

Sex, Romance, and the Glory of God

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Over the past few years WM has tried to offer events that cover a range of topics which are relevant to women. Always our goal is to help us work out what it means to glorify God specifically as women. After Pastor Colin spoke to the men last Feb., we decided it was an equally important subject to address to the women. And while I am not an expert in the area of sex and romance, I have talked to enough women to know that many are not experiencing the joy and freedom that God intended.

For the past 2 months, as I have prepared for this message, sex has almost constantly been on my mind! Last week, I was thinking about how nice it will be to be able to think about something *other* than sex, when I suddenly thought, "*Wait, this must be what it is like to be like a man!*" Yet, seriously, while sex may not always be on our minds, tonight we are going to think about a subject which has far more significance than you may realize.

Never have I labored over any message as much as this one. This could easily be a series of 5 messages so, since I didn't think you'd want to be here all night, and I only have time for *one* message; I will not be able to answer every question or explore every nuance of this subject. At the same time, because this has been so bathed in prayer, I am confident this is the truth God wants each of us to hear tonight.

As you listen, rather than asking "How does this relate to me?" I'd like you to focus on **God's amazing goodness in His design for us as women.** I hope you will leave here with a greater awareness of His merciful provision for forgiveness for our sin, as well as His provision for all that we need to live a life of purity. Our circumstances could change next week, but God's truth is eternal.

Sex was God's idea and gift to His creation. Yet, for every good work of God, our enemy Satan almost always opposes it by offering a counterfeit. It is not hard to see that the sex saturated world we live in is a product of evil.

Pastor Tim Keller says, "**The world's view of sex is either dirty, a necessary evil, or nothing more than for the purpose of entertainment or self-realization. But the Bible has the most exalted view of sex possible. It is a foretaste of the absolute glory that's in our future, the oneness with the triune God that we will experience. It's a physical and spiritual union between two people.**"

Now, I know that for some of you this subject is a great source of frustration and pain. Some of you live with harsh and controlling men, and let me assure you that God sees and grieves over this abuse of authority and His good gifts. And, while God calls wives to submit to their husbands, we are never to follow them into sin.

Some of you are single and would like to be married. Others are widowed, divorced, or never married, and while you have accepted your circumstances, still struggle with loneliness. Many

of you do not feel loved or cherished in your marriage and your life is marked by disappointment, hurt, and resentment.

Yet, ladies, while it's important for us to acknowledge that men have sometimes failed us and, even greatly sinned against us, *the greater reality is that God is the Redeemer who is both able and willing to redeem your story*, however painful it may be. Whether we are married or single, God invites us to surrender ourselves and our circumstances to Him, through Christ, who made us and has a glorious future for those who put their trust in Him.

Tonight, I invite you join me in asking God to instruct us through His Word about His purposes for our sexuality as well as to expose any areas of sin at work in our lives. Some of what we will talk about may be uncomfortable, but if it is received will bear the fruit of righteousness in our lives and marriages.

Along with many of you, I grew up at a time when the ideologies of feminism were really gaining momentum. The messages of independence and doing what pleases you because you deserve it resonated with discontent and unsuspecting women, even in the church. But it wasn't until I became a serious student of God's Word that I realized these were the same lies that Satan spoke to Eve in the garden.

Though slightly repackaged for each generation, sin always tempts us to overturn God's Kingdom for the kingdom of self. Left to our sin nature, every woman wants to be her own authority and, like our sister Eve, when we believe and act upon the lies of the enemy, we have no idea where it will lead. Praise God that Jesus came and broke the power of sin and death. It is the Gospel that brings healing and hope, no matter how much we've blown it or how far we have walked from God.

In Genesis 1:26-27 we read; *"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."* Our image and likeness is a reference to the Trinity, which has great significance for our design and roles as men and women.

Genesis 2 gives more detail, *And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a helper fit for him"* (18). God didn't create woman so she could be an independent creature living for her own happiness, but to complete and help man in their mutual responsibility to rule and subdue the earth. *For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.* (1 Corinthians 11:8-9).

Mary Kassian said, *"When God created us male and female He had the dynamic of His own relationship in mind. The Lord created two sexes to reflect something about God. He designed the two sexes to put God on display. The responsibility to reflect God's image, however, wasn't just given to us as individuals. Mankind was created in relationship to display something about the divine relationships within the triune God."*

While equal in worth and purpose, this God-ordained authority structure creates a harmonious and well-functioning unit when male and female each recognize their different, yet essential roles in bringing glory to God.

This is easy to see in marriage, but it is equally true for singles. You were made from a person and for people. *Because of the freedom your singleness allows you, your focus should be to help and complement as many people as you can for the sake of the Gospel.*

When God created Adam and Eve, He placed them in the sacred **covenant** of marriage where they could enjoy intimate fellowship with Him and one another.

A covenant is a commitment made by choice in the presence of God. **“It is not dependent on what another party does; it is unconditional.** Establishing a marriage covenant involves a ratifying oath, which is our marriage vows, and an oath sign, an action that seals the agreement. This action is the sexual union of husband and wife consummating the relationship.

Today, many view marriage like a contract rather than a covenant. A contract is an arrangement between two parties who commit to certain conditions. Inherent in the agreement is the idea that if one side violates the terms, the other party has some kind of recourse. For example:

- € If you don't pay back the money owed, the bank is free to repossess your car.
- € If you get too many speeding tickets, the judge will suspend your license.

Unfortunately, many people view marriage the same way.

- € I'll do my part as long as you do your part; 50-50 principle
- € I'll treat you with **respect** if you make me feel **loved**
- € I'll meet your **sexual** needs if you meet my **emotional** needs.

A contract puts us in the center, while a covenant places God at the center. *This means that* married or single, our womanhood is not about putting ourselves on display, but putting God on display, reflecting His glory in ways that we were uniquely created to do.

Genesis 3:1 brings clarity to why this has become distorted. *“Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’”* With God's goodness and sovereignty in question, Eve sinned against her Creator. Satan's goal was to destroy Eve, and he has been out to destroy women ever since.

While we can't fully understand what the image of God is all about, we can be sure that being created in His image for a relationship with Him gives us enormous dignity, privilege and responsibility. Yet because of sin, the image of God in man has been so badly marred that His image is often barely recognizable.

The Gospel is what restores and brings clarity to that image along with the head body relationship of man and wife which many try to dismiss. Ephesians 5:22-33 gives us a brilliant picture of how we reflect God's image through marriage:

“Women, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is head of the church, his body, and is Himself its Savior. Husbands love your wives as Christ loves the church and gave Himself up for her...so that he might present the church to Himself without spot or wrinkle. Therefore a man shall leave his father and

mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.”

The NT clearly compares the husband’s headship over the wife to Christ’s headship over the church. The wife’s submission to the husband is to be like the church’s submission to Christ. While married women will also help and complete others in various ways, our husbands alone, are the ones we must give ourselves to intimately and sexually.

Satan does all he can to distort God’s truth through lies and counterfeiting God’s gifts. John 10:10 says, *“The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”* Let’s look at 4 lies that women are prone to believe today.

Lie #1- My body is my own; I am an independent person.

This is the lie that has led countless women to abort their babies. It is the lie that drives women out of their homes to make a name for themselves. This lie says we are our own authority and that our purpose is to be happy whatever it takes. But the Bible says:

(1 Corinthians 6:15-) “Do you know that your bodies are members of Christ? He who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, who you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

When Adam first saw Eve, he basically said, “She’s for me!” Men are naturally attracted to women, body, soul, and spirit, because God designed them that way. This is God’s good gift. The abuse and exploitation of women in our culture is a product of sin.

In God’s goodness, He also created women to be godly influences in the lives of their husbands, children, and other relationships. It is sin that drives women to use their God given influence *to exert power over men.*

We see this portrayed in Proverbs 7. *“With much seductive speech she persuades him; with her smooth talk she compels him. All at once he follows her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a stag is caught fast till an arrow pierces its liver; as a bird rushes into a snare; he does not know that it will cost him his life.”* It should cause us to pause that this woman was both religious and married. While we show disdain for unfaithful men, we need to remember that for every adulterous affair, a woman is involved.

Ladies, the power we exert over a man can be inebriating, yet what we might see as harmless flirtation, could be causing a brother to sin. We must guard against revealing either too much of our bodies, or too much of our hearts to colleagues, strangers online, or other women’s husbands. *If you are single, I urge you to be very careful how you relate to married men, as well as who you talk to on FB, chat rooms, and other places you may be vulnerable.*

Carolyn McCulley says, *“When young women understand the cosmic consequences of sexual sin, the worldviews that shape our consumption of sexual messages today, and how God’s glory is under attack, they will not mistake any modesty message for a frumpy fashion*

campaign. Nor will they resent the men around them for being impediments to whatever is stylish. Instead they will be sobered by how Satan still “prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8) and that men and women alike are fair game.”

Jesus came to rescue us from the bondage of obsession with ourselves. **He died to deliver us from the spirit of independence that wars against our dependence on God and our interdependence on man.** Through the Holy Spirit, the power we have been given is meant to help us overcome sin and influence others with the Gospel of Christ.

As a single, that means you can dress attractively, while being careful not to be a stumbling block to your brothers. This is the desire of a pure heart. As a married woman I will be mindful of dressing in a way that is both honoring to God and attractive to my husband. I will allow my husband to enjoy my body without shame, not seeing this as animalistic, but rejoicing that God created him to delight in me, his wife.

Isaiah 43:7 says that **everyone who is called by His Name was created for His glory.** When we truly understand this, we will know that life is not about us, but the all satisfying Jesus Christ.

Lie #2: I should not have to live with unfulfilled longings.

In the well known story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4, Jesus amazes her by telling her all that she had ever done. He knew that she had had 5 husbands and now was involved with a man who was not her husband. This woman clearly was still not satisfied! That day, Jesus offered her **Living Water**, saying, *“whoever drinks of the water that I give him will never be thirsty forever.”* Jesus knew that the only thing that would truly satisfy this restless woman was Him.

While some things that tempt us are clearly wrong desires, other desires we long for are good gifts of God. Still, whenever we place our allegiance and affections for something or someone above our allegiance and affection for God, it becomes idolatry.

Years ago, a friend of mine from another church listened as her husband told her he was leaving their marriage because God wouldn't want him to be unhappy. By this assumption, he was also concluding that God wouldn't mind that he left three children under the age of 5 feeling confused and rejected for a woman in the church choir. Apparently he believed his happiness was God's greatest priority. But it was a lie from the pit of hell, and Satan wants to lead us in the same direction.

Some of you long to be married. Others are married and long to feel loved. This is normal for we were created for relationship. I won't pretend to understand why God allows what he allows at times, yet **the Gospel reminds us that, through Christ, all of our deepest longings can be met through Him who satisfies us with every good thing.**

Any longing that is unfulfilled is only so that we may taste more deeply of the all-sufficient Christ who died to make us co-heir of His eternal joy forever, and to remind us that this earth is not our home.

Jesus Christ died to purchase a bride - the church. We are His daughters and He is our Husband. As we embrace that truth, whether married or single, we will be content. Jesus promises to love and care for us, to provide for our needs, physically, spiritually, emotionally. We must not let the culture define happiness for us. Christ's greatest desire is for us to grow in *holiness* so that one day we will know true happiness and joy in heaven.

A woman of God knows her real identity is not found in her marital status, her job, her abilities or her looks. Having been chosen and adopted by God, she knows that she has been given far more than she deserves. This reminds her that the main thing isn't about sex and romance. **The main thing is the holiness and glory of God.**

As a single, you can trust that God has a good plan for your life and if it is to give you a husband you can also trust His timing. Even as you hope and plan for that day, you put your ultimate hope in Christ to satisfy the deepest desire of your heart.

As married women, we must acknowledge that we are sinners who married sinners who also have *very different needs and desires*. And, truthfully, sometimes the expectations we have of our husbands, only Jesus Christ could meet. 1 Peter 3: 5-6 tells us "*For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves; by submitting to their husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her daughters, if you do good and do not give way to fear.*"

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| Lie # 3 To get and keep a man's love I must sleep with him. |
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Those of you who were born after 1970 do not have the perspective of history to see how rapidly our culture became sex and porn saturated in only one generation. *Today, if you get your truth from the media, sex is an assumed outcome of every encounter with the opposite sex. It is full of unbridled passion yet puts few, if any, expectations on the relationship. As a culture, while we have never been more informed, we have never been more broken. And we must be careful not to mistake broken for normal.*

Pornography, long recognized as a struggle for many men, has now become an increasing problem for women as well. We live in a porn-positive culture that has had heart wrenching effects on female sexuality.

In a group this size, my guess is that someone here is in bondage to this devastating sin, or knows someone who is. God wants to deliver you from the grip of the enemy who wants to destroy you. In the back I have some copies for sale of, ***Dirty Girls Come Clean***. If you think this would be helpful to you or someone you know, I urge you to pick up this hope filled book.

Erwin Lutzer says: "*We should glorify God with our bodies because we are joined with Christ. If you are joined with Jesus spiritually and metaphysically, and you are in an immoral relationship, sex outside of marriage, you are expecting Jesus to be involved in that unholy relationship to the same level that you are.*"

He goes on, "*When you engage in immoral sex, you have created an unholy soul tie which continues on a downward spiral. Rather than the unity and oneness that is to be found in marriage, you go from man to man looking for the intimacy that only Christ can give you.*"

Too many women believe the lie that to get love they must give a man liberty with their body. Others justify sleeping or living together, claiming they are in love. But this definition of love is rooted in selfish desires, not the authority of God's Word. Biblical love always **protects, trusts, and looks out for the good of others.** The question is do you trust God to provide a man who will honor and protect your purity until marriage?

Tim Keller gives a gospel centered view of *falling in love*: ***“While a part of that will necessarily include a sense of chemistry, things you have in common, and so forth, what mainly should be going on when you are falling in love is that you’re getting a vision of what God is making this person and you say, ‘I want to be a part of getting him there.’”***

The one thing that distinguishes marriage from other relationships is its permanence. Marriage is a commitment made for a lifetime.

John Piper says: ***“In marriage God has designed a unique, stable, and lasting relationship for our most intimate expression of love. I believe experience confirms that something good and beautiful is lost from our sexual intimacy in marriage if we gave ourselves away outside of that union. There is an inexpressible deepening of the union of marriage which God intended, when a husband and wife can lie beside each other in perfect peace and freedom and say, “What I have just given you I have never given to another. I speak to those for whom it is not too late. Do not throw that away.”***

Now let me say a word to those for whom *it is too late*, in that you have either given your purity away or it has been taken from you. Faith in Jesus' name involves taking responsibility for your sin that Jesus died to forgive. If tonight the Spirit is convicting you of mocking God's holiness by your casual view of sex, do not delay in confessing and repenting.

1 John 1:9 says ***“If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness.”*** Receive his forgiveness and then commit, by the power of God, to live a pure life from this time forward. Through the shed blood of Christ you can walk out of this room in the freedom and joy of God's forgiveness for your sin.

For those who have been sexually abused, God can and wants to redeem your story. Erwin Lutzer encourages, ***“Face what happened to you. Mourn the loss of your purity, acknowledging that while some scars will never be taken away, you have hope because of Christ. Above all, understand grace. If you have been focusing only on the sins of others, you may be missing your own sin.”*** Lay down the anger and bitterness that has imprisoned you by trusting that the God of justice will make all things right in His time. Let Christ define you, not the abuse.

God is worthy of our purity. On the Cross, He exchanged our sin for His perfect righteousness. Oh that we might honor His Name and Word by fleeing sexual immorality and impurity and pursuing godliness. (Mat. 5:8) ***“Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.”***

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| Lie #4: Men think of romance and relational intimacy the same way that women do. |
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Our culture tries to convince us that there are no differences between men and women. One huge cost of this has been the confusion of male and female roles. Feminist ideologies have left no one untouched, including men. As women have pursued whatever they believe will

give their lives significance rather than the life God designed them for; men have been increasingly feminized and lost their bearings on their manhood.

The way this often manifests itself in the lives of men is either through aggression or passivity. *As women increasingly undermine male leadership, upsetting the authority structure ordained by God, the result is a slow eroding of the home and society. And we are seeing the devastating effects of that everywhere.*

The culture *similarly attacks men and women's view of sex and romance.* Just as pornography has distorted men's view of sex and women, subtle messages aimed at our emotions come to us as women through chick flicks and romance novels.

Author Beth Spraul says, *"Like pornography, chick flicks take a good gift from God, romance and relational intimacy which women are created to desire, and distort it by presenting as "normal" unbiblical and unrealistic pictures of men, love, and marriage. And just like men who buy into the lies of pornography, women, who believe that their husbands and marriages should always be like what they see on the screen, will be sinfully dissatisfied with God's good gift to them of a "normal" husband and marriage."*

Just as men and women are wired differently when it comes to sex, they are also wired differently when it comes to relational intimacy. In general, although there are certainly exceptions;

- € Men tend to be less emotionally driven, more analytical, more compartmentalized in their thinking, and more into problem solving than processing.
- € Men also typically *need less relational intimacy*, it comes *less naturally* to them, and they tend to *think less about romance* than women do.

This does not mean that men should make no effort to be romantic. Certainly, wise men understand that sharing themselves relationally is not only highly desired by their wives, but will bless their sexual intimacy as well. Still, when we view one another as brothers and sisters in Christ who have been created differently for God's good purposes, we will offer more grace to each other.

By the way, have you noticed that movies generally end with the wedding ceremony? Reality inevitably comes after the honeymoon when the man, who made it his main job to pursue a woman with romantic dinners and long talks, now changes his focus to working hard for her. By God's design, protecting and providing for his wife is how a man most *naturally* shows His love and commitment to her.

In the area of sex, we see the opposite. During courtship, sexual passions generally burn equally for one another. But as lives get busy and children come along, while men's passions remain strong; a woman's drive is typically less consistent. By God's design, her focus of keeping their home and nurturing relationships is a demonstration of her love. Yet God calls each of us to look to the other's needs as well.

In today's confusing culture, many married women wonder; *"What does my husband really want?"* In other words, is your husband's sex drive something that is purely physical, that his

body needs release and your body is the way to get it? Or does he want both physical release *and* the relational intimacy he finds in your arms?

Here's the answer; **God *designed* your husband to need this physical release.** And God provided you, his wife, as the one who can, and should, provide the means for that release. But He also provided the act of making love so that it becomes far more than just about the physical act. ***The Bible calls it "becoming one."***

Contrary to what you may believe, your husband does not just want your body. **He needs you to offer him your body, your soul, your mind, and your acceptance. This is what makes sex so intimate and makes you so vulnerable.** What men want is a wife who is involved and interested. You see, even more than wanting his own sexual fulfillment, your husband truly wants you to be sexually fulfilled as well. If he knows you are just placating him, he will not be truly satisfied. While it may give him a physical release, it will still leave him feeling inadequate.

Phyllis Shirer says *"Men feel more courageous, like they can take on the world, when there is a woman at home that is expressing, in a way that speaks to **them**, that they are eager to be with them and have a relationship with them."*

Kay Arthur adds, *"Particularly during an economic downturn, or when your husband is struggling to find a job and feel like he is the provider in your home. It is even more important during that time that you are available sexually for your husband because that bolsters him as a man."*

"The two greatest fears men have is the fear of being found inadequate and the fear of being controlled by a woman. A man gets a feeling of security and confidence when he feels desired by his wife, not just when she is willing but when he feels desired by her."

Now I understand that there are many challenges here. I know all about how fatigue, children hanging on you all day, work, a husband who has watched TV while you cooked dinner, cleaned up, put the children to bed, and so on, can make sex seem like just one more thing on the day's list of duties. **But if we are honest, we'll admit that often we *simply choose not to participate.*** We actually have a great deal of mental control over our sexual nature and, when we choose to look beyond ourselves and serve our husbands the way we know God wants us to, God always blesses our obedience.

What does your husband want? He wants you—all of you. Harry Schauburg, in his book ***Undefiled***, says, *"The drive to be sexual is more than simply a desire for pleasure or excitement. The sex drive is really a longing for closeness—in both sexes. Don't be fooled by false messages or even personal experience: men want closeness too. Every man that I have counseled who made his wife a sexual object, therefore giving the impression that all he wanted was sexual pleasure has admitted—often with tears—that what he really wanted was closeness. The revelation was unbelievable to the wives who heard their husbands say that. It may seem unbelievable to you too, but it's true."*

1 Cor. 7 says *"Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer, but then come together again, so that Satan may*

not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.” Clearly, this passage shows that we are to make ourselves available on a very regular basis to our husbands.

Now let me be even more candid. Some of you have not had sex for way too long. Perhaps you have even convinced yourself that your husband is ok with that. Well right here, God’s Word makes it very clear that it *not ok*, and it is making your husband much more vulnerable to Satan’s temptation.

Now I don’t believe this command is speaking about *never* saying no to sex due to certain circumstances. But it does teach us that God takes this very seriously. What I think this verse cautions us against is an all too common attitude of rejection of our husband’s natural desires.

You see, ladies, if you truly don’t feel well, or you are worn out in every way, *it is possible to say no in a way that won’t cause your husband to feel rejected*. Telling him that you will make it worth his while if he is willing to wait one day, will let him know you truly do desire him.

It is humiliating for a man to feel like he is begging or asking his wife for a favor, which puts his very masculinity on the line. By our response to our husband’s sexual advances, *we either protect or abuse his heart*. And continual rejection promotes anger and frustration that can manifest itself in countless ways in our relationships.

A number of pastors have told me that men often confess to them their struggle with how to respond to wives who continually reject them. Some have not had sexual relations for months or even years! When these men sometimes give way to sexual temptation, their wives typically respond with hurt and feeling rejected. Yet, in reality, often they have been rejecting their husbands for years!

Do you know that to your husband, being denied sexual intimacy for 3 weeks is what it would be like for you if he didn’t talk to you for 3 weeks? *When we understand that their sexual needs are as valid as our emotional needs, rather than seeing sex as a duty, we will view it as an avenue of grace.*

Now I want to speak to what I believe is a huge blind spot for many Christian women, a spirit of self-righteousness. We can have a long list of things we want changed in our husbands, yet remain blind to sinful attitudes and actions such as a critical spirit, disrespect, treating them as children, or showing contempt through our words, tone, or body language. Not only does this shut men down but it stifles intimacy.

Kim Wagner says: *“The flip side of the woman’s calling to be a helper is the curse of controlling. The ingredients God has placed within woman which aid her in being an effective helper can be perverted into a dangerous tool of domination which she uses to “whip her man into shape.”* For example:

The **Power of Influence** can evolve into the **“Power of Pressure”**
The **Gift of Encouragement** can morph into the **Habit of Nagging**
Keen Intellect can degenerate into a **Sense of Superiority**
Passionate Exuberance can become an **Overwhelming Intensity**

Godly Wisdom can become his *worst nightmare* as an Intimidation Factor.”

In Isaiah 32:9-10, the women were totally blind to their sin. The prophet says: *“Rise up you women who are at ease, hear my voice. You complacent daughters, give ear to my speech. Soon you who feel secure will tremble.”* These women failed to see their need for repentance, unaware that judgment was coming.

We must open our eyes to the truth that God has given the men in our church and homes the authority to lead. It is a fearsome responsibility and a battle rages over them. We must give them confidence that we stand with and for them, even when they fail us at times.

When we understand how much we have been forgiven we will be quicker to forgive. We must remember that our husbands are not the enemy. Even those who have deeply hurt us are not the real enemy. Satan, and our own sin nature, deceives us, but Christ has come to set us free.

Our greatest desire should be more of the Lord for my husband rather than more of my husband for me. The Holy Spirit is the only true change agent, but God allows us to partner with Him through our prayers and godly influence. As we put our hope and confidence in God, He will use us to empower the men in our lives to live in the way He intended. Just as God has given us undeserved grace, we can bend that grace toward our husbands.

I want to stop here and show a short testimony of a pastor’s wife who came to realize, by God’s grace, the blind spots she had in her marriage and how, as a result of her humility and repentant heart, He saved their relationship. Kim Wagner clip

“While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8) He didn’t wait until our guilt and shame were gone before He laid down His life for us. In the same way, He calls us to serve one another, so we can reflect His love for us.

Sexual purity in the lives of believers models and symbolizes the Bride of Christ ready and waiting for her Beloved to return. As she waits, a pure woman treasures Christ above all other things. She puts her hope in God. She knows the modesty of personal restraint. She doesn’t despise submission. She finds her deepest fulfillment in Christ and trusts Him to provide what is best for her. God’s Word has authority over her emotions and her life.

She knows that *“God’s divine power has granted to her all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called her to His own glory and excellence...(2 Peter 1:3); for worthy is our Lord and God to receive glory and honor. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with us all. Amen. (Rev. 21/22)*

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