

# We Will Put Each Other First

Message 3 of 4 in the series: "Tighten the Knot"

## A. God uses marriage relationships to make us look a little more like Jesus every day.

"For those God foreknew he also predestined to be **conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters." Romans 8:29 (NIV)

"This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends." John 15:12-13 (NLT)

"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:45 (NLT)

*Note:* Sacrificial love is essential to being like Jesus.

## B. To put each other first, we need to understand oneness as opposed to "two-ness."

"As the Scriptures say, 'A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and **the two are united into one.**' This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one." Ephesians 5:31-32 (NLT)

1. You are one with your spouse...you are actually caring for yourself.

"In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church." Ephesians 5:28-29 (NLT)

2. There is a mysterious oneness with Christ...you are really caring for Christ.

"Anyone who receives you receives me..." Matthew 10:40a (NLT)

"And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it for the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me.'" Matthew 25:40 (NLT)

**Life Application:** You must align your mindset with God's truth about oneness. Realize that when you put the other person first, you really are putting Christ and yourself first.

## C. To put each other first, we need to have the right attitude about submitting to each other.

"And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." Ephesians 5:21

*Note:* Submission frees us from the "terrible burden of always needing to get our own way." It is not based upon a series of authoritative relationships, but an inner attitude of mutual subordination.

1. There is no submission without humility.

"Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though He was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, He gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave...He humbled Himself in obedience to God..." Philippians 2:3-8a (NLT)

2. There is no submission without honor.

"Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other." Romans 12:10 (NLT)

**Life Application:** Reject the world's philosophy of expose and exploit and accept God's way of honor and serve.

"Jesus called them together and said, 'You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else.'" Mark 10:42-44 (NLT)

**D. To put each other first, we need to willingly serve each other.**

“For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.” Galatians 5:13 (NLT)

**Life Application:** If you don’t know what to do, you can always apply the “Golden Rule.”

“Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.” Matthew 7:12 (NLT)

Shane Segars • 02-19-2023 • [shane@centeringlives.com](mailto:shane@centeringlives.com)

**Connect Group Questions:**

1. Read Ephesians 5:31-32. If God wants husbands and wives to be united into one, why do you think He made men and women so different from each other?
2. Some husbands and wives view their differences as the spice of life while others allow their differences to drive them crazy. If you’re married, which camp are you in?
3. What’s the difference between Jesus’ understanding of leadership and that of our dog-eat-dog culture? (Mark 10:35-45, Philippians 2:3-8)
4. What does servant leadership look like in marriage? (Ephesians 5:28-29, Romans 12:10, Matthew 25:40)
5. What’s the difference between oneness and “two-ness”?
6. How does God help us with our marriage vows? How does He use our marriage vows to make us a little more like Jesus every day?
7. Sign up for our marriage conference February 24-25. [www.centeringlives.com/events](http://www.centeringlives.com/events)