

# **SELF- CENTRED SPOUSES**

**E-BOOK BY  
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**OWNED BY JESUS TO MY  
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## SELF-CENTERED SPOUSES

We are blessed to present this Matrimonial article to you, and we hope that what the Lord has put on our hearts to share, will add some value in your marriage.

Let's start by reading from Ephesians 5 verse 21 to 30: *Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.*

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*

*In this same way, husband's ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body.*

Of course, this is one of THE most known scriptures when it comes to marriage. Listeners, I know that you hear this a lot, but the reality is that we can take so much from it, to not only use, but also improve our relationships. We, as a couple who have been married for 9 years, applied this in our marriage from the start, and honestly, we do have a near perfect relationship.

We want to go back to Ephesians 5, but only to focus on verse 21. *Submit to ONE ANOTHER out of reverence for Christ.* First of all, we need **SUBMIT**, secondly it says **TO ONE ANOTHER**. So, what does it mean to submit? The Merriam Webster dictionary says to submit means to yield to another person.

The Cambridge Dictionary says it means to give something up to someone. The word submit also has to do with authority. Now the second part of this verse says **TO ONE ANOTHER**. It does not say only the husband or only the wife, it says both parties need to submit to **one another**.

Now we would like to explain another form of SUBMIT, which is what we want to focus on today. Part of submit is not to be self-centred in your marriage. This means to focus on your partner and not yourself. This is a **huge** part of submitting to one another. You see, if I am self-centred, it also means that I do not submit to my partner as everything revolves around me and what I want and my happiness. A self-centred marriage is dangerous, and it destroys a marriage.

Let us use a few examples. When we argue, all I think about is me, how I did nothing wrong, how I was only trying to do good. How I meant well. How is that submitting if all I think about is how I feel and only thinking about what is best for me. Let's think about decision making.

I might make a decision which I feel is the right decision and then my partner is not happy with it. But I so strongly believe in my opinion that I don't care what my partner thinks because in my mind, I am doing the right thing. How is that submitting to one another. It's not.

Let's take a step back quickly so that you can understand what we mean with the type of submit we are talking about. When we submit to someone, it means that we value the other party, it means that we respect their opinion. It also means that we yield to them, listen to what they say and take whatever they are saying serious, respecting their authority in the marriage. In simple words, when we submit, we do not allow ourselves to be self-centred.

We also just want to remind you that the submit we are talking about is just one way to look at what scripture tells us, a way we looked at it when WE got married, a way that works for us.

BUT, it's not just us. Let's read something we saw on CBE international, which was a sermon a pastor presented at the Buemord Community Church in the United States. He asked the question *what Paul meant when he said we should submit to one another.*

*This is what he said: It simply means to place yourself underneath another person—it is considering the needs of other people before you consider your own. It is when you say, "No, you go first," and are willing to take second place. Really, it isn't any different from what the rest of Scripture has already said.*

*Let us be clear, submission is not the same as obedience. Submissiveness is the same as selflessness. The opposite of submissiveness is selfishness. We all know selfishness is like poison to any relationship, especially in marriage. I think it is safe to say that most, perhaps all, marriage problems stem from selfishness of some kind. This is crucial to keep in mind.*

this is exactly what we mean by being self-centred. If our focus is on me, I, myself, and both partners are like this, your marriage is going to be like a wild roller coaster ride. You are going to struggle to communicate, you WILL find it hard to find solutions to your problems and your marriage will just continue around and around and around and around on that roller coaster until it derails.

A self-centred marriage will never be a good marriage. But if you turn your focus on your spouse and not yourself, if you submit to your spouse, you will slowly but surely see how your relationship improves, how solving problems becomes a breeze, how the good days increases and the bad one's declines.

Let us share with you how we do things. You see, our focus is always on each other, on making the other one happy, putting the other one first, making the other one feel important, and never let the other one feel that his/her opinions or decisions are not important. In fact, we always want the other one feel that he/she is honoured.

One mistake partners make in marriage is to say these words: Yes its true, BUT. There are no BUT. You see the moment you say BUT, everything before that has been wiped out. We truly respect each other and support each other in everything.

It is our goal is to ALWAYS make each other happy. If you make your wife happy, she would want to make you happy and then you will end up with 2 very happy spouses and happy spouses equals a healthy and strong marriage.

No marriage is perfect, but you it can be near perfect. Yes, we do sometimes have differences, but we never fight, we deal with things as it comes up and we approach it with love and without being self-centred.

In every situation, we submit to each other. To be honest, for the last 9 years we have had so many conversations about how it is possible for us to have such a strong bond, a marriage where we can be with each other 24/7 without fighting, work though our challenges laughing and after 9 years, still be in love. And every single time it all comes back to one thing: submission.

We have been doing marriage counselling for the last couple of years, and what every single one of them had in common was that both partners in those marriages were self-centred. When we do counselling, our focus is ALWAYS to get them to submit to one another and in every single case, where these couples applied it, there marriages were saved, and they now live happily ever after.

If you think about it, this concept is a Godly concept. Let us read a few Bible verses as an example: *Matt 6:33: **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.** Proverbs 8:17: **I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently will find me.** And the last one I want to share is James 4:7: **Come close to God and He will come close to you.***

Brothers and sisters and Christ, as you can see, the concept of submitting is a Godly principle. We need to seek God first. We need to first surrender to Him. We need to

submit to Him FIRST. Marriage works the same, you need to first submit to your partner and your partner need to first submit to you.

Put your partner first in everything and above yourself and your own needs, thoughts, and feelings. Now let's read Ephesians 5 verse 21 – 30 again: **Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.**

The concept of submitting starts with our relationship with God and spills over to our marriages. We need to apply this Godly principle within our marriages, just like **we** did right from the beginning, and after 9 years of marriage, we are still going strong. We always say: Happy wife, happy life, but this goes both ways. Happy partner makes both spouses smarter and the marriage stronger.

We want to end our presentation today with giving you 5 important keys for a happy and healthy marriage:

### **1. Communication**

If we do not communicate in our marriages, we will struggle to make it work. Communication is **THE** most important key to a successful marriage. In our marriage, we talk about our relationship ever single day, sometimes for hours. In a marriage, there should be no secrets. And please, do not be self-centred. Don't take over the show and talk all the time, give your spouse a chance. The key to good communication is to listen more and talk less. Apply this both ways and see how your marriage improves.

### **2. Time Together**

It is crucial that you spend a lot of time with your partner. Forget about girl's nights out or dinking with the buddies every week for hours. You cannot build a successful marriage if you spend so much time away from each other.

### **3. Shared Responsibility**

Never, but never think that a specific task in and around the house is the work of a specific partner. And please, don't wait until your partner asks you to do something. Do it when its needed and do it out of love for your partner. This will make the other person happy, and you know already what a happy spouse means in a marriage.

#### **4. Conflict**

Deal with conflict as it happens. We read in *Ephesians 4:26: Don't stay angry. Don't go to bed angry. Don't give the Devil that kind of foothold in your life.* When there's conflict in a marriage, it needs to be addressed immediately and with love, by submitting to one another. Do NOT BE SELF-CENTERED WHEN DEALING WITH CONFLICT! And even if you must sit up all night, do not go to sleep before it is sorted out and both partners are completely happy.

#### **5. Intimacy**

Intimacy in marriage is very very important. And no, to be intimate is not only about sex. Sex is important but spending quality time with each other is the ultimate. Love each other, spend lots of time cuddling, using love language, giving hugs and kisses. And yes, most men don't like this, but guess what, learn to love it, because marriage is about submission, its about what the other person wants. If you make her happy, she will make you happy and together you will have a much healthier marriage.

Listeners, what we presented today is a proven method to help you strengthen your marriage. We tried and tested it and after 9 years, we are as we were after 1 month. We tried this in marriage counselling on couples and it worked like a charm. And then, most of all, it is a biblical, a Godly concept, so why would it not work.

We challenge you today to give it a try. And please, don't give up after a week or two or even a month. Practice makes perfect. You must put in an effort to make it work. Marriage is work, and if both are willing to work, then your marriage will change from a roller-coaster ride to a sunset cruise on the ocean. But remember, if you stop working on your marriage, holes can still cause the boat to sink, so work hard, play hard and enjoy the ride.

**God bless you and your marriage.**

**Jaco & Miryna van As**