

Transcript* - Marriage Is A Mystery – 5/24/2026 - Pastor Jay Gjurjevich

Well good morning everybody. Great to see all of you here this morning. Happy Memorial Day weekend. To all of you. As we gather this morning, we are continuing in our series called Family Matters. And I don't know if you've noticed, but this title kind of has a double meaning to it. We're talking about matters that are related to the family, and we are saying that family matters.

It matters to God. It matters to us. At least. I think that's the way. I didn't write the title, but it sounds good to me. So I think that's the way it's supposed to go. But as we're doing this, we're talking about all these issues that relate to the family. This morning, we're going to be talking about what is probably the most important relationship in the family.

It is the kind of the core and the center of the family, if you will. And it's the marriage relationship. And if the marriage relationship, by the way, is created by God not only to be the most impactful family relationship, but it's also created to impact our churches, our communities, our neighborhoods. It is that foundational relationship that was put together by the hands of God from the beginning, and because it was put together by the hands of God and it was given a divine purpose.

We're going to see why God did that and what that means for your marriage today. Now, let me just tell you, if you were here this morning and you are not married, I want to say again, don't feel the temptation to don't don't fall to the temptation of zoning this out, zoning out in some way. Right. I'm telling you right now, this has a lot to say to you.

In fact, I had, after the first two services, the best feedback that I got was actually from a man who is not married. And so hopefully that encourages you. And if all else fails, you can just take this message and send it to somebody who is married like a friend or family member. Because in my experience, there's nothing that people love more than unsolicited marriage advice.

And so just send it to him. Say Happy Memorial Day here. Here you go. Here's some married other. Speaking of marriage advice, is there anything more difficult and sometimes awkward than to give people marriage advice about their marriage? Your experiences before, even when people come to you and they ask you, like maybe they're in a conflict or they're in a challenging spot in their marriage, and they come to you and they ask you for marriage advice.

It's so difficult. I think about it. It's kind of like grasping for straws in the dark at times, because you don't know what's going on in that marriage. It's actually not fair that in some ways, to have that request put on you. You don't know what happens between a husband and wife on a daily basis. There's so much context in that relationship that you miss out on.

You don't know about the two. There's two different personalities going on. There's all kinds of history and baggage that has been built up in that marriage that you're really not aware of. And if it's a conflict, you know, you're only getting one side of the story. And so you're trying to piece together, how do I respond to this?

And on top of all that, there is this aspect of spiritual warfare that's often going on in marriages as well. So how do you do that? And it's not only difficult because of all those factors, but also because marriage is complex. I think in so many cases we want a quick fix to our marriage. Here's three steps to working through marriage.

I got an amen in the back for that. Here's three. Here's three steps to working through my marriage. But the thing is, is a marriage is not like fixing a golf swing or learning a new language. It is actually, as the Bible calls it. It is a mystery. And by mystery we don't mean that it's scary and difficult to figure out and full of twists and turns, although at times it can feel that way.

For marriage. We're using mystery in the terms that the Bible uses it, which is mystery being something that that points to something else that God is revealing us. That is true and is true about reality. So God uses something to point to a greater reality. And that's actually what marriage is described as a profound mystery by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians five, which we're going to look at here in a little bit.

But that's one of the reasons why marriage is so difficult at times to figure out, not only to give advice to other people about their marriage, but to figure out our own marriage. In a lot of ways, I think to really have a good marriage, you have to be able to solve the mystery of marriage, and that's what we're going to be doing today.

And to do this, we need to start all the way back. At the beginning, you said earlier God created the marriage relationship from the very beginning. When we open up the first two chapters of the book of Genesis, right at the beginning of the Bible, we see what is called the creation narrative. And among all the things that God creates in all the universe, everything that we see and that we know, we're told that God creates it by speaking it into existence.

He also creates the marriage relationship in that context. So we begin to see that God creates the stars. He creates the planets, he creates the earth. He creates everything in the earth, the mountains, the trees, the oceans, the seas, the birds in the air or the animals on the ground. And then he creates and then he creates a human being.

And what you see is you read this narrative all the way through is that there is this repetition. There's almost kind of this pattern that happens. God creates. And at the end of the day, he sits back and he

says, what? It is good, right? In other words, the thing that I've created, whether it's the stars or the trees or the mountains or the seas or the animals, he sits back and he says, this is good.

It's accomplished its purpose, it's error. It is accomplishing its purpose. There's only one place we get to where God says that it is not good. We get to Adam and God creates Adam, and he sits back and he says, it is not good that Adam should be alone. And that right there is almost like a record scratch. It's almost like a it's such a shock at the shock to the system because we've been saying good, good, good, good, good, good.

And all of a sudden we see not good. And what God is pointing out here is that the image of God, as it was designed to be reflected in humanity, is not complete without woman, with man. And in that way we see uniquely that man and woman both reflect the image of God in different ways together, in humanity.

And with all of that in mind, and with that foundation in place, God moves forward. And not just creating a man and woman, but bringing the woman to the man to be his wife. Creating the first relationship between humans, which was a marriage relationship between a man and a woman together, reflecting the full image of God in humanity just in that relationship.

Listen to Genesis chapter two, verse 24. This is God's design. After he does this, he brings the woman to the man and he says this. Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. This is God's design for marriage. And notice what he does is he brings two people together in unity, calling them even one flesh together.

This is an even greater revelation of the nature and the activity of God. Because what we understand about God and scriptures is that we have we got. The Bible reveals to us a God who is in three persons, a Trinity, right? The Triune God, father, Son, and Holy Spirit together in one. And they've existed that way eternally in self-giving love between the three persons of the Godhead.

And what we see is a creation as as God creates the marriage relationship, you have to be coming, one designed in the same way to have self-giving love towards one another, representing the activity and the full nature of God in humanity. Now, this is why Jesus will later say what God has joined together. Let man not separate because this joining together is a divine act for a divine purpose, and it finds its ultimate meaning in this profound mystery that Paul talks about later.

And we'll get into that in a little bit. But staying here with the original marriage relationship as it was designed, what we see is this beautiful picture of the mystery of marriage begins in creation, and it continues throughout Scripture. But the question might be with such a wonderful picture of marriage that we have in creation, one that was God designed and God completed, and God purposed.

Why don't all of us who are married this morning feel like our marriage is always God designed and God empowered at every given moment? Why is it that sometimes we feel like our marriage is often just the opposite of those things? I think it's really for the same reason that the world that God once said was good, good, good, good, good is no longer that way either, because not long after the first two humans were married, they forgot their calling to fully represent God's glory and God's image and their relationship.

And instead they conspired together to disobey God and to sin. And as a result, what we know was in Genesis chapter three that sin caused a curse throughout all of creation, and it affected the bond of marriage itself. Listen to Genesis three verse 16, after God has just told the woman that pain is going to come through through childbirth, he says this.

He says, your desire will be for your husband and he shall rule over you. So God tells Eve, not only are you going to have physical pain in childbirth, but there's going to be relational pain in your marriage. Because notice these words even though it's a short statement or profound words of conflict, no longer are the husband and wife going to be in complete harmony and agreement and peace all the time, but instead, conflict has now entered the relationship.

Brokenness has entered the relationship. And to take this a step further, this conflict seems to come from a desire to rule over each other, to dominate each other, just the opposite of self-giving love. Instead, I'm taking from them in order to fulfill my desires, my needs, and my wants. And of course, that makes sense, because that's really what sin is.

Sin comes from self selfishness and pride and it's no mystery why that should manifest itself that way in marriage. Now you can actually see, by the way, this curse mindset play itself out in the way that many people think about marriage today. Many people in our culture approach marriage as marriage is something that is there to make me happy.

My spouse is somebody who is there to make me happy first and foremost. That's why I marry them, right? You've heard people say that a lot of people look at marriage just for that reason. I'm not saying it's not. It's a bad thing to be happy in your marriage. But if that's the foundation of your marriage, it's no wonder why so many marriages today end in divorce.

Because this is what happens eventually. If I believe that my marriage is just to make me happy, however, I do find that at any given moment, as soon as it ceases to make me happy, what do I start thinking about? Divorce as soon as my spouse doesn't make me happy in the way that I think they should make me happy at any given moment.

Whatever happiness means at that moment, then I'm justified in divorcing that person. And that's a perspective of marriage that is a child of the curse, because it says, you are here for my desires. I use

you for myself, which is the opposite of self-giving love that the marriage relationship was built on. And you can see the brokenness in that.

But I think what's important to see in all of this and the big story of Scripture is that even though this happens in marriage, God does not give up on his design for marriage, even though it's broken because of the curse. God makes a promise right there in Genesis three. In fact, the verse that comes right before what we just read in Genesis 3:15, God promises that he's going to redeem everything, including relationships and marriages.

So we see that instead of scrapping the idea of marriage, God continues to use it throughout Scripture. The marriage relationship, by the way, becomes a major motif or a mystery through which we see all of God's activity in Scripture. So in the Old Testament, for example, God often refers to Himself and Israel and their relationship as a marriage relationship in marriage terms, God is a husband, always a husband, and Israel is the wife.

The prophets are really fond of drawing this comparison, Jesus's entire ministry. If you've ever read the Book of Isaiah, his entire ministry is all about his marriage acting as a living metaphor of God's relationship with Israel. And when God does this, he's not just doing this to give us a relatable metaphor like marriage, but what he's doing is actually affirming the divine purpose of marriage as it was created originally.

And he's pointing forward. He's pointing us forward to what, to what will come, forming a paradigm of what will happen when Jesus comes. And when we see in the New Testament that there is this wonderful picture of the Messiah's relationship with the church being compared to a marriage, all the way to revelation, where we get what the wedding supper or the wedding party of the lamb with his people.

Now, as I mentioned earlier, we're going to look at one of the most, I think, instructive scriptures and words passages ever written about marriage from Ephesians chapter five. And now that we have the context for this mystery of marriage, we're ready to hear what Paul has to say about it. And as we read this passage together, I want to tell you, you're going to notice that there's a lot of action words in this.

In fact, I highlighted all those action words that we see in this passage. If you read it on the screen, you're going to see it in yellow. And as we go through this, I do want you to notice all the action words that are mentioned here. We're going to talk about why that's important in marriage, what it means to love one another in action and by choice.

But as you see these commands, I also want you to remember that they are lived out for a greater purpose. They're lived out in marriage for the mystery of revealing to the world and to one another the

gospel of Jesus, because that's ultimately what our marriages are designed to do. They're based on the gospel, and they reveal the gospel and our relationship.

So with that in mind, let's look at Ephesians starting in Ephesians five, starting in verse 22, it says this wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, his body and his himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit and everything to their husbands.

Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies.

He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it just as Christ does the church. Because we are members of his body. Verse 31 therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. Now this mystery is profound, and I'm saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. So as we get into this, let's address the elephant in the room right at the beginning. This word submit that happens here in reference to wives submitting to their husbands. I say elephant in the room because there's been a lot of discussion about this and and what it really means and how it plays out in a marriage relationship.

I think first, what we need to do is we need to realize the context of this is why we introduce context into all of this. The word submit is a word of order. A word that refers to a refers to order and just as God brought order out of chaos when he created right when he spoke into existence, order, and creation out of nothingness, he brought order into chaos.

And with new creation, he promises again to bring order out of the chaos of sin and brokenness. So this is a word that represents order. Remember your marriage as representing the gospel, the reality of of God. Now, that being said, I think it's also important to note that there is supposed to be mutual submission. The actions of mutual submission between a husband and wife in a marriage relationship.

The verse right before this in verse 21 says, submit to one another out of reverence to Christ. And so there's mutual submission activity that goes on at any given moment between a husband and wife in a in a biblical marriage relationship. So submitting action is not just one way, but when it comes to the order in the marriage relationship, submitting is a willing act on the wife to place herself under the leadership or headship of her husband, and that is her husband.

Not all husbands, by the way, just her husband in the marriage relationship. And she does this not because her husband is better than her or has more value than her. Scripture is clear about the fact that both men and women, husbands and wives find their value in the fact that they're created in the image of God, which is, which is which happens for both male and female, of course.

And as believers, we find our value in the righteousness of Jesus before God. So brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, our brothers and sisters in Christ as well. Now, unfortunately, of course, this term submit has been, abused in a lot of ways in the church and in homes of Christian households in many ways, sometimes to justify things like abuse, which is just sinful and wrong.

But notice, and I think we should notice also in this, that the husband is not even told to demand obedience or even submission from his wife. Submission is voluntary on behalf of the wife, and it's out of her commitment to Jesus who submits to the father in saving activity as well. So at the same time, though, I think what we see, we've got those two verses about submission, but the rest of this is all addressed to the husband first and foremost.

And notice that what Paul calls the husband to do is more than just submit. He's called to love his wife in the way that Christ has loved the church, which is even more extreme in a lot of ways. Right? I mean, think about it this way how has Christ loved the church? He loved her to the point that he died for her.

And so what you see here is just in case we missed that reference, Paul says, this is how you're to love your wife. You're to give yourself up for her. Just like Christ gave himself up for the church. And the question might be, why is this only addressed to husbands? Why not address her husbands and wives? Aren't husbands and wives supposed to love one another in this way?

And the answer is yes. But again, the reason that this is addressed the way it is, is because of order. This is a language of order. For example, think about what happened back in the garden, right? Adam and Eve were both given this command. They both sinned before God. And who is it that God holds directly responsible right after the sin?

He holds Adam responsible. It's a question of order. And I think in the very same way, God holds husbands directly responsible for their marriages. Which is why, although the command to love one another in a marriage and all these things we see here belong to both the husband and wife, God holds the husband directly accountable for modeling this kind of love, which is why it's addressed to him.

So the pattern then looks like this loving action starts with the husband, and then the wife responds by reciprocating the same kind of loving action. And as both are self-sacrificial, I'm sacrificing my

needs. I'm sacrificing my wants in order to meet your needs. And then she. And then the wife does it for her husband. There is this way in which both needs are met, but it's not met by me taking from you.

It's met by me receiving from you the love that you were giving to me. The way that you were serving me. And that's what the relationship is supposed to look like now, as they do, they're displaying this even greater mystery that joins the design of the original marriage to the gospel work of Jesus and the promise of what's to come.

And when Paul talks about the profound mystery of marriage in terms of how Jesus loves the church, this is what he's talking about now, as each spouse then does this, and it loves each other in these ways. The effect on the goal, though, is to enhance the image of God in their spouse. There's a book written several years ago, a marriage book by authors Dan Allander and Trumper Longman.

It's fantastic book. It's called Intimate Allies, but they say this one statement and this is one statement that stuck with me for years. He says at any given moment, marriage partners will either be enhancing or degrading the glory of their spouse and their relationship. That means at any given moment, with reference to your spouse, any action or word or intent.

If you are married, you are either enhancing the glory of God's image in your spouse, or are you degrading that image in your spouse at any given moment? The question is, what does it look like to do either one of these, practically speaking? Well, to put it simply, as a spouse you are either giving glory to your spouse or you're stealing glory for yourself.

And again, it goes back to the curse, right? The desire to dominate for selfish purposes. The other person, instead of laying down my life for the benefit of the other person. And look, no marriage is perfect in this regard. Even the best marriages there's taking and giving of glory. And things happen like that all the time. But here.

But but every relationship, every every spouse is either doing this at one time or another. And this is again why Paul gives us this helpful outline of marriage. That's why he gives us all these words, all these ways to love our spouse, because it's a way of checking ourselves and helping us understand what does it look like to give glory to my spouse?

What does it look like to see the image of God glorified in them? To enhance that image, rather than to take from it and to cover that with the time we have left? I want to cover, I want to I want to look at it from, kind of a broader framework, because we could just go through all of these lists and say, okay, this is what this looks like.

What it means to flourish is what it means to do these things. But I don't think that's as helpful, really as this kind of framework. I came across a guy named Benjamin Merkle, who's a scholar, wrote a commentary on Ephesians, and in Ephesians five he talks about really this framework of understanding this passage, that there are four ways that Paul tells us that God has loved or Jesus has loved the church.

And in those same four ways, that's how we're to respond in marriage to our spouse. The first one is this we love unconditionally. Just as Christ loved the church when she was not worthy. A husband loves his wife and a wife loves her husband. Whether or not they are deserving of that love. And one of the one of the lessons that every marriage, every married couple learns early on in the relationship is that if we are going to survive this thing, we need to learn to forgive, right?

Because a spouse is constantly going to disappoint you and offend you in ways that you never knew were possible before. You got married, right? Well, experiences.

You know, and here's the thing is that science tells us that in the first couple of years, we have these these honeymoon. What are these, like, honeymoon chemicals? These love chemicals that go off in our brains with a new with a new marriage, including things like dopamine. And these things are really strong the first couple of years that you're married.

And it helps you, by the way, to overlook things that otherwise would be very annoying to you. Like, oh, that's just a little quirk that my husband has. Or look, she's she's totally unhinged. But it's so cute to see that.

And look, I think this point is important because I think God does this for us on purpose. He allows us these first couple of years of all these brain chemicals, these love chemicals, so that we can learn to forgive, so that when we get past those two years and things are a little bit more difficult and it's not as cute anymore, we've already learned to forgive because we have we have conditioned ourselves for those first two years to do it.

You know, it's been said that a good marriage is made up of two professional forgiveness people who know deeply how they've been forgiven by God so that they can forgive the other person. The problem is, is that for some people, they don't use those first two years or whatever it may be, those early years in marriage, to learn how to forgive so that when it comes to later on and it becomes more difficult to forgive, it is almost impossible to learn to forgive their spouse.

He. Recently I was listening to a man who had been married for 68 years talk about his marriage and someone asked him, of course, a younger person. What is the secret to loving one woman for an entire life lifetime? And what he said was so profound. I think it just illustrates what it means to love unconditionally in a marriage, he said.

This we didn't just fall in love once. We choose each other every day. You know, people think that love is a feeling, but feelings change. Some days you feel close, some days you don't. That's normal. But love is what you do in both situations. She's not the same woman I married 68 years ago, and I'm not the same man either.

That's the point though. You keep meeting who they become. Anyone can love the best version of someone, but a lifetime is built by loving the changing versions as well. And here's what I want you to hear out of that. It's the idea of biblical love. It's not a feeling, it's not always romantic. And it's certainly not always easy.

It's a choice. It's a choice to love someone, even when you don't think that they deserve it. Did you ever notice how many times we're commanded to love in the Bible? Not only our spouse, but we're commanded to love our neighbor. We're commanded to love our enemies. We're commanded to love the world, right? Other people? And it's because love is a choice.

If love was merely a feeling or an emotion, it'd be really tough to be commanded to feel a certain way. But because God knows love is a choice and he's commanding us to love through action, we're given commands to love in that way, and that love is in action. And biblical love is modeled in Christ's love for the church who chose to love us.

And how did he love us? Well, that's the next point. Secondly, we love sacrificially. Just as Christ gave himself up for the church. So also husbands should be willing to love their wives in the same way and vice versa. You know, I've yet to come across a husband who would say that he would not take a bullet for his wife or for his kids.

However, some of those men are the same ones who would never give up the TV remote control to his wife.

Or even apologize to his wife. Here's another Amen. Or even apologize to his wife when he's done something to hurt her. You see, you can actually be much more difficult to give ourselves up to our spouse in the everyday things. But that calling is the kind of love that Jesus displays laying down our lives every day, picking up our cross every single day for our relationship and for our spouse.

You know, it's been said that to say I do means to say I die. I think the greatest marriage is two servants in love at the same time. The worst marriage is two selfish people in love. God's designed us as people, I believe, who are most happiest and most fulfilled when we're serving a greater purpose than ourselves, who we believe is true and right and good, and at the same time, when we're serving people who we really love, there's nothing more joyful than a person who is serving in that way.

And there is no more no one more miserable, on the other hand, than a person who is just sitting around waiting to be served. The difference is the mindset. Third, we love purposely. Just as Christ sanctifies, cleanses, presents his bride as pure as Paul says. So husbands should lead their wives with purpose and the purpose of both he and his wife conforming to the image of Christ.

You know, you've probably heard this before, but your marriage is not about your happiness as much as it is about your holiness. Because one of the reasons that God has given us marriage is so that we can be transformed into the image of Christ, that we can grow spiritually. You know, when we say that marriage is a covenant relationship, what we're saying is that God gives it to us for a purpose, and we make a covenant with God as well as making a covenant with our spouse.

I don't know if you can remember back to your wedding ceremony, but hopefully there was a time in your wedding ceremony where you acknowledge, promises to God and acceptance of the promise of the covenant of marriage to God, each of you together, before you turn to one another and made promises to one another. Because that's really the order of a marriage relationship.

As a husband, I am first and foremost committing to the covenant of marriage according to the way that God has designed it and purposed it. And the same thing for my wife. And then we make promises to one another out of that. And what you see is that the purpose is for your holiness, your spiritual growth, for you and your spouse, the sanctifying, the cleansing, the presenting.

All that Paul talks about here is meant to happen in your marriage, and your spouse is actually meant to be your primary partner in sanctification and spiritual growth. That's how God has designed it. In many ways, marriage is the primary spiritual growth relationships we will have, and not only because it was designed to be that way, but because it's also really hard to hide spiritual immaturity and sin from your spouse.

If you noticed that you know you can come to worship services every Sunday morning, put your best spiritual foot forward, serve in various areas right? Make it look like you're the most faithful Christian who has ever lived, and then you can go home and be angry, immoral, abusive, and greedy behind closed doors. And the thing is, is that no one in this room would even know about that.

But your spouse knows it's really hard to hide those things from your spouse. They know you. They know the real you. They know the things you struggle with. They know the sins that take over. When you let your guard down. Your spouse is made to sanctify you. They brush off those rough edges on a daily basis. We talked last week about the importance in relationships between, men, friendships with men.

Right. Iron sharpening iron. Well, iron sharpening iron should be happening in the marriage relationship. Really? Before it happens anywhere else. And to illustrate how central the spiritual partnership is in marriage, think about this. Consider the effect that praying together has on two spouses. As far as the health of their marriage, you probably heard that 50% of all marriages end in divorce, right?

At least in our country. Well, only 20% of couples who go to church together get divorced. That's pretty significant. It cuts that number in half. But consider this this part's mind blowing. Less than 1% of couples who pray together regularly end up getting divorce. Less than 1%. And when you think about it, that makes sense. It's really hard to fight with somebody or to have contempt for somebody who you are praying with.

It's really hard to not be reconciled to someone you were praying with. Regular prayer forces you to deal with those issues, to deal with those edges that need to be sharpened. So finally, we love affectionately. Just as Christ nourishes and cherishes the church, so also a husband needs to nourish and cherish his wife and his marriage. Think about for a minute what these words are saying.

Nourishing and cherishing. First, nourishing. Nourishing is not something that just happens on its own. Nourishing means to feed something to take care of, something that implies something that is intentional, and whether that's an infant who you have to feed and take care of, or to plants in your backyard, who you have to feed, that you have to feed, those things don't happen on accident.

They only grow through intentionality and purpose. It doesn't matter. And so as husbands, we might be naturally good at things like providing and protecting, which is good, but you need to know also that nourishing and cherishing go beyond just providing and protecting in order to nourish and cherish. You have to be intentionally pursuing your wife emotionally and spiritually.

And it's not just any kind of nourishing that Paul talks about. He talks about nourishing our own flesh. Think about all that has to happen as we nourish and take care of our own bodies. We have to feed ourselves. We keep ourselves healthy. We clothe ourselves. We clean ourselves. We take care of our health. We provide all these things we do every single day, and we do them because if we don't do them and don't take care of our bodies and nothing else matters, well, the same thing happens for our marriage relationship.

If you don't take care of that, nothing else matters. Husbands and wives both need to feed their relationship. But again, remember that you are not one flesh with anything else in this world other than your spouse. You're not one flesh with your job. You're not one flesh with your hobbies. You're not one flesh with your friends. You're not even one flesh with your kids, even though they come from you.

It's only one relationship where you're told you are one flesh with that person and it is your spouse. And so we have to feed and nourish our marriages. And I think one way for men, if you're thinking about this nourishing is like kind of like the friendship part of your relationship. Cherishing is almost a romantic part of your relationship that helps you to think about that.

And so you should be nourishing and investing in both of those things. Invest in your wife as a friend. Go out and do things that are fun together. Yeah, have a date night. But not just because it's on the calendar, but because you're pursuing each other in that way. How are we pursuing and improving our friendship? How about our romantic life?

Maybe we should go to a place where we actually have to dress up a little bit if we're going to go to dinner, because that communicates how much we cherish one another and cherish our relationship, whatever it may be. And when you sit down for dinner, don't talk about the kids or the grandkids or the budget or, you know, plans for vacation.

Talk about talk to each other and talk about each other at the same time. One way that a wife can really feed her marriage is seen in what Paul says in the end here. And we're wrapping up in just a couple of minutes. Wives, respect your husbands as a husband. Let me say this to all the women here.

The best way to feed your marriage is to show respect and appreciation for your husband. And it's really simple to do. We don't need like, a coronation when we come home. All we need really is for you to say I respect and appreciate you, but say it like you mean it. Don't say it. Well, I was told I had to respect in a priest.

I would say like you mean it. And in many ways, that's all it takes. Because here's the thing, is that the words that a wife speaks to her husband, whether you realize it or not, are words that sink deep into his soul. You know, many men have hard exteriors because we have to deal with disrespect all the time in our lives.

We go out and we work. We deal with disrespect from our bosses, disrespect from our clients, disrespect from the guy who cuts us off on the freeway. But when we come home, the words of our wife and the care of our wife is what makes all the difference. And if the home is a place where a man gets disrespect and he's belittled by his wife, it sinks deep into his soul and he begins to believe it.

That's why Paul is specific about telling the women to be respectful. It's not because women don't need respect. Women need to be respected as well. But God has designed men to really value respect. And if they're disrespected over and over again in this one flesh relationship, it will wither. On the other hand, if a wife is respectful to her husband, it makes him come alive in a way that will nourish a marriage like few things can.

It's the best way to nourish the head in order to nourish the entire relationship. So as we close this morning, let me say one thing. Every married person in here has experienced this. That if your marriage is struggling, everything else in your life is going to be affected by that. Everything else in your life feels out of balance if your marriage is in a good place.

On the other hand, everything else in your life is going to be that much better. And why is that? Well, I hope you can see that based on what we've talked about this morning, God has designed it that way for a purpose. Because your marriage is more than just a relationship. It's more than just two people trying to figure out how to live together and raise a family and pay a mortgage.

Instead it is call. It is a calling to live out the wonderful and beautiful mystery that points us to the greatest truths that anyone can know that God has created us and that God loves us. Each marriage is meant to display that to one another and meant to display that to the world. What a wonderful calling you've been given as a husband or wife.

What a wonderful calling your marriage has been given. It is nothing less than that. Let's pray. Lord, we ask this morning that you would help us in all the different ways that we struggle with putting these things, to bear in our lives. Lord, we know that marriage can be a complicated thing. I pray for every marriage in this room.

I know that there are some who are really struggling with some heavy things right now, and they're not really sure how to get out of it. They're not really sure which way is forward. Rather, in some ways, it's just most important for us to sometimes go backwards. Go back to why you created marriage in the first place. Go back to those times where we first understood this is what our relationship is all about.

And Lord, it's amazing how when we see the bigger picture of what you have called marriage to be, the things that we thought were such big deals and big issues begin to get smaller. And Lord, above all, I pray this for all of us, whether we're married or not. That we would see the forgiveness and the love of Christ that is given to us through this wonderful motif, this wonderful mystery, and that those of us who are married would do more than say it, Lord, we would live it out in our marriages as evidence and a testimony of your goodness and your love for us.

It's in Jesus name we pray. Amen.

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