

Pursuing Oneness:

Practical Steps Toward Health and Strength in Marriage

Redeeming Grace Church
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Introduction: The Ground We Stand On – Oneness

*“So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, ‘This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become **one flesh**.” Genesis 2:21-24*

*“Did he not make them **one**, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth.” Malachi 2:15a,c*

*“But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become **one flesh**.’ So they are no longer two but **one flesh**. What therefore God **has joined together**, let not man separate.”” Mark 10:6-9*

The Image –

The Reality –

The Implication –

“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

The Application –

Step #1 – A Commitment to Bearing the Cost of One Another’s Sanctification

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” Ephesians 4:32

Step #2 – A Commitment to Especially Care for Your Spouse in His/Her Weakness (rather than point out or exploit his/her weakness)

“Love is patient and kind...It does not insist on its own way...Love bears all things...”
I Corinthians 13:4a,5b,7a

“Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.” Luke 6:36

“...it is his glory to overlook an offense.” Proverbs 19:11b

- The reality of inherent limitations – sin and weaknesses
- How did I respond when things aren't going the way I expected?
- Weakness can be significant, and change can be slow, but without mercy for weakness it can become a place of resentment.

Step #3 – A Commitment to Regularly Choose to Perform a “Substantive and Weighty Act of Self-denial”

“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”
Philippians 2:4

e.g. The “Weighty Act” of giving forgiveness

- Offenses that linger have a poisoning effect and over time develop into a root of bitterness.

Step #4 – A Commitment to Purposefully Engage in a Consistent Pursuit of Wise and Grace-Filled Speech and Action

“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.” Ephesians 4:29

- A pattern of humble acknowledgement and confession
- A pattern of gratitude, encouragement, and honor
- Three enemies to be detected and vigorously opposed

“We learn how to do things by doing the things we are learning to do.” Aristotle