

Domestic Bliss

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[0:00] This is a sermon from King's Church West Lothian. Now, there's a very good reason for that, and that's because the section that we want to look at today is specifically on the subject of husbands and wives.

And the reason we wanted to do that this week is because we actually decided, given that it is on the subject of husbands and wives, is that Becky and I will together be sharing a little bit. And this, due to a number of different factors of rotas and blah, blah, blah, this was the only time that we could be here together. So we'll root back to the earlier part of chapter 5 next week, but we will today be looking at this section in Ephesians where Paul specifically addresses husbands and wives.

Now, the scripture that we're going to look at is, to be honest, one that most preachers approach with dread. Now, the reason for that isn't because we don't think it's God-breathed and suitable for teaching and rebuking and training in righteousness.

We absolutely do. However, the scripture we're going to look at does come with a lot of cultural baggage. And it is exactly the kind of scripture that people who would come from maybe a radical feminist point of view, that they would look at and they would say, well, this proves it.

[1:48] This proves that Christianity is where the patriarchy comes from, that it's misogynistic, it's patronizing towards women.

This proves it right here, what we're going to read. And equally, on the other side, the toxic masculinity type, you know, the manosphere, these guys like Andrew Tate that you hear about and these kind of guys that put these odious things online.

They would say, ha, this, no, no, this proves that the Bible supports what we think. This proves that women are nothing more than chattels to their husband and that their opinions aren't worth listening to.

Now, as you probably don't be too surprised here, I don't think that either of these things are true. I believe that what we have here, although it definitely needs explaining, what we have here is something which is neither patriarchal or certainly not misogynist or patronizing.

It is liberating and it is uplifting for both men and women, for husbands and wives. And here's the reason. Because it takes out, it takes marriage out of what I can get out of it, what's right for me, me, me, or even us.

[3:05] And it takes it to a higher plane. And it shows us that marriage, biblical marriage, Christian marriage, can reflect the love of God. So, with that little intro, I am going to read the scripture.

This is Ephesians chapter 5, verses 21 to 33. I don't know if we quite got that. We did. Wonderful. Okay. So, here we go. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

Now, as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

In this way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church, for we are members of his body.

[4:22] For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery, but I'm talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you must also love his wife as he loves himself.

And the wife must respect her husband. So, here's how I'm going to do this. I'm going to start off and give a little bit of background and talk about some stuff from the husband, specifically about the husbands, and then Becky is going to come up and share some of her insights and talk about her reflections as a wife.

Now, you probably don't need me to tell you that the verses that probably make us wince a little bit are verses 22 to 24, the wives submit to your husbands bit.

Now, you might be surprised to hear that 17 years ago, at our wedding, this was the scripture that we had read.

And so, at the service, they read the scripture. We got a little bit of pushback from friends and family, both Christian and non-Christian, interestingly.

[5:37] And they said, well, to be honest, it felt a little bit sexist. That, you know, what's wrong with 1 Corinthians 13? Come on. Now, for us at the time, we felt that we wanted to have the scripture read because we felt that it was what biblical marriage was all about.

And naively, I think, I think we probably thought that it would be, you know, this pattern of teaching would be okay to follow. If we both went in faithfully and with an open heart, we thought that would be fairly straightforward to follow.

Now, that was a bit naive, I think, probably looking back. However, I don't think we were wrong to have it read, our wedding, because it has absolutely, over the years, been foundational for our marriage.

And many times, Becky and I, when we've discussed things, maybe even had a little bit of marital conflict, we've gone back to this scripture and we've used it to work out how we do married life.

As I say, Becky will get up shortly and talk about what that experience has been like for her. And so what I'm going to do is I'm going to just leave those verses aside just for the time being.

[6:48] I'm going to jump on to the next bit where it talks about husbands. Because I think this scripture, even just if you look at the volume of it, it is primarily addressed to husbands. Even just for a simple reason, there's eight verses there that are specifically addressed to husbands and only three that are addressed to wives.

And what is the call on husbands? What does it say? It says, husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

So what does that mean? Husbands, love your wife as Christ has loved the church. Well, just to kick it off, I mean, it is a sky-high calling, isn't it?

How did Christ love the church? Well, we sang about some of that stuff today, didn't we? Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Why did he do that?

He did that to gain for himself a people that would know him and love him. He literally died for the church. But even apart from that one momentous event that took place that day, on a daily level, Jesus, he sacrificed himself for the church, for the greater thing.

[8:01] Now, just think about what Jesus' life looked like. Jesus chose the life of a penniless, wandering preacher.

Now, Jesus is one of the few people in history that could have done absolutely anything. I mean, even if you look at his temptation, do you remember the devil tempted him in the desert before he started his ministry?

What did the devil offer him? He offered him rulership over every kingdom on the earth. I mean, Jesus literally turned down being king of the earth, as it was at that particular moment, in order to spend his life getting up and walking from village to village in a little area, in just a little bit of Israel, teaching about the kingdom of God.

Teaching about how true greatness is found through humility. And saying, he's like, blessed are the meek, blessed are those who are poor now.

Teaching the people to follow him. Demonstrating humility. So, how does that kind of attitude translate to a marriage?

[9:13] Obviously, we're not all called to be Jesus in that sense. However, what Jesus did was he preferred the church's priority over his own.

He could have chosen comfort and good things on this world, as it were, but he didn't. He went through that pain and that sacrifice for the church. So, in the same way, a husband should do the same for his wife.

So, let's just think about just an example of how that could be. Let's say a married couple needed to get a new car. Okay? And the husband really likes the red car.

They've agreed what type of car. They know what they want. They know what they need. He likes the red car. The wife likes the blue car. Okay? And they cannot agree. He likes red. She likes blue. No matter how much they go, should we go for purple? Should we compromise? No, no, no. It's got to be red or it's got to be blue. They cannot compromise on it. What are we going to do here? Okay. So, according to this teaching, well, clearly, the wife should submit to the husband.

[10:18] Ah, but the husband should love his wife. So, the way that the husband expresses his leadership is that he goes, well, I know.

Sorry, did he want the red car or the blue car? I can't remember. I know I wanted the red car, but you know what? My wife really, really wants the blue car. So, do you know what? The way I'm going to lead my wife, the way, in the language of this, my wife is going to submit to me is that we are going to get the blue car.

Okay? Now, obviously, that's a little bit of a mundane example. But these things come up all the time. A husband absolutely should be thinking prayerfully about how he leads his family and the kind of life that he wants to live with them.

So, thinking about things like, well, where are we going to live? That kind of thing. So, the area.

Does the area that I think we should live in, does that work for my wife?

Does she have friends there? Can she make friends there? All that kind of stuff. Or does the house that I think we should buy, does that, is that going to work for her? Even other things like, you know, the husband and wife, for example, want to have a big family.

[11:34] Let's say, for example, well, you know, can, does my wife want to have a big family? Can she go through that pregnancy, that childbirth multiple times? Can she do that?

And the important thing is that the husband primarily shows love for his wife in making those decisions. So, the husband can want what he wants.

But ultimately, he's got a, the primary focus of his care and his love and his leading should be towards his wife as Christ loved the church.

So, another thing. So, how does Jesus love the church? Well, it says in the Bible that Jesus is constantly interceding for us.

Interceding is just a fancy word for saying prayer. He's praying for us right now. Isn't that a crazy thought? Jesus is praying for you right now. Husbands, do you pray for your family?

[12:34] Do you pray for your wife, those of you who are married? It has long been my habit to get up early before work, to read the Bible, to spend some time in prayer. And it has become a habit to daily lift up my family in prayer.

That's the first thing that I do, just so I don't forget. And, you know, at times it might not be the most in-depth prayer. It might just be, God, I pray they have a great day. That's all it might be.

Sometimes, if they're going through stuff or particular challenges, it might be a little bit more in-depth. They're praying for wisdom, that kind of thing. But, husbands, I believe that one of the ways in which you should lead your family as Christ loves the church is to pray for them on a regular basis.

Now, one of the things I always find so strange about the Gospels is why people follow Jesus in their masses.

When he said things like, take up your cross. He who would ever come after me must take up his cross and follow me. He said things like, you know, if you follow me in this world, you're going to have trouble.

[13:43] He said those things. And yet people still love to follow him. Why do they do that? Well, it's because Jesus was just so wonderful to be around. He was the most wonderful man.

He was the most wonderful teacher. And here's what one woman said about what it must be like, particularly for women, but for men and women, I think, to spend time with Jesus. So this is Dorothy Sayers.

Perhaps it is no wonder that the women were the first at the cradle and the last at the cross. They had never known a man like this man. There had never been another. A prophet and a teacher who never nagged at them, never flattered or coaxed or patronized, who never made arch jokes about them, never treated them either as the women, God help us, or the ladies, God bless them, who rebuked without querulousness and praised them without condescension, who took their questions

and arguments seriously, who never mapped out their sphere for them, never urged them to be feminine or jeered at them for being female, who had no axe to grind or uneasy male dignity to defend, who took them as he found them and was completely unselfconscious.

I would encourage you men, if you want your wife to follow you and allow you to lead her in that voluntary way, I would say be worth following.

Be like Jesus. Be encouraging. Be kind. Be helpful. Be helpful. Now, the call to be Christ-like, oh sorry, I should say, sorry, the call to be submissive isn't reserved for wives alone.

[15 : 30] In fact, that first verse we looked at, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. That is a call to all Christians. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

So what does that mean? Well, it means that there's a kind of virtuous circle, almost like a bit of a dance of submission to one another. You know, holding, it's the kind of, the picture would be holding the door open.

So if I'm submissive to Olu, and Olu is submissive to Vicky, who in turn is submissive to Gordon, who's in turn submissive to me, it's a preferring of one another that goes on constantly.

And that's what Jesus is talking about in loving one another, preferring the other. Now, not all of us are married. Some of us are single. Some single people here are interested in getting married. Some probably aren't. If you are, here's my advice to you. And again, I suppose being a man, this is probably more aimed towards the men.

[16 : 30] It is a mistake to have a list of characteristics of things that you are looking for in a potential married partner. I can remember being a young man and having conversations, I suppose, like this, and hearing the list of things that my male friends were looking for in a wife.

I can remember one guy who I spoke to, who, when I think I asked him how serious he was about his girlfriend that he was with, and this is what he said. He said, well, she ticks all the boxes. But what?

She's not a checklist. She's a person. Listen, but I think we do do this. You know, naturally, we look for, we think about what kind of woman I like to marry.

Well, she'd obviously have to be a great cook. She'd have to be fun to be with. She would, you know, put a bit of a Christian veneer on it. She'd have to have a care for the poor and the needy. And so on, we'd love to spend time with people less fortunate than themselves.

Obviously, not so much that she would ignore me, obviously. And top it all off, naturally, she would have to be absolutely drop-dead gorgeous. Now, the problem with that is that, first of all, that person probably doesn't exist.

[17 : 40] And second of all, if she did exist, she wouldn't want to marry you. So, the thing is, we don't, here's my advice to you. Don't look for a list of good things in another person.

Look to yourself and see what kind of husband, what kind of wife could you be. Be the person that the person you are looking for is looking for.

That's good, isn't it? I'm going to say that again. Be the person that the person you're looking for is looking for. What you really want is a wonderful husband or wife who sees something in you and wants to help you become an even closer follower of Jesus.

Now, speaking of wonderful wives, I'm going to hand over to my own wonderful wife, Becky, who's going to speak from her perspective.

Thank you. Okay. Hello, everybody. Bear with me because I'm a bit nervous.

[18 : 58] And I guess, you know, going off piste already, I wrote everything out because I just thought, my goodness, this is a thorny issue. When Mike was saying we skipped, I was like, could we not skip this too?

But actually, I think when I was thinking about this and thinking about sort of as a woman who believes that Jesus is an egalitarian, he values everyone equally, and a bit of a feminist myself, how do I stand here and talk about this model of marriage?

And actually, so I really, really thought about that. And actually, as I was standing there and Daniel's leading us in worship, I can't assume now. And actually, what we talked about today is God's love for all of us.

And not all of us are married and not all of us, you, marriage is hard. Sometimes we're single, sometimes we're widowed, sometimes we're divorced. And actually, God's love is greater than all of this.

And the picture in heaven is that we will be, we will no longer be married because actually we are the bride of Christ. And so while it's really good to talk about these things now, because actually marriage is a lot generally, but also for those of us who are not married, there's lots to learn too. [20:08] But equally, we're not left out of this. And actually, our relationship with Christ is far more important than our relationship with our spouse, although that is very important.

So, so this passage is really challenging. I read the message translation. I found it a lot more palatable. The first bit is, goes like this, out of respect for wife, for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ. The husband provides leadership to his wife the way that Christ does to his church. Not by domineering, but by cherishing.

So just as the church submits to Christ as he exercises such leadership, wife should likewise submit to their husbands. But husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church.

A love marked by giving, not getting. Christ's love makes the church whole. His words evoke her beauty. Everything he does and says is designed to bring out the best of her, dressing her in dazzling silk, radiant with holiness.

[21:16] That is how husbands ought to love their wives. So as Michael has already talked about, this passage is a huge call on husbands to love faithfully, generously and sacrificially.

It is the gravity and depth of this pattern of love that enables a wife to submit in certain contexts. Any submission is never demanded or forced.

It is earned and freely given through the trust in the sacrificial love in that relationship. So while I don't want to shy, but actually I don't want to shy away from this passage from words like submit that feel very alien in our culture.

We don't want to dilute the truth of the Bible and make it to fit with the wisdom of our present age. We believe that scripture is God-breathed and as believers it is our duty and our delight to understand it and acknowledge its context and apply it to our lives.

There is a German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer, who said, to marry is to halve your rights and double your duties. Interestingly, he's a man and he felt like that.

[22:27] But statistics do show that in this country, those with the longest life expectancies are married men and unmarried women, which perhaps reflects the challenges of women in marriage.

This passage, assigning gender differences within marriage, is fraught with difficulty because of the pattern of this world. In our flawed human history, the physical and therefore surmised intellectual differences between men and women have meant that men have assumed authority positions over women.

It's not to say that all men have been dominating or domineering or disrespectful of women, but societies have been inherently built that enable men to lead and govern. There remain many parts of the world where women cannot access education and places like Afghanistan where rights were gained for women and then lost again under the Taliban.

In our times, in this country, great strides of progress have been made through the sacrifice and pain of many to gain equal access to education and career opportunities underpinned by protective legislation.

We live in enlightened times now, but the gender pay gap still references that inherent gender bias in our society. All of our worldviews are framed by experience and rhetoric, and mine, like most women in this room, has in part been shaped by the gratitude to the feminist movement for the freedoms and opportunity that I get to enjoy.

[23:56] Therefore, when I am told to submit or be the helper, as we will hear in the next passage of a man, my hackles are rising. But returning to marriage, the first marriage was Adam and Eve.

In Genesis 2, God forms Adam from the dust of the earth and breathes life into his nostrils. The Lord finds it is not good for Adam to be alone, so he shows him the animals and offers to him to name them.

But for Adam, there was not a helper fit for him. So God put Adam into a deep sleep and forms Eve from him. When Adam awakes, it is recorded as the first song in the Bible.

He cries out, this at last is the bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. Now, the illustrative text that is Genesis, it sounds like it's a bit of a surprise, a bit of a stumbling block for God when he realizes

that Adam needs a companion.

Adam is tending and living this perfect paradise, and he's productive but not stressed, and he has animals company, and he walks every evening in the cool of the garden with God.

[25:04] Yet, when Adam makes Eve, Adam still cries out, at last, she's fulfilling his longing. This hasn't been a chinking God's plan.

He created a human man with an innate God-given desire for connection, for relationship. Eve reflects back to Adam his humanness. They can understand each other.

They can read each other. They can learn together. God wanted Adam to long for his human companion such that he would value her.

But in the passage, Eve is referred to as Adam's helper. Helper is the word ezer in the original text, E-Z-E-R, and it does sort of interpret to helper.

But there are 21 other uses in the Old Testament of this word ezer. Twice, it refers to women. Three times, it refers to when Israel is calling out to other nations when it's under duress, asking for military help.

[26:02] And so it's a sort of protective strength. And 16 other times, it refers to calling out to God for help, for aid, for counsel, for solace. It's a word of support, of care, of strength, of meeting another's weakness.

So now returning to this passage, Michael asked me to reflect how, from a wife's perspective, how we have interpreted this passage into our marriage.

As you heard, we had it very naively at our wedding and thought it might be easy. Verse 22, wives, submit to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. Now, this does not say women submit to men as you do to the Lord.

This is very clearly singling out the context of marriage. This is the covenantal, lifelong, monogamous, committed relationship of marriage.

If you love the Barbie movie like I do, you'll know Ken offers Barbie the opportunity to be his long-term, long-distance, low-commitment, casual girlfriend.

[27:03] This is not that. There are lots of romantic ideas about marriage, and you often hear this phrase, you complete me. I disagree. I think the picture that best demonstrates marriage is the gem roller.

Gem as in precious stone gem roller. I don't know if they're very common. My kids, our kids have wanted one. But National Geographic sells them. But it's basically like this metal circular container that sits on the top of a little machine.

And you basically put rocks inside from mineral-rich ground. The machine turns on, and it spins around really, really fast. And then knocks rocks together, and it hits off the side as well. And all the craggy edges are knocked off to dust.

And you emerge with these smooth, precious stones within. Now, if you're not married, this does not mean that this process is not happening to you.

It certainly is. And the rocks are your friends, your family, your colleagues, your challengers. And perhaps you feel more vulnerable and unprotected from the knocks than you would in marriage. But there is a promise to all believers that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

[28:14] However, I do often think that in your spouse you have probably found the rock with the particular crags that really articulate with your own pointy corners.

And perhaps it reflects the day-to-day relentless clashing together. So how do the spinning rocks look in our marriage? I think it's fair to say that this changes over time and has been largely governed by work and family commitments.

I'm a doctor in the NHS, and Michael works in construction, and he's been employed and self-employed at various points over the years. Michael used to be a milkman's boy, and he's just really good and self-disciplined at getting out of bed.

So that means he gets up every day at about 5, washes up, spends time with God, and arrives about 6 o'clock with a cup of tea for me in bed. So it's a great start today, a cup of tea, and I've already been interceded for as well.

That is Christ loving you. When he goes away overnight, I realize that I don't know when the bins go out. We run out of bread because I don't know how to work the bread maker, and the crockery stacks up.

[29:21] We parent together, but I do the organizing. I know the family timetable. I reply to the emails. I send the forms. I know the PE kit days. I do the laundry and I pack for the holidays.

There's a lot of discussion about the secret load carried by women, the mental load, the preparation, the planning, the juggling. I find it frustrating, both at home and at work, when others want to stay in decision-making when they haven't looked at the detail.

So someone said to me recently, I'm just gifted in the big ideas, the broad view. And I'm like, that's just ego and laziness.

So my female colleagues have said to me at times, just present it to him like it's his idea. And at times, I absolutely have done that in the workplace. But that is not the subversion and manipulation model that I want to have in our marriage.

That's not a healthy model. So sometimes we will come to the point, and it's usually juggling something into the family calendar, where Michael said, we just need to make a decision on this. And I won't let that decision happen unless he has engaged with the detail and understood the impact and worked out who's going to absorb that impact.

[30:31] But then a few years ago, it came to a point when I was really exhausted. I was drowning at work and carrying the mental workload at home. And as it often happens, you keep going and you keep going and you keep going, and it feels okay and it's manageable, and then suddenly it is not.

And the spinning plates start falling, and so do the tears. And we had a big argument, and we got to the core of the issue, and we said, well, let's try and divvy up some more of the organizing.

You take on a bit more of the mental load, and Michael was promising to be more helpful. And then he came back to me the next day and said, this isn't going to work, because I'll help a bit more, and then you'll feel better and my good intentions will fade.

He said, I need to own something. And so he offered to do the shopping and the cooking. Now, I find that hard, because he wasn't a particularly good cook at that point. And he's also not a savvy shopper.

But he did lift a transformative load, and I have been so grateful in recent years. Now, so that's some of the things where we sort of juggle things together. But Proverbs 31 describes a wife of noble character.

[31:38] Now, Michael was reading his way through the Bible, one chapter every day during our courtship. On the morning of the day that he proposed to me, his daily reading was Proverbs 31.

So it describes a woman, who I hope to be, one day. She is productive. She is brave in business. She is generous. She is dignified. She is strong. Her husband takes great pride in her and encourages her in the Lord and in her endeavors.

It was absolutely God's grace that Michael read that passage on that day. I have always, as his wife, felt empowered and encouraged to take things on, to pioneer, to lead in the workplace.

Michael's often held the fort in family life, particularly in support of my career. He's also generous in releasing me from him and the family to take care of others. And I'm often out caring for somebody else while he's doing the bedtime at home.

And foundations in this passage, this empowered, brave woman, actually meant that we bought our house before Michael has even viewed it. So there have been times, like the house, when he has supported me to make very empowered decisions.

[32:47] But at other times, he has been decisive in decision-making in support of me. More recently, again, I was totally overwhelmed at work and the workload was impossible. And I was working really long hours.

And I was raising concerns and just feeling there was no way forward. I felt it was impossible to continue. But I was carrying real guilt that if I stopped, the clinical care would be less good.

I was struggling in my identity of clinical lead and my pride and my pride of being a coper and my satisfaction of caring for others. And I'd been wrestling with the decision about resigning.

But I kept holding back from it, in part because of finance as well. And Michael bought me a cup of tea in bed one morning in March. And I'd barely slept and I was desperate not to go to work that day, which is something that I never feel.

And he said, Becky, you can't go on like this. You have to resign. And his decisiveness, ultimately leading me and willingness to deal with the repercussions, enabled me to make that decision with him that I would resign.

[33:50] And he's really engaged in the finances and already sacrificed and is working harder than ever in his own business such that I can resign. So in a fortnight, for the first time ever, I will be unemployed. I might even start cooking the tea.

And our roles and our responsibilities will transition and change again. So in this context of Christ-centered, loving, sacrificial marriage, there is a place for submission by wives, I think, reading this passage.

Now, in submission, wives are not called to kowtow. They are not called to toe the line. They are not called to flinch away. It is freely given and earned by the husband and never demanded.

It's important to say here that submission does not hold in physical intimacy, which is an expression of love freely given and received in the context of safety and trust. So in marriage, disagreement and discussion is very normal.

We are in this gem roller together. Many times you will hold the same views and proceed together happily. Other times you will hold the same view but disagree on how to implement it.

[35:05] And other times you will simply disagree. And this requires discussion, consideration, rediscussion and concession and compromise from both sides. And sometimes the concession comes from the partner who is less bothered, less affected, feels less strongly.

Most times the concession will come from one partner choosing to bless and serve the other. And actually in that passage, that is generally the husband. And many times, modelling how Christ loves the church, the husband will choose to serve the wife.

But it is both ways. Very occasionally there is a situation where you simply cannot reach agreement despite multiple discussions. Perhaps you have sought counsel out with.

But the Bible is not unrealistic. These occasions, they do occur. And most times the decision has to be made. The decision not to make a decision because you can't agree is still a decision in favour of the partner who does not want change.

Sometimes something is changing whether we like it or not. And we have to choose direction. And there may be no middle ground. It is in this situation in a stalemate and only in the context of two things.

[36:14] That my husband is loving me like Christ loves the church. He doesn't have to be perfect but he needs to be actively seeking to love me like that. And two, that the decision is in line with Christ's teachings.

And absolutely, there is no submission if it is not in line with Christ's teachings. Then in this precise context, I think there is a command to a wife to submit to a husband. I can think of very, very few scenarios where we have reached this point over the last 17, as he said, and a half years.

Of the three contexts, actually each of them was very personal and not really suitable for sharing. But each time, Michael carried the ramifications of the decision.

Twice, with hindsight, he was right and once he was not. Two to one, that's not bad. But I'm coming to the end of what I have to say really.

But I think Christ's love for us is enormous. And a marriage is somewhat of a poor reflection but it is a reflection of that.

[37:20] And we are called to do marriage well. But equally, we are just called to love well. Love well. And just earlier in this passage, there's a bit, and I love it in the message.

So it says, love, whether in, sorry, this is my bit. Love, whether in marriage or not, is a gift from God. But it says about love, observe how Christ loves us.

His love was not cautious but extravagant. He didn't love in order to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us. Love like that.