



INTRODUCTION

Kevin Deyoung — “We are here and there and everywhere. We are distracted. We are preoccupied. We can’t focus on the task in front of us. We don’t follow through. We don’t keep our commitments. We are so busy with a million pursuits that we don’t even notice the most important things slipping away.”

Main point: Appreciating our differences and having grace for them can keep us united in the midst of the craziness of life.

I. Different by Design

- Genesis 1:27 — “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”
- Galatians 3:28 — “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
- Wayne Grudem — “This means that we should see aspects of God’s character reflected in each other’s lives. If we lived in a society consisting of only Christian men or a society consisting of only Christian women, we would not gain as full a picture of the character of God as when we see both godly men and godly women in their **complementary differences** together reflecting the beauty of God’s character.”¹

II. Celebrate the differences, don’t begrudge them.

- Stanley Hauerwas — “We never know whom we marry; we just think we do. Or even if we first marry the right person, just give it a while and he or she will change. For marriage, being (the enormous thing it is) means we are not the same person after we have entered it. The primary problem is... learning how to love and care for the stranger to whom you find yourself married.”²
- Tim and Kathy Keller — “You and your spouse should grasp one of the most startling aspects of Biblical teaching on gender roles in marriage. While the principle is clear... the Bible gives almost no details about how that is expressed in concrete behavior.”³
- Paul Tripp — “The real and significant differences between you began in the mind of your Creator. Everything that makes up your wife — what she looks like, her innate gifts, and her particular

¹ Wayne Grudem, Bible Doctrine, p. 200.

² Stanley Hauerwas, “Sex and Politics: Bertrand Russell and ‘Human Sexuality’ in the Christian Century, April 19, 1978, 417-22.

³ Tim and Kathy Keller, The Meaning of Marriage, p. 185.



personality — came out of the mind of an incredibly creative designer. Everything that makes up your husband — what he looks like, his innate gifts, and his particular personality — came out of the mind of an incredibly creative designer. He was not locked into one model of what a human being is. There is no end to the gradations of differences that he can form into the hardwiring of a human being. There seems to be no end to the endless variety of body design. There seems to be no end to the range of human personality. There seems to be no end to the catalog of built-in human gifts and abilities."⁴

III. Don't let differences divide

- Ephesians 5:30-31 – “Because we are members of his body. Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”
- Charles Hodge: “Because the relation between husband and wife is more intimate than any other, even than that between parents and children, therefore a man shall consider all other relations subordinate to that which he sustains to his wife, with whom he is connected in the bonds of a common life.”⁵

IV. Have Grace for differences

- Tim Keller – “To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God.”⁶
- Readers Digest — “On her golden wedding anniversary, my grandmother revealed the secret of her long and happy marriage. ‘On my wedding day, I decided to choose ten of my husband's faults which, for the sake of our marriage, I would overlook,’ she explained. A guest asked her to name some of the faults. ‘To tell the truth,’ she replied, ‘I never did get around to listing them. But whenever my husband did something that made me hopping mad, I would say to myself, ‘Lucky for him that's one of the ten.’”⁷

⁴ Paul Tripp, *What Did You Expect?*, p. 209.

⁵ Charles Hodge, *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, p. 255.

⁶ Tim Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*, p. 95.

⁷ Roderick McFarlane, in *Reader's Digest*, December, 1992.