

# Easy As 1-2-3



## Toward a Grace-Based Marriage

### It's As Easy As 1-2-3

Select where you would like to begin and enjoy!

1-Overall Understanding (below)

[2- Detailed Study Notes](#)

## Overall Understanding

This is a summarized version of the Detailed Notes concerning what marriage can be when grace is lived out.

## Toward a Grace-Based Marriage

Ephesians 5:18-33

### Verses 18-33

*And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another in the fear of God. <sup>22</sup> wives, to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. <sup>28</sup> So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. <sup>30</sup> For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.*

*<sup>31</sup> “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”<sup>32</sup> This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.* <sup>33</sup> Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love (agape) his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

## **Toward Understanding a Grace-Based Marriage: A Work In-Progress**

- I The teaching in Ephesians 5 is as much (or perhaps more) a teaching on Christ and the church as it is about marriage, and yet we tend to focus on marriage and overlook the beauty of what God is saying about our relationship with Jesus.
- II In referring to our relationship to Christ and thus our relationship to each other in marriage as a great “mystery”, God is elevating the importance of marriage.
- III In the whole of the New Testament writings, very little specific instruction is given about marriage. Yet religion wants to formulate and legislate to the point of inventing something that God did not intend.

God made instructions about marriage basic so that in any culture or time the truths would be applicable and so that within these basic guidelines each marriage would be uniquely beautiful reflecting:

1. Christ and the church
2. Cultural and familiar backgrounds
3. God-given personalities and talents
4. Spiritual gifts and callings
5. Likes and dislikes, and
6. Give room for differences

### **IV Relational definitions**

- A** Notice we are to submit to each other “in the fear of God”, and in that same way women are to submit to their husbands.
  - 1 In what manner do we submit to each other? We cooperate given deference to each other for the purpose of unity in the body of Christ. Most Christians are “cool” with that.
  - 2 Paul continues the same sentence using the same verb (submit) saying, “Wives, to their own husbands as unto the Lord.”

**Somehow, religion has made the submission of a wife to her husband something different than our submission to one another...something that involves subjugation instead of cooperation.**

## V The Husband's Blessing<sup>1</sup>

### **Ephesians 5:25-28**

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,*

### **Genesis 2:23**

*The man said,*

*"This is now bone of my bones,*

*And flesh of my flesh;*

### **Ephesians 5:26**

*So that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,<sup>27</sup>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. <sup>28</sup>So husbands ought also to love their own wives*

- A The "duty" of the husband is to see the wife in her beauty and glory, and to speak to her that way.
- B She is so precious to him that he is willing to DIE for her.

## VI The Wife's Blessing<sup>2</sup>

- A A woman's submission to her husband is compared to her submission to her loving Lord. **If she or her husband has a bent view of their relationship to God, this will be reflected in their view of submission.** Instead of a joyful trusting surrender to the one who loves her unconditionally and who has her best interest at heart, a woman can begin to see submission as a bondage or burden.
- B Believers are told to submit to each other; however, **a woman is in submission only to her husband,** thus **protecting** her from those who might seek to dominate or control her outside the bonds of marriage. **She is submitted to her husband before any other member in the body of Christ.** The two of them are one and thus submit to the rest of the body of Christ as one.

## VII Unity is the Purpose of Marriage

- A We are to be *joined* to each other (verse 31).

*"Joined" is proskollaō, "to glue upon, to glue to, to join one's self to closely, cleave to, stick to." The compound verb denotes a most intimate union. Wuest's Word Studies - Volume 1: Word Studies in the Greek New Testament.*

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<sup>1</sup> His blessing rather than his duty

<sup>2</sup> Her blessing instead of her obligation

**Luke 24:18**

*One of them, named Cleopas, answered and said to Him, "Are You the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days?"*

Cleopas and the person who walked with him were probably a husband and wife, and only the husband was named, (as in the feeding of the 5000).

- B** Marital Unity is Based on Jesus. When we agree together as husband and wife, nothing can stop us.

**Ecclesiastes 4:12**

*And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*

**Matthew 18:18-20**

*"Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.<sup>19</sup> Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. 20 "For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst."*

**VIII** The entire marriage relationship passage is predicated upon the preceding verses which paint a joyous relationship.

**Ephesians 5:18-21**

*And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,<sup>19</sup> speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; <sup>20</sup>always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;<sup>21</sup> and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.*

- A** As we are "be being **filled** with the Spirit", walking in and believing the great love with He loves us individually, we are then effortlessly able to do our submissive and love "duties".

**Ephesians 3:19-20**

*And to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.<sup>20</sup> Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly*

*beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.),*

## **IX Verse 31**

This mystery is great (Greek: mega); but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

Jesus wants complete intimacy and unity with you. He does this by affirming who you really are, Eph. 5:26-27

<sup>26</sup>so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup>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.

Jesus sees you without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.



## **Toward a Grace-Based Marriage: More Food for Thought**

When we read Ephesians 5:25 and realize that God is comparing the relationship Christ has with the church in order to describe the relationship between and man and woman, hope rises in our hearts. How wonderful it must be for Christians to be married if their relationship is such a reflection!

1. Perfect union
2. Perfect harmony
3. The two become one
4. Deep love between the two
5. Acceptance of each other
6. Grace extended to cover all faults
7. Equality in Christ as co-heirs
8. Working together, praying together, being successful together
9. Brother and sisters, true friendship

**However, when religion takes over our understanding of God's love for us, when we begin to see Him as a hard task master, when obedience is with reluctance, when God's love is fickle and usually based on our performance, when we stop seeing ourselves as His body**

## **and instead his subjects, THIS ERODES AND DESTROYS WHAT GOD HAD INTENDED FOR MARRIAGE.**

1. There is almost no unity.
2. Harmony? Are you kidding? How about wars and rumors of wars?
3. Deep love? Well, it's desired, but seldom truly felt.
4. Acceptance? Hardly. Most marriage seminars focus on how to get your mate to do what you'd like him/her to do...manipulation instead of cooperation.
5. Grace? No way! Laws...lots of laws...and formulas...and fault-finding
6. Religion makes the husband the ruler of the wife. It makes the wife a near slave unable to decide for herself. It makes man supreme and woman's only importance to exalt him. She is incapable of making the smallest decisions, needing to get permission like a small child. She must submit like it or not or face the fires of hell or perhaps be killed in a tragic car accident!!! The husband is supposed to love His wife, but how can he truly love her when she is never quite good enough? **How can he see her as a co-heir, when he does not even see her as an equal?**
7. Brothers and sisters? How about leader-follower, teacher-student, boss-employee (who doesn't get paid...AKA in most societies, slave or concubine). Women working full-time required to turn their entire paycheck over to their husbands and then needing to ask for money they earned in order to purchase something for the kids or house, or herself.

## **HOW DID THIS UGLINESS SNEAK INTO CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE?**

1. When someone does not understand how he/she is deeply loved and accepted by the Father, he/she is incapable of loving his/her spouse.
2. When believers do not understand the gospel of grace, their perspectives on Christ's relationship to the church become warped and that twisted view gets translated into marriage.
3. Religious Do's and Don'ts enter the marriage...with the woman never feeling loved and the husband never feeling respected...both of them miserable.
4. Men and women are NOT treated equally in church setting and so this is brought home.
5. So, the marriage seminars begin...but until both man and woman have a clear understanding of their relationship with Jesus and understand the truth about God's intention for them as a couple, the marriage will continue to be something less than an example of Christ and the church.

So what is the answer?

We believe with all of our hearts the words of Jesus when He said that knowing the truth would set us free. We don't have all the answers, but we are learning.

There are extensive additional notes in the [Detailed Study Notes](#) that you might find beneficial. We hope the above notes have inspired you to rethink marriage.