



# **THE VERTICAL MARRIAGE**

# THE VERTICAL PURPOSE:

*Explain briefly why you want to get married.*

## Bad Reasons to Get Married:

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

- Love

*How does the world 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?*

- Living the Dream

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 in children’s movies.

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

*How does that truth impact living for the “fairy tale ending?”*

*What are you hoping that marriage will bring you?*

- 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 will get married and start a family.

*According to 1 Corinthians 7:32-38, does God require you or hold an expectation of you, that you will get married?*

- I want to have kids

Getting married because you want to have kids is starting a home off to be child centered and not a home centered on God and His glory.

*Why do you think starting a home off this way would be dangerous?*

- Financial Stability (1 Tim 6:17)

*What caution does 1 Tim 6:17-19 give in regard to money?*

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

## **BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF MARRIAGE**

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### **1) GOD'S GLORY**

*What do the following passages say about what your purpose in life should be?*

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." 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:**

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*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 determine his existence and His character. They do not depend on anything or anyone else. God is fully complete, lacking in nothing. He cannot be improved 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 is an amazing fact 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 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. Paul speaks of this in 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?

- 1) 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;
- 2) The glory of his *knowledge* that makes the Library of Congress look like a matchbox and quantum physics like a first grade reader;
- 3) The glory of his *wisdom* that has never been and can never be counseled by men;
- 4) The glory of his *authority* over heaven and earth and hell, without whose permission no man and no demon can move one inch;
- 5) The glory of his *providence* without which not one bird falls to the ground or a single hair turns gray;
- 6) The glory of his *word* that upholds the universe and keeps all the atoms and molecules together;
- 7) 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;
- 8) The glory of his *purity* never to sin, or to have a two-second bad attitude or evil thought;
- 9) The glory of his *trustworthiness* never to break His word or let one promise fall to the ground;
- 10) The glory of his *justice* to render all moral accounts in the universe settled either on the cross or in hell;
- 11) The glory of his *patience* to endure our dullness for decade after decade;
- 12) The glory of his sovereign, slave-like *obedience* to embrace the excruciating pain of the cross willingly;
- 13) The glory of his *wrath* that will one day cause people to call out for the rocks and the mountains to fall on them;
- 14) The glory of his *grace* that justifies the ungodly;
- 15) The glory of his *love* that dies for us even while we were sinners.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF LIVING MY MARRIAGE FOR THE GLORY OF GOD:**

- 1) I improve my marriage by seeing more of God

The single best way to improve your marriage is not to read a book on how to be a better husband or how to be a better 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 these things through His word being demonstrated through Jesus. A greater focus on Jesus will lead to a better marriage because we will be impacted by who He is and what He has done.

### **9 GOSPEL TRUTHS THAT IMPACT YOUR MARRIAGE**

- 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, sin's ruling power 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 remaining sin, which continues to dwell and war within us (Romans 7:19-21, 24-25; Galatians 5:16-17). This indwelling enemy represents the essence of what is called the doctrine of sin.

*Taken From, Love That Lasts, Gary and Betsy Ricucci*

- 2) I improve my marriage when God's glory becomes more precious than my marriage

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

*In what ways do we live for God?*

**We live for God through the power of the gospel in our lives.** When we dwell on and reflect the gospel to our spouse, we are pursuing God in our marriage. God's glory is becoming 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 is becoming 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?*

*What things do you think should be in place in your future marriage to see the beauty of Christ and the power of the gospel together?*

## **2) GOD'S PICTURE**

Read Ephesians 5:22-33

*In what ways is marriage a picture of Christ and His relationship to the church?*

*Why do you think God uses Christ and the Church to describe the roles of husband and wife?*

Understanding that marriage is a picture of Christ in the church is significant for many reasons. Here are three of those reasons:

1. It lifts marriage out of sitcom images and gives it the magnificent meaning God meant 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 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 wife and vice versa. When we see that both roles are rooted in who Christ is and what He has done we will fully grasp that the different roles are only different not more or less significant to the kingdom of God.

## **3) OUR COMMITMENT**

### **YOU ARE CONDUCTING YOUR 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 says, "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."



## **YOU ARE A SINNER MARRIED TO A SINNER**

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

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

Paul Tripp says, "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."

*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 do I daily influence the way my spouse thinks about God, him- or herself, and life?*