

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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SERIES

Grace Unleashed

PART

23

TITLE

Submitting Out Of Reverence

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 5:22-33



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Well Providence, it's great to see you. It's been a great weekend together. Certainly to sing to the Lord this morning, but also to serve our city yesterday and I'm just so grateful for each of you, what the Lord is doing in your life. That's just an honor to sing to the Lord with your church family. I hope that you know that, I hope that you feel that. And if you're a guest here with us, we're really glad that you are here as well.

As a church family, we exist to bring God glory and how he tells us to do that is that we would be about really helping people to know Christ as their savior and Lord and then to grow them up to love and to worship him. And one of the most important ways that we do that here at Providence and what God's word even says for us to do is to open up his word. It's to read it, it's to study it, it's to apply it, it's to obey it. But even before you can apply and obey, you have to believe.

And not just to believe that it's a book and that these are words and it's what is written and it's what it means, but to believe that the author, I'm not just talking about the human author, but God who inspired these writers, in our case Paul, to actually pen this. It was in his intentions to bring good intentions to you. That's one of the first things that must be settled in your heart anytime that you read any part of the Bible. And that is, is the author is God in this passage and not just in this passage, but in all of life and in all of the Bible is this God for me or against me?

Is he absolutely committed to my good or not? And my task this morning is to help you to see that in the context of marriage is that God is for us and that what he has written is for our best. And so if you are a guest here, we are really glad that you are here. I wanna ask you if you have one of these Bibles with you, if you wanna head over to Ephesians chapter five. Those of you who have read this passage starting in verse 21 and moving to verse 33 you know that this is not something that is love, it's not adored. There's a lot of things in this passage that are confusing to us as a culture and yet you have to believe.

And my hope is that, indeed, that you will see even when the voice of God sounds so different than the voice of our culture is that you're gonna believe the voice of God. And so I wanna pray for us even before we get started. Let's pray. Father we love you. Thank you so much for your good intentions that are magnified, that are put on full display when you sent Jesus Christ from heaven to Earth in order to live a life that we could not and did not live, to die the death that we deserved, and then to rise again from the dead so that we could be forgiven of our sin.

We know that you are for us. And as your church family, we know that you are committed to our good. So committed that you even gave us the Bible, instruction for how to live our life and not only how to live our life, but who to admire in life. And I pray that as we open up your word, that you would give us the gift of belief. Help us to trust you. Help us to see you. Help us to admire your son. I pray that you would speak through weakness and that you would bring clarity each of our lives and that you would help us to settle within our hearts.

Maybe even once and for all, Lord, to settle in our hearts. God, that where our hope really comes from in life. So for those in the room maybe who don't even know you yet, a savior and Lord. Who are wondering what this is all about and who are wondering what I'm gonna say, I pray that you would speak to their hearts today. We love you and we are grateful and we pray this in Christ's name. Amen. On this screen there's two pictures that I want to show you. They're vastly different pictures. And what I want you to think about is what are these two images have in common.

On the left, you have soldiers in the war storming the beach in Omaha. And on the right you have a garden. One side is black and white, one side is color. One side is harsh, it's firm, it's aggressive, it's hard. On the other side is pleasant and organized and green and beautiful. What do these two things have in common? I believe perhaps you can think of many things, but the thing I think about is the truth that we find here in Ephesians five and it's the truth about marriage. And it's this, is that vision motivates sacrifice.

Without a clear vision, people will not sacrifice, they will not pay the price, to be able to experience what is actually available to us, whether it's in the context of a garden. Somebody, right, people had to see the reward in their heart that sacrifice before they could see it with their eyes. Somebody had to envision a field that was full of weeds and maybe rocks and all kinds of things and see in their heart before they could see with their eyes what it could become and then that vision inspires sacrifice. The same thing in war.

Somebody had to envision, they had to see the rewards of sacrifices that would come from with freedom and liberation of people around the world. Vision inspires, it motivates sacrifice. The more magnificent your vision is about anything, the more it will determine the magnitude of your sacrifice. And that's true in marriage as well. You see our vision of marriage will determine the level of sacrifice that we will give to our marriage. And if this is true then I want you to just to think for a minute, just to consider just for a moment what must have been going through the heart of Jesus Christ when he revealed his vision for marriage to his disciples and they responded, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry."

Just imagine the impact, the impact on our sacrifice, the impact on our patience, the impact of our endurance or our compassion or our love or our respect or our serving one another. Just imagine the impact of having a vision of marriage that is so different from the architect of marriage that you cannot even imagine his vision as being a good thing. To actually settle upon a conviction about what marriage is that's so different from his that we look at God who created us, who was so committed to our good, and we say, "That's not even good." And this was after these 12 men had been with Jesus for three years.

They'd seen his heart, they'd seen that he was committed to their good, and he says, "This is what I created. This is what the intentions were." And they said, "If that's the case, I don't want anything to do with it." Stunning. In this very reality sits upon the heart of Paul who's sitting in a room in prison. He's thinking about the church in emphasis and he's thinking about what they're thinking about marriage. And so he wants to jump into the ring in order to show what God had truly made available and what God had done for us. So let's read it. We're gonna start in verse 21.

He says, "Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ." Now this was tied, if you remember last week, this was the participle of how we're filled with the Holy spirit. The last part of that is that we submit, that we lay down our desire for the good of others. And then what he does from verse 22 to verse 33 is he gives two very specific examples of what submission looks like. One in the life of a wife and one in the life of a husband. And this is what he says, "Wives submit to your own husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its savior. Now is the church submits to Christ so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands."

"Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her that he might sanctify her. Having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word. So that he might present the church to himself in splendor without spot or wrinkle or any such thing that she might be Holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it. Just as Christ does the church. Because we are members of his body."

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and shall hold fast to his wife and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound and I'm saying that it refers to Christ in the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself and let the wife see that she respects her husband." So I wanna show you a few things here and then give you a few applications at the end. The first thing I want you to see here is that "God calls us to admire his son". I know that this passage is about marriage, but marriage is not the most important thing in this passage.

Do you notice that he anchors everything that he instructs us about marriage on one, one, condition? And that is do you revere Jesus? He says, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." The word reverence, it means admire, it means all, it means to have this astonishment, devotion, worship for Jesus Christ. You see, only when our heart is like this cup here, this cup that's full of water, so full that it's running over, it's overflowing with water, it's overflowing. Only when we are the cup and our admiration for Jesus Christ is literally running off the edges of that glass or that cup, can marriage work according to his plan.

You see, you and I both know that we imitate those that we admire. Think about somebody right now that you admire. There's a good chance that if you admire them deeply enough that there's things about their life that you'd even try to emulate. I admire several people in my life. I admire my dad. And there's so many times when I'm thinking about parts of life, how I'm treating my kids, family devotions, when I'm thinking about work, when I'm thinking about the house that I think about my dad. He's a man who's worthy of admiration.

And so I want to imitate him. There's time here at Providence that I frequently say, "What would David do in this situation?" David Horner who is our Senior pastor here for almost 38 years, right? He loved God, he loved the Bible, he loved his wife, and his family. He was faithful to them. All of these people that we admire, they're not perfect people. But there's parts of who they are that are so admirable. And when they are, we want to imitate them. And what he's saying is this, "Husbands and wives, do you admire Jesus? So much so that you would want to imitate Jesus? You see, there's frequently times when I ask you to read the Bible." Do you know why I hope that you read the Bible for yourself?

My primary hope is not that you learn how to live. My primary hope is that you learn who to admire. Because if you learn who to admire, then you're gonna wanna imitate who that is. And what's interesting is that when we read the pages of scripture, we find that everybody and the Bible is just as messed up as us. Everybody's sinning and everyone's selfish and everyone's lying and manipulating and hurting one another, until Jesus arrives. And suddenly we find somebody who's perfect in every way. He's perfect in love and perfect in righteousness.

He's perfect in wisdom and perfect in strength and power. He's perfect in intuition. He is absolutely perfect and do you know what this perfect one does? The same author writes to the church in Philippi, it's called Philippians chapter two and this is what he says, "Though he, though Jesus was in the form of God," meaning though he was the son of God, "He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself and taking the form of the servant being born in the likeness of man and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death. Even death on a cross."

You see when you admire Jesus, you emulate Jesus, and when you see that Jesus used all of his perfection and all of his strength and all of his love in order to submit to serve us. Then what we find ourself doing is finding the inclination within our heart to submit to serve others. And in the context of marriage, that would be your spouse. You see God knows that our love frequently gets interrupted in life. By our own selfishness and maybe by the imperfections of the people that we're married to.

And so what he tells us to do is to keep one eye on Jesus as we keep one eye on our spouse. To always see Jesus standing behind our spouse and to do everything unto the Lord. You see, I would be lying to you if I stood up here and said that I'm a nightmare of a husband. I'm not boasting, I'm not a perfect husband.

But it's the intent of my life to do that well. But even in my life and I know for many of us in this room, we want to be loving spouses. We want to care for our husband or our wife, and we do. Many of you do. I know that.

And yet isn't it true in your life, I know that it's in mine, it's amazing how frequently Tabitha has to look beyond me in order to see Jesus for her cup to be full of admiration for her to be able to treat me as well as she does. I have developed a habit over the last few years, it's the craziest thing, I think sometimes do deeply that I don't even recognize there's other people in the room. Frequently she's in the room. And so when I'm sitting there thinking, there are times where she's asked me questions, literally, we'll be sitting having lunch together, just the two of us, no one else is there, and she'll ask me a question.

I'll hear the question, and I will think about the question and I will answer the question in my mind thinking I am answering her out loud. Well it creates a little irritability. And she's like, "Are you just ... do you just not listen to me?" And I'm like, "What?" Recently, just recently, this happened and I said, "What? I told you." She said, "You have not said a word." You see, we all have our interesting moments in life, but here's the point is when admiration is overflowing, meaning admiration for Jesus, we tend to emulate Jesus' life, but we also tend to trust his instructions even when those instructions initially seem very puzzling to our heart or to our mind.

So my encouragement is not to start with marriage, but to start with Jesus. Read his story, consider his claims, consider his accomplishments, consider his accomplishment that he stood up from his throne in heaven, he left to come down here, consider his accomplishment that he was tempted in every way just as you are and I am and yet he never once sinned, consider his accomplishment that he literally chose willingly to give himself up. His body, to give himself up and allow it to be crucified, to be nail to a tree. Consider the fact his accomplishment that he was not only buried, but then death could not hold him down.

He rose from the dead and consider his invitation to you that you, you, you can trust Jesus today and be forgiven of all of your sin. His blood is so powerful that whoever believes in him, God the Father forgives. That is an accomplished man. And so wherever you're at, you may be in horrible marriage right now. And every part of who you are is thinking about marriage and what I would encourage you is simply this. The first step is to put everything and who you are to admire Jesus Christ, until you admire him to the place you want to emulate him. And then redirect and point that attention to loving your husband or your wife.

The second thing I want you to see here is that God designs marriage to display his glory and gospel. There's intent in why he did this that Paul writes about. He not only tells us to say, "Wait a minute. Before we even get into marriage, the first thing I want you to do and to see is Jesus Christ. I want you to admire him." And then all the sudden, he gets out his tools and he says, "Now let's build this from the ground up." Why did God create this thing, this mysterious, puzzling, relationship called marriage? Well the Bible says that everything God does fits into his mission, including marriage.

And what we're told in God's word is that God is on a mission to display his glory. And how he's doing that is he's creating a missionary people who will share this good news, his accomplishments with everyone else in the world so they can be forgiven. It really is a remarkable thing. And this is what Paul is absolutely gripped with right now as he's writing this. You have to understand this. He knows that God created the church in emphasis, that he built them in order to be a missionary people to the unbelievers in emphasis, but also to the edges of the Earth.

But it's interesting is that when we get bogged down in life, when we get bogged down in sin or in purity or in struggling marriages, we stop thinking about our missionary purpose and we start thinking about my selfish purpose. We stop thinking about his accomplishments and we start thinking about our accomplishments and why does my spouse not recognize my accomplishments? And so what he does is he says, "Just hold off on yourself for a minute and I want to you think about this, that God created marriage and a tool and he gave you and I a tool that you and I would have an arena that he would give us this thing so that we could participate, we could redirect our attentions to being a missionary people."

Now ultimately the next part is about parenting. And then the next part after that is the workplace. Each of these are simply arenas to where God is saying, "I'm giving you these opportunities for you to become a missionary people. So don't get distracted with your purpose." So why did he create marriage? Well, I like pictures and I like this picture. Marriage was really designed to be a spotlight. There's two people, a man and a wife, they both shine and they both shine if I had the opportunity to superimpose a cross right in the middle, that would be a perfect picture. This would be marriage.

I know that you and I oftentimes think that marriage is about us, but it actually isn't. It wasn't built for us. It was built for our good, but it was built for our good so that we could have a missionary purpose 'cause that's what the whole thing is about. Is that your life and your spouses life are directed towards Christ's life and everything that you're doing is pointing other people to look at him. This is ultimately what he has designed, a spotlight to display the relationship between Christ and the church. So what we find here in the text is Paul is sharing what God has told husband's and wives to do and if you boil it all down, what he's saying, is this, "Husbands, I want you to show the world. Not a perfect, but a persistent example of a portrait of the love of Christ and how Christ loved us, his people."

"And how you're gonna show the world this is and how you treat your wife." And then he says, "And wives, you have the unique gift, you have the unique responsibility to show the world what a forgiven, strengthened, church does in response to a loving Jesus Christ. And how you're gonna show how God's people respond to Jesus Christ is you're gonna treat your husband in such a way." This will be the lens by which people will be able to see what God has done in the world. And what you need to understand is that marriage was not a late entry in the marketing plan of the Gospel. Jesus did rise from the dead and then gone said, "You know what? We need a creative team."

“Angels, why don’t you gather together and figure out some sort of marketing plan to get this out to the world. And then come back a few days later and say, “You know what? Marriage would really serve this well. We could like have the husband do this and the wife do this and [inaudible 00:22:18] and go, “Man.” Like, ‘cause you really did good way back when you created this thing, but how good would it really be if we could tie it all together.” That’s not how it happened. We know this because before we sinned.

In other words, before we needed a rescue God created marriage. It was God who was the first Father of the bride. It says that God brought her to the man. It was God who officiated the first wedding ceremony and he said with his own lips, “A man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.” Now you look at that and you think, “Wait a minute. This was before there was any moms and dads. And that’s true. What God was doing here was he was setting president for the rest of civilization and that is that when we would get married, that we would transfer our priority of commitment from whoever it was, most of the time mom and dad to this individual and a covenant is formed and we become husband and wife, we cleave to one another, and we become one flesh.”

This was his intent. Now I want you to notice that in chapter five our text, in verse 31, Paul quotes this exact same verse. He says, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and will fast to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.” And then Paul explains this verse in verse 32 and he says, “Now this mystery is profound and I’m saying that it refers to Christ and the church.” So what this is saying is this is that before we needed a rescue, God made marriage to display the rescue. This is called sovereign decree, sovereign design. He knows what is going to happen before anything happens.

He knows. He knows that we’re gonna fall and so even before we needed a rescue, God said, “We’re gonna create marriage to display to the very people needing a rescue how they can be rescued.” And what this proves, Providence, it shows that the purpose of marriage and the participants of marriage, meaning a husband and a wife, are no more interchangeable than Christ is or his church. We can’t alter anything or eliminate anything on a whim. And if we do, we sabotage our own sight of the glory of Jesus Christ and our own possibility of rescue.

You see I realize that you hear otherwise every other day of your life. I realize that what I’m saying to you right now is probably like when you’re driving through the country and your favorite song comes on the radio and you turn it on and all the sudden you get further and further away and now there’s more static on the radio and more static and you’re trying to listen to it and because it’s your favorite song, you start leaning in, you wanna hear it, and all the sudden you go over a little hill. You can hear it real well and then it goes back down and you’re like, “I can’t hear it so well anymore. I just wanna hear it so bad.”

This is what it's like to listen to God in this world. There's static everywhere. His voice is behind it. God never yells. He always whispers through his word. If you wanna hear his voice, you have to want to hear his voice. You have to lean in to his voice and his voice says, Hebrews chapter 13 verse four, he says, "Let marriage be held in honor among all." His glory is at stake and so even though you listen, you hear, very different perspective of marriage every other day of your life. I still implore you today to agree with God.

Agree with God as to what this thing is. The longer we live, the more strange Ephesians five will feel. Our culture is not going to drift in this direction. And so you have to ask the question, is this a God who's for me or not? And I tell you this morning he is. He is so for us. The third thing I want you to see that God does is that God designs roles in marriage to benefit men and women. He designs roles in marriage to benefit men and women. Now the word submit is not necessarily a lovely word is it?

I mean, it doesn't even roll off the tongue so well. It just feels harsh. It feels sharp doesn't it. Submit. This is not a word that gets cross-stitched on many pillows. It doesn't, right? This is not a word that sort of describes your role in your daydreams. Anyone here like daydream like, "You know what? I just ... let me just have this amazing just little time. I'm on a beach." Nobody says, "You know what? I'm gonna end my daydream by submitting." That'll be pleasant. It's a sharp word and yet it's a word that he says is for our benefit.

And now you say, "Wait a minute. If it's so sharp and it's not a pleasant word, then why would you say that the roles that God has created a marriage that benefit both men and women. In fact many of you are already looking at this and says, "Well this whole text to me looks like it's only benefiting the man." Submit to your husbands. And so before I tell you how this is for our good, let me just remind you one more time of the good intentions of God. Romans eight 32 says that, "He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will we not also with him graciously give us all things."

You know what that says? It says that if you can trust God with your soul for eternity, do you not think that he is good when giving you instructions on your marriage? Or your finances or any other part of life. You see, the very first thing, I come back to this again and again and again, anytime we're in the scriptures, you have to settle once and for all, is this God for me? And if he is, when you find a puzzling instruction, you don't bend it around your desire, you try to bend your life around his desire.

Because you know it's for your good. And so how could this be for our good? Well to know that, you have to understand how God created us. That God has literally implanted in every single person in this room, a God given relational longing, a desire. You look at the women around this room, and God created in every single women in the world a longing to be loved and pursued. Every girl from the day that she's conscious of what she looks like and who she is, she looks into a mirror or she looks into the mirror of other people and she asks this question, "Am I lovely? Do I look lovely? Am I lovely?"

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So what does God do? What God tells the man to meet this need by loving and pursuing her as Christ loved and pursued us. And this is how men, we, are to submit. You say, “No. We’re not supposed to submit.” No, actually we are. Go back to verse 21. “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” Everyone gets to submit. It’s just a matter how we do it. We submit by loving our wife, by pursuing our wife instead of ourself. And every man in this room was also created with a longing and that longing is to be respected enough to be followed.

See every guy from the moment their conscious asks the question, “Do I have what it takes? Do I have what it takes in the workplace? Do I have what it takes at home? Do I have what it takes in the gym? Do I have what it takes on the football field? Do I have what it takes?” So what has God done? God told the woman to meet this need by respecting and yielding to him as unto the Lord and this is how she submits. Now Providence, I know that sin distorts in a million ways and I know that sin muddies the water’s in a million ways and I know that sin creates all manner of selfishness and manipulation and domineering, but at the core, do you see God’s good intentions?

That he would give us instructions that would align with how he created longings within each of our hearts. You see it all fits together. What I’m trying to say is this, marriage is not the problem and the roles are not the problem, our sin is the problem. And so God doesn’t intend to eliminate marriage or to eliminate the roles ‘cause those are good. His intentions is to make us strategic strike upon our sin. And he did that in Jesus Christ. You see, I see it in my marriage all the time. Without even saying the words, it’s amazing, Tabitha.

I can tell when I am not pursuing her with full intent, you can see it in her facial expressions. And it’s interesting, you think about my life of needing somebody to stand behind me to say, “You can do this. You can do this.” I promise you I would not be standing on this stage right now if Tabitha was not my wife. She has a need and I have a need and God’s created each one of us and given us an amazing gift in instruction, a role, to help each other with our greatest, deepest relational longings on the Earth.

This is a God who’s for us. So let me close with a few instructions. They’re not gonna sound terribly creative, but they’re really good. Husbands, love and pursue your wife. He says, “The husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church.” Guy, God gave us the responsibility in our home to lead and whether you do or not, you will be help responsible for it. God will hold you accountable for your leadership whether you give it or not. There’s an authority. Isn’t it interesting that those of us who are parents, dad’s you’ll know this that ... do you know why you respond to your kids whom you love maybe more than anyone else with more anger than anyone else?

It's because of authority. You're supposed to respond to me in obedience is how we look upon them. I have authority over you, I'm telling you to do this. I mean, do you get made at anyone else, like when you're out for a work luncheon and they're squirming in their chair. Do you get mad at them then or for not finishing their plate? No you don't. Why? 'Cause you're not authority. All the sudden you're at home and you say, "Finish that." And they don't. You get angry. Why? Because I'm Lord. This is what Jesus said, our impulse when we have authority is to lord it over people.

Matthew chapter 20 verse 25 and 26 says, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lorded over them." He goes on and he says, "The not so among you. That whoever would be great among you must be your servant." He tells us to "Love as Christ loved the church." And so what did Jesus do with his authority, guys? What did he do with his authority? Paul writes about it in four different ways. First thing is that Jesus loved us and gave himself up for us. Husbands, when we give ourselves up for our wife, it's not only meaning that we're willing to die for her, it means that we put her needs above yours.

It's the speaking of initiation and service and sacrifice. The second thing we see in verse 26 is that Jesus used his authority to sanctify us. The work sanctify literally means to set apart. To consider as special. Isn't it amazing that the very first human words in the entire Bible are Adam composing a love poem to Eve, saying you're special, you're important, you're beautiful. And so we're talking about here is that Jesus and husbands, when we're loving our wives as Christ loved the church is that we're giving priority to our wife, we're encouraging our wife, we're showing affection to our wife.

The third thing that we see in verse 26 is that he purified us with his word and speaks a spiritual leadership. There's a lot of men in this room who don't think that they're spiritual leader because their wife is in Bible study all the time. I just can't do that. She's so much further than I am. Listen to me. Leadership is one thing, it's pointing people in the right direction. You can say, "Sweetie, I don't know very much, but this is what I know, Jesus loves you." If she is grown in her mind to the point to where that doesn't inspire gratitude that you would be pointing her to the love of Christ, then she simply has not grown very far.

You're simply pointing, you're bringing her to church, you're reading the scriptures for yourself, and you're saying, "You know what sweetheart, I don't know a whole lot, but this verse was encouraging to me," and you read it to her. I don't even know what it means, but it was encouraging. It's literally pouring the word of God over your marriage. The fourth thing, it says in verse 29, is that "Jesus used his authority to feed and cherish us." So he's speaking of protection and provision. I need to move on. Wives, the second one, respect and yield to your husband.

You see, “Wives, submit to your own husbands.” He says, “As to the Lord.” Now submitting certainly has limits. There’s a limit of your submission in purity, in truth, and in marriage. Let’s talk about those. If your husband asks you to sin, you do not submit. If your husband asks you to believe that Jesus is not Christ, is not the Lord, is not God, you do not submit. And if another man other than your husband asks you to submit, then you do not because this is not women submit to men, this is wives submit to your husband.

And so there is a limit. And what Jesus is simply saying is this, this is not a picture of the goodness of husbands in the world. And what Jesus is saying to you ladies is this, he’s asking you to display your affection for Jesus Christ by admiring your husband who is much less deserving. And you have a perfect example of this, Jesus in Luke chapter 22 verse 42. Jesus said, “Father, if you’re willing, remove his cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours to be done.”

It’s interesting, even today, the Holy spirit submits to Jesus saying, “Glorify him and one day the Father in heaven will submit to Jesus by saying that his name is above every name.” So submission is clearly not about inferiority or about ability. In fact, yielding your will to another takes remarkable strength and spiritual maturity. It is very clear that your husband’s maturity will affect your motivation, but I believe what God intends here is simply this, is first of all that you give your husband enough space to steer.

Second that you affirm him where you see God’s grace and loving leadership in his life. And third is that you show respect to him in such a way that garners his desire to live respectably. And it’s amazing that love and respect, they feed off of each other. You see, a respected man is inclined to love and a loved woman is inclined to respect. But similarly a disrespected man is not inclined to love and an unloved woman is not inclined to respect. You think, well we do this every day though. We sin every day so what’s the solution?

The solution is the one person in the marriage has to look to Jesus long enough to admire him and then to emulate him. Why, how? By treating others as they’re not treating us, how we want them to be treating us. And suddenly the cycle shifts course to where even if we’re feeling disrespected or unloved, we give to the other person what we know that they need and what they know that they long for and suddenly their heart is now inclined to reciprocate in like kind.

This is all for the glory of God. And the last thing is this, is singles “leverage this time in your life as a way to prepare for marriage.” I had the amazing privilege over 13 years at Providence to serve our single adults. And so I know that many here from that time, I know that many long to be married, I know that many within our own congregation feel less simply because they’re not married, I know that you’re not, but it’s natural to feel this way, and whether you want to be married or whether you do not want to be married, I wanna encourage you not to waste this season by doing the same thing.

It's really amazing. If you do not want to be married, first Corinthians chapter seven says, invest your energies into a church that will be longer, that will last longer than marriage. To invest in God's bride. And it's amazing though is that the same instruction is given to those who long to be married. So whether you want to be married or whether you do not want to be married, it's investing in a people, it's investing in the missionary people of God and the world of how you use your life to prepare for whatever he has for you next.

I would encourage you a few things though. I wanna encourage you to settle in your heart right now before you meet anyone the kind of person that you want to marry. And then strive to become the person that, that person of character would want to marry. I would encourage you to pray for a spouse and pray for your future marriage. I would encourage you to grow in your admiration for Jesus Christ and consider only a person who deeply admires Jesus as a possible spouse. And then give yourself to the bride of Christ by connecting and growing and serving and going.

I promise you, you will not waste this time in your life. So Providence I leave you with this. He is worthy of your admiration. And for those who will, who look long enough, we will emulate his life in our relationships. Let's pray together. Father in heaven, we thank you for you love for us and we acknowledge that without your spirit, that this passage is hard to swallow. And so I pray that you would open up our eyes and help us to be accepting of what you have provided for us in Jesus.

We thank you now for the privilege to be able to sing to you. You are the admirable one. And so we pray God that with full hearts, God, that you would receive worship and the things in our life that maybe we don't quite understand about what we just heard or read. That you would continue to make those clear in time. We love you and we are grateful for Christ and it's in his name that we pray. Amen.



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