



Christ's Beloved Bride

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. —Ephesians 5:25-33

Christ has made the Church His treasured possession—His beloved wife. We are His beautiful Bride. No human groom has a more ardent love than God's love for us, His people. And it's His love that moves Him to perfect us. All God does and everything He allows He uses to perfect the beauty of His Bride.

And His Bride adorns herself for Him. For the Christian, obedience is an act of love—the desire to please. We search the Scriptures and pursue holiness, because we want what He wants and desire what He desires. Obedience tells God and the world that we buy in to Christ's idea of beauty.

And Christ expresses His idea of beauty through Christian marriage. Obedience to Christ's design for marriage perfects His work in us and displays His glory to the world. When a man and a woman imitate Christ in their marriage, they receive the blessings of God in their home and reveal His glory to the world.

Christian marriage is a high calling, and Christ alone can enable us to fulfill it. His glory is our good and our good reveals His glory to the world, as we live out in our marriages His loving plan of redemption.

The way Jesus loves us is the way husbands are to love their wives and exalt Christ in the home.

A Husband's Love for His Wife

Sacrificial: *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,*

- A husband is to invest all his ambitions, hopes, dreams, and aspirations for the good of his wife and his relationships with her.

Purposeful: *that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,*

- A husband's primary purpose is to help his wife grow in faith, holiness, and purity through God's Word.

Pleasing to Him: *so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.*

- Investing in our marriages brings life's greatest blessings. Redemption is the love story of God pursuing and winning us to Himself, and He replays it in every Christian marriage.

Our Example: *In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies.*

- As Christ made the Church one with Him, so husbands and wives are one. As Christ is the Head of the His Body the Church, so the husband is head of his home. Christ's perfect, sacrificial love for us is the model for how a husband should love his wife.

Our Blessing: *He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.*

- Marriage is an act of faith. We commit ourselves to each other, trusting to receive the same commitment in return. We sacrifice for each other, hoping to receive sacrificial love in return. The marriage and family that grow as a result nourish our souls and bless our lives.

Weaves Itself into Our Closest Relationships: *“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.*

- Leaving home to create a new home is a step of faith, an act of obedience, and a way we participate in God’s unfolding creation and plan of redemption.

Calls Us to Imitate Christ and His Love: *However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.*

- Christ’s love is mirrored in human relationships. Pray that our marriages will reflect Christ in our homes and exalt Him in our church.

Our Plan Moving Forward

Pray as we move into the second phase of our plan moving forward as a church. Ask God to help us ...
Rediscover

- Who we are as a body: Our uniqueness. Our call for our community.
- Who God would have us to be: Qualities we can build on. Things we need to change.
- The drives, passions, and priorities God is calling us to

Rebuild (Phase 3)

- Own, embrace, and communicate who we are as a local church
- Define, refine, and extend our vision for serving Christ
- Follow God’s call on us as a congregation, as our passions become our priorities and determine our direction.

Prayer for Northpoint

Ask God to protect, strengthen, and guide our leaders at Northpoint.

- 1. Our Pastors and Directors:** Scott Williams, Tony Chute, Terilyn Brown, Geoff Grant, Taylor Mendoza, and Marti Wiegman.
- 2. Our Lay Elders:** Tim East, Steve Flood, Mark Kiker, Mike Russell, and Vinoj Zechariah.
- 3. Our Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Andria Brucks, Jacob Williams, Carolee Jefferson, Amber McEwen, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, and Teri Vaughn
- 4. Northpoint as a Body of Believers:** Many at Northpoint are struggling in their marriages. Ask God to convict individuals of their sins, encourage their faith, enable their obedience, and teach them to love each other as Christ loves His Church.

Prayer Record

Note when and how God answers your prayers. It will help you to see that He really is paying attention.

Date	Request	Date	Answer

Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.
-1st Peter 4:7