



## Sermon Notes from 7 October

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### Marriage: Chemistry or Covenant? (*Ephesians 5:21-33*)

by Rev Guna Raman

A panoramic view of Bible wisdom on marriage is given in Ephesians.

#### 1. What marriage is

v31 Paul quotes Genesis 2:24, giving us the essence of marriage. In Hebrew, *cleave* means to *covenant*. A man will leave his father and mother and cleave – be covenanted to his wife.

***A covenant is a deep, exclusive, permanent, legal and personal, binding commitment.*** Hence, the essence of ***marriage is not so much a declaration of present love; it is a binding promise of future love.*** It is not about saying “I love you” to your spouse but about staying with your spouse through the thick and thin in your marriage. This is opposed to the world’s culture that looks at chemistry and thrill in a relationship which is self-centered and transient. It takes a covenant to keep you loving your spouse regardless of their flaws and sinfulness. The essence of marriage is covenant!

#### 2. What marriage does

Marriage cleanses (vv25-27):

Jesus comes into our lives for the purpose of bringing change; we are sanctified into becoming more like Him. Contrary to how the world’s culture likes it, your spouse comes into your life to partner with the Saviour to change you!

***The purpose of marriage is to cleanse one another, to partner with the Saviour in helping your spouse become the future glory self that God is making him or her.***

Three practical implications:

1. **Expect clashes in the marriage relationship** - You will confront your shortcomings in a way that no other relationships have been able to do.

2. **Go for what would get stronger when you get older in marriage** - A spouse who would honor you, dare to confront you with your sins and lovingly point you to Jesus.

3. **Cultivate respect more than just attraction in the marriage** - A spouse who knows how to change for God and for you.

Marriage meshes (v25):

There is gender difference. The roles differ - they complement one another. The husband is the head in a marriage relationship. He has the final say, having his wife’s desires and needs ahead of him. He makes her glorious and flourish spiritually.

#### 3. What marriage needs

The key to marriage is a Holy Spirit powered, Gospel based ability to do love. Eph 5:18-19 The Holy Spirit takes your head knowledge of Christ and makes it experientially alive in your heart (Jn 16). And you have a song in your soul!

v21,22 Marriage will never work unless you know God’s love in your hearts! Being filled with the Spirit, you are able to love even when you are not loved. God, not your spouse, becomes your source of happiness!

***You can only keep giving love as long as you keep getting it.***