I. Understanding Marriage

a. Goals of marriage

i. Illustration

(Eph 5:22-32 NAS) 22 aWives, b be subject to your own husbands, c as to the Lord.
23 For a the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the b head of the church, He Himself c being the Savior of the body.
24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.
25 aHusbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and b gave Himself up for her;
26 a that He might sanctify her, having b cleansed her by the c washing of water with d the word,
27 that He might a present to Himself the church 1 in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be b holy and blameless.
28 So husbands ought also to a love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;
29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church,
30 because we are a members of His b body.
31 a For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.
32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.
ii. A place for growth

(Eph 5:22-32 NAS) 22 **Wives**, 23 **be subject** to your own husbands, 24 **as to the Lord.**

Eph 5:25  Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and 26 **gave Himself up for her;**

iii. Building up of church and society

b. Blessings of marriage

i. Fellowship, belonging and intimacy

ii. Support, encouragement and mutual serving (5:21)

iii. Children

c. Challenges of marriage

i. Self-loving spouse

ii. Personal failure

iii. Illness and financial difficulties

iv. No children or difficult children

v. Mistreatment from those outside your family
II. Training for Marriage

a. Align yourself with the will of God

b. Mature in unconditional love

c. Overcome personal weakness

d. Work to correct your circumstances if able

e. Accept the circumstances that you are not able to change