

Jesus said, “You too, **be ready**; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.” Luke 12:40

We believe Jesus’ promise that He is coming for His Church. We need to be ready for His arrival. In what areas of life do you need to get ready?



# “Get Ready my \_\_\_\_\_”

June 5	heart
June 12	mind
June 19	family
<b>June 26</b>	<b>marriage</b>
July 3	nation
July 10	time
July 17	career
July 24	relationships
July 31	testimony
August 7	money
August 14	church



# Get Ready My Marriage

- To get our marriages ready for Jesus, we need to mold them into God's biblical design for marriage.
- What is that design?
- Is it possible to reach that goal?
- Can husbands and wives, as sinners living in a fallen world, live up to God's design for marriage?



# God's Design for Marriage

## Genesis 1 - 2



# The first couple

## Genesis 1:26-28

“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. God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”



# The First Man

## Genesis 2:7

“Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”



# The first marriage

Genesis 2:18-25



Then the Lord God said, “It is not good (advantageous) for the man (mankind) to be alone; I will make him a helper (Hebrew “ezer”) suitable for him.” 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.

Genesis 2:18-20



So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Genesis 2:21-25



“For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.” Genesis 2:24

- “For this cause”—not simply to produce children, but to correct the condition of solitude mentioned in Genesis 2:18 as not good.
- Leave (definite break) & Cleave (to be glued to)
- Companionship, not procreation, is the basic reason for marriage.



# Characteristics of a “One flesh” marriage

Source: Professor Ebbie Smith

1. Only valid between a man and a woman who are striving toward God’s ideal for their union.
2. The quality of growing and expanding. This relationship is never paid up; so long as the two persons live, this relationship should continue to deepen in intimacy, servanthood, and love.
3. By necessity must be faithful. A one flesh relationship must remain an exclusive relationship.
4. Remains a serving, mutually helping relationship. Mutual servanthood constitutes the important center of the one flesh relationship.

“God intended husband and wife to be a spiritual, functional unity, walking in integrity, serving God, and keeping His commandments together.” – Bible Knowledge Commentary



# What is marriage?

## ARTICLE X - MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY (Church Bylaws approved February 14, 2016)

- We are committed to the home and family as set forth in Holy Scripture. We believe God has ordained and created marriage to exist between one man (born biologically male) and one woman (born biologically female), with absolute marital fidelity. The Bible sets forth specific home and family values, which include the distinct roles of husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, and children. It is our firm conviction that we uphold the dignity of each individual as we embrace the unchanging and longstanding principles of scriptural truth.
- **First Melissa defines marriage as the permanent, exclusive, comprehensive, and conjugal “one flesh” union of one man (born biologically male) and one woman (born biologically female), intrinsically ordered to procreation and biological family, and in furtherance of the moral, spiritual, and public good of binding father, mother, and child. (Genesis 1:27-28, Genesis 2:18-24, Matthew 19:4-9, Mark 10:5-9, Ephesians 5:31-33)**
- No other definitions of marriage, as written by individuals, groups, or government agencies, will be considered valid according to the beliefs and practices of this church.



# How are American marriages doing?

- An average of 3,751 families end in divorce each day of the year.
- More marriages are now terminated in divorce than by the death of a spouse.
- One million children a year see their parents divorce.
- Over 50% of the children in America's public schools come from single-parent homes.
- 35% of our nation's children live apart from their biological fathers.
- 50% of children who do not live with their fathers have never stepped foot in their father's home.
- Most people now live together before marriage for the first time.
- Living together prior to marriage can increase the chance of divorce by as much as 40%.
- Less than 40% of all married couples claim to be very happy.
- More than 60% of first marriages are now preceded by living together, compared to virtually none fifty years ago.



# How are American marriages doing?

- The average age for childbearing is now younger than the average age for marriage. By age 25, 44% of women have had a baby, while only 38% have married.
- 41% of 1st marriages end in divorce. 60% of 2nd marriages end in divorce. 73% of 3rd marriages end in divorce.
- The average length of a marriage that ends in divorce is eight years.
- The average age for couples going through their first divorce is 30 years old.
- 43% of children growing up in America today are being raised without their fathers.
- 75% of children with divorced parents live with their mother.
- 28% of children living with a divorced parent live in a household with income below poverty line.
- Half of all American children will witness the breakup of a parent's marriage. Of these children, close to half will also see the breakup of a parent's second marriage.

Sources: <http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/9-things-you-should-know-about-marriage-in-america>  
<http://www.mckinleyirvin.com/Family-Law-Blog/2012/October/32-Shocking-Divorce-Statistics.aspx>



# Why Divorce?

The most common reasons people give for their divorce are lack of commitment, too much arguing, infidelity, marrying too young, unrealistic expectations, lack of equality in the relationship, lack of preparation for marriage, and abuse.

Source: <http://www.divorce.usu.edu/files/uploads/Lesson3.pdf>

If a person has been to college, has an annual income over \$50,000, is religious, comes from an intact family, and marries after age 25 without having a baby first, their chances of divorce are very low.

Source: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/02/14/5-facts-about-love-and-marriage/>



# What exactly did I say?

## Traditional Christian wedding vows

I take you as my lawfully wedded husband/wife, I promise before God and these witnesses that I will love you, will comfort you, will honor you, will keep you, in sickness and in health, for richer or poorer, forsaking all others, as long as we both shall live.



# Wedding Vows

I take you as...

My lawfully wedded husband/wife

Will honor you

**Covenant**

**Show respect, encouragement**

Promise before God

Will keep you

**Spiritual foundation**

**Commitment**

Promise before these witnesses

In sickness and health/richer or poorer

**Social foundation**

**Unconditional love**

Will love you

Forsaking all others

**In words, thoughts, deeds**

**Faithfulness**

Will comfort you

As long as we both shall live

**Show compassion and kindness**

**Permanence, consistency**



# What does God think about my vows?

“If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, he shall not violate his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.”

Numbers 30:2

“When you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it; for He takes no delight in fools. Pay what you vow! It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay.”

Ecclesiastes 5:4-5



## **What if I have broken my vows?**

“Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” Acts 3:19

## **What if my spouse has broken their vows?**

Paul wrote, “But whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.” 2 Corinthians 2:10-11



# How can I handle the conflict in my marriage?

Philippians 4:4-8



# Primary Causes of Conflict

- Power and Control
- Insecurity
- Differences in Values
- Competition
- Personal Differences
- Misunderstood Feelings and Unmet Needs

source: *Dr. Carol Rubin and Dr. Jeffrey Rubin*



Rejoice (*Chairete* Greek present imperative) in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:4-7

“Thankful prayer brings release from fear and worry, because it affirms God’s sovereign control over every circumstance, and that His purpose is the believer’s good.” -Pastor John MacArthur



Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. Philippians 4:8

## Are these 6 qualities present in your marriage?

**True** things are the opposite of dishonest and unreliable things

**Noble (Honorable)** refers to what is dignified and worthy of respect

**Right** refers to conformity to God's standards

**Pure** refers to what is wholesome, not mixed with moral impurity

**Lovely** speaks of what promotes peace rather than conflict

**Admirable** describes what is positive/constructive, not negative/destructive

These six objects of thought are then described as **excellent** and **praiseworthy**



What really separates contented couples from those in marital misery is a healthy balance between their positive and negative feelings and actions toward each other.

In our research, we found that in stable marriages there was a very specific ratio that exists between the number of a couple's positive interactions – touching, smiling, paying compliments, laughing – and their negative ones.

**The magic ratio is five to one.** In other words, as long as there is five times as much positive feeling and interaction between husband and wife as there is negative, we found that the marriage was likely to be stable.

**Based solely on this ratio, we were able to predict whether couples were likely to divorce.**

- Dr. John Gottman



# Fighting Rules

By Greg Smalley and Gary Smalley

1. Clarify what the actual conflict is.
2. Stick to the issue at hand.
3. Maintain as much tender physical contact as possible.
4. Avoid sarcasm.
5. Avoid “you” statements.
6. Don’t use “hysterical” statements or exaggerations.
7. Resolve any hurt feelings before continuing the conflict discussion.
8. Don’t resort to name-calling.
9. Avoid power statements and actions.
10. Don’t use the silent treatment.
11. Keep your arguments as private as possible to avoid embarrassment.
12. Resolve your conflicts with win-win solutions.
13. Strive to reflect honor in all your words and actions during the resolution of your conflicts.



# Is it possible to live out a Biblical marriage in a fallen world?

Ephesians 5:20-33



# God Speaks To All Believers

“Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.” Ephesians 5:20-21

- Greek grammar: Participle in middle voice
- Means “arrange self under” or “relate yourself to”



# God Speaks To Wives

“Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.”

Ephesians 5:22-24

“What most Christian teaching through the centuries has missed in using this Scripture is that the wives are not ‘commanded’ to accept subjection to husbands, **but are enjoined to ‘subject themselves.’** The initiative, the autonomy, and the practice are all left with the wife.” – Dr. Ebbie Smith



“The husband is the head of the wife” Ephesians 5:23

## Why are so many husbands not the head of their families?

- Husband has never been taught this
- Husband does not know how
- Husband has never seen a godly example
- Husband is lazy and refuses to do it
- Wife won't let him
- Our culture ridicules and redefines this idea



# God Speaks To Husbands

“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; but that she would be holy and blameless. 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.” Ephesians 5:25-30



# God Speaks To Both Spouses

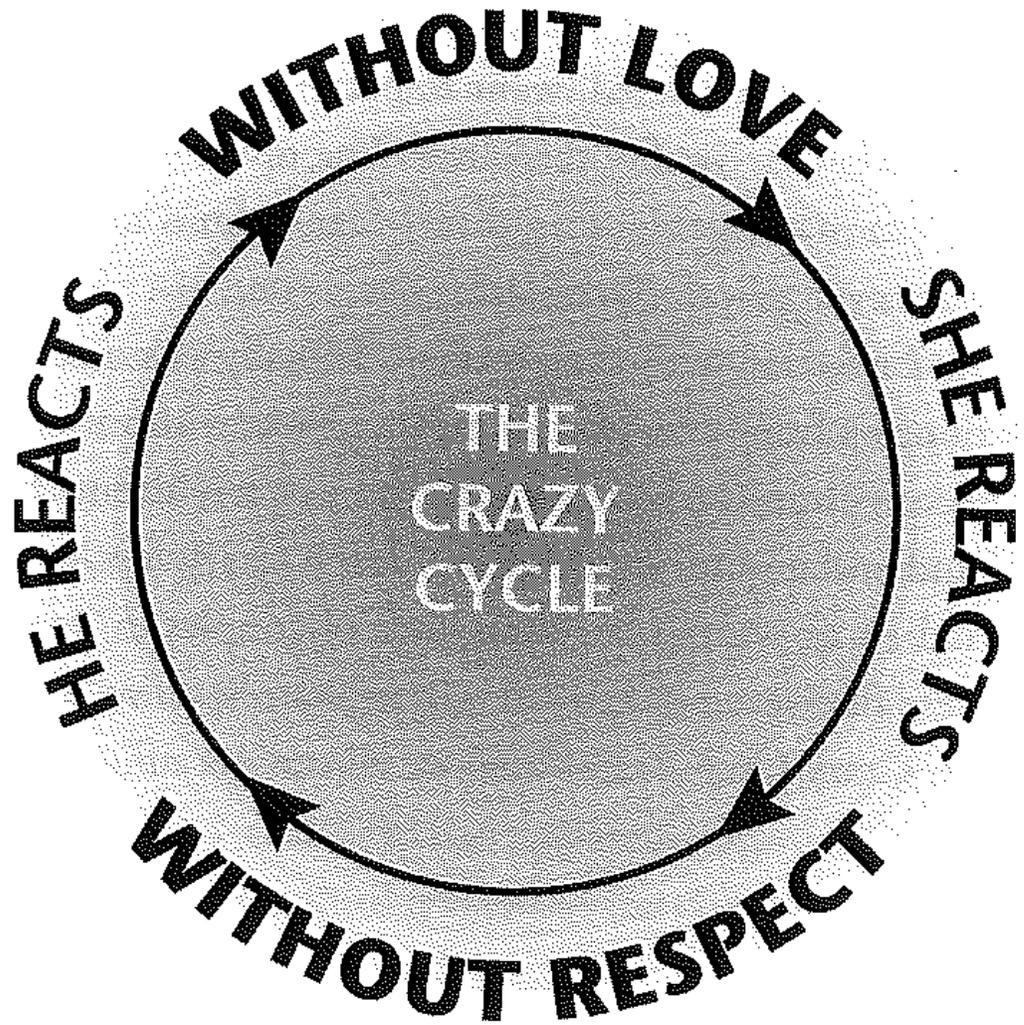
“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.”

Ephesians 5:31-33

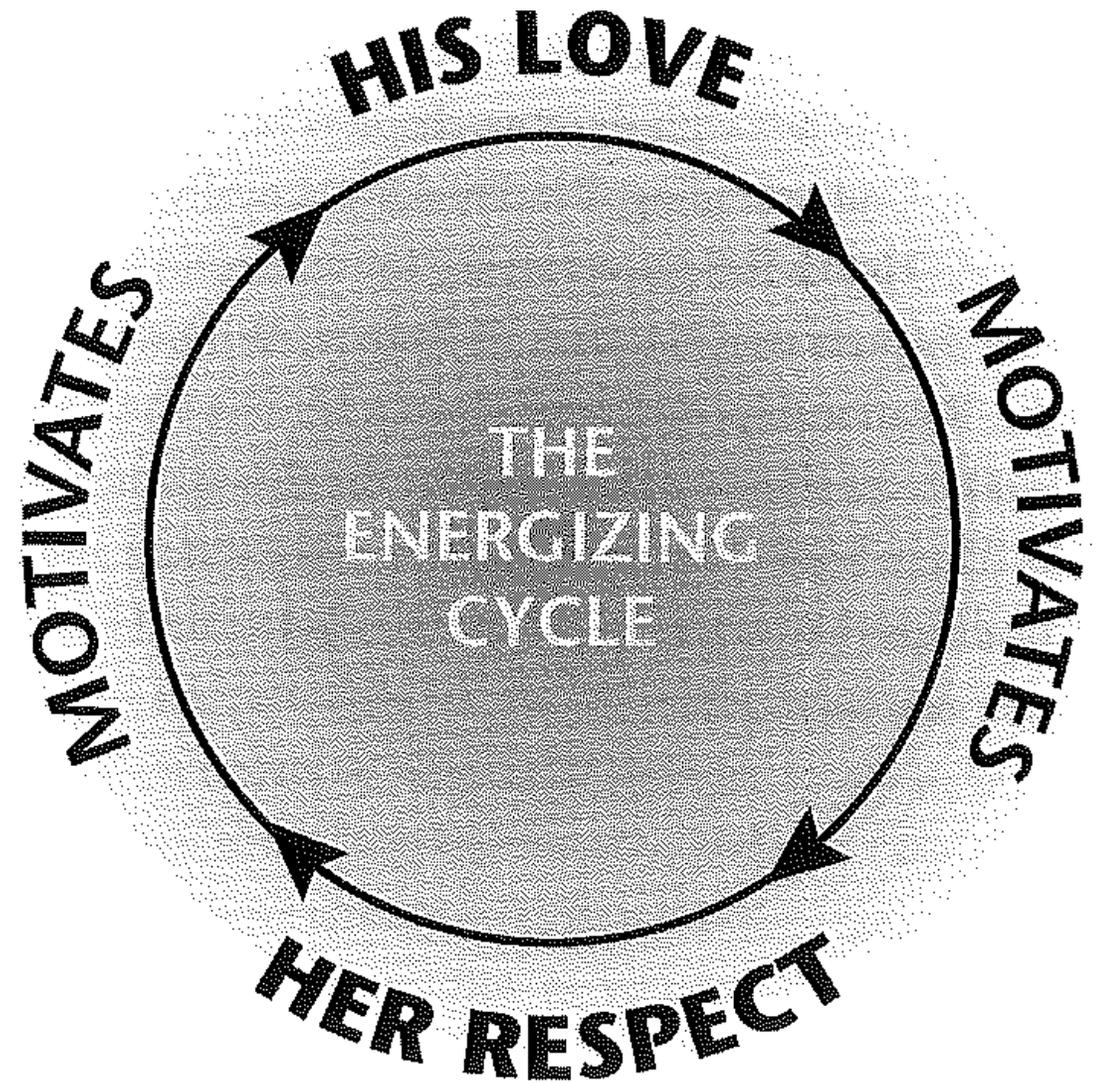
#1 need of men = Unconditional respect (esteem)

#1 need of women = Unconditional love (security)





OR



Source: *Love & Respect* by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs



**Who is getting their marriage ready for Jesus?**

**Video testimony –**

**Matt and Maghan Achimon**



# If your marriage needs help...

- Pray constantly
- Prioritize your marriage over everything else except your walk with Jesus Christ
- Remember your vows
- Ask God for healing and restoration
- Ask God to help you love your spouse more
- Major on forgiveness and grace (reconciliation)
- Pray together
- Worship together
- Ask for biblical counsel



# Husbands and Wives...

Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

1 Peter 4:8

