

CA 16 EMAW 16 FILLING THE GAPS

Music Theme in

FOSTER: She was a beautiful bride and he was a dashing groom. They gazed deeply into each other's eyes as the Pastor read the vows.

"Do you Jerimiah, take this woman Leah,

- to make sure your clothes are always cleaned, and your food is always ready when you get home.
- To never bother you when you are watching a game or when she has some little problem.
- To look beautiful and sexy all the time and never get sick
- To let you make all the decisions and never complain
- To heal you of all your hurts and pain
- to meet your every wish and whim
- and serve all of your needs?

If this is the true desire of your heart, please answer, 'I do' "

Welcome to Champions Arise. I'm Foster Braun and I'm with Kent Darcie. I'm pretty sure I've never heard wedding vows like that. And my guess is you haven't either....or have we? Today we are going to look at marriage from God's perspective and how we can fill the gap between God's ideal for marriage, and where marriages tend to be in our society today. We'll be right back.

Music Theme out

FOSTER: Kent, I don't know what I'd do if I heard wedding vows like those in a ceremony.

KENT: It's too bad we didn't have time to hear Leah's version. Can you imagine?

FOSTER: I shudder to think.

KENT: I'm sure you're not alone. But the truth is, those vows you read are probably closer to the real way we're thinking when we're standing at the altar, than the vows that come out of our mouths.

FOSTER: I agree. I'm not happy about agreeing, but I do. But why is this so true?

KENT: I think it's safe to say that most men and women want to fall in love and have a long lasting marriage. But, underneath the surface, there's things we want, that we don't tell anybody about. Like we secretly expect our spouse to meet all our needs and take away our pain.

The problem is, a few months after the wedding, the honeymoon glow wears off, and the hidden agenda of wanting our needs met comes to the surface. And suddenly you have two people who are demanding that their needs are met. And that was never the goal of marriage in God's plan.

FOSTER: That situation reminds me of an expression I heard one time. It said that two people who just want their own needs met are like “two ticks and no dog.”

KENT: that’s about it. But I think the world we’re in, particularly the media – TV and movies – are contributing to this. The biblical model of a man leading in his marriage and family has been thrown away. Today, husbands, and men in general, are shown in basically three ways in our media:

1. They are too stupid and inept to be leaders
2. All they care about is sex and using women as objects for their pleasure
- Or 3) they are simple, and passive and should be dominated by the strong independent woman.

In addition to that, many of the marriages today are second and third marriages. So there is a lot of confusion about what true marriage is supposed to look like.

FOSTER: I see that a lot with the young people.

KENT: They’re getting that confusion from us. I’ll give you an example.

Lonnie Berger, the author of “Every Man a Warrior”, received a phone call one day. His friend wanted Lonnie to speak to his wife. So his friend gives his wife the phone, and the first thing Lonnie hears is sobbing. The second thing he hears is “I want a divorce.”

FOSTER: You’re kidding!

KENT: No. So she eventually calms down, and says that she’s tired of being married to this man, “And he won’t change!” And she gives the phone back to Lonnie’s friend. So they decide to meet and when they do, all the husband does is complain about his wife. She was unrealistic. She was too demanding. Nothing he did was ever good enough and on and on. It was all her fault.

And this was a total shock to Lonnie, because this couple had spent the last 20 years involved in their church. They had a beautiful home. His job paid well. Yet their marriage was about to explode. So Lonnie decided to ask his friend a couple questions.

FOSTER: And before we get to those questions, if you joined us late, you’re listening to Champions Arise. I’m Foster Braun and I’m with Kent Darcie. We’re so glad you joined us today as we’re talking about filling the gap between Gods’ plan for marriage and where our marriage might be today.

Kent I’m listening to this story and thinking, how does a couple get to this point? I know couples, good Christian couples that you could easily be telling their story.

KENT: Unfortunately we all do, but here, things got interesting with a couple key questions. The couples name was Ted and Cindy and Lonnie asked Ted

“How are you doing at fulfilling your God-given responsibility to Cindy?”

And Ted’s response was “I don’t know,” “What do you mean?”

So they opened his Bible and read Ephesians 5:25 *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.”* And after Lonnie asked, “Ted, how are you giving up your life for Cindy?”

A strange look came over his face. And he muttered, “I don’t know. I’ve never seen this before!”

Then they turned to 1 Peter 3:7: *“You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”*

So Lonnie asked, ‘Ted, what do you do to honor your wife? Do you know what’s going on inside her right now?’ Ted was stunned and said. “I don’t know, I’ve never seen this before.”

Before we move on, my friend, if I asked you how you are doing at fulfilling your God-given responsibility to your wife, or what do you do to honor your wife, what would your answers be?

FOSTER: Hopefully, our answer wouldn’t be “I don’t know, but...”

KENT: the point is not to shame any man out there. Every godly man wants to do better in his marriage. The goal is to inform and encourage so we can move toward God’s design for our marriages. And that’s exactly what Lonnie did with Ted and Cindy. After a few months, Ted and Cindy were having their quiet times with God, memorizing scripture, and learning about God’s plan for their marriage.

Ted stepped into his role as the biblical head of the family and honored Cindy as a precious gift from God. He did special things for Cindy and prayed for her daily, something he had never done before.

Cindy overcame bitterness in her heart and grew in her love for the Lord and Ted. Together, over time, they reached a point in their marriage where they discovered the truth in the scripture, *“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”*

And as their marriage better reflected God’s design, they had more opportunities to share Christ and to minister to others.

FOSTER: That is such an encouraging story, Kent.

KENT: It is, but the thing I like about it, was Ted’s willingness to learn. A godly man is always learning.

FOSTER: And I want to touch on something else you mentioned. You said that Ted stepped into his role as the biblical head of the family and honored Cindy. The Bible says that the husband is the head of the family right?

KENT: Yes, Ephesians 5:23 and 1 Corinthians 11:3 both say that, but only under this one condition and both verses say the same thing. Listen to 1 Corinthians 11:3 *“But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ,”*

FOSTER: But you didn’t say the husband is the head of the wife.

KENT: That, comes next. **After** the head of the man is Christ. Here is the full verse.

“But there is one thing I want you to know: The head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”

So Christ submits totally to God. The husband submits totally to Christ and the wife submits to the husband.

So the question is, if we know that Jesus Christ totally submits to God, are we in total submission to Christ? And if we are, if we are loving our wives as Christ loves the church, wouldn't she follow us as the head?

Going back to Ted and Cindy, decide if this is a biblical example of being the head of the house.

When Ted was going through the training with Lonnie, one day he realized that growing up on a farm, he had watched his dad come in from the fields and his mom always had the meals ready for his dad when he came in. So Ted had developed the habit of coming home from work and demanding his food. Often when he came through the door his first words were, “Where's my food?” or “Hurry up, I'm hungry. Make me a sandwich.”

Does that sound like “loving our wife as Christ loves the church and gave Himself for her?”

FOSTER: No

KENT: No, and guys please hear me. Some of you are thinking “ouch” And that's a good thing. Actually it's a God thing. Because it had never occurred to Ted that, the way he just demanded his food, was dishonoring to his wife, or that she felt unloved, and put down.

And my friends, some of you are feeling the same way. You're thinking, “I didn't know.” And that's ok. That's why God had you listen to us today. Because He wants you to learn how to be the godly head of your household.

FOSTER: And that is our goal here at Champions Arise. God-loving men. God-loving husbands. God-loving fathers.

KENT: yes and another part of being that God loving husband you mentioned Foster, is appreciating God's design for our wives. And that goes all the way back to Adam.

In Genesis 2:18 we see, *“The Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’* This word “*helper,*” in the original language, is “a highly exalted term” and, in the context of marriage, means “*one who fills the gaps.*”

Men generally have gaps when it comes to kindness, compassion, sensitivity, gentleness and relationships in general. Genesis 2:18 basically says that we are incomplete, and our wives have been specifically designed by God to fill the gaps in our personality, and our character.

Too often we think our wives are trying to bug us and won't leave us alone. But because of the way God designed them, they see things in us that we miss. If we don't allow these qualities to develop in our lives, we can deeply hurt those closest to us—our wives, children, and others—and many of us do.

FOSTER: It always amazes me how God has designed things to work well, and yet we think we know better.

KENT: You know, the day a man sees his wife's differences, not as a threat to his manhood or a challenge to his leadership,

FOSTER: been there

KENT: me too, but the day we overcome that and see our wives as a gift from God and as a tool God uses to mold us into the godly man we want to be, that's when really good things will start to happen in our marriages. And God will use our marriage to proclaim to the world that God's design works.

FOSTER: Kent this has been a full program. Please do a review of what we've covered.

KENT: We learned that God has a design for marriage that the world thinks is either outdated or foolish, but it works. We also saw that being the head of our home is only biblical when we are totally submitted to Jesus Christ. And we learned that our wives are designed by God to make us better men.

And for you single guys, start praying for God to make you ready for marriage. That way, when He brings that special woman into your life, you will have a heart of humbleness and honor for her.

FOSTER: Thanks Kent, My friends, after giving our lives to Jesus Christ and becoming Christians, marriage is the most life-changing event in a man's life. I encourage you to take steps today to model your marriage after God's design.

Music Theme in

Program Close

FOSTER: Thank you for listening to Champions Arise where men are equipped and strengthened to meet their God-given potential. Today we discussed filling the gap between Gods' plan for marriage and where we are in our marriages today. The material for this program is from lesson 1 in the book "Every Man a Warrior," Volume 2, by Lonnie Berger. You can learn more about his book and listen to this, or any of the programs in this series at our website championsarise.org. I'm Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. Thank you for listening to Champions Arise. May God mold you into the man He knows you can be.