

Glad You Asked

“What About Marriage?”

Ephesians 5:22-33

I.) “Why Marry” - Selfishness Threatens Marriage Today

“To me it seems that we are living in an important and uncertain age, and the institution of marriage is most assuredly in an uncertain state. If 50-75 percent of Ford or General Motors cars completely fell apart within the early part of their lifetimes as automobiles, drastic steps would be taken. We have no such well organized way of dealing with our social institutions, so people are groping, more or less blindly, to find alternatives to marriage. Living together without marriage, living in communes, serial monogamy (with one divorce right after another), the women’s liberation movement to establish the woman as person in her own right, new divorce laws, which do away with the concept of guilt – these are all gropings toward some new form of man-woman relationship for the future. It would take a bolder man than I to predict what will emerge” (Dr. Carl Rogers, 1973).

The Issue At Hand: The perception and viewpoint of many in our culture today is that it’s better not to marry or to prolong marriage by having a very long dating and cohabitation type relationship instead. We will see that most of these opinions are **driven by SELFISHNESS**, not out of pursuit of Jesus Christ and his plan and purpose for marriage.

Research shows that people delay marriage or choose not to get married because they are trying to find **their perfect “soul mate.”**

Stats and Findings from the National Marriage Project Study

- 1.) The #1 Response Given to what it meant to find the Perfect Soul Mate - “I just want to make sure we’re **compatible.**”

When asked to elaborate on what “**Compatibility**” meant, most men answered in a way that indicated that they were looking for someone who would “Accept them as they are” and “Not require them to change.”

This is not “Compatibility,” but rather “**SELFISHNESS**”

- 2.) The #2 reason people said they need to take time to find their “Soul Mate” and/or not get married is because it takes time to figure out if the **Sexual Attractiveness and Physical Chemistry will last!**

“The idea of marriage as a contractual union designed for the sake of mutual love, procreation, and protection is slowly giving way to a new reality of marriage as a ‘terminal sexual contract’ designed for the gratification of individual parties” (John Witte Jr.).

“Marriage used to be a public institution for the common good, and now it is a private arrangement for the satisfaction of individuals. Marriage used to be about us, **but now it’s about me**” (Tim Keller).

II.) The Meaning of Marriage

We must not lose heart, because God's design for marriage is actually to bring us into more intimacy and fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ.

*****The meaning of marriage is found in The Mystery of Marriage (Ephesians 5:32)*****

Mystery - "Mysterion" in Greek - more accurately translated as SECRET... To build on this, the word MYSTERY (Mysterion) is usually used in Scripture when referring to some **"Wondrous, Unexplainable truth that God reveals through the Holy Spirit."**

So, when Paul refers to the **Mystery or SECRET of Marriage**, he's really implying that there's some BIG huge SECRET TO BE DISCOVERED pertaining to marriage.

Eph. 5:22 gives the context to help us understand by the time we get to Verse 32 that this WHOLE ENTIRE MYSTERY AND SECRET is NOT MARRIAGE ITSELF, but rather the SECRET is that the husband is the leader of the wife in the same way that Christ is the leader of the church.

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

Jesus gave his life up for US, the church, and in the same way, the Husband is to give up his life for his wife. It's only at this point that we see this HUGE MEGA SECRET and THE MEANING of marriage is for the **MARRIAGE ITSELF to be symbolic of and show the relationship between Jesus and the Church.**

Truths for Application from Ephesians 5:

- 1.) **Marriage is Symbolic of the relationship between Jesus and His Church:** Jesus is the leader and savior of the church and he brings us into unity and intimacy with himself. Likewise, husbands are the leaders of their wives and it's their job to serve their wives and lay their own lives down for their wives by being sacrificial how Jesus was. **(Eph 5:23)**
- 2.) **The second way the marriage** relationship is symbolic of the relationship between Christ and the Church is this - The church submits to Christ's leadership and similarly, wives submit to their husbands (Eph 5:24)
- 3.) **The third way our marriage relationship is symbolic of the relationship between Christ and the Church** is in the **husband's role to love his wife more than he loves himself** (Eph 5:28-30).

"This is the secret- that the Gospel of Jesus and marriage explain one another. That when God invented marriage, he already had the saving work of Jesus in mind" **(Tim Kelller).**

The Meaning of MARRIAGE IS THIS – To Point us to the saving work of Jesus Christ and His love for us! We understand the sacrificial love of Christ in how he laid down his life for us, because in our own marriages, we are called by God to have a sacrificial love for our spouse too. Perhaps this is the way we can relate to Jesus the most in his love for us. He denied himself by dying physically and literally, and we get to deny ourselves and serve our spouses by putting their needs before our own.