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Introduction I don't want to hesitate to tell you what the meaning of marriage is: Faced with the complexities of commitment with the wisdom of God Timothy and Kathy Keller is an excellent book and a great resource for promoting the growth of marriage. I decided to review this book piece by piece in relation to chapters, so you can follow along with me and see how this book affects my marriage! Buy a copy today Timothy and Katie have been married for over 37 years. Much of their marriage experience, along with Timothy's experience as a pastor are major contributors to the amazing content in this book. Timothy is the main author of The Meaning of Marriage, while Katie adds a splash of her insight. In a brief introduction, Timothy invites both married and unmarried (singles) to give this book a try. He also mentions how the material in the book is a good source for the fundamental teachings about marriage from the Bible. He says: It's hard to get a good look at marriage. We all see this through the inevitably distorted lenses of our own experience. As true as this is, we can customize our perspectives as we learn what God says about marriage through the Old and New Testaments, and the resources that teach them, such as this book. Chapter 1 - The Secret of Marriage, as I jumped into Chapter 1, The Secret of Marriage, had quite a few things that captured my attention, including marriage statistics about our current culture compared to the past, a shift mentality that has the vast majority of people self-centered, and the secret of marriage found in the scriptures. Keller touches on a lot of information, but he writes in a way that is easy to understand. It seemed that every time I went to turn the page, I also wanted to see if someone was around to share what I was learning. Timothy said on page 21: I believe in all this, and yet there is no connection between people that is more or more important than marriage. I agree with this statement, but I realized as I read it that I had never thought about it that intensely before. It stirred my heart and made me realize that I should give my marriage more weight or importance. Not that I don't know, but that it should be intentional. If I think of my marriage as it is on a daily basis, I will most likely respond to my husband with more deep respect and love. One fact that I liked to read was on page 24, studies show that spouses hold each other to a higher level of personal responsibility and self-discipline than friends or other family members can. Interesting. Marriage is ripening character! Another fact mentioned is that two-thirds of unhappy marriages will become happy within five years if people choose to remain married for divorce. We were in this category! The first four years of our marriage were painful, but we decided to stay together and our fifth year of marriage was amazing! This chapter gives hope to those who are going to it's a tough time. Timothy also writes about human nature and how many people are self-oriented. Marriage used to be about us, but now it's about me. We carry around extremely unrealistic expectations for our spouses, who are as imperfect as we are. We are determined to get more than we deserve, and our understanding of the purpose of marriage is misguided. One point that was made that condemned me about my erroneous views on marriage was on page 42: It is an illusion that if we find our true soul mate, everything is wrong with us will be healed; but it makes a lover in God, and no man can live up to that. This is what I understand that I ... luckily I started to grow out. I saw my husband on a pedestal. I had expectations that being with him was the perfect novel and that any flaws would dissipate. On the contrary, our shortcomings were exacerbated, which usually led to a fight. I had to learn and I'm still learning that God comes first and then my marriage. Except that my husband is a man, is sinful, and will let me down from time to time ... and the same is for me. Timothy dives deep into the scriptures, helping us learn the secret of marriage. One of God's great goals for marriage is simply to remind us of Christ's relationship with His redeemed people forever! It suggests on page 47 that we begin with this: Do for your spouse what God did for you in Jesus and the rest will follow. This should be our goal to be a servant-lover for our spouse, which means that we learn how to delay satisfaction or even deny ourselves to serve each other. Christ has given himself to us, and we must follow his example in our marriage. It also calls for a deeper understanding of the gospel that will help create a deeper union between spouses over time. There was a lot more information stuffed into this first chapter that blessed me greatly. It inspired me not only to grow up in my marriage, but also to my relationship with Jesus. I was reminded that marriage is a reflection of the gospel, the way in which we gain a deeper understanding of The History of God's Love. GET The Meaning of Marriage: Faced with the complexities of commitment with the wisdom of God E.S. Part 1 Part 2 Part 3 Part 4 Part 5 Part 6 Part 7 Part 8 13 min ☺ Face the complexities of commitment to the wisdom of God are you alone or do you have problems with marriage? Are you, in addition to that, a Christian? Then you have to let Timothy Keller explain to you: The meaning of marriage. Who should read the Meaning of Marriage? And why? The meaning of marriage, as Timothy Keller shows in The Introduction, is a book for married and unmarried people, but also a book about the Bible. Since, as he goes on, the basis of all this is the Bible, the book is primarily aimed at Christians, whether lonely, married or divorced. In fact, it explicitly excludes members of the LGBT community by the very definition of marriage he proposes in So, read it if you think marriage is (also) about God; not if you think otherwise. The importance of marriage should also appeal to more religious fans of John Gottman and his two most famous books: Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work and Why Marriages Succeed or Failed. About Timothy Keller Timothy Keller is an American Christian pastor, apologist, and theologian. A founding pastor at the Presbyterian Church of the Redeemer in New York, Keller is best known as the author of several bestsellers, most notably The Cause of God: Faith in the Age of Skepticism and The Prodigal God: Restoring the Heart of the Christian Faith. It is fitting that Keller wrote The Meaning of Marriage with the help of his wife, Kathy Keller. Read more on The Meaning of Marriage PDF Summary Based on a simple reading of biblical texts, the meaning of marriage examines the Christian understanding of marriage. The point is whenever we mention the word marriage below, we will talk about, according to the author, a lifelong, monogamous relationship between a man and a woman. Keller explains his definition further, thus: According to the Bible, God invented marriage to reflect his saving love for us in Christ, to improve our character, to create a stable human community for the birth and upbringing of children, and to accomplish all this by bringing additional genders into the enduring union of a lifetime. It must therefore be said that this Christian vision of marriage is not something that can be realized by two people of the same sex. This is the unanimous opinion of the biblical authors, and therefore it is the opinion that we assume throughout the rest of this book, although we are not directly concerned about homosexuality. The essence of the Meaning of Marriage is based on St. Paul's thoughts on marriage, expressed in ephesus 5:18-33, and, in fact, each (but one) of its eight chapters begins with a quotation taken from this passage, cited in full as an epigraph to the book. Everything else, as you will see in our resume, is basically a comment on St. Paul's. First: The Mystery of Marriage Epigraph to Chapter 1, The Mystery of Marriage is the ephesus 5:31-32: A man must leave his father and mother and be one with his wife, and the two will become one flesh. It's a deep mystery... Keller tries to explain this mystery as a miracle of two imperfect people who come together to create a space of stability, love and comfort - a refuge in a heartless world. This is a difficult task, and unfortunately it is further complicated by a modern understanding of marriage. There is plenty of evidence: today there are twice as many divorces as in 1960; only two thirds of all births today are made up of married parents, and only one in 20 children was born to unmarried parents only half a century ago. Finally, and most eloquently, more than 72% of American adults were married in 1960, but only 50% were in Reason? Well, the failed movement from us to the I. Marriage used to be a public institution for the common good, Keller writes, and now it's a private arrangement to satisfy individuals. Ironically, it is this newfound freedom in marriage (David Brooks would say radical individualization) that has made spouses a little less free than before, and much more miserable. Nowadays, you can marry everyone you want, and because of Disney and Hollywood, you expect to find a perfectly compatible person. Either that or nothing. The problem is that the ideal does not exist, so many are left with nothing, desperately trapped between unrealistic toy and terrible fears about marriage. Don't believe Keller? Here's a curious statistic: two-thirds of unhappy marriages should become happy within half a decade if people choose to stay married for divorce! Second: The Power of Marriage Chapter 2 precedes the ephesus 5:21: Obey each other from the veneration of Christ. Here, Keller presents Paul's thesis that all married partners need the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Why? Because it is only through the work of the Spirit that we can fight the main enemy of marriage: self-centeredness! And that's where Keller's attack on the new concept of marriage is a union where two people can be free, like when one really comes to the surface. This, he said, is simply impossible! When you make a career decision, whether it's a career in medicine, in law or in art, everyone asks you to make sure that you can succeed, it's to give up. You don't become a writer without making a few sacrifices and devoting your free time to writing, do you? And you don't become a successful lawyer while studying for a doctorate, do you? Well, why should marriage be different? Whether we are husbands or wives, Keller writes, we must live not for ourselves, but for others. And this is the most difficult, but the most important function - to be a husband or wife in marriage. Keller says that in a union - any union - you have three opportunities (and only three possibilities): you can serve with joy, you can make an offer to serve with resentment or coldness, or you can selfishly insist on your own path. Only one of these options leads to happiness and satisfaction in marriage, and we don't need to tell you which one. Third: The Essence of Marriage In the third chapter of the Meaning of Marriage (which begins with the ephesus 5:31), Keller gets the reader in the heart of what marriage is all about, namely, love. Of course, the question he is trying to answer is one of the oldest in the book: what, in the name of God, is love really? Contrary to what you think, love is not just another name for butterflies in your stomach when you meet one that you think is one. When you first fall in love, reminds us Keller, you think you love man, but you're not really. You can't know who that person is right away. It's going to take years. You really love your idea of a person and it is always, first, one-dimensional and somewhat mistaken. True love comes after that when you actually get to meet the person you fell in love with. He writes: Being loved, but not known is comforting, but superficial. Being famous and not loved is our biggest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved, well, is very much like being loved by God. That's what we need more than anything. It frees us from pretense, humiliates us from our complacency, and strengthens us for any difficulties life can throw us away from. True love is not only horizontal, but also vertical. When the covenant is made before God, God is also part of marriage. And when He is there, every broken promise is paid doubly. Four: Mission Marriage Now, you may ask, why need a horizontal relationship with someone of the opposite sex if he can connect vertically and bask joyfully in eternal love for God? First of all, think of it (of course, only metaphorically if you are religious) as a kind of design flaw: Adam lived in the Garden of Eden and had the privilege of knowing God himself, and yet, he felt lonely, and needed Eve to be complete. Since then, each of us feels almost the same. To paraphrase Black: We need a friend, oh, we need a friend to make us happy, not to stand alone here... Our spouse must, in (Christian) theory, be our best friend. And that means a lot more than you think. Namely, it means not only having someone around you to understand you, but also having someone able to see your flaws, flaws, weaknesses, addictions, and yet see beneath them the person you can become, the man God wants you to be. Again, love is not about the present of you: it is about the future of us. And that's the mission of marriage: to turn you into someone you can be, someone you would never become in the absence of another. Five: Love for a Stranger Chapter 5 continues this discussion, exploring further the relationship between the present and the future in marriage, between knowledge and love. And it all starts with an eloquent quote from the American theologian Stanley Howerwa, who argued in Sex and Politics: Bertrand Russell and Human Sexuality, that the main problem in marriage is to learn to love and care for the stranger you find yourself married to. No matter how long you have met someone before, marrying him/her means marrying a stranger because marriage brings out many traits in you and your partner that, up to this point, have been hidden from everyone. And now the real struggle begins! And, interestingly, it's a two-way struggle: you only face a real person who your spouse, but also with a real person that you yourself. But that's why you're each other: seeing each other as the best person that each of you can become, and helping each other along the way. That's why, Keller writes, one of the most basic skills in marriage is the ability to speak directly, without embellishment of what your spouse has done, and then, utterly, and joyfully express forgiveness without the slightest superiority, without making the other person feel small. Six: Embracing another chapter 6 is written entirely by Timothy's wife, Kathy Keller; understandably, as he considers one of the most contentious issues in Christian marriage, formulated by St. Paul in Ephesus 5:22-3, two: Wives, to present to his husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, since Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the savior. Katie combines these verses with Ephesus 5:25 (Husbands love their wives just as Christ loved the church and gave his way to it) to talk about a rather controversial topic now: gender differences. Unsurprisingly, she says that there are quite a few of them, and that they naturally lead to two different functions: her husband and his wife. It has always been God's plan to make men and women different. And this has always been part of our responsibilities to live in harmony with our projects. As for women, this means voluntary submission, i.e. a gift offered... not a duty of force. Marriage is all about accepting otherness, so homosexual marriages hinder growth, as opposed to heterosexual. A man of his gender is not so likely to have so much otherness to accept, writes Katie, but God's plan for married couples involves embracing otherness to make us one, and that can only happen between a man and a woman. Seven: Single whole and marriage is OK, if above true, how concerned are homosexuals, what does this say about single people? They have even fewer others to accept. And if the mission of marriage is to make one bigger than he/she already is, does that mean that single people, by default, are not as accomplished as married people? To tell you the truth, we don't think the Kellers are doing the right thing. It is said that in our time, when so many people bear so much burden on marriage, and so many expectations of it, one whole leads to depression and despair. They actually feel unfulfilled and unsatisfied, and even envy the happiness of others. If you are a Christian, however, this does not happen, since you already have a deeply fulfilling love relationship with Christ now, and hope for a perfect love relationship with him in the future. It may inspire you to find a spouse, but it can also help you live a fairly fulfilled life without it. Of course, if that was the case, then marriage made little sense; and if it is not, then you cannot live on the love of Christ alone (see: Chapter 4 for more). Eighth: Sex and Marriage For this reason, says St. Paul in Ephesus 5:31, a man will leave his father and mother and will be united with his wife, and the two will become one flesh, however, was rarely considered something sacred. In fact, quite the opposite: sex was a dirty business in the eyes of many Christian theologians and thinkers, so it has also been seen by many governments throughout history as wicked. Keller says this is not supported by the Bible and that biblical Christianity may be the most positive religion in the world. What's more, he says that sex is perhaps the most powerful God-created way to help you give your all to another person. Sex is a God-appointed way for two people to mutually say to each other, I belong fully, permanently and exclusively to you. You don't have to use sex to say anything less, concludes Keller and making his case for sex in marriage is the only acceptable form of sex: the Bible says not to team up with someone physically if you're also willing to team up with someone emotionally, personally, socially, economically and legally. Do not become physically naked and vulnerable to another person without becoming vulnerable in all other ways because you have given up your freedom and tied yourself up in marriage. Then, once you have given in marriage, sex is a way of maintaining and deepening that union as the years go by. Sex, for Keller, is both a unifying act and a service of covenant renewal; and it's as important as love. In fact, it should be understood in much the same way: it's not what you get, but what you give. Only one person, Key Lessons from The Meaning of Marriage 1. You will never find the perfect partner2. Knowledge without love is terrible; Love without knowledge is superficial3. Marriage about serving others (and serving God) Page 2 11 min read ☺ Practical Guide to the Inner World What if the key to achieving inner peace and harmony is unlearning things you have learned? Sounds interesting? Here's Don Miguel Rouge with another book of toltec wisdom: The Voice of Knowledge. Who Should Read The Voice of Knowledge? And why? The voice of Knowledge for anyone who does not know what the four agreements are and who thinks that learning more should be one of the goals of his/her life. It's also for anyone who thinks he/she is imperfect, and that he/she can never become a better version of himself/herself. About Don Miguel Ruiz Don Miguel Ruiz is a best-selling Mexican author who calls himself the shaman Toltek. He made his debut in 1997 in the film Four Agreements. The book remained a bestseller for the next decade and brought Ruiz fame and, among other things, several guest appearances in Opres. This was followed by a series of The Book of Wisdom (The Mastery of Love, The Voice of Knowledge, the Circle of Fire, the Fifth Agreement) Ruiz is one of the most respected spiritualist teachers of our time. Find out more on . Voice knowledge PDF Summary They say that knowledge of power. Don Miguel Ruiz believes this is one of the many lies you are fed on a daily basis. What is truth is real, he writes in an epigraph to The Voice of Knowledge. What is not true is not real. It's an illusion, but it looks real. Love is real. It is the higher expression of life. And love is exactly what's at stake: because of the many lies we grew up believing to be true in our lives, we forgot how to love and, with that, how to live as well. The voice of knowledge from the title of Don Miguel Ruiz's 2004 book is not, as you might expect, the voice of God; it is, in fact, the voice of the prince of darkness that separates you from himself. Therefore, this is one that you almost never have to listen to. And that's why in detail. The symbolic meaning of Adam and Eve's story Since everyone knows history, we can sum up in just a few sentences: So, Adam and Eve were created by God, placed in the Garden of Eden, and told that the only thing they are not allowed to do is from the Tree of Death, known as the Tree of Knowledge. Of course they did just that, and before you can tell why, God, why? They fell from grace and became ordinary suffering people. Don Miguel Ruiz is expected to be interested in the story from a different perspective. This explains with symbolism that I will try to explain in words, he says in the first chapter of Voice of Knowledge. The story of Adam and Eve, he continues, is based on absolute truth, although I never understood it as a child. This is one of the greatest teachings ever, but I believe most people misunderstand it. History, in fact, he says, about us: Adam and Eve were every person who existed in the time of Creation, so the story is not about them exclusively, but about humanity as a whole. And he says this: We are born innocent and in paradise; all about joy, freedom and eternal love when we are children; we live in perfect harmony with all creation. But then the Prince of Lies sneaks out of somewhere and, bringing a message of fear, convinces us to taste the alluring fruits of the Tree of Knowledge. The fruits of knowledge are poisonous because they bring with them thousands of lies. As soon as we start eating these fruits, the lie begins to live in us. The mind is fertile ground for concepts, ideas and opinions, Ruiz writes. If someone tells us a lie and we believe it, that lie is ingrained in our mind and can grow as big and strong as a tree. One small lie can be very contagious, spreading its seeds from person to person when we share it with others. The simple truth of existence (and Miguel's visit to his grandfather) when Miguel was a teenager, he once went to visit his grandfather in an attempt to share with him what he had learned at school. In's the shaman, almost 90 years old at the time, listened very carefully to Miguel's stories about all the injustices in the world, about poverty, about violence, about the conflict between good and what he then called evil. Well, Miguel, these are very good theories that you learned, his grandfather replied. But these are just theories. Everything you've told me is just a story. That doesn't mean it's true. Now it's Ruiz's turn to listen. And my grandfather began to explain to him: most people around the world believe that there is a great conflict in the universe, a conflict between good and evil. Well, that's not true. It is true that there is conflict, but conflict exists only in the human mind, not in the universe. This does not apply to plants or animals. This is not true for stars or trees, or for the rest of nature. This is only true for people. And the conflict in the human mind is not really between good and evil. The real conflict in our consciousness between the truth and what is not the truth is between truth and lies. Good and evil are only the result of this conflict. Miguel was amazed and surprised. But that's not where his grandfather ended his story. Instead, he went on to explain how people complicate things, and how it is also the result of lies, the biggest of them is that we are not created perfect. The opposite is true: we are created perfect, but we fall from grace, because, through our knowledge, we allow lies to infect our being. And they gradually separate us from ourselves, because we begin to believe in them and stop believing in us. The only way to know the truth is to experience it. Everything else is simply a product of our mind, which can never be free from lies. We can perceive the truth with our feelings, but as soon as we try to describe it in words, we distort it, and that's no longer true, said Miguel's grandfather in the teens Ruiz. And at that moment he realized that he had experienced something that would eventually develop into this book. The lie of our imperfections is, the lie of our imperfection, it is a big lie, one that undermines the existence of everyone, the one causing chaos in the world. When we are children, Ruiz writes, we are fully in tune with ourselves. We are genuine and never try to pretend that we are what we are not. We are, to put it simply, incapable of doing so. When a child was a child, I quote the exquisitely beautiful film Wings of Desire, he didn't know it was a child: he had a soul, and all the souls were one. When the child was a child, he had no opinion about anything, had no habits ... and did not make a face when photographed. Well, all of this changes when we become mature enough to be able to learn abstract things and ideas. Because with them comes a void: suddenly there is a feeling that some people know more about the world than we do, and that we lack something (i.e. knowledge). And we are to invent stories about what is good and what is bad, about what is love and what is hatred, who we are and what is not. Of course, they are all nothing more than history: just as someone who has never experienced love can never understand it, if simply described, we can never understand anything (even ourselves) if we do not experience it fully. Think of it this way: if, theoretically, one person is drawn by Leonardo da Vinci, Picasso and Dali, few will be able to guess that their portraits depict the same person. Why? Because they all see this person differently, noticing very different things in him. Some are more attractive to the majority, while others can only be rated by an elected minority. That doesn't make them true. Actually, it doesn't do anything. They will always be nothing more than stories. People are born in truth, says Don Miguel Ruiz, but we grow up believing in lies. One of the greatest lies in human history is the lies of our imperfection. It's just a story, but we believe in it, and we use that story to judge ourselves, punish ourselves and justify our mistakes. Be the narrator of your life to sum up the argument so far: Just like Adam and Eve, we are created perfect. This must be true, because we are created by God in His image and likeness, and God is necessarily perfect. And we know it really through our experience of being as children. However, we begin to forget this as soon as we begin to listen to the voice of knowledge, which Ruiz describes as a wild horse, taking us where he wants to go. The voice of knowledge exposes us to the illusion of what the world is: we begin to believe things we have never experienced, and real knowledge can only come through experience. In other words, with the voice of knowledge comes a lie. The greatest of them: that we are imperfect by birth and must spend a lot of time and energy to improve ourselves. What you call thinking, Ruiz writes, is the voice of knowledge, inventing stories, telling you what you know, and trying to make sense of everything you don't know. The problem is that the voice makes you do a lot of things that go against yourself. You can change that! Just knowing that you are the author of the current story you are telling yourself is a great start. Because the good thing about stories is that they can be rewritten. The protagonist of your story is certainly none other than you. All the other secondary characters whose story, in relation to you, depends on the story you believe you are in. If you remove the lies you believe about yourself, the lies you believe about everyone else will change. Every time you change the main character of your story, the whole story changes to adapt to the new main character. Knowing that you are a character in history In fashion the best relationships with the people around you. In their stories, you are a secondary character, just as they are in yours. If you're trying to write your story for them, you don't respect them. If they try to write your story for you, they don't respect you. We are born to write only one perfect story: the story of ourselves. So don't waste your time taking something personally: when other people interact with you, they really interact with the secondary characters in their story. And even Shakespeare wasn't that great in creating three-dimensional secondary characters. Key Lessons from Voice of Knowledge 1. We are born perfect2. The voice of knowledge interferes with our experience of ourselves3. You can write your own story

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