

A Biblical Perspective

The Surpassing Goal:

Marriage Lived for the Glory of God

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God is. God is the one ultimate absolute in existence. (Gen. 1:1; Deut. 4:39-40) Everything else is from Him and through Him and for Him. That is the starting place for understanding marriage. If we get this wrong, everything goes wrong. And if we get it right—really right, in our heads and in our hearts—then marriage will be transformed by it. Marriage will become what it was created by God to be—a display of the truth and worth and beauty and greatness of God.

Knowing God's Character

Most young people today do not bring to their courtship and marriage a great vision of God—who He is, what He is like, how He acts. In the world, there is almost no vision of God. He is not even on the list to be invited. He is simply and breathtakingly omitted. And in the church, the view of God that young couples bring to their relationship is so small instead of huge, and so marginal instead of central, and so vague instead of clear, and so impotent instead of all-determining, and so uninspiring instead of ravishing, that when they marry, the thought of living marriage to the glory of God is without meaning and without content.

Key to Glorifying God in Marriage

So knowing God and cherishing God and valuing the glory of God above all things, including your spouse, is the key

to living marriage to the glory of God. It's true in marriage, as in every other relationship: God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.

Put God First in Marriage

Here is a key that unlocks a thousand doors. Superior satisfaction in God above all earthly things, including your spouse and your health and your own life (Psalm 63:3, "your steadfast love is better than life") is the source of great long-suffering without which husbands cannot love like Christ, and wives cannot follow like the bride of Christ, the church. Ephesians 5:22-25 makes plain that husbands take their cues of leadership and love from Christ, and wives take their cues of submission and love from the devotion of the church for whom He died.

Roles of Husbands and Wives

Let me say it another way. There are two levels at which the glory of God may shine forth from a Christian marriage: One is at the structural level when both spouses fulfill the roles God intended for them—the man as leader like Christ, the wife as advocate and follower of that leadership. When those roles are lived out, the glory of God's love and wisdom in Christ is displayed to the world. But there is another deeper, more foundational level where the glory of God must shine if these roles are to be sustained as God designed. I don't think that our love for our wives or theirs for us will glorify God until it flows from a heart that delights in God more than marriage. Marriage will be preserved for the glory of God and shaped for the glory of God when the glory of God is more precious to us than marriage.

Do your homework

- The North Carolina Family Policy Council web site (www.ncfamily.org) has several policy papers on marriage and marriage laws including, *Why Families Matter: The need for husbands and wives, fathers and mothers*, *The Essence of Marriage: 10 good reasons to preserve meaningful tort laws*, and *The Essence of Marriage: Why it is only the union of a man and a woman*. There are also several radio shows in our archives that you can listen to and download. You can sign up for a weekly "Facts" e-mail which will keep you informed on breaking issues.
- The NC General Assembly web site is www.ncleg.net. You can view bills and contact your legislators through this site.
- Heritage Foundation at www.heritage.org
- Family Research Council www.frc.org
- Concerned Women for America www.cwfa.org
- Recommended books:
 - Gallagher, Maggie. *The Abolition of Marriage: How We Destroy Lasting Love*. Washington, DC: Regnery, 1996.
 - Geisler, Norman L. and Frank Turek. *Legislating Morality*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1998.
 - Grudem, Wayne, ed. *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002.
 - Piper, John. *What's the Difference: Manhood and Womanhood Defined According to the Bible*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1990.
 - Waite, Linda, and Maggie Gallagher. *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People are Happier, Healthier, and Better Off Financially*. New York, NY: Broadway, 2001.