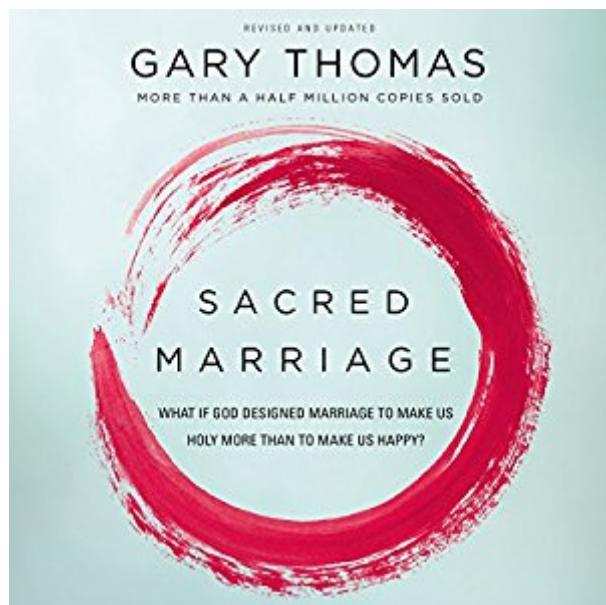


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# Sacred Marriage: What If God Designed Marriage To Make Us Holy More Than To Make Us Happy?



## **Synopsis**

Happy is good. Holy is better. Your marriage is more than a sacred covenant with another person. It is a spiritual discipline designed to help you know God better, trust him more fully, and love him more deeply. What if God's primary intent for your marriage isn't to make you happy...but holy? Sacred Marriage doesn't just offer techniques to make a marriage happier. It does contain practical tools, but what married Christians most need is help in becoming holier husbands and wives. Sacred Marriage offers that help with insights from Scripture, church history, time-tested wisdom from Christian classics, and examples from today's marriages. Sacred Marriage reveals how marriage trains us to love God and others well, how it exposes sin and makes us more aware of God's presence, how good marriages foster good prayer, how married sex feeds the spiritual life, and more. The revised edition of Sacred Marriage takes into account the ways men's and women's roles have expanded since the book was first written. It has been streamlined to be a faster listen without losing the depth that so many listeners have valued. Sacred Marriage uncovers the mystery of God's overarching purpose. This book may very well alter profoundly the contours of your marriage. It will most certainly change you. Because whether it is delightful or difficult, your marriage can become a doorway to a closer walk with God and to a spiritual integrity that, like salt, seasons the world around you with the savor of Christ.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Admittedly, I haven't read every marriage book ever written, so the title of this review is probably

overstating the case. However, I have read a number of marriage books (including some more popular ones like "The Five Love Languages" and "Fit To Be Tied," which are also solid and worth reading), and this is the cream of the crop. The overarching theme of the book is explicated clearly in its subtitle, that marriage is primarily a means of God drawing us to holiness rather than an instrument used to bring about our own happiness. This concept seems to cast a somewhat melancholy vision for marriage as a medium for unhappy relationships, and many of the other folks with whom we read the book were initially disheartened by that premise. However, after giving Thomas some time to flesh out this idea, they came around to appreciate the heart of his message. What I love most about "Sacred Marriage" is the concept of marriage as a spiritual discipline. Just like Richard Foster in "Celebration of Discipline" is able to turn the most traditional spiritual disciplines like fasting and study into something desirable and appealing, Thomas casts a vision of marriage that just draws me to an almost feverish pitch of anticipation. From Thomas' perspective, God can and will (if I am open to His work) use my marriage as one of the primary means of drawing me to Himself. And that has nothing to do with the circumstances of my marriage at any given time or the particular ways that my wife treats me. When we open ourselves to this new perspective, our marriages have the opportunity to be totally transformational. What an exciting prospect!!!

I used to give out copies of Bryan Chapell's wonderful Each for the Other. Before that my favorite book on marriage had been Mike Mason The Mystery of Marriage. Thomas is my new favorite. He shows that the design of marriage is not for our mere happiness. It is so much greater than that. Its central purpose is our holiness. In this approach, God alone is acknowledged as Lord of our lives. He is central to marriage, not our spouse. Thomas wants the reader to embrace a Biblical vision for marriage that views all of the joy and sorrow, success and struggle as opportunities to draw closer to God and to grow in grace. Again and again, the Scriptures show us that all of life (marriage included) is about showing us who God is, how we need him, and may draw near to him through faith alone: Habakkuk's prayer for justice is answered by sending the Babylonians (Hab. 1:6f.); Hosea is told to take his wandering wife Gomer back and bear children with her; the people will be sent into 70 years of exile as a blessing; Job loses it all (Job 1), except the most important thing; Joseph is sold into slavery by his brothers (Gen 37:12f.); following Christ faithfully leads the disciples literally into life's storms (Matt. 8:23-24 and 14:22-24). All because the Lord loves his people, and desires their holiness more than their immediate happiness. All this is obviously true. Yet, Gen. 2:19-24 may still seem in tension with this: "And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that

man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.' "But as one writer points out, this is about God providing "companionship in the labor of dominion.... He [Adam] needs a companion suitable for him in the work to which God has called him." Marriage in Gen.

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