



THE PILLARS OF MARRIAGE: OVERVIEW

MEN OF THE WORD | SEPTEMBER 24, 2025
GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH



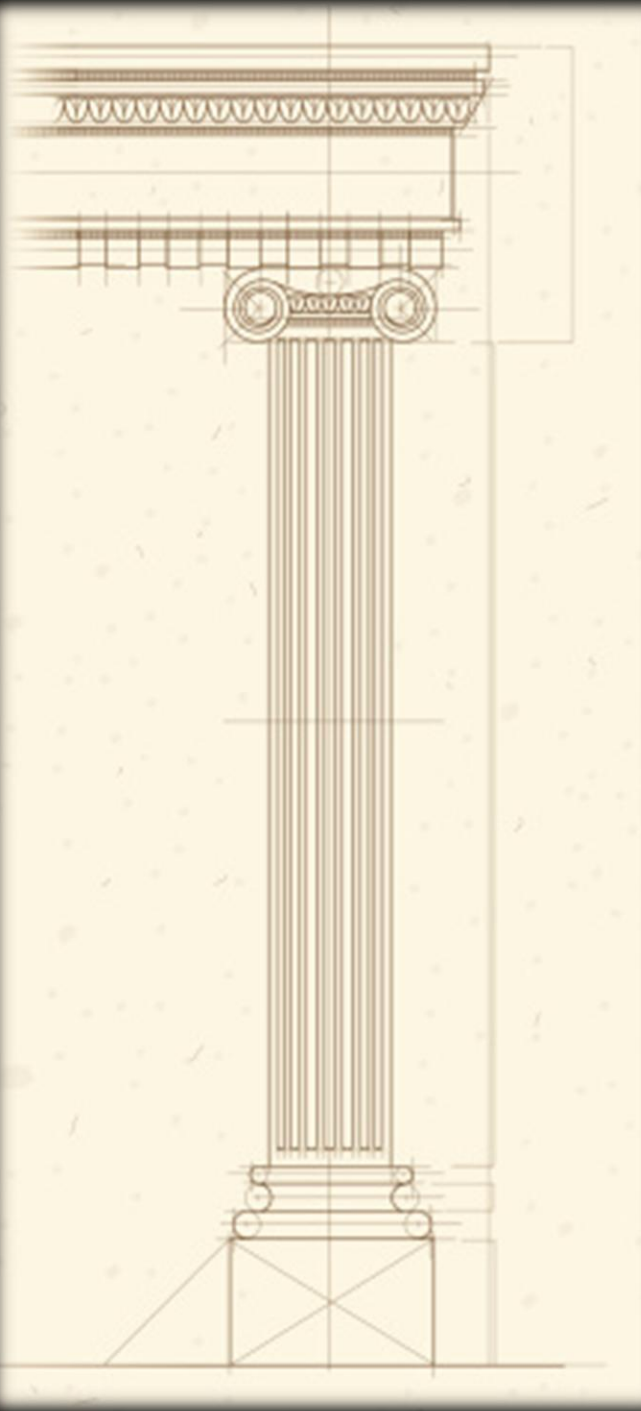
WHY THIS STUDY?

- To marvel at God's goodness in marriage.
- To strengthen existing marriages.
- To prepare men for marriage.
- To admonish and correct unbiblical attitudes, expectations, and practices.
- To point to the all-sufficient grace of Jesus Christ for forgiveness, transformation, and endurance.
- To train a brotherhood for influence.



THE SIX PILLARS

- I. MARRIAGE IS COMPLETION
- II. MARRIAGE IS COMBINATION
- III. MARRIAGE IS COMPLEMENTARY
- IV. MARRIAGE IS COVENANTAL
- V. MARRIAGE IS COMPANIONSHIP
- VI. MARRIAGE IS CONNOTATIVE

An architectural line drawing of a classical column, likely Corinthian, showing the column shaft, capital, and base. The drawing is on a light background with some faint grid lines.

I. MARRIAGE IS COMPLETION

com·ple·tion: “the act or process of finishing something.”

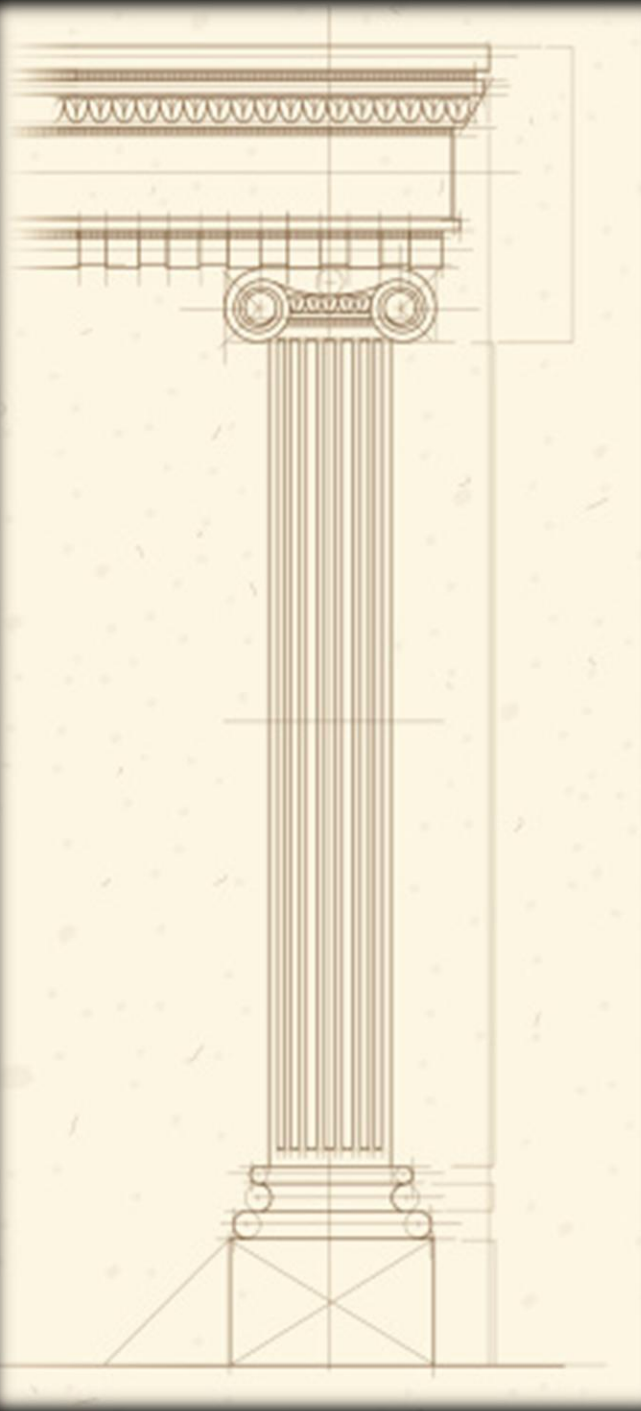
Genesis 2:18, 22 – “Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.’ . . . The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.”

- Marriage was designed *to complete* what was lacking in Adam as he existed in his initial solitude.
- **Genesis 2:19–20** – “Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought *them* to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him.”
- Everything around Adam was “good” (Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25), but Adam was not *yet* “good.”
- **Genesis 2:18** – “Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.’”

“This statement makes an essential point that every man needs to take to heart: *you and I are designed incomplete*. Men are made by God not to stand in isolation but in need of companionship, and the one companion who fulfills God’s intention in our lives is a woman. . . . God intends for man to have a partner who bears God’s image along with man, and who with man can look upward to God and live for Him.”

—Richard Phillips, *The Masculine Mandate*, 78–79

- Having brought Adam to this realization, God created not a “companion” or a “lover,” but “a helper suitable for him” (Gen 2:18).
- The term “helper” (עֵזֶר, ‘ēzer) emphasizes *function*.
- In light of the mandate to “cultivate and keep” the garden (2:15) and extend that rule over the earth (1:26, 28), Adam needed a *helper*.
- Adam could realize his full potential only with *assistance*—not from another man, but from a specially-designed *helpmate*: woman.
- **Genesis 1:31** – “God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.”

An architectural line drawing of a classical column, likely Corinthian, showing the column shaft, capital, and base. The drawing is on a light background with some faint grid lines.

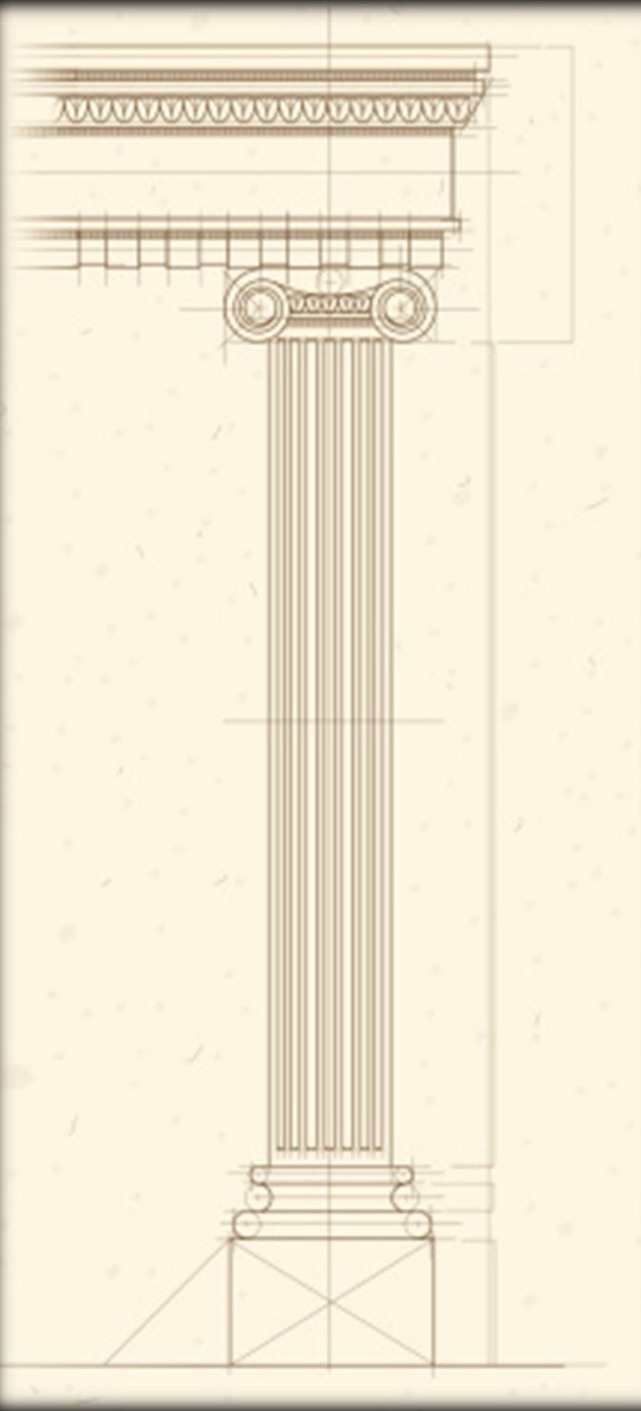
II. MARRIAGE IS COMBINATION

com·bi·na·tion: “two things joined together to form a single unit.”

Matthew 19:4–6a – “And He answered and said, ‘Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, and said, “FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH”? So they are no longer two, but one flesh.’”

- Biblical marriage is not the formula of $1 + 1 = 2$ (a formula that attempts to preserve individual autonomy).
- The biblical formula for marriage is $1 + 1 = 1$ (a formula that creates a brand-new identity).
- **Genesis 2:24** – “For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”
- This truth is established prior to the Fall but repeated explicitly three other times after the Fall (Matt 19:4–6; Mark 10:7–8; Eph 5:31), to emphasize its enduring necessity.

- Although it is lived out in manifold ways, this “one-flesh” identity is most vividly applied in *physical intimacy*.
- “Conjugal relations” is an appropriate description of this activity:
 - “conjugal” = *con* (Latin: “together”) + *jugum* (Latin: “a yoke”)
 - *conjugalis* = “yoked together”
- Sexual activity in marriage is not primarily for procreation; it is an ongoing *reminder* to the husband and wife of their *shared identity*.
- **1 Corinthians 7:3–4** – “The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does*; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*.”

An architectural line drawing of a classical column, likely Corinthian, showing the column shaft, capital, and base. The drawing is on a light background with faint grid lines.

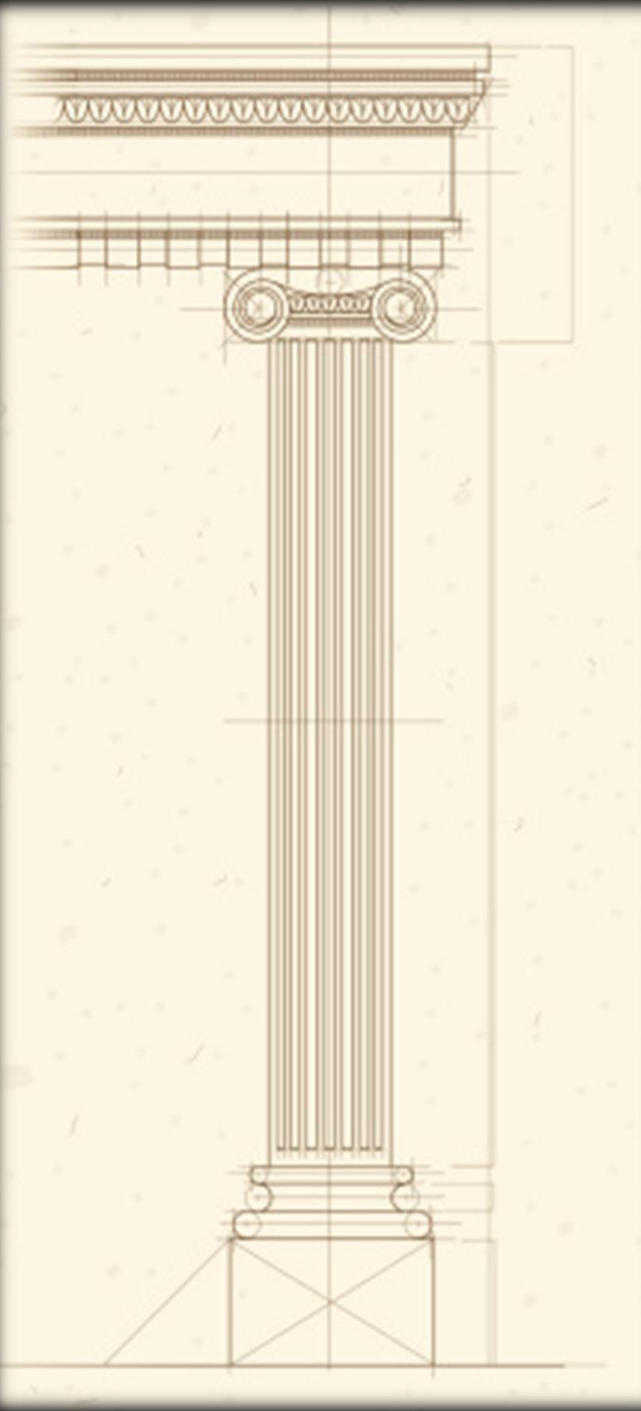
III. MARRIAGE IS COMPLEMENTARY

com·ple·men·ta·ry: “relating in such a way as to enhance or emphasize the qualities of each other.”

1 Corinthians 11:8–9 – “For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman’s sake, but woman for the man’s sake.”

- God did not create a *clone* for Adam; He created a *woman*.
- On the one hand, the woman is *the same* as man; Eve is formed from Adam's rib (Gen 2:22)—from the same substance as Adam.
- **Genesis 1:26–27** – “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”
- This *sameness* is illustrated by the fact that both are redeemed according to the same means, and both inherit the same spiritual riches (Gal 3:28; 1 Pet 3:7).

- On the other hand, the woman is *different* from man; she is created with different *psychology, physiology, and function*.
- **1 Corinthians 11:8–9** – “For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman’s sake, but woman for the man’s sake.”
- This difference is evident in the different aspects of *the curse* pronounced upon Eve (Gen 3:16) and Adam (3:17–19).
- This difference is evident in the different *instructions* given to men and women (Eph 5:23–24; Col 3:8–9; Titus 2:4–5; 1 Pet 3:7).
- Like instruments that function best when operated according to the manufacturer’s instructions, marriage functions best when the Creator’s complementary design for it is embraced.

An architectural line drawing of a classical column, likely Corinthian, showing the capital, shaft, and base. The drawing is on a light background with some faint, illegible text and a grid-like pattern.

IV. MARRIAGE IS COVENANTAL

cov·e·nan·tal: “relating to or involving a solemn, binding agreement.”

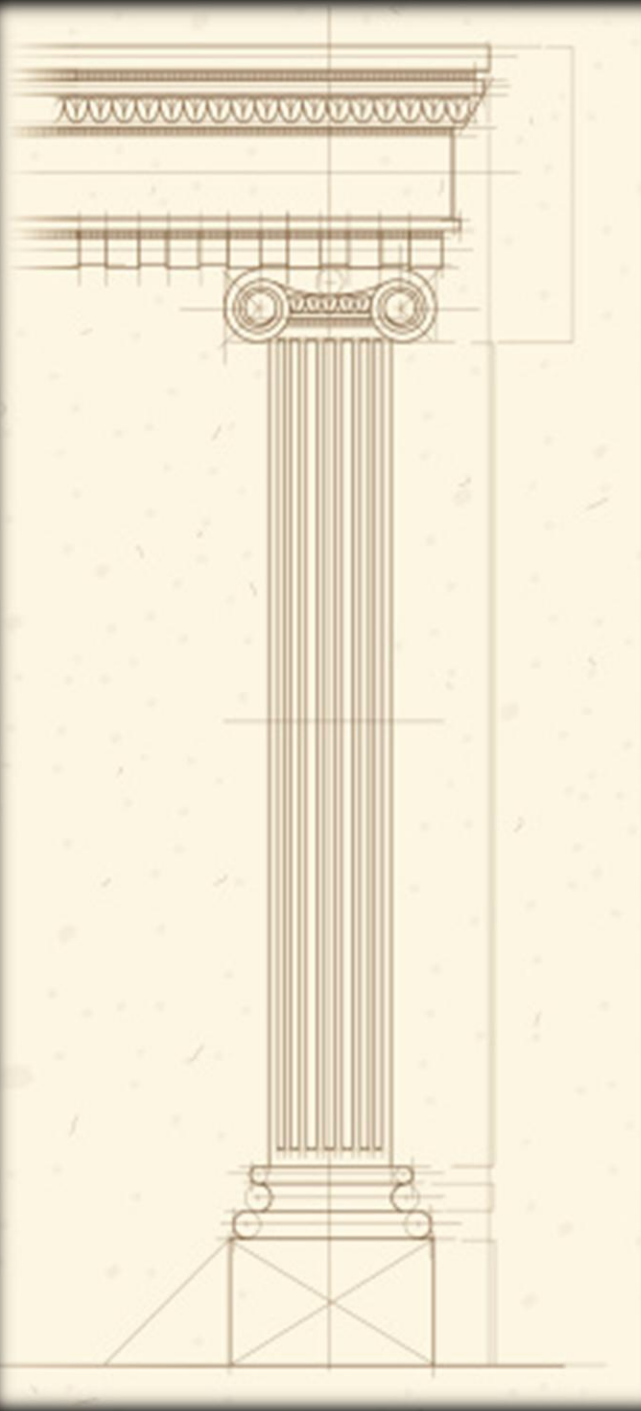
Matthew 19:6a – “So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

- The covenantal nature of marriage is not a social construct that evolved over time; it is an essential element by original, divine design.
- **Malachi 2:13–16** – “‘This is another thing you do: you cover the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts *it with* favor from your hand. Yet you say, ‘For what reason?’ Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. . . . Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. For I hate divorce,’ says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘and him who covers his garment with wrong,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.’”

- **Matthew 19:3–6** – “*Some* Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, ‘Is it lawful *for a man* to divorce his wife for any reason at all?’ And He answered and said, ‘Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, and said, “FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH”? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.’”
- This covenant is *between two sexes* (a man and a woman); *exclusive to two people* (no one else is to be included); and *life-long* (established until death).
- This covenant is a set of *verbal oaths*, wherein every word counts *forever*.

“I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wife and to have and to hold from this day forward. I promise before God and in the presence of these witnesses to be your loving, faithful, and self-sacrificing husband, to seek and serve the Lord with you, to pray for you, to provide godly leadership in our home, to love and cherish you, and to give all of myself to you, in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, until the Lord Jesus Christ calls me home. What God has joined together, let no one separate.”

(Gen 2:24; Eph 5:25, 28; 1 Pet 3:7; Eph 5:23; 1 Cor 11:3
Col 3:19; 1 Cor 7:3–4; Matt 19:6)

A detailed architectural line drawing of a classical column, likely Corinthian, showing the column shaft, capital, and base. The drawing is oriented vertically and occupies the left side of the image.

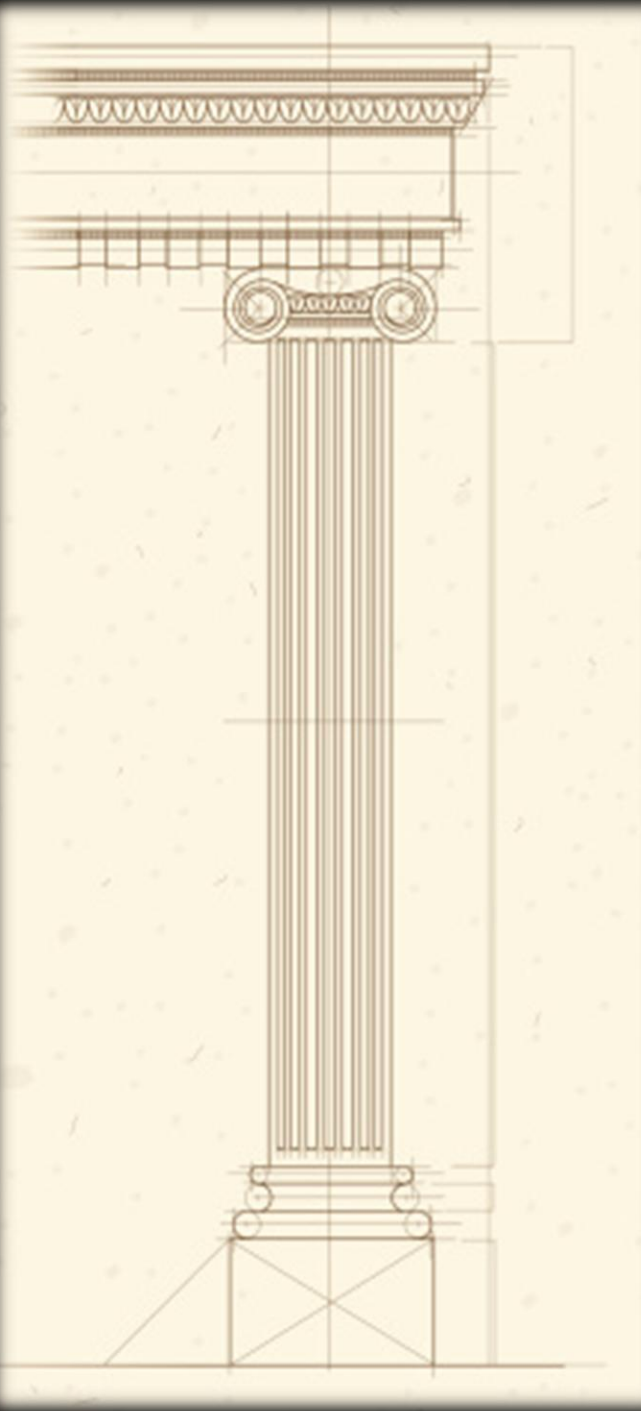
V. MARRIAGE IS COMPANIONSHIP

com·pan·ion·ship: “a sense of closeness and enjoyment of being with another person.”

Ecclesiastes 9:9 – “Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun.”

- The companionship that marriage affords is one of the sweetest expressions of the goodness of God.
- That *romance* is to be an essential part of marriage is evident in that a whole book of the Bible is devoted to the topic: *Song of Solomon*.
- *The MacArthur Study Bible*: “Solomon’s ancient love song exalts the purity of marital affection and romance. It parallels and enhances other portions of Scripture that portray God’s plan for marriage, including the beauty and sanctity of sexual intimacy between husband and wife. . . . The Song of Solomon expands on the ancient marriage instructions of Gen. 2:24, thus providing spiritual music for a lifetime of marital harmony. It is given by God to demonstrate his intention for the romance and loveliness of marriage, the most precious of human relations and ‘the grace of life’ (1 Peter 3:7).”

- **Proverbs 5:19b** – “Be exhilarated always with her love.”
- **Proverbs 18:22** – “He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.”
- **Ecclesiastes 9:9** – “Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun.”
- Martin Luther: “To have peace and love in a marriage is a gift that is next to the knowledge of the gospel.”

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VI. MARRIAGE IS CONNOTATIVE

con·no·ta·tive: “implying an association or idea beyond the explicit meaning of a word or phrase.”

Ephesians 5:25–27 – “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing.”

- Marriage is not an end in itself; it is designed to point to the greater truth of Christ's love for His church.
- **Ephesians 5:25–32** – “. . . So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church, because we are members of His body. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must *see to it* that she respects her husband.”
- Marriage is the unique context in which a couple can *live out the truth of redemption* as a witness to the lost and to the glory of God.



WHAT'S NEXT?

- Begin to meditate upon these six truths.
- Prepare for some deep conviction in the months to come.
- Pray for receptivity and transformation.
- Consider how you can play a part in influencing others for good.
- Rejoice in grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is able to cover every sin and failure.