

A Biblical Perspective of Marriage



Ice Breaker



 **Watch Jesus walk on water or heal a blind man?**

 **Be thrown in prison or swallowed by a whale?**

 **Spend an hour in Heaven or a week on Earth with Jesus?**

 **Endure a plague of frogs or locusts?**

 **Hear a sermon from Jesus or watch a miracle?**

 **Be able to calm the storm or walk on water?**



Be at the birth of Jesus or the resurrection?



Walk in the wilderness or fast for 40 days?



Be the last to board the ark or the last to cross the Red Sea?



Be thrown into the lions' den or into the fiery furnace?



Name the animals or build the ark?



Be strong like Sampson or wise like Solomon?

What is a "Biblical marriage?"



Types of Love

- **agape**

God's immeasurable, incomparable, divine love for humankind; perfect, unconditional, sacrificial, pure

- **phileo**

an intimate type of love that most Christians practice toward each other; a powerful, emotional bond in deep friendships

- **eros**

sensual or romantic love; reserved for marriage and within the boundary of marriage is to be celebrated and enjoyed

View marriage realistically.

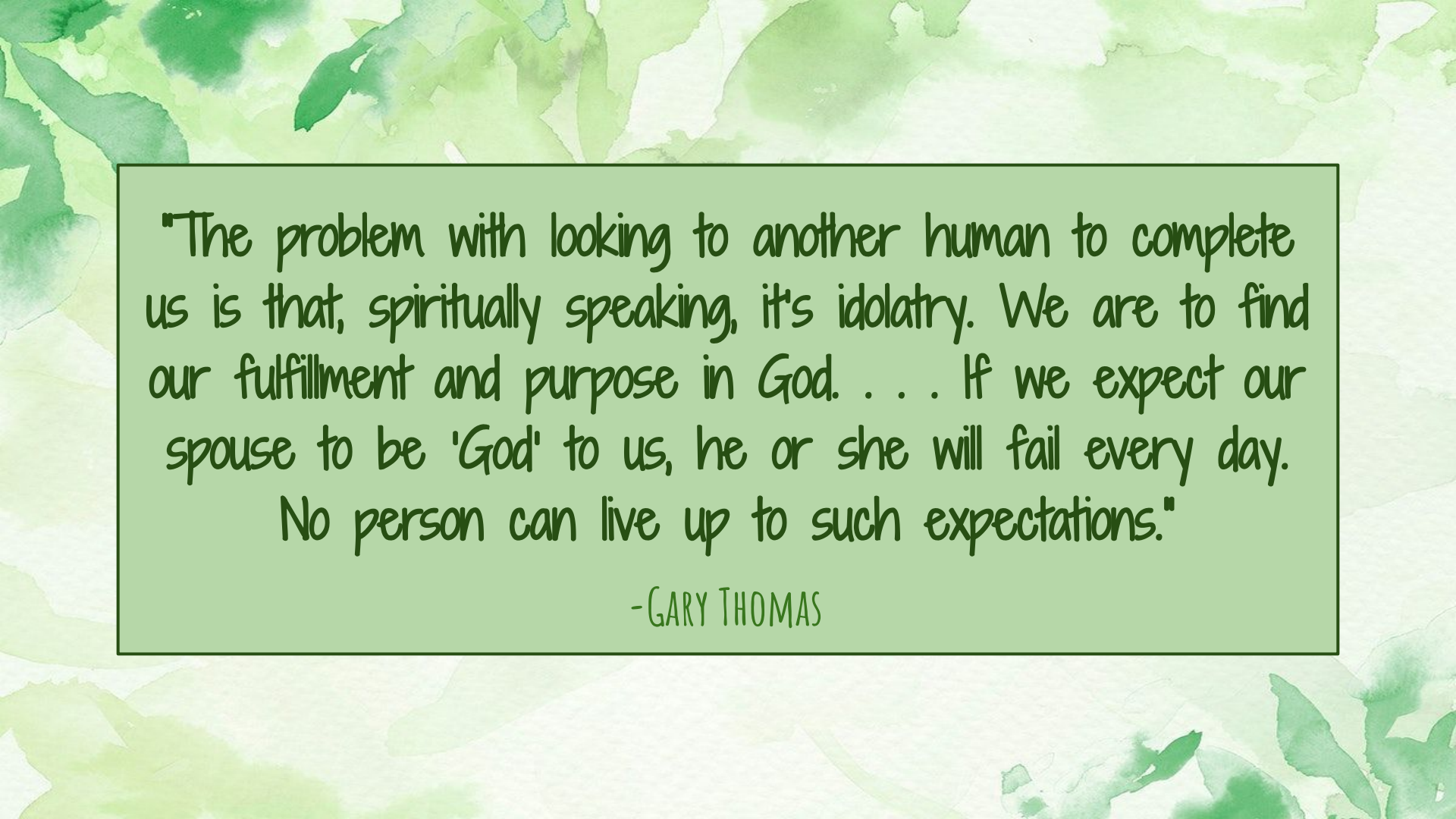
Marriage is **not**:

- Perfect happiness
- Conflict-free living
- Idolatrous obsession

Marriage **is**:

- Partnership
- Spiritual intimacy
- The ability to pursue God together





"The problem with looking to another human to complete us is that, spiritually speaking, it's idolatry. We are to find our fulfillment and purpose in God. . . . If we expect our spouse to be 'God' to us, he or she will fail every day. No person can live up to such expectations."

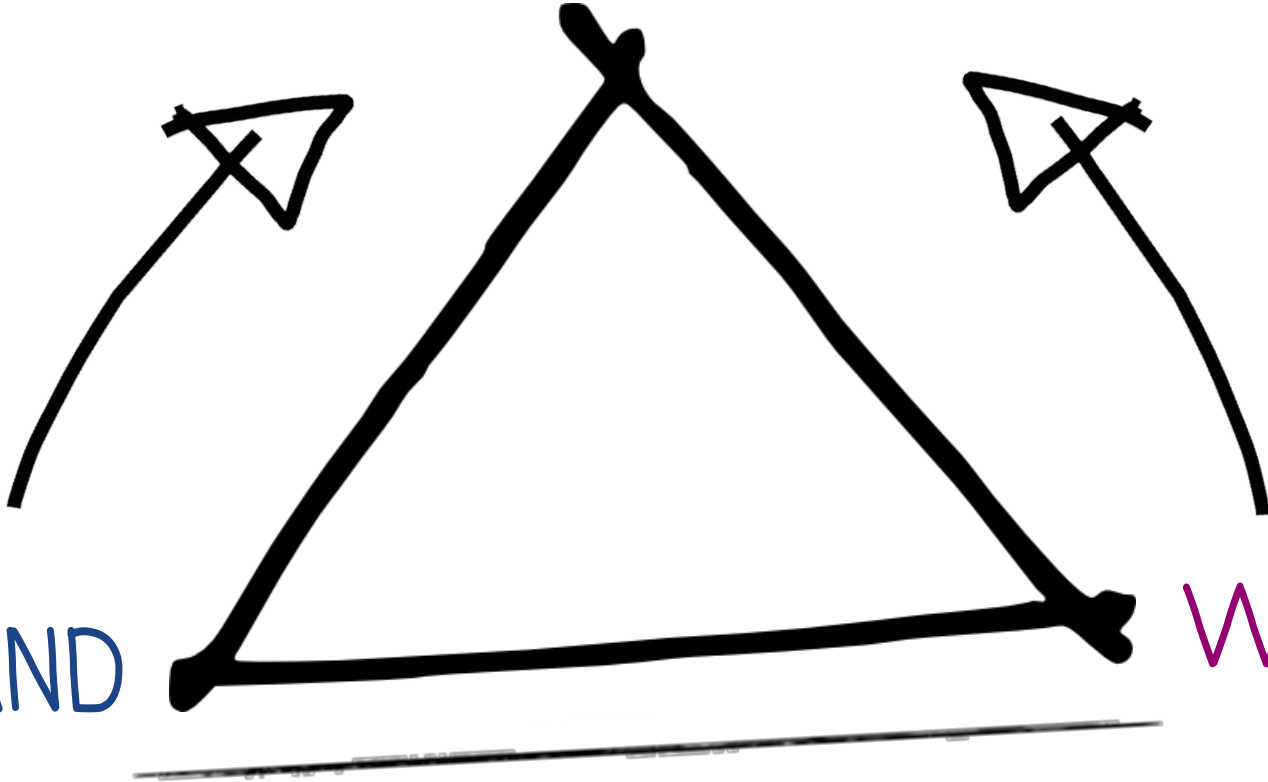
-GARY THOMAS

GOD



HUSBAND

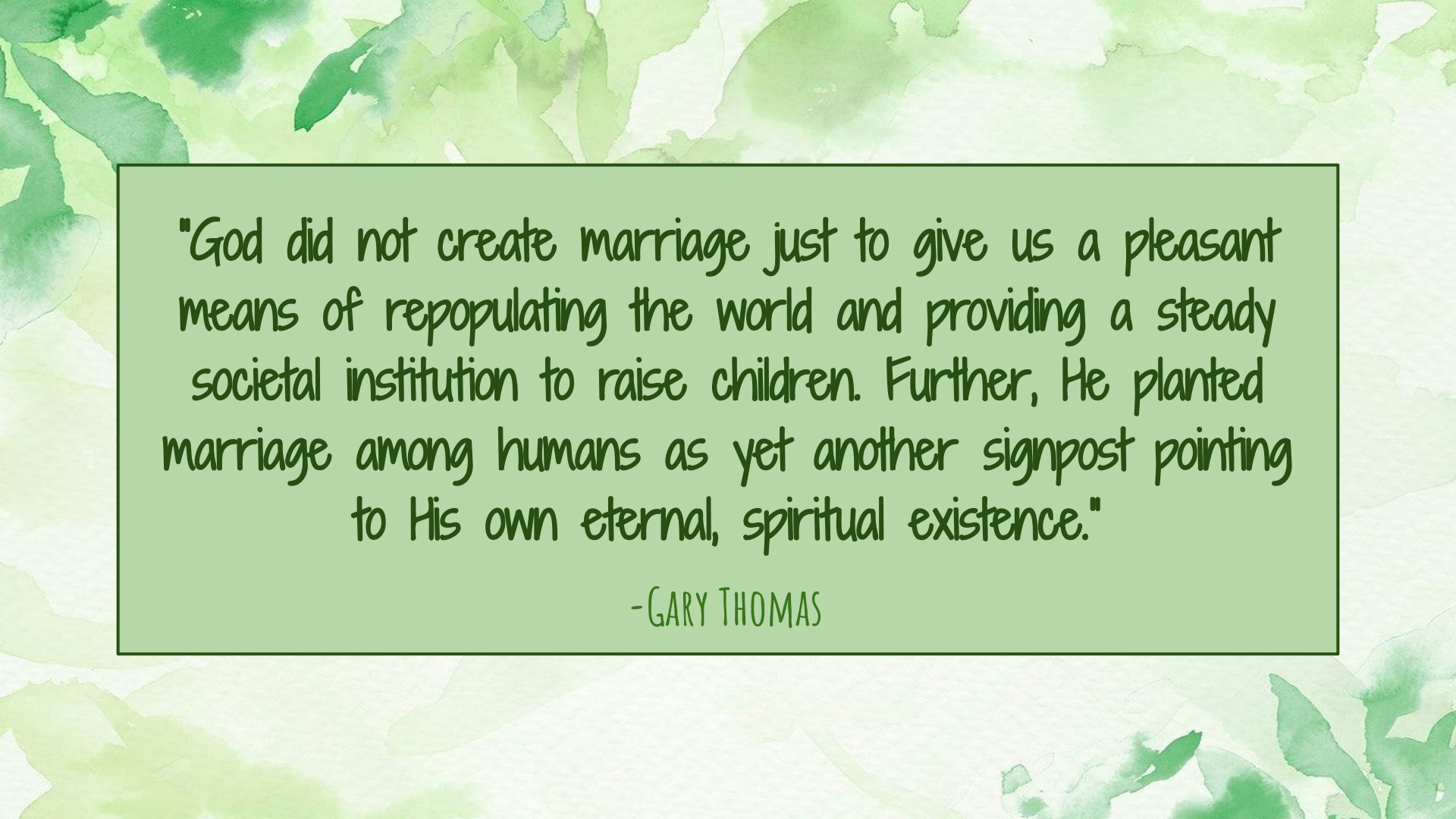
WIFE



Marriage is an other-centered union.

- God created marriage as a loyal partnership between one man and one woman.
- Marriage is the firmest foundation for building a family.
- God designed sexual expression to help married couples build intimacy.
- Marriage mirrors God's covenant relationship with His people.



The background of the image is a soft, watercolor-style illustration of green foliage. The leaves are in various shades of green, from light lime to deep forest green, and are scattered across the frame, creating a natural, organic feel. A central rectangular box with a thin black border contains the text.

"God did not create marriage just to give us a pleasant means of repopulating the world and providing a steady societal institution to raise children. Further, He planted marriage among humans as yet another signpost pointing to His own eternal, spiritual existence."

-GARY THOMAS

Marriage: Covenant, not contract

Contract

between 2 people

Covenant

between 3 people



Marriage: Covenant, not contract

Contract

Obligation

"I have to do this."

Covenant

Opportunity

"I want to do this."



Marriage: Covenant, not contract

Contract

Impersonal

“This involves something I have or do.”

Covenant

Personal

“This involves all that I am.”



Marriage: Covenant, not contract

Contract

Conditional

"If you do your part, I'll do mine."



Covenant

Unconditional

"I'll do my part whether you do yours or not."

Marriage: Covenant, not contract

Contract

Leverage

"I look out for my own best interest."



Covenant

Loyalty

"I look to God for our best interests."

"I look out for your best interests."

Marriage: Covenant, not contract

Contract

Suspicion

"I want assurance that you'll do your part."

Covenant

Trust

"I will certainly do my part."



Marriage: Covenant, not contract

Contract

Business

“What will it take to make this work?”



Covenant

Relational

“I’ll do whatever it takes to make this work!”

Marriage: Covenant, not contract

Contract

Compromise

"I'll meet you halfway."

Covenant

Sacrifice

"I'll give 100%."



Marriage: Covenant, not contract

Contract

Temporary

“Once all the stipulations have been met, the contract is over.”

“If any of the stipulations are broken, the contract is null and void.”



Covenant

Permanent

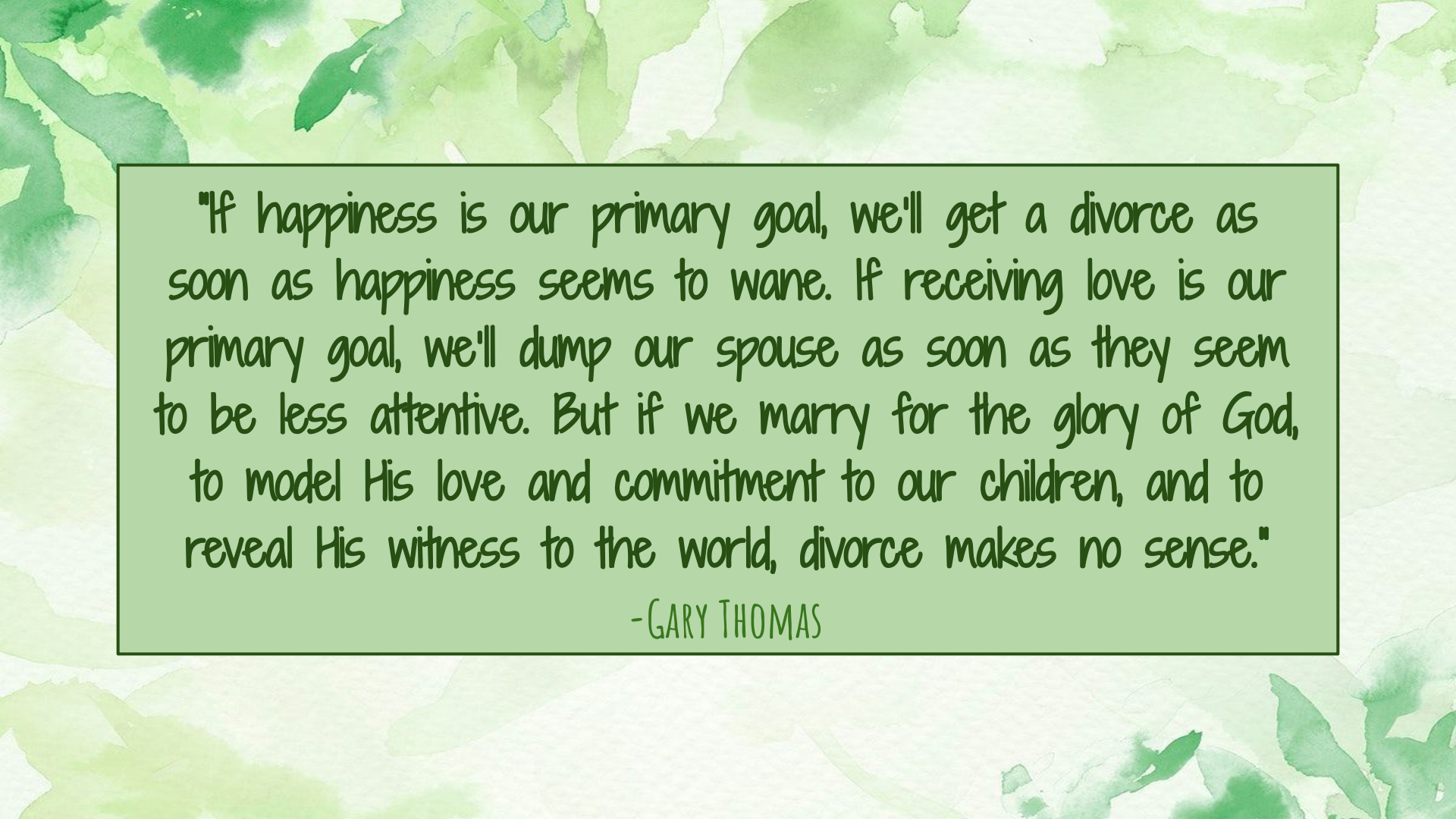
“I will continue to do/work at this as long as I have breath!”

“When you fall short, I will respond with the forgiveness and grace I would like when I fall short.”

Serve your spouse.

- Focus on your spouse's strengths rather than their weaknesses.
- Encourage rather than criticize.
- Pray for your spouse instead of gossiping about them.
- Learn and live what Christ teaches about relating to and loving others.





"If happiness is our primary goal, we'll get a divorce as soon as happiness seems to wane. If receiving love is our primary goal, we'll dump our spouse as soon as they seem to be less attentive. But if we marry for the glory of God, to model His love and commitment to our children, and to reveal His witness to the world, divorce makes no sense."

-GARY THOMAS

Marriages need God's grace and mercy.

- Don't pull back–fall forward.
- When in doubt, pray–“Lord, how can I love my spouse today like he/she has never been loved and never will be loved?”



Let's discuss...

1. Is there any way in which your relationship is more “contract” than “covenant?”
2. What is one way that your relationship reflects a Christ-like relationship to others?



Leaving and Cleaving



leaving and cleaving

(v.) leaving your old family unit to form and attach to your new partner to form a new family unit



How do you leave and cleave?

- Physically
- Relationally
- Emotionally
- Financially
- Spiritually
- Geographically (if needed)



Physical Leaving and Cleaving

- If possible, start and maintain married life at your own physical address.
- Your own home is a tangible expression of leaving and cleaving.
- If you have to return home, view it as a temporary season.



Relational Leaving and Cleaving

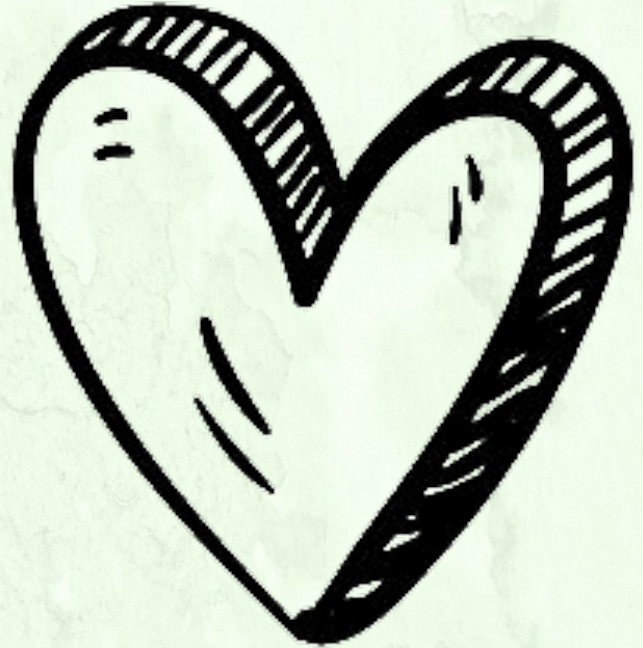
- Marriage requires new priorities.

God → Spouse → Everyone else

- This includes leaving previous romantic relationships/ friendships with the opposite sex that do not include your spouse, in-person or virtually.

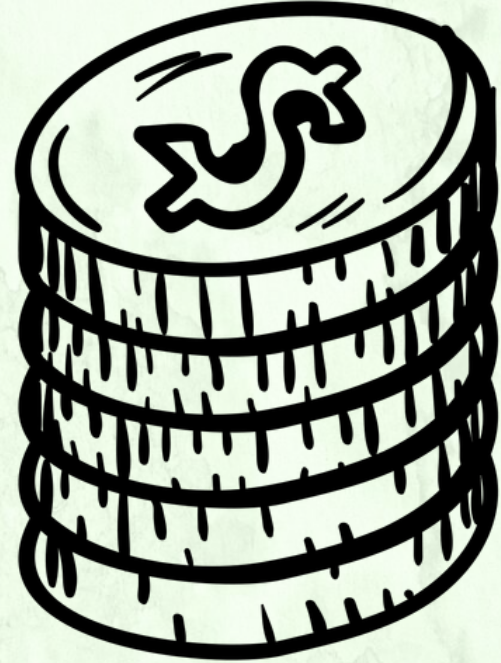
Emotional Leaving and Cleaving

- News sharing and decision making should be done with your spouse **first**!
- Do not allow the opinions of others trump those of your spouse!



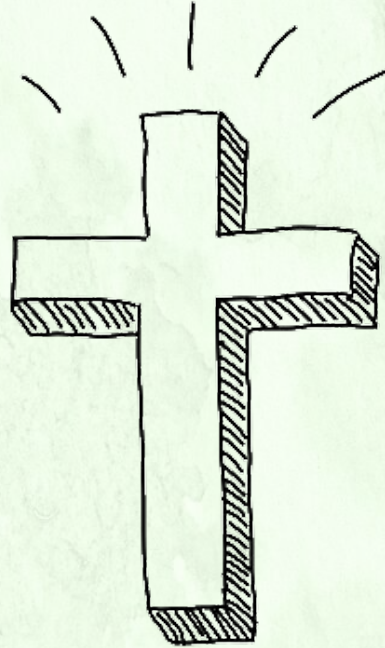
Financial Leaving and Cleaving

- Blaze your own financial trail!
- Live within your means.
- Work hard, give graciously, save diligently, and then spend happily!



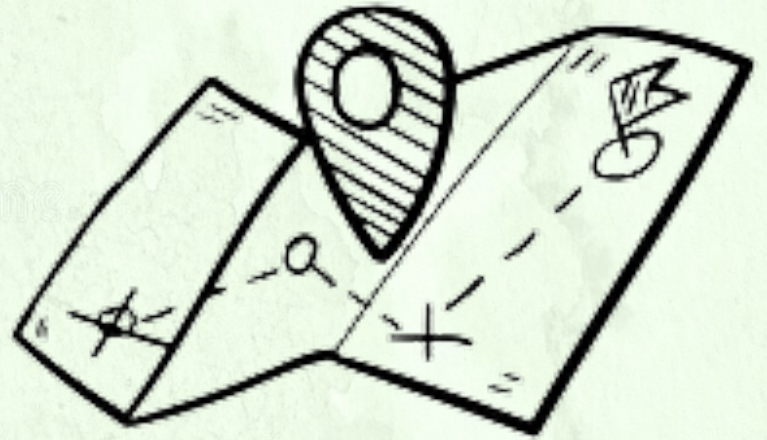
Spiritual Leaving and Cleaving

- A personal faith in Jesus saves you, not a childhood of going to church and being raised in a Christian home.
- Set your spiritual expectations for yourself individually, as a couple, and for your future family.



Geographical Leaving and Cleaving

- If needed, move yourself away to grow closer together as a couple and to Jesus.



Let's discuss...

1. What do you predict will be your biggest challenge when leaving and cleaving?
2. Can you remember when your faith became independent of your parents?
3. What are some spiritual expectations you already have as a couple?
4. What spiritual expectations would you like to set moving forward as a couple?

Sources

- “God’s Design for Marriage”
 - <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/marriage/gods-design-for-marriage/>