

In the HOUSE *of the* LORD



LESSON #9 – MARRIAGE

Men and women are equal before God, yet God created men and women to be different. They are united in Christ, yet Christ has given each of them different roles within marriage and within the Christian church. Both men and women are to use their God-given roles to serve God and each other.

The love that caused Christ to give Himself up for the Church, is the same love that spouses are to have for each other. This is a self-sacrificing love that always puts the other person's needs ahead of their own.

Christ is the foundation for a Christian marriage. The more a husband and wife strengthen their relationship with Christ, the more they will strengthen their relationship with each other.

What is marriage?

- Matthew 19:4–6 *"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'?"⁶ So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."*
- Ephesians 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.*

How was marriage first established?

- Genesis 2:18–24 *The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."¹⁹ Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.²¹ So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh.²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.²³ The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."²⁴ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.*

Already at creation, God established different roles for husbands and wives. God created Eve to be Adam's "helper." Is the helper role an inferior role?

- Genesis 2:18 *The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."*
- Psalm 27:9 *Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, O God my Savior.*
- Psalm 118:7 *The LORD is with me; he is my helper. I will look in triumph on my enemies.*
- Hebrews 13:6 *So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"*

How does God describe the roles that husband and wife are to have within the home?

- Ephesians 5:21-28 *Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.²² Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.*
- 1 Peter 3:1-8 *Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives,² when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.³ Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes.⁴ Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.⁵ For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands,⁶ like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.⁷ Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.⁸ Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.*

The role of the husband:

The role of the wife:

The role of both:



How does the Bible describe the roles of men and women within the church?

- 1 Corinthians 11:3 *Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.*
- 1 Timothy 2:12-13 *I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve.*
- 1 Corinthians 14:33, 34, 40 *For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the congregations of the saints,³⁴ women should remain silent in the churches. . . . But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.*

How does the Bible describe the love that a husband and wife are to have within the home?

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*
- John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*
- John 15:13 *Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.*
- 1 John 4:10 *This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.*

Marriage has three purposes/blessings, which can be denoted with three “C” words:

- Genesis 2:18 *The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."*
- Proverbs 18:22 *He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD.*
 - Blessing/Purpose:
- Genesis 2:24 *For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.*
- 1 Corinthians 7:2-5 *But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.³ The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.⁴ The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.⁵ Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*
 - Blessing/Purpose:
- Genesis 1:28 *God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number."*
- Psalm 127:3-5 *Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him.⁴ Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth.⁵ Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them.*
 - Blessing/Purpose:



What earthly responsibilities does the Lord give Christian parents?

- Ephesians 6:1-4 *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.² "Honor your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise--³ "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."⁴ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*
- Proverbs 22:6 *Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.*
- Colossians 3:21 *Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.*

What heavenly responsibilities does the Lord give Christian parents?

- Proverbs 22:6 *Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.*
- 2 Timothy 1:5 *I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.*
- 2 Timothy 3:15 *From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*
- Ephesians 6:4 *Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

Who has the right to end marriage?

- Malachi 2:13-16 *Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands.¹⁴ You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.¹⁵ Has not the LORD made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.¹⁶ "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.*
- Matthew 19:9 *I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery.*
- 1 Corinthians 7:15 *But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.*
- Romans 7:2 *For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage.*

What does God say about sex outside of marriage?

- Exodus 20:14 *You shall not commit adultery.*
- Hebrews 13:4 *Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.*
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 *It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality;⁴ that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable,⁵ not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God.*
- 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 *Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.¹⁹ Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.*

How do husband and wife show love to their heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus Christ?

- 1 Corinthians 10:31 *So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*
- Colossians 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.*
- Romans 12:1,4-8 *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-- this is your spiritual act of worship. ...⁴ Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.*

What does God say about communication within marriage?

- Ephesians 4:29 *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*
- Ephesians 4:25-27 *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.²⁶ "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold.*
- Colossians 3:12-14 *Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.¹³ Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*
- Proverbs 12:18 *Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.*
- Proverbs 15:1 *A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*
- Proverbs 18:13 *He who answers before listening-- that is his folly and his shame.*

Some listening skills:

- Are both eyes on the person to whom you're listening?
- Are you thinking about what that person's saying?
- Can you accurately summarize what they've said?
- Can you ask open-ended questions to help dig deeper and discuss further?
- Are you thinking about how this affects you (selfishly) or how it affects them (unselfishly)?
- Can you put yourselves on the same level (physically) with that person? (i.e. kneel, sit, etc.)

Some keys to communicating during conflict:

- Control your anger. Identify the cause, then tell your spouse – gently.
- Listen with your mind open and your mouth shut.
- Be careful what you say – once the words are out, they're out.
- Be willing to apologize unconditionally, even when you're not sure if you're wrong.
- Be willing to forgive.
- Pray and have devotions with each other. It is hard to stay angry with someone while you are praying with them.

Christian Marriage

This order of worship, from Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal celebrates God's gracious gift of marriage. The congregation shares the joy of the bride and groom as they publicly promise lifelong love and faithfulness to each other.

Call to Worship

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord Jesus Christ came as an invited guest to the wedding at Cana, and with his gracious presence, he brought joy and gladness to those who were there. Jesus is also with us who have gathered in his name to celebrate with the Word of God and prayer the marriage of _____ and _____. We are assured of God's gracious help and guidance in these words from the Psalms:

M: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

C: His love endures forever.

M: The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love;

C: He is good to all.

M: God is our refuge and strength,

C: An ever-present help in trouble.

M: He is our God forever and ever;

C: He will be our guide even to the end.

M: May God be gracious to us and bless us

C: And make his face shine on us.

M: Loving Father, we are grateful for your goodness in permitting us to gather as the family and friends of _____ and _____ to share their joy on this special day. Look on them with favor, strengthen their confidence in your firm promises, and assure them of your abiding love. As your Son, Jesus, graced the wedding at Cana with his presence, so may he be with us who pray in his name.

C: Amen.

Congregational hymns or other music appropriate for worship may be sung here or at other places in the service.

Lessons

One or more lessons are read.

Sermon

Marriage Rite

M: Dear friends, when God in love created the world, he made man and woman in his own image and bonded them together in marriage. Through this blessed union of husband and wife, God established the family, provided for the physical and spiritual welfare of children, and fostered the peace and stability of society.

God intended marriage to bring loving companionship to the people of his world. But because of sin, the joy of marriage was soon overcast with sorrow, and the harmony of family life was shattered by strife. Out of love God sent his Son, Jesus, to die on the cross to take away the sins of all people. Everyone who believes in Jesus receives forgiveness and is enabled by the Holy Spirit to live in peace and joy.

God's love for you is boundless. He commands you, in response to his love, to love each other. Love is forgiving and enduring. Love shows itself in truth and faithfulness, in thoughtfulness and understanding, in patience and kindness. Marriage furnishes a unique opportunity to put this love into practice.

The pattern for Christian marriage is the intimate union of Christ and his Church, which the apostle Paul depicts in Ephesians 5. After urging believers to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ," he makes this application for Christian spouses: "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her."

It is reverence for Christ on the part of husband and wife that lays the foundation for Christian marriage.

You have come here to be united in marriage, which consists in your mutual consent, sincerely and freely given. You are now invited to declare this intent in the presence of God and these witnesses.

Marriage Promises

M: (to the groom): _____, will you take _____ to be your wife? Will you be guided by the counsel and direction God has given in his Word and love your wife as Christ loved the Church? Will you be faithful to her, cherish her, support her, and help her in sickness and in health as long as you both shall live? If so, answer: I will.

G: I will.

M: (to the bride): _____, will you take _____ to be your husband? Will you be guided by the counsel and direction God has given in his Word and submit to your husband as the Church submits to Christ? Will you be faithful to him, cherish him, support him, and help him in sickness and in health as long as you both shall live? If so, answer: I will.

B: I will.

M: Join your right hands, and make your promises to each other:

The groom and bride will say in turn:

I, _____, / in the presence of God and these witnesses, / take you, _____, to be my wife/husband. / I promise to be faithful to you / as long as we both shall live.

Exchange of Rings

M: Exchange rings as a symbol of the lifelong commitment and abiding love which you as husband and wife have promised each other.

The groom and bride will say in turn:

_____, receive this ring / as a symbol of my love and faithfulness.

Declaration of Marriage

M: By their promises, _____ and _____ have bound themselves together in marriage before God and these witnesses. Therefore, I declare that they are husband and wife, in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together, let no one separate.

Marriage Blessing

M: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit preserve you in faithfulness, strengthen you in love, and guide you to life's end.

Hymn

Prayer

M: Let us pray. Eternal God, source of love, help _____ and _____ to fulfill the promises they have made here today and to reflect your steadfast love in their love for each other. Give them kindness and patience, affection and understanding, happiness and contentment. Use their family and friends to support them in difficult days, that their love for each other may continue to grow as long as they live.

Gracious Father, in your goodness you bring people together into families and enrich their lives with abundant blessings. Renew the love of husbands and wives, parents and children, that they may strengthen and support each other on the way that leads to our heavenly home, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Blessing

M: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor and † give you peace.

C: Amen.

A hymn that teaches the faith: Christian Worship #505 – “Love Is The Gracious Gift”

Love is the gracious gift of your goodness;
Love is the patient fruit of your care;
Love is the gentle work of your Spirit,
Who is the source of love ev'rywhere.

You loved me first, Lord, sending me Jesus.
Then I responded, trusting your Son.
Now you invite me to love my neighbor,
Showing your true love to ev'ryone.

Love means forgiveness, patience, and kindness;
Love is not jealous, boastful, or rude.
Love endures all things, bearing, believing;
Love hopes forever, rejoices in truth.

Love in a marriage, love freely given,
Love of a husband, love of a wife --
Made to continue, blossom, and flourish,
Grow ever deeper throughout this life.

Love among Christians, love in the fam'ly,
Love for the Savior, whose blood was shed,
Love and submission one to another
As unto Christ, who reigns as our head.