

MARRIAGE

Marriage is a beautiful relationship; it is a relationship designed by God for a man and woman to be joined together as lifelong partners under the lordship of God.

The Bible describes this relationship in Ephesians:

- 🔔 *Wives, submit to your husbands, as to the Lord* – this means the husband is the designated head of his wife, just as Jesus is the head of the church, and should be respected for this assigned position
- 🔔 *Husbands, love your wives as your own bodies* – this means to love them just as Christ loves the church and gave himself for the church (all who are part of the church body)
- 🔔 *Husbands, leave your family and be joined with your wife* – this means that in the sacrament or marriage, a husband and wife are a new family with responsibility to each other, honor for each other, and trust in each other



As important as these instructions are to a healthy marriage, the foundation or ability to carry-out the instructions is a love for God and, in turn, love for your spouse; without love, a sense of responsibility, honor and trust will not be sustainable; in short, love covers a multitude of sins or imperfections.

If God did not love us, He would not have:

- ✝ Given us a way for salvation or reconciliation to Him through his son
- ✝ Given the Holy Spirit as our helper and intercessor
- ✝ Given us the Bible as His word and the truth
- ✝ Been committed to His relationship with man both before and after sin

God loves us as a gift. In a similar way, marriage is based on two people loving each other unconditionally through the understanding and acceptance that each is loved unconditionally by God. If love is based on conditions and expectations, it is not love of God or of another; rather, it is love of self and one's own needs and interests.

Marriages can succeed, overcome, survive, and fail. Even if the marriage remains, the relationship and love itself can be in deterioration. For marriage to succeed or be healthy, both the man and woman must remain humbled by the grace afforded them through God's love; in turn, they are enabled to love their spouse. Aside from God's love, marriage has probably succeeded; still, I see no way possible for man's love alone to sustain this lifelong relationship as God designed marriage to be.

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