

I. Intro

A. Love and Marriage: Marriage is a beautiful institution that is ordained by the Lord.

1. **Prov. 18:22:** *He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.*
2. **Prov. 12:4:** *"An excellent wife is the crown of her husband..."*

B. Biblical Happiness

1. **O.T. (ehsher):** *supremely blessed = supremely happy*
 - a. **Ps. 1:1:** *Blessed (happy) is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.*
 - b. **Ps. 2:12:** *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed (happy) are all they that put their trust in Him.*
 - c. **Ps. 32:1:** *Blessed (happy) is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. ² Blessed (happy) is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity,...*
 - d. **Ps. 119:2:** *Blessed (happy) are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with the whole heart!*
 - e. **Ps. 146:5:** *Happy (blessed) is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, Whose hope is in the Lord his God.*
2. **N. T. (Makarios):** *supremely blessed = supremely happy*
 - a. **Matt. 5:3:** *Blessed (happy) are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
 - b. **Matt. 5:4:** *Blessed (happy) are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

c. **Matt. 5:6:** *Blessed (happy) are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.*

d. **Jn. 20:29:** *“Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed (happy) are those who have not seen and yet have believed”.*

e. **James 1:12:** *Blessed (happy) is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. - NKJV*

3. Happiness is biblical, but completely different from the modern understanding of happiness.

a. Biblical happiness is not merely an emotion.

C. God does desire happiness, but even more than happiness, His will is to bring us into a place of Holiness.

1. **Holiness:** *to be sanctified, to be set apart, to be distinguished as different in character and activity.*

a. **1 Thess. 4:3:** ³ *For this is the will of God, your sanctification.*

b. **1 Pet. 1:16:** *“Be holy, for I am holy”*

II. Body

A. Sanctification in Community

¹ *I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Eph. 4:1-3)*

1. God is producing some things in us as we walk with others on this journey.

a. Humility, gentleness, patience

b. Maintaining the unity of the spirit

2. God gave offices with purpose... to produce some things

¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, (Eph. 4:11-13)

3. God ordained engagement for Body Building

¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Eph. 4:15)

4. God ordained community to teach us to Walk in the Love of Christ

¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (Eph. 5:1-2)

5. God called us to imitate Him (in community), thereby producing a Christ-like love.

¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. (Eph. 5:19-21)

6. This type of spiritual growth is only developed in the context of a community.

7. Sanctification in Community (Repeat)

B. Sanctification in Radical Submission

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (Eph. 5:22-24)

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1. Wives, submit to him like he's Jesus.
 2. Submit: *to be assigned to a particular area + under*
 - a. Not a sign of inferiority or weakness.
 3. **To Submit to your husband**: *is to be assigned a particular area, to regard and deeply care for, to revere; honor him, build him up with the highest esteem (as to the Lord).*
 - a. **Problem**: He's not Jesus (Sisters).
 4. Wives, this type of submission is more to Jesus than to your husband.
 - a. God knows that your husband is a terrible leader.
 - a. But Jesus is a perfect leader.

2. Sanctification in Submission

C. Sanctification in Sacrificial Love (Eph. 5:25-31)

²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. 5:25-27)*

1. Husbands, love her like you're Jesus
2. Jesus' love is sacrificial in nature
 - b. When Jesus loves, he gave his very life...
 - c. He gave his ALL to those who didn't deserve it.
3. Husbands, we've been called to love like Jesus loved the church (which challenges us to follow the Leadership of Jesus).
 - a. This type of love is more a product of your love for Jesus than your love for her.
 - b. Your marriage becomes the platform for God to display His grace.
 - c. God knows that you are a terrible leader, yet he asked her to submit to your leadership anyway.

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- d. God knows that your love is weak and selfish, yet he instructed you to love her like Jesus.
 - i. Sacrificial in nature.
 - ii. Supply her needs.

D. Challenges with Submitting/Sacrificing

²² *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord... (Eph. 5:22)*

²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,... (Eph. 5:25)*

1. The standard is set so incredibly high in either case that it can be frustrating.
 - a. The standard is actually unattainable (in our own
 - b. The call to radically submit and love sacrificially is God's standard that can only be reached by power of Holy Spirit.
- a. It takes the hand of God to forge a culture of mutual submission/sacrifice.
2. The Submitting/Sacrificing prescribed in Ephesians does NOT work for:
 - a. Boyfriends/Girlfriends
 - b. Married, but the spouse doesn't love Jesus.
3. Reminder: Liberty/Freedom in choosing on the front end.

II. Conclusion

- A. God is using the institution of marriage to unveil a great mystery: **The mystery concerning the covenant union between God and His people.**

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (Eph. 5:32)

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1. Marriage between a man and a woman is secondary to a greater marriage: The marriage between Christ and the Church.
 - a. Greatest love story this world has ever witnessed.
 2. Jesus, the Eternal Son is the Bridegroom King.
 3. Christ loved His Bride so much that He came to pay a ridiculous dowry to redeem her from slavery.
 - a. He purchased her freedom with His own blood.
 - i. She was not worthy of the cost.
- B. God is using the institution of marriage to display the way in which He will sanctify His Bride.
1. By sacrificially serving her, washing her.
 - a. She did not deserve it.
 - b. He promised to transform her into a spotless, ready Bride who is waiting for His return.
 2. Community (Marriage) is one of the primary places where Christ is telling His grace-filled, jaw-dropping story.
 3. Community (Marriage) is one of the primary places where Christ is preparing/sanctifying His people (Bride) to meet with Him.