

How Christian Marriage is a Reflection of God's Love

In today's culture, marriage is disregarded as irrelevant, an ancient institution that once served a purpose but now has no significance.

In surveys, it is reported that many professing Christians no longer hold to the value of Marriage Covenant

But there was and is a divine purpose God intended for marriage between a man and a woman that brings His blessing to everyone who will embrace His plan.

Commitment to Marriage

The Christian faith offers a distinct perspective on the institution of marriage. It goes beyond being a social contract or legal partnership, transforming into a divine union – Covenant that holds great spiritual significance.

Christian views on marriage reveal the deep mysteries rooted in God's love for His people - the church.

Genesis 1:27

"God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

Genesis 2:18 after surveying the animal kingdom, it became evident that man had no companion as all other creation enjoyed.

"The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Genesis 2:24

"Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

The main purpose of Christian marriage should be to represent a powerful testament to God's enduring love, serving as a reflection of the deep spiritual connection shared between Christ and the Church:

Jeremiah 3:14 "Return, O backsliding children," says the LORD; "for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.

Eph 5:25 “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.”

Divine Union Purpose in Marriage

In Christianity marriage is ordained by God as being a lifelong covenant, a monogamous union [having one mate, spouse at one time] between a man and a woman.

The concept of a divine covenant underscores that marriage is established by God Himself.

This divine origin elevates marriage to a place of profound spiritual significance - it is not merely a human arrangement but a covenant with a sacred purpose.

- This enduring commitment reflects God’s unchanging love for His people and serves as a testament to His unwavering faithfulness.

Monogamy is the cornerstone of Christian marriage.

- The belief in a monogamous union is firmly rooted in biblical teachings that advocate fidelity and the sanctity of the marital relationship.
- It highlights the importance of exclusivity, trust, and faithfulness & commitment within the marital bond.
- At the heart of Christian marriage lies the purpose of companionship and intimacy – expressed as the emotional and spiritual connection between a husband and a wife.
- Christian couples are encouraged to grow together, supporting and loving each other, reflecting God’s intention for meaningful human connections:

Ecclesiastes 4:10-12 “For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm alone?

Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.”

Marriage as a Symbol of Love

Marriage in Christian faith carries a symbolism that goes beyond the union of two individuals.

- It serves as a powerful symbol of the relationship between Christ and the Church:

Rev. 19: 7 “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”

Rev 21: 1-3 “Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also, there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.”

Just as a husband and wife commit to each other in the covenant of marriage, Christ is seen as the bridegroom, and the Church as His bride.

- Marriage has the image of providing a picture of the faithful, enduring love that God has for His people.
- The symbolism within Christian marriage must serve to remind couples of the spiritual dimension of their union.
- It encourages them to model their relationship on the love and commitment exemplified by Christ and the Church.
- Just as Christ’s love for the Church is unwavering, selfless, and enduring, so too should the love between a husband and a wife be characterized by these same qualities.

So, marriage is more than a contractual agreement or a social arrangement – it is a sacred covenant with deep spiritual implications.

- It is a testament to God’s love for His people and His desire for their union to mirror the enduring love and commitment between Christ and the Church.
- Christian couples must live to be an example of love that endures the trials of life and stands as a testament to God’s grace and faithfulness.

Roles in Marriage and Grace

Husbands are called to exemplify self-sacrificial headship within the marital relationship.

- This means that they are to take on a leadership role as a selfless and sacrificial service to their wives – as our model Christ did for His church.
- This concept draws from the biblical teaching that husbands are to love their wives just as Christ loved the Church.
- Christ’s love for the Church is seen as the ultimate model of selflessness and sacrifice.
- Husbands are encouraged to prioritize the well-being and happiness of their wives above their own, seeking to serve and support them.

Wives are called to embrace a posture of godly submission within the marital relationship.

Not subservience, but a willingness to respect and support the leadership of the husband.

Just as the Church is called to submit to Christ's leadership, wives are encouraged to submit to their husbands' leadership within the marriage.

This submission is rooted in mutual respect and love, as the husband's leadership is characterized by self-sacrifice and devotion to the well-being of his wife.

This parallels the gospel of grace, as the husband's self-sacrificial love reflects the love of Christ, and the wife's submission mirrors the Church's submission to Christ - it serves as a living representation of the profound spiritual relationship between Christ and the Church.

The core tenet of Christian marriage is the belief in its enduring nature. When a man and a woman make their vows before God and their community, they are entering into a covenant that is expected to last a lifetime.

- This commitment goes beyond the highs of the wedding day, extending into the everyday challenges and trials that married couples will face.
- It signifies an unwavering promise to stand by one another, offering support and love in times of joy and hardship.

The endurance of Christian marriages is seen as a reflection of God's unwavering love. Just as God's love for His people is constant and unchanging, Christian couples are encouraged to model their love on this divine example

**A Christ-centered relationship is absolutely essential
in sustaining a lifelong marriage.**

By anchoring the marriage in faith and trust in God, couples draw strength and resilience from their shared spiritual foundation.

Love as Commitment in Marriage

In Christian faith, the perspective on love transcends the notion of mere emotion, extending to a commitment to serve and support one's spouse.

The concept of love within Christian marriage goes back to the biblical narrative of creation, where God formed Adam and Eve as the first couple. This divine act of creation is seen as an expression of God's love for humanity, as He designed the perfect companionship between man and woman.

In this way, love is considered an integral part of the blueprint for human existence, woven into the fabric of creation.

This commitment involves serving and supporting one's spouse, irrespective of the challenges and obstacles that may arise during a marriage.

It is a promise to be there for one another, to share in each other's joys and sorrows, and to selflessly work towards the well-being and happiness of one's partner

1Cor 7:33-34 "But he who is married cares about the things of the world—how he may please his wife... But she who is married cares about the things of the world—how she may please her husband.

Mutual Service Connection

In the context of a Christian marriage, mutual submission is a fundamental practice.

Eph 5:21 "Submitting to one another in the reverence/fear of God."

- To "submit to one another" is not based on the merits of the other person—believers aren't to submit to one another because others deserve it; they are to submit to one another in their reverence of Christ.
- Mutual submission is built on the idea that both husband and wife should willingly and lovingly submit to each other's needs and desires.

This mirrors the love and service that Christ demonstrated during His earthly ministry. Christ's selfless sacrifice for humanity serves as the model for how Christian couples should relate to one another.

The practice involves making sacrifices for the well-being of one's spouse and striving to reflect Christ's selflessness and love in the marriage.

A Christian marriage, guided by mutual submission, serves God in various ways:

1. It establishes a nurturing family unit where children are raised within a loving and supportive environment.
2. Faithful intimacy, both emotional and physical, strengthens the marital bond, aligning with God's design for spousal relationships.

3. Ordered sexual relationships within the confines of marriage honor God's intention for fidelity, trust, and exclusivity.

Having a Covenant Relationship with God

If we say we are Christians, then marriage has expectations of us.

- God expects our devotion to Him and His Kingdom to take priority in our lives.
- He expects us to be loyal to Him, not chasing after other "gods."
- James 4: 4-5 "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."
- We cannot live apart from God and flirt with darkness, expecting grace to cover us and make it ok. We cannot assume that we will have all the benefits of a covenant relationship with God when we are not willing to set ourselves apart for Him.
- The same is true for the marriage covenant!
- **A covenant relationship is two-sided**. Both participants are responsible for the health and wellbeing of the relationship.
- There's no doubt that God will do His part: He will be faithful; He will be loyal and loving; He will be devoted and true.

The question is this: will we do our part?

Will we set ourselves apart for God, forsaking all others, and keeping ourselves only for Him?

Will we be loyal to His Kingdom? Will we devote ourselves to keeping His ways?

Will we reject everything and everyone that tries to distract us from loving Him "with all [our] heart and with all [our] soul and with all [our] strength?"

When we determine to prioritize our relationship with God, just like we would with our spouse, we can experience the benefits of a mutually devoted and loyal relationship that is not only special but also extraordinary!