

# 3 – “Friendship and Communication” // Ephesians 5:25–27 // *First Love: Gospel-Centered Relationships*

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## Compassion Video:

This weekend, we are launching a partnership with Compassion International. Compassion partners with local churches to sponsor impoverished children right in their own neighborhoods and communities.

That was my family, and today, each of you will have the opportunity to partner by sponsoring a child.

By sponsoring a child, you will ensure that they have the opportunity to get proper nutrition, education, and leadership training. You will also be able to write letters, encourage, and perhaps even visit them in their home country. Most importantly, these children will be involved in a local church and have the opportunity to respond to the gospel of Christ.

(A majority of the children available to sponsor today are from regions where the Summit has an ongoing ministry - the Dominican Republic, Kenya, and Indonesia.)

We have a vision of planting 1,000 churches in our generation. This is one way that we're giving EVERYONE the opportunity to take part in that vision and our mission internationally. I'd love for us to sponsor 1,000 children this weekend! Help us make that happen. Your campus teams will follow up with more details at the end of our time together today.

## Introduction:

I sent you out last weekend with the assignment to ask significant relationships in your life, “What can I do to serve you?” I’ve heard some great stories... One guy told me he asked his boss and got assigned overtime and was not too happy about it. The best one...

*Dear Pastor Ryan,*

*After hearing JD's message yesterday, I went home and prepared to shear my two Babydoll Sheep. My wife saw what I was doing and asked "How may I serve you?". Not to deter her from a deeper walk in faith, I asked if she would help me shear the sheep.*

*She began sheering the under side of my male sheep. To all of our horror she nearly sheered off his sheep-hood with one pass of the sheers. I guess proper instruction was not given prior to allowing her to serve me and the sheep is VERY disappointed in the results. And obviously she was unaware of the placement of the sheep's anatomy.*

*Two hours and \$336.00 later an emergency vet arrived and sewed back on the sheep's body part. We are hoping he will live. We were instructed during the service to continue serving each other for a week. One afternoon of applying J.D.'s sermon cost us \$336.00. Is there a total that we are aiming for?*

*Thank you for inspiring us to expect great things of God and attempt great things for God,*

*Martv*

But the vast majority really were positive...

We are on week 3 of our series on relationships, *First Love*. Each week we are looking at the classic biblical passage on relationships, Ephesians 5:21–32. (*turn there if you will*)

I want to start off today by telling you about what is arguably one of the most important marriages in history, though probably one you've never heard of. The marriage of one of my heroes, Martin Luther, to Katherine von Bora. (Mark Driscoll talks about it in his book *Real Marriage*.)

### Martin Luther and Katie von Bora

- **The context:** Luther, you know, is famous for starting the Reformation. The core of the Reformation was that the Bible, not the teaching of the church, should be our authority for life.
  - Well, one of the areas he took issue with was the teaching that all clergy be celibate. He said, "That's nowhere in the Bible," and he was, of course, correct. He wrote a book called *On Monastic Vows* in which he proved that forced celibacy on priests was an invention of man. And he ended the book encouraging monks and nuns to throw off their vows and get married for the glory of God.
- **The heist:** Well, a group of nuns read his book, found his reasoning compelling, and threw off their values. But the Roman Catholic Church would not let them leave the convent. So Luther helped arrange this big heist. Twelve women were smuggled out of a convent in 12 empty fish barrels. Luther was like the original "Ocean's 12."
- **The wedding:** Most of the nuns got married pretty easily, but one of the nuns, Katharine von Bora, turned out pretty tough to get a husband for.
  - She was brash, unattractive, and proud. Eventually she came up to Luther and said (essentially), "You got me into this mess. You owe me a husband. If you don't find me one, then you'll have to marry me."
  - Luther, who was 40 years old and a virgin (**the original 40-year-old virgin**) and quite content in his singleness, didn't want to marry her. But she wore him down and they finally got married.
  - When asked why he married her, Luther responded, "To spite the devil." (*Which has to be the least romantic reason for a wedding in the history of mankind.*)
- So, the marriage **did not exactly start off like a fairy tale**, but they ended up having on the most incredible marriages in history.
  - We know most about their marriage **through their letters**. They are awesome. Truly hilarious. She was really smart, really quick-witted, and pretty self-willed.
    - His favorite title for her was, "**Lord Katie**," but other pet names included "Dear Rib, my Empress, my true love, my Sweetheart, my dear gift of God."
- In **Luther's earliest writings** on marriage, he treated marriage as **something primarily functional**—something God designed to propagate the human race and something we should enter into to stave off sexual temptation.
  - But toward the end his life he would call Katie von Bora "the greatest (earthly) gift of grace a man could have."<sup>1</sup>
  - She was more than his lover; she was his confidant, his companion, his best friend.

Friendship is one of the most forgotten elements of marriage. Many of you probably realize your spouse is supposed to be your friend, but you really see attraction and passion and romance as the core of

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<sup>1</sup> Mark Driscoll *Real Marriage* 23. Quoting from Lazareth *Luther on the Christian Home* 32.

marriage. If anything, you see marriage as primarily *romance* **spiced** with a little *friendship*. But really marriage is *friendship* **spiced** with a little *romance*.<sup>2</sup>

If you want a marriage to be endearing and enduring, friendship has to be its core basis. One respected sociologist says it this way,

*"The determining factor in whether wives feel satisfied with the sex, romance and passion in their marriage is, by 70%, the quality of the couple's friendship. For men, the determining factor (in all those things) is, by 70%, the quality of the couple's friendship."*

*"So men and women come from the same planet after all."*<sup>3</sup>

**Proverbs 2:17** calls your spouse your "*al-loop*," a unique Hebrew word that lexicons translate as "*special confidant*" or "*best friend*."<sup>4</sup> And in the great biblical book of romance, Song of Solomon, the girl says of the boy, "*This is my lover; this is my friend.*"<sup>5</sup>

*That is the concept behind what Paul says in **Ephesians 5:25**...*

### **Ephesians 5:25–27**

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> 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."

*A couple of things there that teach you that marriage is essentially friendship:*

#### **(1. Friendship = analogy of the body)**

**The analogy of the body that pervades the passage is a fascinating one.**

- In one sense we can think of our body as separate from us; in another sense we can't. *I am one with my body.*
- My wife is in one sense separate from me, yet she is one with me. We have fused our entire lives together. All our interests; our home; we experience things together. We are **two separate beings** united into one so that every part of our lives is fused together!
- In vs. 31 Paul quotes from the Genesis narrative, that in marriage a man and woman should 'leave father and mother' and cleave to (or become one with) his wife.
- That's the essence of marriage. Becoming one.
- In fact, when Adam saw Eve in the Garden, he said, "This is bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh." It's like he's saying, "I see a part of who I am, my own soul, my own body!"
- He didn't say, "Wow, what a hot babe!" He said, "I see my own a piece of my own soul and body!"
- That's what a friend is: someone you feel shares your deepest interests and passions.

#### **(2. Friendship = progression toward a common cause)**

**You see in this passage a progression toward a common cause: Christlikeness.**

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<sup>2</sup> This thought came from a message by Tim Keller, "Marriage as Friendship."

<sup>3</sup> John Gottman, *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, 17. In Driscoll, 24.

<sup>4</sup> Tim Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*, 117.

<sup>5</sup> Song of Solomon 5:16

- Veronica and I have been assigned to help each other in the greatest of all pursuits: preparing for glory.

**1 John 3:2**, “Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we will be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.”

*This is our greatest passion, preparing to see Jesus, and we are assigned to one another to help make it happen.*

- What makes a friendship great is a sense of unity in a common cause.
  - Think of how many epic movies that has this as the plot: *Lord of the Rings*. *The Dirty Dozen*. *Young Guns*. *Band of Brothers*, *Ocean’s 11*. (all the movies I like).
- **C.S. Lewis** says there is one kind of love, eros, in which the lover is focused on each other, face to face, absorbed in each other. But there’s another kind of love, phileo, which are people side by side, absorbed by some common interest.<sup>6</sup> This is friendship.
- Now, friendship, or **common cause, can be found around a lot of things**. If someone else and I share a common love for a sport, or a hobby, or a favorite author, we can find friendship around that. But the deeper the shared interest, the greater the friendship. I have friends in my life like that, and so do you.
- For a Christian, the deepest passion is seeing Jesus, growing in Jesus, being like Jesus.
- Christian marriage is a comrade in the greatest passion and a companion for the greatest journey!
  - Tim Keller says in *Christianity* “to fall in love is to look at another person and get a glimpse of the person God is creating, and to say, ‘I see who God is making you, and it excites me! I want to be part of that. I want to partner with you and God in the journey you are taking to his throne. And when we get there, I will look at your magnificence and say, ‘I always knew you could be like this. I got glimpses of it on earth, but now look at you!’”<sup>7</sup>
  - Your hope is that one day you and your spouse will hear, “Well done, good and faithful servants. Over the years you lifted each other up. You washed one another’s feet. You sacrificed for each other. Sometimes you confronted each other. You prayed for each other. You hugged and you loved each other and you continually pushed each other toward me. And now look at you. You’re radiant.”<sup>8</sup>
  - **It is your commitment to your spouse’s holiness that keeps the marriage going, because it is friendship on the deepest level.**
- Even when you get tired of your spouse, and irritated, and you want a new one, you realize, “The new spouse that I want is *them* in their glorified state.” You see them not for what they are but what they could be. One day I will see Veronica in heaven in all her glorified beauty and I’ll say, “I knew it! I always knew you could be that.” And it’s my honor to move her toward that destination here.
  - You ever hear the **proverbial story about Michelangelo** who was asked how he could carve a magnificent statue of say, a horse, from a block of stone? He said, “I just see the horse in the stone and chip away everything that is not the horse.” That is marriage. You see the radiant beauty of Christlikeness in your spouse and you wash and chip away everything that is not that.

<sup>6</sup> “Lovers are normally face to face, absorbed in each other; friends, side by side, absorbed in some common interest.” C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (Mariner, 1971), 61

<sup>7</sup> Tim Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*, 121.

<sup>8</sup> Keller *M of M* 123 I paraphrased TK a little here

So, let's stop here for a minute and ask,

## What makes for friendship?

A. **Common cause** (which we have been over). If you don't share common cause the friendship will never last. You'll get bored with each other. Those who are going nowhere can have no fellow travellers.<sup>9</sup>

## B. Constancy

- A friend is someone you know will never leave because they are as committed to you as they are to themselves. You're like a part of their body.
  - **Proverbs 17:17**, "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is made for adversity."
  - *A friend is someone who walks in when everyone else walks out.*
- The person who should most trust your constancy is your spouse. They should know that while they get upset with you, you are the ones who most believe in them, who are not going anywhere, who believe the best about them and give them the benefit of the doubt. You feel about them like they are your own body.
- Because here's the thing: Someone is not going to let you in until they know you're not going to reject them, to walk away or humiliate them or expose their weaknesses.
- It kills me to hear spouses tearing their other spouse down, because I know that there is no way their spouse will ever open up to them—how could they? They don't feel safe.
- My body, generally speaking, knows it is safe with me. I may be unhappy with some part of it, but my body knows, "I can trust J.D." Think about **trimming your fingernails...** ever had someone else do it? Kind of scary...! But my body lets J.D. do it, because my body knows that if it feels pain; J.D. is going to feel pain, and J.D. is not going to let that happen. That even when J.D. does cause the body pain, it's for the body's good.

## C. Transparency

- In order to have a friendship you've got to open yourself up. Share what's going on emotionally. A companion, who is like your own body, has to see what's really going on!
  - Some of you men are a closed book to your spouse, and that's why she's not your friend.
  - For some of you men, I have **one simple activity** that could absolutely transform your marriage (*like last week I gave you 1 question*): *Come home and tell your wife one thing that happened that day and how you (key word) FELT about it.* It may be a babystep, but it would be a huge one that would go a long way in uniting you to your wife in friendship.
  - *More on that in a minute.* But one word by **C.S. Lewis**: "Eros will have naked bodies; friendship, naked personalities."<sup>10</sup>
- *Transparency*: Allow them to call out your sin. Believe me, they see it. And be humble. **Proverbs 9:8** "Reprove a wise man and he will love you for it; but fools despise wisdom and correction."
- **Proverbs 12:1**, "Whoever loves reproof loves wisdom, but whoever hates correction is stupid."
- **Question for you**: *When it comes to how you respond to your spouse's correction, which are you?*

## D. Trust of good intention

- **Let me go back to the analogy of the body.** Cleaning the body is an intimate thing and you wouldn't want someone else doing it.

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<sup>9</sup> Keller, *M of M*, 120.

<sup>10</sup> C.S. Lewis *The Four Loves* 71

- Imagine someone else brushing your teeth or shaving you. It's scary. You don't want someone just poking and jabbing around there. You want to know they will be gentle. I don't want someone to shave me who just takes a razor and slashes at my face.
- In order for your spouse to let you "clean" their "spiritual" body, they have to know you have good intentions and won't go in there poking and slashing.
- Some of you should not be so harsh and cruel to your spouse. (As I prepared for this, I feel like there's a woman in here who has been that way recently and you need to repent.)
- Simple thing here: for every one negative comment, there should be about 5 positive. This is big mistake fathers make with children; bosses make with employees; teachers with students; and wife and husbands with each other. We tend to only notice and point out the weaknesses. When people feel like you are down on them, they won't really listen to you. But when they know you are their biggest fan, they will often take your criticisms more to heart because they know it comes from someone who really cares. *In all relationships (and especially marriage), we tend to assume the positives, and notice the weaknesses. We should assume the weaknesses and notice the positives.*
- **You married a sinner; that should not be a surprise.**
  - So instead of berating them over their sinfulness, speak blessing and empowerment over their lives. See the beautiful creation at work inside of them and call it out in them. Hold the crown of Jesus over their head and grow them into it.
  - For every one word of criticism, speak 10 words of affirmation.
  - Veronica is awesome at this. I realized something this week as I prepared. Veronica really is my functional pastor. I haven't really had a pastor since college. She watches out for my soul, and speaks wisdom and blessing to me. The reason I let her do that is because she is my biggest fan.

*So the core of marriage is friendship. In light of that, I have...*

#### 4 practical points:

##### 1. Prioritize friendship in the dating process

- If you are single, what are you most looking for in a spouse?
  - It's kind of a stereotype that men overvalue looks in a mate and women overvalue earning potential.
- But neither of those things make for endearing, enduring marriages.
  - Beauty fades: you will lose your sexual appeal and your physical beauty over time; we all kind of end up looking the same.
  - Earning potential may not turn out.
- You're also setting yourself up for loneliness. What Adam needed in the garden was not just a sexual partner; he needed a companion—bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh.<sup>11</sup>
- Remember: ***marriage is not romance spiced with friendship, but friendship spiced with romance. (or SPIKED)***
- *Let me get up in your business for a minute:* Many of you **singles walk into a room** and write off 80% of the people immediately.
  - You don't like the shape of their jaw. You wanted someone more dark-skinned. They have a weird part in their hair. They wear straight leg instead of tapered leg jeans. They weren't an athlete.
- None of that stuff really makes for a happy, enduring marriage!
- **Psychologists say that infatuation lasts, at its longest, about 18 months. And then it's gone.**

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<sup>11</sup> Keller *M of M* 125

- **Listen to this:** Christian counselor **Gary Thomas:** *"In 1967, a study of college-age women found that 76 percent of women said they would marry someone if the man had every trait they were looking for, even if they didn't feel 'romantic love' toward them. In more recent research, 91 percent of women said 'absolutely not.' That's a huge shift. People have been pursuing such pairings (based on infatuation) for several generations now, and I'm asking you to be an astute and honest observer: how's that working out for us?"*<sup>12</sup>
- *"I've rarely had a wife complain to me about her husband's looks. When wives come to me, it's almost always about character issues: 'He shouldn't do this thing. He should do that thing, but doesn't. How do I fix this?' Yet most women are not seeking men of character first. They are seeking men with whom they feel 'in love.'"*<sup>13</sup>
- Let me tell you why most marriages are so bad. People have gotten through the infatuation stage and now they are bored. They got the idea from books or TV that if you'd just find the person with whom you had the perfect chemistry, if the infatuation was strong enough, it would last forever. But now that that has died, which it always does, you have nothing left. You didn't prioritize friendship in the dating process, and you haven't developed friendship after the marriage started.
- **One person said it this way:** *"Press on through that period of death of infatuation into that greater but much more profound relationship that follows, and you'll find you are living in a world of new thrills all the time!"*<sup>14</sup>
- What I **first saw in Veronica** made me love her has a friend (*I've told you the story of the list I made...*).
  - Over the years we neglected that, and our relationship suffered. We are recovering it now, and it's better than ever!

*Couple of really practical things for you if you are single:*

- **If you're single, don't marry a non-Christian!**
  - You'll never be able to share the deepest unity. Because if you're a Christian walking with God, the deepest part of you is the part that knows God.
  - You say, "I'm married to a non-Christian now." That's ok, you can still make it, and God has purposes for you in your marriage the way it is. But unfortunately, yes, you'll never be able to share the same kind of unity you could share if they loved and were committed to Jesus like you were. *Doesn't mean you should leave them* (because 1 Cor is clear that you should not, and God has different purposes for you in the marriage), but pray for them.
- **Beware the intoxication of physical contact.** There are a lot of reasons why you should keep physical contact before marriage to a minimum, but here's one you might often overlook: physical, erotic contact has a way of clouding all your judgment. You need, in the dating process, how much of a lifelong friend this person can be. And you can't do that when you're all **strung out** on infatuation and the buzz of physical contact.
  - You should marry someone with whom sex is the crowning jewel in a relationship, not the centerpiece of it. It's like the frosting on the cupcake. The only way you'll be able to judge that is by keeping that drug out of the dating process.

## 2. Prioritize friendship in the marriage

- Nothing can replace the centrality of friendship in your marriage. If you don't prioritize the friendship, the relationship will slowly die.
- **Your career** can't replace your priority of your friendship with your spouse...

<sup>12</sup> Gary Thomas, *Sacred Search*, 23–24.

<sup>13</sup> Thomas, *SS*, 43.

<sup>14</sup> C. S. Lewis *Mere Christianity* 111

- Your love and commitment to your **kids** cannot replace the priority of your friendship with you spouse, and this is what often happens.
  - The center of the home is NOT parent and child; it is husband and wife.
  - God did not put a parent child in the garden, he put a husband/wife.<sup>15</sup> In order for the home to be solid, my relationship with my wife has to be strong. The greatest way I can love my kids is to prioritize my wife, even over them.
  - The Bible says, Eph 6:4, “Raise up your kids...” You know what that means, don’t you? Get rid of them. Technically, the word you use is “rear” Love that image. Get behind them and start pushing them up; to a place where they are not dependent on you!
  - If you love and devote yourself more to your children than your spouse, your entire family will be pulled out of joint and the whole family will suffer.<sup>16</sup>
- Married people: you have to prioritize friendship in marriage above all things!
  - Marriage has an unparalleled power over your life. You have tied your life to another person, literally, as Paul says, you have become one body with her! If your marriage is strong, then even if the rest of your life falls apart, you can usually make it. **Because marriage has an unparalleled power in our lives, it should have an unparalleled priority.**<sup>17</sup>
- I have heard it said there are **3 kinds of relationships**:
  - Back to back: a couple has turned their back on each other. They live separately; maybe in the same house, but only roommates.
  - Side by side: work together on the house; the kids; the business; serving the church.
  - Face to face: this kind of relationship is one in which, in addition to shoulder-to-shoulder work, they get a lot of face time drawing each other out in conversation, friendship and intimacy.<sup>18</sup>
- Many of you need to work on #3. Through simple communication!
  - **My wife and I were a study once... “How did that make you feel?”**
  - Women do this more naturally. They engage each other about feelings. They stare at each other for hours over coffee pouring out their feelings. That would drive me crazy.
  - I’m reminded of the **Brian Regan** story in which his wife asks him after he gets home playing golf with a friend who had just broken up with his girlfriend. “How is he?” “I guess fine.” Is he dating anybody? I don’t know. How could you play with golf with him for 3 hours and that not come up? How would that come up? “Hey, good putt... you dating anybody?” Guys, that’s something we need to work on.
  - So try that simple exercise. Both of you, when you get home in the evenings: One statement to your spouse about something that happened that day and how you **felt** about it.
- You’ll find it changes things: *“The road to the heart is the ear.”*
- You say, ‘I can see now I made a mistake. I didn’t prioritize friendship in the dating process; I was infatuated with her looks or his earning potential... and my spouse is not my friend.’
  - Well, you have **a lot more in common** than you realize. You share a home; maybe kids; if you’re Christians your greatest passion.
  - **Leaving, because you feel mismatched, is never a biblical option.**
  - You’re going to have to **work at whatever friendship** you can, and **trust God**, and you’ll probably find that the results are **better than you’d expected.**
  - I’m telling you, the **power of God’s grace is amazing.**

### 3. Marriage is not the only place to experience friendship

- Remember the **first week—marriage is temporary; the church is eternal.**

<sup>15</sup> Keller, *M of M*, 127.

<sup>16</sup> Keller, *M of M*, 129.

<sup>17</sup> See Keller, *M of M*, 131.

<sup>18</sup> Driscoll *Real Marriage* 32

- In marriage you become “one body.” What is the other institution in the Bible that is called the body? The church. Don’t miss that.
- The church is a place that God intended for us to experience cross-gendered friendship. You see, when God created Adam and Eve he created them both, but in different ways, in the image of God. He deposited various of his attributes in either gender.
- We each, male and female, are incomplete without the other, and we long to be united with each other. That happens in marriage for many people.
- And if you’re single, you long for that too, and God intended you to experience a measure of that in the church.
- Now, there are limits, of course. Married people fuse together in friendship in ways singles in the church cannot. Obviously. But the church is a place where you get another taste of that coming kingdom of which marriage and family were just a sign: Christ’s relationship to his people.

#### 4. Beware the marriage counterfeits

- People sometimes can’t understand why sex outside of marriage is wrong. You actually catch a glimpse of it here. Sex is the ultimate fusion.
  - God designed a vulnerability in sex that would only be safe, at least in this life, within an absolute, exclusive, lifelong covenant.
  - Sex in marriage can tear you apart; certainly outside of marriage.
  - It’s like a glue.
  - It’s the two genders (God having deposited his attributes in each gender), coming together as an act of oneness. Two different beings; different genders, becoming one, in the midst of a lifelong, exclusive covenant.
  - Sex apart from that is not fully human.
- **Sex outside of a lifelong covenant is physical oneness apart from oneness in other area.** It’s separating the soul from the body and having unity in one area but not the others. It’s half human. It’s like zombie sex. Body without soul. Unity of the body without unity of the soul.
- **Homosexual sex is an attempt at physical unity between two genders that are the same.** But God intended sex and marriage to be between two genders he made opposite. God deposited his attributes in the two genders so that the unity in sex and marriage would be two different, complementary beings learning to love “the other” that God had made. *That’s why he says homosexuality is sinful.* It’s not because God’s not open to variety. But like these other examples, it’s a counterfeit for the real thing that doesn’t serve the full extent of the purposes he has for sex.
- So beware the substitutes.
- And **you married people beware** trying to have friends of the opposite sex who are not your spouse.
  - Emotional adultery is having a friend of the opposite gender who is more of a friend to you than your spouse is. When you’re married, you shouldn’t have a lot of close friends from the opposite sex. That is only asking for trouble. I once heard about a guy who had a close female friend serve as his best man. Now, I’m not the judge, but, girls, if a guy suggests that in your wedding, I’d suggest you reconsider.

#### Conclusion:

Friendship is one of the most crucial, but most overlooked, dimensions of marriage. I’ve given you a lot here, but I hope you’ll chew on it.

I’ve given you an activity: Ask each day one thing that happened and how you feel about it. When something gets you emotionally, men, write it down, and share it (something that makes you mad, sad—not about *them*). My wife loves it when I pull out my little book!

I hope you realize that the pattern and power for all of this is Jesus. Remember the love triangle. Jesus at top. As you become more aware of the love he has for you, you become able to give it to your spouse. The gospel is...

## Bullpen:

- <sup>28</sup> In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup> because we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup> “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” (Ephesians 5:27-31, ESV)
- (Willingness to share): The essence of God is being in a tight friendship. That’s how you were created. Men especially like to do more and more alone—you know who is the first one presented alone in the Bible? Satan.
- Common cause: Journey toward Christlikeness. Seeing a glimpse of who they could be
  - Trust and belief and patience

Beware emotional adultery: having as a close friend someone of the opposite sex who is not your spouse.

While we can be friendly toward everybody, we can only end up being truly friends with a few. And it takes work.

Same desire; same destination

Remember: this all points to Jesus. God says he is the father to the fatherless, and he’ll be the friend to the friendless, even in marriage. You can know God in a special way in a broken marriage.

- One more quote, then I have a couple of practical suggestions/insights for you if you are single: *“People get from books the idea that if you marry the right person, you may expect to go on being in love forever. As a result, when they find that they are not, they think this proves that they have made a mistake, and they are entitled to a change. But let the thrills go. Let it die away. Go on through that period of death into that greater but much more profound interest and happiness that follows. And you will find that you are living in a world of new thrills all the time. But if you make thrills your regular diet, and you try to prolong them artificially, they will all get weaker and weaker, fewer and fewer, and you will become a bored, disillusioned old person. Thus you find so many middle-aged people, men and women, mauling on about their lost youth.”*<sup>19</sup>

((Use this somewhere?

- Marriage allows you to see someone’s sinfulness like never before. You don’t realize how sinful someone could be until you get married. Marriage allows you to see your own sin like never before. You don’t realize how sinful *you* could be until you get married.))

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<sup>19</sup> Anonymous source quoted by Tim Keller in the sermon “Marriage as Priority and Friendship”

