

AMITY BIBLE CHURCH

"To Know God and To Make Him Known"

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY NOTES

— May 27, 2018 —

Pastor Leslie Smith

SERIES: Reaffirming the Biblical Foundation of the Family

SERMON: Marriage 101

TEXT: Ephesians 5:18, 21-27

Central Message:

Why is marriage so important to God in the first place? The answer is simple. Marriage does not exist for itself...it is **symbolic** of a greater reality. The symbolism of marriage can only be understood in the light of the foundation on which a Christian marriage is based: the mystery of Christ's relationship to His church. Ephesians 5:21-33 yields three lessons on the symbolism of marriage. The first lesson focuses on the basis for Christian conduct: the relationship of Christ and His church. The second lesson addresses the responsibilities of the Christian wife. The third deals with the duties of the Christian husband. If we understand and apply Paul's teaching, we will discover that our attitudes and conduct in a Christian marriage, like every other dimension of the Christian's life, are dramatically different from those of the world.

There are three over-arching principles that, if embraced, will serve to solidify and preserve the marriage covenant. First, ***at least one spouse in every marriage needs to be a born-again believer and committed to being filled with the Holy Spirit on a daily basis.*** Scripture forbids believers to marry unbelievers, but it is possible that two unbelievers may marry, and one spouse becomes a believer subsequent to the marriage. Second, ***every husband needs to be committed to loving his wife as Christ loved the church.*** This means that husbands must be willing to die for their wives in order that they be completely sanctified and set apart for the glory of God. And finally, ***every wife must be willing to submit to the***

authority of her husband in every aspect of the marriage...in everything!!! When husbands and/or wives focus on their own duties in the marriage and on their commitment to Christ instead of on their spouse’s flaws, then the marriage works.

The Summary Statement for the Text

Who we are as believers will determine who we are as husbands and wives.

The Key Take-Away for the Lesson

There are three guiding principles that govern our Christian lives and those same three guiding principles govern our married lives. The key lesson for us is that we must become committed believers before we can become committed spouses. Those guiding principles are *surrender, submission, and sacrifice*.

High Point #1: Every believer is called to a life of ***surrender***. (Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:25-26)

¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, ^[1]for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,

If we live by the Spirit, let us also *walk by the Spirit*. Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

The act of surrender is a testimony to the value that you as a believer place in your relationship with God. The real question is this...do you love God enough to surrender your will to His will? Are you willing to allow the Holy Spirit to produce the fruit of righteousness in your life? The quality of your married life will be a direct reflection of your willingness to surrender your will to God.

High Point #2: Every believer is called to a life of ***submission***. (Ephesians 5:21; Philippians 2:4)

“and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.”

"do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others."

Submission is all about the value you place on your relationship with other people, and the operative question is whether you care enough for them to give deference to them.

A great deal of emphasis is placed upon the command for wives to submit to their husbands and that is certainly a valid assertion, but the context for that command is established in verse 21...believers are to first submit to each other as they submit to the Holy Spirit. When Spirit-filled believers come together in marriage and they are willing to defer to each other...to be willing to give up their own preferences...that is the foundation for Christian marriage. Marital love rests upon a foundation of mutual submission.

High Point #3a: Every believer is called to a life of *sacrifice*. (Romans 12:1)

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship.

An act of sacrifice is the voluntary surrendering of something good so that you might gain something greater. Jesus sacrificed His life so that He might become the first fruit of many brethren. He gave up something valuable so that He could gain something more valuable. That is the basis of the Christian life. What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul? When this attitude of sacrifice is allowed to permeate a marriage, husbands and wives gain so much more than they ever give up.

High Point #3b: Every believer who is called to marriage is also called to a life of *sacrifice*. (Ephesians 5:22-27)

AMITY BIBLE CHURCH

“To Know God and To Make Him Known”

²² Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. ²⁴ But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, ²⁶ so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ that He might present to Himself the church ^[q] in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

Our text is based upon a principle, which is vitally important and yet little understood in our times: God has established certain institutions in this world which are earthly symbols of heavenly realities. The nature of the heavenly reality determines the nature of the symbol. Stated briefly, the substance dictates the symbol.

You may not believe it, but sacrifice means risking yourself. When you look at Christ's sacrifice you understand that His death was not just an act of kindness. It was the pain of rejection when He entered our world to call us to Himself. Before we can begin to understand this concept, we must recognize the motivation. We can never comprehend why God did what He did, but I think we can get a glimpse of the motivation which will help us as husbands see what our goal is supposed to be.

What is our purpose as husbands? What do we expect to happen? What is the expectation of Love? Our task as husbands is to love our wives sacrificially so that she blooms as God planned. The purpose of love is the perfecting of the one that is loved. If we look closely at the Ephesians 5 passage, it shows us the purpose of Christ's sacrifice and His love, and it shows us what the goal of husbands must be. Christ wanted to sanctify the church and to set her apart for Himself and to Himself. When we marry someone, we set them apart from the world. They are

AMITY BIBLE CHURCH

"To Know God and To Make Him Known"

set apart for special protection, for special care, for special attention, for a special purpose. When a man marries a woman, he has taken her out of the world and set her apart because he wants to devote special attention to her. What is the goal of this special attention? He wants to present her to himself without a spot or wrinkle.

Christ loves the church and is committed to removing all the blemishes so He can present her in all her glory and beauty to Himself. This is the purpose of love...to bring about the perfection of the beloved. So the goal of love is not just kindness motivated by a desire to make your wife happy. The goal is to build her up to bring about God's purpose in her.