

THE FIVE P's of MARRIAGE

- Douglas A. Wilson, MA, LPC

PLAN
PROMISE
PLACE
PARTNERSHIP
PROCESS

*Watch what GOD does, and then you do it – like children who learn from their parents.
Mostly what GOD does is love you. Keep company with Him and learn a life of love.
Observe how Christ loved 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.*

Ephesians 5:1-2

The Marriage Relationship is perhaps the most unique that there is amongst human beings, and it is special in a variety of ways:

FIRST: *We must acknowledge that Marriage is a part of GOD's PLAN.*

In the Book of Genesis, the Second chapter, after He created Adam,

*"GOD said, "It's not good for the Man to be alone;
I'll make him a helper, a companion." (Genesis 2:18)*

A few verses later after GOD created Eve from the rib of Adam, Scripture states:

*Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and
embraces his wife. They become one flesh. (Genesis 2:24)*

In marriage, a man and woman leave their families of origin, and cleave to one another; establishing new loyalties and giving preference to each other.

SECOND: *Marriage is a PROMISE that a husband and wife make to one another.*

*But each one of you must love his wife as he loves himself.
And a wife must respect her husband.*

Ephesians 5:33

Tim Challies states: *"Every marriage is meant to display the truth about the covenant-keeping love of God for His people. In this portrait, the husband is a display of Jesus Christ who woos his bride, leads her, cares for her, and is intimately united to her;
the wife is a display of the church who is drawn by Christ, who joyfully follows him, joins in his life and work, and is intimately united to him.
Marriage gives us a vivid picture of the kind of promise-keeping love God has*

for His people and the kind of promise-keeping love His people have for Him.

challies.com - Informing the Reforming. 9/8/2017, What's the Purpose of ... Marriage?

THIRD: *Marriage is a PLACE to learn and practice love.*

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 in her, dressing her in dazzling white silk, radiant with holiness.

And that is how husbands ought to love their wives.

They're really doing themselves a favor – since they're already "one" in marriage.

Ephesians 5:25-28

The marriage relationship provides an environment to learn love for the purpose of giving to each other, not for getting one's own way or having what one wants.

In marriage, a husband and wife have daily opportunity to take turns serving and sacrificing for one another – to put the other person first.

Love can best be thought of as a two-sided coin: side one is protecting each other from pain; side two is caring for one another's needs – this includes physical protecting and caring, but even more importantly, emotional protecting and caring.

FOURTH: *Marriage is a PARTNERSHIP – not a 50–50 partnership, but 100-100.*

Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ.

The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to His church, not by domineering but by cherishing.

So just as the church submits to Christ as He exercises such leadership, wives should likewise submit to their husbands.

Ephesians 5:22-24

David Wilkerson says this:

"Marriage is not made up of two halves trying to become a whole. Rather, a marriage consists of two whole people who are bridged by the Spirit of GOD. Marriage never works unless each party maintains his and her own identify, settles his and her own values, finds his and her sense of fulfillment, and discovers his and her own source of happiness...through the LORD."

- David Wilkerson, Have You Felt Like Giving Up Lately? (Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell 1980), 35

The beauty of marriage is that GOD has designed it in such a way that one lives with, and learns to love another, who is like them, but not the same as them.

GOD is neither male nor female, but both men and women have been created in His image;

this means both husband and wife have many of GOD's attributes, just not the same ones. Being different from each other is a great asset, and as a couple learns how to love each other more fully, they also have the opportunity to learn more about GOD and His loyal love for them.

FIFTH: Marriage is a *PROCESS*.

Romans 12:9-12 says:

*Love from the center of who you are; don't fake it.
Run for dear life from evil; hold on for dear life to good.
Be good friends who love deeply; practice playing second fiddle.
Don't burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame.
Be alert servants of the Master (JESUS), cheerfully expectant.
Don't quit in hard times; pray all the harder.*

Here's a picture of what this should look like.

Dave Willis said:

*A Husband and Wife must function like two wings on the same bird.
They must work together or the marriage will never get off the ground.*

A marriage consists of many stages and seasons, all designed to mature a husband and wife into being the right person for one another. Every stage and season provides new opportunities to learn, change, and grow – to further develop in becoming the best they can be and living out GOD's best for their lives. They each possess different abilities, talents, and gifts. Both have a unique personality and temperament. So together, as a team, all the bases are covered. They must allow for differences, accept them, appreciate them, and celebrate them; and then use them to make their marriage stronger and their love more complete.

Gary Thomas wrote this in his book titled, *Sacred Marriage*:

*Marriage is not a matter of finding the right person,
but rather, marriage is a matter of being the right person.*

- Gary Thomas, *Sacred Marriage* (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI: 2000)