples in Eph. 5:33?

Set 2 ***Briefly discuss:** Throughout the passage in Ephesians, husbands and wives are given their respective commands on the basis of how Christ interacts with the church. Marriage is clearly being used as an analogy for this relationship. This connection gives us a clear indication that God’s intention for marriage is that it be a living illustration of the gospel. Certainly God desires the husband and wife to find enjoyment in their relationship, but the greater purpose is to display the love of Christ and the submission of the church. Even a couple’s mutual enjoyment is a picture of the mutual affection Christ and His bride, the church, have for one another.*

Go 2a What would our culture say is the purpose of marriage? Why do people get married?

Go 2b What would you have said is the purpose of marriage? If you are married, honestly share why you got married? If you’re not married but desire to be, honestly share why you would like to be?

Go 2c How might a missional understanding of marriage change your expectations of marriage? How might this understanding help to shape how a couple interacts?

Go 2d What would cause Christ to “divorce” the church? How might this shape how you think about divorce?

Set 3 ***Briefly discuss:** Husbands do their part in displaying the gospel by the way they love their wives. This love is to be self-sacrificing and is expressed by nourishing and tenderly caring for the wife with the aim of seeing her mature in holiness and spiritual beauty. Just as Christ uses the Word to “wash” the church (v 26), so husbands ought to see that their wives (and families) are being shaped by the Word.*

Go 3a What are some specific ways a husband could nourish his wife’s relationship with Christ? How are you doing?

Go 3b What are some specific ways you can show your wife that you cherish her? In what ways can you show her tenderness? How will this help her to receive your leadership?

Go 3c What keeps your wife from being under the preached Word? What keeps her from personal time in the Word? How can you help her in both of these areas?

Go 3d In what ways might your character inhibit your wife’s desire to follow your leadership?

Set 4 Briefly discuss: *Wives do their part in displaying the gospel by the way they submit to their husbands. This submission is to come from the heart and should display a genuine respect for him.* A wise wife will help her husband to learn how to better lead her and will show him grace when he leads awkwardly. There will be great temptation to resist his spiritual leadership when he tries to correct ungodly thinking, attitudes, or behaviors. This submission is made more difficult because she will see his deficiencies and may be tempted to compare herself to him as an excuse for resistance.***

- Go 4a** What does it mean to respect a husband? What makes this hard (*be careful not to disrespect your husband by sharing his faults with others*)?
- Go 4b** What are some specific ways you can help your husband better lead you? How can you show him grace when he does this awkwardly or even when he blunders badly?
- Go 4c** How would you respond to your husband if he were to correct an ungodly attitude or behavior of yours? How might your responses to him stifle his ability or desire to lead you?***
- Go 2a** Remember that your husband is a conduit of your submission to Christ. You submit “as to the Lord.” How might this reminder help you better respond to the imperfections of your husband’s leadership?

FINISH

If you are not consistently gathering with your church and hearing the preached Word, what keeps you away? What changes do you need to make in order to make this a top priority for you and your family?

* You are commanded to respect your husband in large part due to the role that **God** has given him as your head (Eph. 5:23-24). You may not believe that he is worthy of your respect, but this is not gospel-oriented thinking and indicates that you are making wrong comparisons. Don’t compare yourself to your husband; compare yourself to Christ. Your husband is broken and may be very broken, but he is still your husband through whom you obey Christ.

** This is no excuse for a husband’s resistance to change. He must obey Christ and will give a greater account for his deficiencies. But neither is his sinfulness or even his hypocrisy an excuse for disregarding correction that is truly needed.

*** This question is not meant to imply that only husbands can correct. Godly wives play an important role in helping their husbands to deal with sin. When his thinking, attitudes, or behaviors are ungodly, she must lovingly and respectfully correct him. However, he is to **lead** this kind of openness by a willingness to speak truth in love to his wife.

Walk it Out!
Living Christian in an Everyday World
Missional Marriage
Colossians 3:18-19 and Ephesians 5:22-33

God has a mission for your marriage that goes well beyond you.

1. What is God's mission for your marriage?

God intends for your marriage to be a living _____ of the _____ of Jesus Christ.

- a. Husbands illustrate Christ's _____.
- b. Wives illustrate the Church's _____.

2. What is the husband's role?

- a. _____ your wife.
- b. _____ your wife.
- c. _____ your wife.

3. What is the wife's role?

- a. _____ to your husband.
- b. _____ your husband.
- c. _____ your husband.