

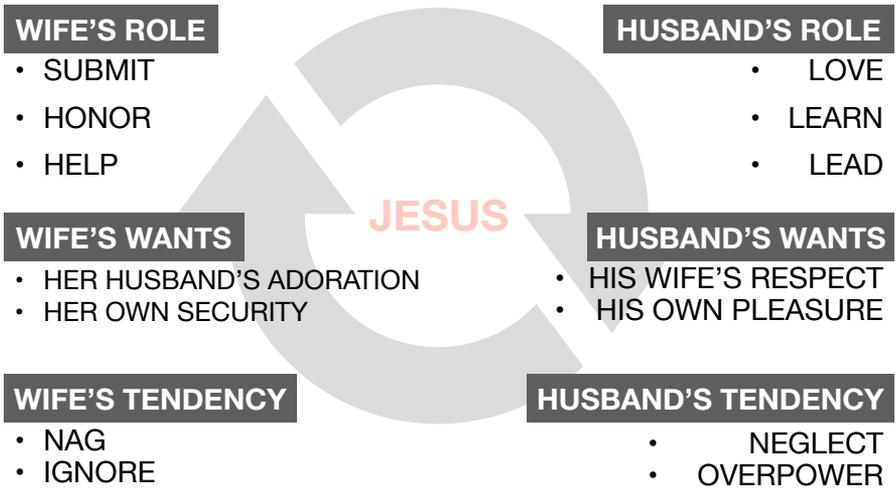


GOSPEL-CENTERED MARRIAGE

GOD'S GLORY

Version 3
August 2022

THE MARRIAGE WHEEL



1 INTRODUCTION

- 🔪 Explain briefly why you want to get/stay married.

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BAD REASONS TO GET MARRIED

There are many bad reasons to get married. It can be very easy to enter marriage with unrealistic expectations of what the marriage will bring to you.

BAD REASON 1: LOVE

🔪 How would our culture define love?

🔪 What do the following passages say about how God defines love?

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Ephesians 4:1-2

1 Peter 4:8

1 John 4:7

Colossians 3:14

- Does God define love as primarily an emotion or primarily an action?

BAD REASON 2: LIVING THE DREAM

Many young women dream about their wedding day. Young men dream about the woman that they might marry someday. Marriage is portrayed as the “fairy tale ending” often found in children’s books and adult romantic comedies.

- What does Matthew 6:33 tell us about what our pursuit should be?

- How does this text contrast with our culture’s “fairy tale ending” view of marriage and life?

- What are you some things you hope that marriage will bring you?

BAD REASON 3: IT'S THE EXPECTATION

Culture, our families, and our friends often hold expectations of who we should be. A very common expectation placed on us is that we get married and start a family.

- 🚫 According to 1 Corinthians 7:32-38, does God require or expect that you will get married?

BAD REASON 4: TO HAVE KIDS

Getting married because you want to have kids is starting the home right off as a child-centered home. A child-centered home is not a home centered on God and His glory.

- 🚫 Why do you think starting a marriage this way would be dangerous?

BAD REASON 5: FINANCIAL STABILITY

- 🚫 What caution does 1 Timothy 6:17-19 give in regard to money?

- ❏ Why does that make getting married for financial reasons a bad idea?

BAD REASON 6: SEX

Many young Christians want to be obedient to God's Word and therefore practice abstinence. This is a good and godly thing. However, our culture has turned sex from a good gift from God into an ultimate thing to worshipped. This cultural obsession with sex, combined with the strong romantic feelings an engaged couple has, can make sex a dominating motivation for marriage.

While sex is a beautiful and wonderful gift God gives to procreation, pleasure, and connection in marriage, it is a bad reason to get married.

This topic is covered in more depth in another booklet.

- ❏ Why is getting married for sex a bad idea?

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BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR MARRIAGE

GOD'S GLORY

- 🔪 What do the following passages say about what your purpose in life is?

Isaiah 43:6-7

Romans 11:36

Colossians 1:16

Paul Tripp, in his book, *What Did You Expect* rightly says,

We cannot understand what the Bible has to say about marriage by looking only at the marriage passages, because there is a vast amount of biblical information about marriage not found in the marriage passages.¹

In other words, verses that tell us about who we should be, what our purpose in life is, and how we should honor the Lord have a huge bearing on our marriage.

- In light of that truth, and the truth of the previous verses, what should the purpose of your marriage be?

THE GLORY OF GOD DEFINED

- Based on Acts 17:24-25, what does God gain from us living for His glory?

- Based on Job 41:11, what does God need from us?

In Exodus 3:14, God tells Moses “I AM who I AM.” In other words, God is saying that He, and He alone, determines His existence and His character. He does not depend on anything or anyone else. God is fully complete, lacking in nothing. He cannot be improved upon and He has no need.

READ Isaiah 62:3-5 and Zephaniah 3:17-18.

- What does God say He chooses to do even though He lacks in nothing?

It's amazing that, although God lacks in nothing, He still chooses, in His infinite knowledge and wisdom, to delight in us. He gains nothing from our obedience. He gains nothing from our attempt to glorify Him and yet He chooses to delight in it. This should give us great comfort knowing that God is completely for us.

How could God not be acting for our good since He gains nothing from our obedience? Simply said, God's commands to us must be for our benefit and not His own, because He needs nothing from us.

The Apostle Paul writes about this in his letter to the church in Rome:

ROMANS 8:28-32

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

WHAT IS GOD'S GLORY?

TAKEN FROM DESIRINGGOD.ORG 2

- The glory of His eternity that makes the mind want to explode with the infinite thought that God never had a beginning, but simply always was;
- The glory of His knowledge that makes the Library of Congress look like a matchbox and quantum physics like a first grade reader;
- The glory of His wisdom that has never been and can never be counseled by men;
- The glory of His authority over heaven and earth and hell, without whose permission no man and no demon can move one inch;
- The glory of His providence without which not one bird falls to the ground or a single hair turns gray;
- The glory of His Word that upholds the universe and keeps all the atoms and molecules together;
- The glory of His power to walk on water, cleanse lepers, heal the lame, open the eyes of the blind, cause the deaf to hear, still storms with a word, and raise the dead;
- The glory of His purity never to sin, an incapability to have even one evil thought;
- The glory of His trustworthiness never to break His word or let one promise fall to the ground;
- The glory of His justice to render all moral accounts in the universe settled either on the cross or in hell;
- The glory of His patience to endure our dullness for decade after decade;

- The glory of His sovereign, slave-like obedience to embrace the excruciating pain of the cross willingly;
- The glory of His wrath that will one day cause people to call out for the rocks and the mountains to fall on them;
- The glory of His grace that justifies the ungodly;
- The glory of His love that dies for us even while we were sinners.

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MARRIAGE FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

TWO WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR MARRIAGE

1. ***YOU IMPROVE YOUR MARRIAGE BY SEEING MORE OF GOD***

The best way to improve your marriage is not to read a book on how to be a better husband or wife. The single best way to improve your marriage is to see God more fully: To get a greater glimpse of who God is, how He acts, and what He is like.

God has shown us who He is through His word and displayed in the life of Jesus. Having a greater focus on Jesus will lead to a better marriage as we are changed increasingly more by who He is and what He has done.

9 GOSPEL TRUTHS THAT WILL IMPACT YOUR MARRIAGE

TAKEN FROM LOVE THAT LASTS: WHEN MARRIAGE MEETS GRACE 3

1. Because of the Gospel, Christians have become new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17). Therefore, in our marriage, our

past does not define us, confine us, or determine our future.

2. Because of the Gospel, we are forgiven (Ephesians 1:7). Therefore, we can live free of all guilt and condemnation for every sin, and we can trust that God, in His mercy, will be gracious to us.
3. Because of the Gospel, we can forgive just as Christ forgave us (Ephesians 4:32). Nothing done against us compares to our sin against God. Therefore, all offenses, hostility, and bitterness between Christians can be completely forgiven and removed.
4. Because of the Gospel, we are accepted by God (Romans 15:7). Therefore, we are not dependent on a spouse for who we are or what we need.
5. Because of the Gospel, the ruling power of sin over us is broken (Romans 6:6,14). Therefore, we can truly obey all that God calls us to do in our marriage, regardless of any circumstance or situation.
6. Because of the Gospel, we have access to God through Christ (Hebrews 4:14-16). Therefore, we can at any time take any need in our marriage to the One who can do all things.
7. Because of the Gospel, we have hope (Romans 5:1-4). Therefore, we can endure any marital difficulty, hardship, or suffering, with the assurance that God is working all to our greatest good (Romans 8:28).
8. Because of the Gospel, Christ dwells in us by His Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:13-14). Therefore, we are confident that God is always with us and is always at work in our marriage, even when progress is imperceptible (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).
9. Because of the Gospel, we have power to fight and overcome the remaining sin that continues to dwell and war within us (Romans 7:19-21, 24-25; Galatians 5:16-17).

2. YOU IMPROVE YOUR MARRIAGE WHEN GOD'S GLORY BECOMES MORE PRECIOUS THAN YOUR MARRIAGE

Living for God should be the pursuit of your life. When you live for God, all other things in your life fall into place.

 In what ways do you live for God?

We live for God through the power of the Gospel in our lives. When we dwell on the Gospel and then reflect the Gospel to our spouses, we are pursuing God in our marriage. God's glory then becomes more precious than our marriage.

We live for God by fulfilling the roles that God has designed for us in our marriage. God has given us instruction on how life will go best for us. That is ultimately for our good and His glory. When we seek to model those roles from a heart of gratitude, God's glory becomes more precious than our marriage.

 What things do you have in place in your life to consistently see the beauty of Jesus and the power of the Gospel?

Understanding that marriage is a picture of Christ and the church is significant for many reasons.

1. *It lifts marriage out of sitcom images and gives it the magnificent meaning God meant for it to have.*

Marriage is a beautiful picture of how God interacts with His people. The world tries to taint and mar the image of what marriage can and should be.

When we consider what Christ has done for the church and how marriage reflects that, we return marriage to its proper place: a God-glorifying display of how He interacts with us.

2. *It gives marriage a solid basis in grace, since Christ obtained and sustains His bride by grace alone.*

When we understand that marriage is a picture of Christ and the church, it has a huge impact on the way we treat our spouse. It frees us to make grace the foundation of our marriage.

3. *It shows that both the role of husband and wife are rooted and defined in Christ's self-denying work on the cross so that pride and captivity are cancelled.*

The role of the husband is no more significant than the role of the wife and vice versa. When we see that both roles are rooted in who Christ is and what He has done for us, we will fully grasp that the different roles are only different, not more or less significant to the kingdom of God.

The roles God designed for marriage are covered in more detail in the booklets *Gospel-Centered Marriage: Husband's Role* and *Gospel-Centered Marriage: Wife's Role*

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THE COMMITMENT

YOU ARE CONDUCTING A MARRIAGE IN A FALLEN WORLD

The reality of living in a fallen world is that you will not escape grief and you will not escape trials. But the good news is that God is using those trials for your good and His glory.

Paul Tripp, again writes,

There is hope for you and your marriage because God is in the middle of your circumstances, and he is using them to mold you into what he created you to be. As he does this, you not only respond to life better, but you become a better person to live with, which results in a better marriage.⁴

YOU ARE A SINNER MARRIED TO A SINNER

- ① What does Romans 3:23 tell us about our sinfulness?

- ① What does Romans 3:23 tell us about our spouse's sinfulness?

- ✎ Paul Tripp, one more time,

Most of the troubles we face in marriage are not intentional or personal. In most marriage situations, you do not face difficulty because your spouse intentionally did something to make your life difficult. Yes, in moments of anger that may happen. But most often, what is really happening is that your life is being affected by the sin, weakness, and failure of the person you are living with.⁴

- ✎ How should this truth impact the way you see conflict within your marriage?

YOU HAVE BEEN POSITIONED TO HELP YOUR SPOUSE GROW AND CHANGE

- ✎ What does Hebrews 10:23-24 indicate about how we should interact with other believers?

- ✎ How does that affect the way you should view your relationship with your spouse?

How can you daily influence the way your spouse thinks about God, him or herself, and life?

1 Tripp, Paul David. *What Did You Expect?*, (London, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 2010).

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3 Mahoney, C.J., Carolyn Mahoney, and Gary and Bets Ricucci. *Love That Lasts*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006).

4 Tripp, Paul David. *What Did You Expect?*, (London, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 2010).

5 Tripp, Paul David. *What Did You Expect?*, (London, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 2010).

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