

A Beautiful Marriage *designed by God*

Ephesians 5:21-33

1. Submitting to God's order in marriage v21-24

a) Wives submit to your husbands

2. Selfless love for the good of her v25-32

Husbands:

a) **LOVE** your wife as Christ loved the church v25-27

b) **LOVE** your wife as you love yourself v28-32

Church Family Prayers

Heavenly Father, we thank you for Trev and Sue, and we pray that they would have a safe and restful time on annual leave. Thank you for their devotion to you, Lord. May they continue to grow closer to you as they persevere in faith. And may they both return refreshed in body and mind, full of your Holy Spirit and ready to continue the good works prepared in advance for them to do (Eph 2).

Father, thank you for saving us through Jesus' perfect sacrifice on the cross. Lord, the world sees the cross as complete foolishness, but we thank you that we know that it is the power, wisdom and love of God (1 Corinthians 1:18). Help us not to be arrogant because we know this to be true. Instead, may we be ever-thankful to you for giving us your Holy Spirit, Lord, so that we could have 'eyes to see' and 'ears to hear' this good news.

In response to this, Father, we pray that we would live the lives you give us in joyful submission and obedience to you. We pray our lives would be offered to you every day as holy, living sacrifices (Rom 12). Help us not to live like the world sees fit, but rather, we pray that we would be marked by our willingness to put others first and not ourselves.

And Lord, we pray that you would keep our motives pure. Help us to submit to each other out of reverence for Christ – remembering how he did not grasp hold of his place as King of Kings but instead, took on the nature of a servant, washing his disciples' feet and being obedient to death on the brutal cross (Phil 2).

Help us, Father, to look to Jesus as our model for Godly living and to live out what we are reading in Ephesians – especially in our families, Lord. Especially in this difficult time of heightened stress, anxiety, insecurity and fear, help the husbands in our church to love their wives as Christ loved the church. Father, may they have a single-minded focus to work toward building up the spiritual maturity and holiness of their wives. Help them to model the abounding love that Christ had for his church. And, Father, we pray that you would help the wives in our church to submit to their husbands just as the church submits to Christ. Lord, we know that this way of living is deeply unpopular in the eyes of the world and we know that lives can be messy and complicated because of sin, so we pray that you would help us with this Lord. Help us to be quick to repent when we stumble, asking forgiveness from each other and especially from you. And help us to be quick to forgive others, just as we know we have been forgiven so much by you.

Loving father, we thank you that, because of Jesus, you hear your children when we cry out to you in prayer. We thank and praise you for the healing of Paul's wife Louise. We continue to pray for those whom are sick and suffering. We pray for David, Stephen, Rod and Gloria. In the times we find ourselves in pain, help us to look to you as our comfort God. May our hearts be filled with your Holy Spirit and a love for your precious Son, and our minds be filled with the truth of your Holy Word. AMEN