



August 24, 2025

United - Ephesians 5:22-33 - Marriage Intro

SUMMARY: Today's sermon introduced a new series on marriage, using Ephesians 5:22-32 as the foundational text. Drawing from personal experience and the metaphors of Song of Solomon, I compared marriage to a garden—something beautiful, fruitful, and refreshing, but only if it is diligently tended. The heart of the message focused on the biblical command for husbands to love their wives with “agape” love, a love that is unchanging, selfless, and not based on reciprocation. I challenged the common idea that love is simply a choice, arguing instead that true agape love is impossible to muster on our own strength; it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, not a product of human willpower. The only way to cultivate this kind of love in marriage is to be filled with the Spirit, allowing God to produce His love in and through us. The sermon closed with a call to prayer and reflection, inviting both married and unmarried listeners to seek Christ and pray for the Spirit's work in their relationships.

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 5:22-33; Song Of Solomon 7:2, 1:8, 5:1; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8; Galatians 5:16, 22

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Matt said that a beautiful marriage, like a garden, requires ongoing work and intentional care. What is one area in your marriage (or in a close relationship) that you have neglected? What is a practical step you could take this week to tend to it?
2. Agape love is described as unchanging and self-sacrificing, even when nothing is given in return. Can you think of a recent situation where you struggled to love someone in this way? What made it difficult?
3. Agape love is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, not something we can force. What are some ways you can invite the Holy Spirit to fill you and produce this kind of love in your relationships?
4. Trying to “decide to love” without God's help leads to frustration or even burnout. Have you ever experienced this in your marriage or another relationship? What did you learn from that experience?
5. Prayer was highlighted as the pathway to Spirit-filled relationships. If you are married, what is one specific prayer you can pray for your spouse this week? If you are single, who is someone you can pray for, asking God to work in their relationships?
6. The sermon mentioned that love without the Spirit is just imitation, not true transformation. Are there areas in your life where you are “faking it” instead of letting God change you from the inside out? What would it look like to surrender those areas to Jesus?
7. Husbands and wives were encouraged to pray for each other to reflect Christ and the church. How can you make prayer for your spouse (or for others' marriages) a regular part of your spiritual life?