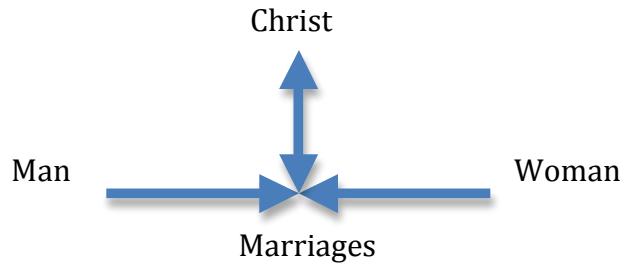


*Ephesians 5:31-32  
Where Marriages Meet  
For this reason a man shall leave his  
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### Ephesians 5:31-32 Where Marriages Meet

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32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

#### Video

#### Introduction to the Classes

Married to Christ? **2 Corinthians 11:2:** For I am jealous for you with Godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ.

Betrothed yet legally married like Joseph and Mary before Christ's incarnation (Matt. 1:18).

When will our Marriage to Christ be complete and celebrated? Revelation 19:9, At the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, in Heaven!

In the Mean time.....

#### What Are the top Issues in our Marriages and the flow of our five weeks

- 1-*Forgiveness and Living a Sanctified Life*
- 2-*The Love of a Bondservant*
- 3-*Communications and Intimacy that is Fulfilling*
- 4-*Growing in Faith and Trust*
- 5-*Submissions to Authorities in Our Two Marriages*

-Our teachings will be focused first on our Marriage to Christ and secondly as that teaching applies to our Marriage to our spouse.

-Stats on Marriages. I'm using Timothy Keller's Statistics from his great book *The Meaning of Marriage*

#### Myths, and Sobering Realities of Marriages in America

Myth: Our culture says, "*live together, try each other out in the same house and see if it works out for you, then get married if you want to.*"

Results: Those who lived together in a test drive mode and then marry have a higher divorce rate than those who start out married. 85% Divorce who first test drive, then marry.

Myth: Unhappy marriages always end in divorce.

Results: The truth is if couples do not divorce when they are unhappy they will be happy in marriage, if not extremely happy within several years.

Sobering fact: Divorce among Christians is parallel in numbers to divorce among non Christians.

Why is that?

Like the world the greatest *slow killing* poisons in a marriage whether in our marriage to Christ or to our spouse are:

**#1-Self Centeredness**, whether towards Christ or our spouse

**#2-Not serving** our marriage partner, whether Christ or our spouse

### #3-Doing Marriage like the World:

**Christians** often forgive **as** the world forgives

**Christians** often live an unsanctified lifestyle and destroy their marriages **as** the world does

**Christians** often define love **as** the world does: primarily as a feeling and for self fulfillment

**Christians** often view communications and fulfilling intimacy **as** the world does: as a means to personal satisfaction

**Christians** often have a little trust in Christ or their *other* spouse, just **as** the world does

**Christians** often rebel against authorities and submit to authorities only when in agreement with them, just **as** the world does.

We are here tonight in Jesus Christ's name and power to begin to change those mindsets and their results or help to prevent them now or in the future.

### **Your Notes on the Introduction:**

### **Week One Forgiveness and Sanctified a Life**

Speaker regarding our Marriage to Christ is John Winder

Guest Speakers on our Marriage to our spouse are Chris and Nicole Kroger

Our Marriages (Marriages: speaking of Marriage to Christ & our Marriage to our Spouse) start with:

### **Forgiveness and Living a Sanctified Life**

Key verses: **I. In regards to Forgiveness: Ephesians 4:32**

**II. In regards to a living a Sanctified Life: Ephesians 4:17-24**

#### **I. In regards to Forgiveness:**

**Do we forgive as God in Christ forgives?**

**Ephesians 4:32:** And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, **even as** God in Christ forgave you.

*What does God giving and our receiving & understanding Divine forgiveness look like in our marriage with Christ?*

We truly understand forgiveness from God to us when we forgive....

...each other **as** God in Christ has forgiven us. Ephesians 4:32 (*but do we?*)

#### **Paul expands on the Ephesian 4:32 passage in.....**

**Colossians 3:12-14:** 12 Therefore, as *the elect of God, holy and beloved*, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering (*we have to put on what is not naturally there!*); 13 bearing (*lift them up in the mean time while bearing with them*) with one another (*someone just like you from God's perspective!*), and forgiving one another, if anyone has a *cause for complaint* against another; **even as** Christ forgave you, so you also **must do**. 14 But above all these things **put on love**, which is the bond of perfection (*to affirm this truth see 1 Peter 4:8*).

**The 'putting on of love' spoken of in Colossians 3:14 is demonstrated here in the area of forgiveness in....**

**2 Corinthians 2:7:** so that, on the contrary (*opposite of how you feel and what the majority did*), you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, (from the same root word for the Holy Spirit as the paraclete, or Helper) lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. 8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him (*by comforting him following forgiveness*).

Note: Forgiveness is always followed by Acts of Love. In this way we are forgiving even as God in Christ has forgiven us!

Key sobering verses to be sure we understand that our great forgiveness from God **must** be followed by our forgiving others:

**Matthew 6:14-15:** 14 (*Jesus is speaking*) "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

*Note: He is still your Father but you are in sin and out of fellowship with your Father if you do not forgive!*

**On what foundational truths are we to forgive as God in Christ has forgiven us?**

**.....The Seven Pillars of God's Grace** (Or Grace as it is given by God *because* of the total satisfaction of the cross for all sins, and thus defining for us why & how we are to forgive even as God in Christ has forgiven us):

First of all Grace is: **Grace means: Pure kindness and favor that cannot be earned but only received by faith. If ever Grace is perceived to have been earned or merited even in the slightest degree it then ceases to be Grace.**

1<sup>st</sup> -God does not withhold Grace in the presence of human failure. (*Do we?*)

*Grace ceases to be Grace if it is withheld in the presence of human failure.*

*Grace withheld in the presence of human failure is not forgiving as God does in Christ*

2<sup>nd</sup> -Grace cannot be lessened because human failures are measured as being greater in degree of sinfulness.

*Because of the cross, God is totally free to act in independence of human sin, or even degrees of human sins*

*Grace is not Grace that is withheld or reluctant to be given when we measure one sin as greater or more heinous than another.*

*Grace withheld due to measuring one sin as lesser or greater is not forgiving as God does in Christ.*

*Note #1: Because earthly consequences and loss of trust differs with different sins, does not mean that the Grace is lesser or greater. The same amount of grace is required for all sins.*

*Note #2: Forgiveness as God forgives does not mean that there are no consequences on earth for our sins, nor does forgiveness mean there is a restoration of trust. Forgiveness opens the door to begin the process of restoring trust and faithfulness, which takes time and testing to establish.*

3<sup>rd</sup> -Grace cannot incur a debt when given out. (Rightfully a benefit cannot be called a gift if it requires additional payment by the receiver before being given.)

*By casting my sins behind His back (Is. 38:17) the Lord pictures what has happened to forgiven sin.*

*We on the other hand often add additional requirements to forgiveness. Ever stop talking to a forgiven person for a day or a week after they have repented and confessed to you, adding to their punishment?*

*Grace that adds a debt to the recipient is not Grace and is not forgiving as God does in Christ*

4<sup>th</sup> -Grace is not grace where humans find any merit in the sinner; and there is absolutely no human merit that God would see and recognize. God recognizes only good works that follow the gifts of Grace received by faith.

*Ever been happier about forgiving someone you like (has merit) versus someone you did not quite care for as much (has demerit)?*

*Grace that adds merit or demerit is not Grace and is not forgiving as God does.*

5<sup>th</sup> -Grace is never an over payment of a debt and never falls short of paying a debt. Grace is neither treating a person as he or she deserves to be treated, nor treating a person better or less than he or she deserves.

*Each and every sin of all humans whoever lived require only the cross of Jesus to appease or satisfy God's righteous demands. Nothing more and nothing less will do or be required.*

*Any other grounds for forgiveness is not forgiving as God does.*

6<sup>th</sup> - Grace is not increased, lessened or withdrawn in the presence of the sins of the unsaved in their current state. GOD does not deal with any sin in mercy, or leniency. The cross of Christ has fully appeased God and now all that is required of the unsaved is to believe and thus receive His Grace.

*The sinner is never forgiven because GOD is big-hearted enough to remit the penalty, or to waive His righteous judgments. Any presentation of divine forgiveness which represents GOD as directly exercising clemency toward a sinner is a fatal detraction from the meaning of the Cross of CHRIST, and is a disastrous misrepresentation of the truth contained in the Gospel of His saving grace.*

*The cross of Jesus Christ is the only grounds for forgiveness whether it is God forgiving or His children forgiving as He does.*

*Any other grounds or lack thereof for forgiveness is not forgiving as God does.*

7<sup>th</sup> -Grace is not increased, lessened, or withdrawn in the presence of the sins of the saved with regards to their current state. By THE CROSS of Christ all sin, whether it be that of saint or sinner, has been righteously judged, and the ransom price, which satisfies every demand of infinite holiness, has been paid.

*Faith in God's Word which says Confession (which includes repentance in 1John 1:9) is all that is required for the saved to receive forgiveness and restore fellowship with the Father.*

*Failure to forgive the Saved in their current state upon their confession is not forgiving as God does.*

These pillars of Grace give God a righteous predisposition, a *bent* to forgive. Do we have this predisposition, this bent to forgive?

**The facts of Grace and thus forgiving as God in Christ forgives are foundational in our Marriage to Christ and must per Ephesians 4:32 be foundational in our Marriage to our Spouse.**

Do we understand the Seven Pillars of Grace and how God in Christ forgives us in our Marriage to Him;

and thus our key to forgiving **as God in Christ forgave you and continually forgives you!**

## Notes on Section I: In regards to Forgiveness:

### II. In regards to living a Sanctified Life: Ephesians 4:17-24

**Are we living an overall Sanctified life; a life set apart in our Marriage to Christ and our Marriage to our spouse, free from any bondage of the flesh?**

**Ephesians 4:17-24:** 17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility (*no righteous purpose and failure to reach any purpose*) of their mind, (*why is this so?....*) 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 **But** you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is (*or resides*) in Jesus: (*what truth?....*) 22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be continually renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on (*not reform the old, but put on the newly created man*) the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

### The Keys to Living a Sanctified Life

1-Whichever inner person you feed will dominate you. Feed the old man, the flesh, the old nature (all are synonyms) it will dominate you. Stop feeding the old man and constantly feed the new man in Christ and your new nature will dominate.

2-Remove those things, people, places, audio and or visuals that would tempt you to feed the old man. Remove what stumbles you, cut it off!

3-Keep yourself in the Love of God (*Jude 21*). Keep yourself in places, with people and audio and or visuals that will build up the new man and not feed the old man. Meet with sinners you want to share with on ground of your choosing.

4-Account that thru Christ you have the only power that you can use to fight and be victorious over your old nature (*Romans 7:24-25*). Christ is the only person and power strong enough to give you victory over your flesh.

### Your notes on Forgiveness and living a Sanctified a Life in Marriage to Christ

**Chris and Nicole Kroger will address the application of 'Forgiveness and living a Sanctified in our Marriage to Christ' to Forgiveness and Living a Sanctified life in Marriage to our spouse.**

**Your Notes on Chris and Nicole's Presentation**