

4-9-2023, COTR Texarkana

Title: A Happy Home, pt-1

Purpose: Purpose: Provoke people to embrace Biblical principles to have a happy, fulfilling, Christ-honoring marriage.

Truth for Today: Marriages built on God's Word can be happy, fulfilling, and Christ-honoring.

Text: Proverbs 24:3

Topic: Marriage, Family, Commitment, Love, Submission, Respect

Series Title: Building Relationships that Last

Series Purpose: Provoke people to build healthy relationships that can last a lifetime by embracing Biblical principles.

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I. Introduction

A. Text: Proverbs 24:3 (NCV) It takes wisdom to have a **good family**, and it takes understanding to make it strong.

B. Review series: 'Building Relationships that Last'. We're learning how to build healthy relationships that can last a lifetime by embracing Biblical principles. Last week we talked about how to heal broken relationships by hitting the reset button of forgiveness. Today we'll talk about 4 Biblical principles to help you have a happy, fulfilling, Christ-honoring marriage. Next week in pt. 2 we'll talk about raising kids.

1. This will help everyone whether you're married, single, or divorced. You can apply these principles to your life and help marriage people you care about.

C. Title: A Happy Home, pt-1

II. God's design for marriage

A. Ge. 2:18–24 (ESV) the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; **I will make him a helper (MSG companion) fit (NLT just right) for him.**"...22 And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman...23 Then the man said...she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." 24 Therefore **a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**

1. According to the Bible, marriage is designed by God to be between a biological male and a biological female. God intended marriage to be a lifetime commitment that will bring happiness and fulfillment and a secure environment to raise happy, well-adjusted kids. Our culture

defines marriage differently. We must decide if we obey God's Word or ignore it.

III. Biblical principle #1: Commitment is the glue that keeps us together.

A. Def. commitment: a vow or pledge to act in a certain way; something we have obligated our self to do, e.g., marriage vows, "as long as we both shall live", instead of, "as long as love shall last". Contrast: uncommitted people pursue what they feel are better choices or options and break a prior commitment, e.g., having an affair and divorcing. It's unrealistic to think any relationship won't have tough times but commitment is what carries a relationship through adversity. // building foundation

1. Covenant marriage vs. no fault divorce: No-fault divorce is a divorce in which the dissolution of a marriage does not require evidence showing wrongdoing or a breach of the marriage contract by either party.¹

Covenant marriage is a legally distinct kind of marriage in Arizona, Arkansas, and Louisiana in which the marrying spouses agree to obtain pre-marital counseling and accept more limited grounds for later seeking divorce²

People who choose to live together instead of getting married try to keep their options open wrongfully assuming they'll be happier, but the opposite is true. Focus on the Family: research shows that cohabitation is correlated with greater likelihood of unhappiness and domestic violence. Women are more likely to be abused by a cohabiting boyfriend than a husband. Children are more likely to be abused by their mothers' boyfriends than by her husband. If a cohabiting couple ultimately marries, they tend to report lower levels of marital satisfaction and a higher propensity to divorce.³ Commitment is a key to healthy relationships.

II. Biblical principle #2: Paul told husbands to love their wife

A. The Bible isn't a 'how to' marriage handbook. Married/ marriage is only mentioned 21 times in the NT and rarely is it prescriptive. However, If we live by Bible in general, we'll be a better Christian and better Christians make better marriage partners. Paul wrote the longest address in NT about marriage giving 4 commands:

B. [Ephesians 5:25–33 (NLT) **For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her...**

1. LaNell to husbands: How does a husband love his wife like Jesus loves us?

2. John to husbands: (1) To honor Christ, husbands have to deal with selfishness. (2) Biblical love is more than sex and feelings; it's acting in a loving way.

III. Biblical principle #3: Paul told wives to submit to their husbands and treat them with honor and respect.

A. Context: how Christians are supposed to act. [Eph. 5:21–33 (NLT) And further, **submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.** 22 **For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord.** 23 **For a husband is the head of his wife** as Christ is the head of the church...24 As the church submits to Christ, so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything...33...and **the wife must respect her husband.**]

(AMP)...notices him, regards him, honors him, prefers him...praises him, and loves and admires him exceedingly].

1. What submission is NOT: Video, Comedy "*Father of the Bride, pt. 2.*" I don't know what 'Mi-Ki-Kaleem' means but it's not Biblical submission.
2. Def. submit: To yield our will to another.⁷ Context both are called to submit; it's not 1 way. [1 Peter 3:7 (NLT)...husbands...she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. Treat her as you should...] Paul isn't saying a woman is to submit to all men, only her husband. A wife doesn't submit to her husband because he's smarter or stronger. There's no superiority or inferiority. Submission doesn't mean you're weak. The key is '*As to the Lord*' does not mean that a wife is to submit to her husband in the same way she submits to the Lord, but rather that her submission to her husband *is* a way she serves/ honors the Lord because⁴ Paul said the Lord appointed the husband as head of the home. i.e., he is responsible for the condition of the family. E.g., If somebody needs to apologize, get a 2nd job...
3. LaNell to wives: (1) What does it mean to submit to your husband? (2) Are there limits to submission? (3) What if the husband isn't a Christian; does a Christian wife still need a submissive attitude?
4. LaNell to husbands: What should a husband do if a wife isn't submissive?
5. John to husbands: Should a husband demand submission? No! If we do our part in loving her, she will respond in a Christ honoring way.

IV. Foundational principle #4: Love is more than words, it's the way we act.

What does it mean to love someone? In back seat of car, “I love you”, means I want to have sex with you. If your spouse gets a cancer on their face and surgery disfigures their good looks, “I love you” means I’m committed to you despite how you look.

A. In the Greek language of the NT, there were 3 kinds of love: (1) Def.: Eros: sexual love.⁵ (2) Def. Phileō: love focused on feelings and emotions. Friends have this kind of love but when something bad happens, the feelings change the friendship usually ends. (3) Def. Agape: unconditional love like God has for us; love that is kind and giving without asking anything in return; a love that is committed to doing good for the other person no matter what they do. Agape is more a love by choice and action than phileo, which is love based on emotion and feelings; agape refers to the will to act in loving ways whether we feel it or not. Human love depends on moods and feelings, but agape love draws on the Holy Spirit to love the way God loves us.⁴

V. Conclusion: How should Christians who love each other express their love?

A. Prayer for marriages, (stand??? and hold hands) [1 Cor. 13:4–7 (NLT) Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud 5 or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged...7 Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.] Prayer for marriages

VI. Response

A. Souls: God’s love for us, [John 3:16 (ESV) “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”]

VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No-fault_divorce
2. <https://www.google.com/search?q=covenant+marriage&oq=covenant+marriage&aqs=chrome..69i57j0l5.4497j1j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>
3. <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/marriage/preparing-for-marriage/test-driving-marriage/the-problem-with-living-together>
4. Hoehner, H. W. (1985). [Ephesians](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 640). Victor Books.

5. White, R. E. O. (1988). [Love](#). In *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible* (Vol. 2, p. 1357). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

VIII. Supplemental Material

- A. [Ephesians 5:25–33 (NLT) 25 For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her 26 to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God’s word. 27 He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. 28 In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. 29 No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church. 30 And we are members of his body.
- B. Commitment anchors a relationship by bringing security and stability, e.g., foundation of a building.
- C. III, B, Motivation: A Christian marriage is our testimony to Christ and His Bride, [Eph. 5:31–33 (NLT) As the Scriptures say, “A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.” 32 **This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one.**]
- D. III, IV, **How does a husband love his wife like Jesus loves us?** Love is a safe place of shelter, for it never stops believing the best for others. Love never takes failure as defeat, for it never gives up. 8 Love never stops loving... 1 Corinthians 13:7-8 TPT Difference between love and cherish: We use the word love when we refer to ice cream or baseball and also our spouse. The word love is often identified with a feeling, but I like to use the word CHERISH because it is an action word and hasn’t been associated with inconsequential things. Definition of Cherish: To treat with affection and tenderness, treasure, appreciate. To nurture and protect. (The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, 5th Edition.) Learn Your Wife’s Love Language. Don’t just love her the way you want to receive love. - Tender touch and embrace (not just when you want something, non-sexual) - Words of affirmation - you are beautiful, I love your gentle spirit, I am proud of you - Uninterrupted time - face to face communication, quiet, alone, listening and hearing what she is going through. Not reading or watching something when you are talking. Don’t just try to fix her or convince her, really listen. - Acts of Service - washing

her car, doing the dishes, putting away clothes, giving kids a bath.. - Gifts - spa gift card, flowers, dinner out... EX: John walks around to my side of the bed to pray for me before we go to sleep at night. Picks me flowers from the garden. Tells me he is proud of me. Washes and details my car. Rubs my feet... **What does it mean to submit to your husband?** Submission is a 4-Letter word in our American culture (actually 10, but who's counting). I am a strong, independent woman, but I find great security in being a woman under authority. I find great freedom being a submitted wife. God takes care of me. God watches out for me. I can trust God. And my husband has to stand before God and give an account if he makes a bad decision. (Ha! Ha!) Submission is making a choice every day to trust God. To trust Him that He will lead and direct my husband. To trust God that when my husband and I don't agree, God will take care of me. It's also admitting that I am not always right and that I know God is ultimately in control. **Are there limits to submission?** Obedience is conditional. If your husband asks you to do something that is unscriptural or against your conscience or could harm someone (or yourself), then you can still have a good attitude but choose not to obey. We are submitting to our husbands as unto the Lord and God does not require us to do something that would be displeasing to Him. **What if the husband isn't a Christian; does a Christian wife still need a submissive attitude?** I don't choose to submit to my husband because he's a pastor, or because he's perfect (but this year he has come pretty close to being perfect), nor because he's always right. I also, don't submit to him because I am a weak woman or because I am not smart enough to take care of myself. I submit to my husband because: - The Bible tells me to do it. I love God and I show my love to God by obeying His commands. - When I submit to him, I am actually submitting to God and putting my trust in God's ability to take care of me. - There is protection in submission. When I submit to God by submitting to my husband, then my husband is responsible before God for the decisions that are made. I am protected and God will take care of me. **What should a husband do if a wife isn't submissive?** A husband cannot demand that his wife to submit to him. He can only control his own actions and attitudes. He should always lead by loving his wife and cherishing her. Praying for her. And praying for wisdom when there is conflict. Searching his heart about what he needs to do. MOST IMPORTANT: John and I try to never

make a decision if we are in disagreement. We will table the decision and continue to pray until God changes one of our hearts or changes the situation.