

Homework – 3
Ephesians 5:25-33
“The Husband Your God and Your Girl Want You to Be”

1. The wedding ceremony had gone flawlessly. The minister closed with the phrase, “I now pronounce you husband and wife.” The groom got a little anxious, and tongue-tied, and said to the minister, “Isn’t it kisstomary to cuss the bride?” The minister answered, “Not until you’ve been married a while.”

2. Unfortunately, for many husbands, time has a way of cooling the fires of courtship. Some wives might contend that when their husband said, “I do”, what he meant was, “I do not have to try anymore.”

3. It is amazing how often a wedding ring will turn a Casanova into a codger. It reminds me of the two women who met for breakfast. One of them said to the other, “Did you wake up grouchy this morning?” Her friend answered, “No, I just let him sleep in.”

4. In defense of husbands, marriage is not an easy thing. Someone has said, “Marriage is when you agree to spend the rest of your life sleeping in a room that is too hot, beside someone who’s sleeping in a room that is too cold.”

5. Someone else said that, “Marriage is like twirling a baton, doing handsprings, and eating with chopsticks. It looks easy until you try it.”

6. Regardless of how complicated and challenging marriage may be, the man who knows Jesus Christ has a responsibility to be the kind of husband both God and his girl want Him to be.

7. Toward the close of Ephesians chapter 5, the Apostle Paul lays out his theology for matrimony. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul explains our responsibilities as partners in a marriage.

8. Though he begins with wives, the larger part of what he has to say applies to husbands. What the Word of God has to say about a *godly* husband should be vitally important to *every* husband who desires to have a marriage that pleases Christ.

9. As we look at what the Bible says to husbands, there are three truths that we draw from this text that teach us how to be the kind of husband that pleases our Lord and our mate. Notice with me first of all, that a godly husband is:

I. CALLED TO A SUPREME LOVE

1. Notice in our text, verse 25. Paul writes and says, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.” When the apostle

wrote those words in the first century, they would have been shocking to the men of that day.

2. Much like our own day, marriage in the first century, Roman culture was a mess. Women were not respected, and wives were treated as legal necessities, only for the birth of legitimate children.

3. Some 1900 years ago, when Paul called the Christian husband to love his wife with a love like that of the Lord for his church, one writer described it as, “a bare-knuckled swing at the domestic ethics of his time.”ⁱ

4. When you really consider what verse 25 says, the words are still shocking. Godly husbands are called by the Word of God to love their wives as the Lord Jesus loves His church. That is a supreme love.

5. Notice a couple of things about this supreme love. Notice first of all:

A. The model for our love

1. Brendan Doane is a 37 year-old mail carrier from Las Vegas, NV. He was voted by the readers of *Redbook Magazine* as “America’s Hottest Husband of 2008”.

2. As you can imagine, fellows, he is enough to make you sick. He has all his hair, looks like he has about 32” waist, and he leaves romantic notes all over the house for his TV reporter wife. He is the kind of guy you want to punch.

3. The good news for regular husbands, like us, is that Brendan Doane is not the standard we have to meet, and we don’t have to be the hottest husband in order to be a godly one.

4. Paul says in our text that the love of Christ is the model for how we are to love our wives. The way in which He cares for His church is the guide for how we are to love our wives.

5. What this means is that if you know Jesus, then you know exactly how to be the kind of husband you should be. If you have experienced His love in your life, then you have a perfect example of how you are to love your wife.

6. Let no Christian husband ever say that he does not know how to treat his wife. You may not have had a dad who loved your mom. You may have grown up in a home where your father was a terrible example of a husband.

7. That, however, is no excuse for you to be a terrible husband. Through His Word, and through His relationship with us, Jesus Christ gives us a clear model for how we are to love our wives.

8. A godly husband is called to a supreme love, one in which Jesus is the model. Notice not only the model for our love, but notice also further:

B. The method of our love

1. Understanding that love of Jesus Christ for His church is the model, how are we to then love our wives like Jesus loves the church?

2. First of all, this means that our love for our wives is to be an *unconditional* love. Jesus loved the church before it loved Him. The Bible says that Christ died for us, “while we were yet sinners”.

3. That means that His love for us is not based upon our love for Him, or any other pre-condition. He loves us unconditionally, when we are good, when we are bad, when we are lovely, and when we are ugly.

4. Likewise, a godly husband will love his wife in spite of our flaws and failures. When she is young, he will love her in spite of her immaturity. When she is old, he will love her in spite of her age.

5. When she is sweet, he will love her for her grace. When she is ill, and moody, he will love her by God’s grace. A godly husband, because He loves like Jesus, loves his wife unconditionally.

6. If we love like Jesus, our love is not only *unconditional*, but it is also *unending*. There will never be a time throughout the endless ages to come that Jesus will not love His church.

7. Likewise, a godly husband keeps his vows, and loves his wife for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, for richer or poorer, with a ceaseless, endless love.

8. Someone once noted that women marry thinking that their husbands will change. Men marry thinking their wives never will. Both are wrong.

9. Regardless of how much things may change in your marriage, one thing should always remain the same – your love for your wife. Godly husbands are commanded in Scripture to love their wives as Christ loved the church.

10. Notice a second truth we draw from this text. Notice not only that godly husbands are *called to a supreme love*, but notice also further that godly husbands are:

II. CONCERNED WITH A SACRIFICIAL LIFE

1. Look again at verse 25. Paul says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Notice that last phrase, "gave himself for it."
2. Christ's love for the church was evidenced and demonstrated by His sacrifice on her behalf. He loved her us so much that He was willing to suffer himself in order to make us what we ought to be.
3. There is a lot of debate and discussion about the Bible's call for wives to submit themselves to their husbands. We will look at that command in the days to come, but it is amazing to me that there is no debate about what the Bible says to the husband.
4. While the Word of God calls upon wives to submit, it calls upon husbands to sacrifice. The weightier demand is placed upon the husband. A godly husband must submit to God, and then sacrifice himself for the sake of his wife.
5. Notice with me a couple of things about the sacrificial life that marks a godly husband. Notice first of all:

A. The price of this sacrifice

1. In the case of the Christ and His church, the Lord Jesus paid the ultimate sacrifice – His own life. Jesus went to the cross, and willingly died in the place of sinners He sought to redeem.
2. While husbands may never actually be called upon to die for their wives, they are commanded to be willing to sacrifice whatever is required to meet the needs of their spouse.
3. Think of it this way, you may not have to die for your wife, but you may need to turn the T.V. off and talk to her. You don't have to go to the cross for your wife, but you may have to go to the store for her.
4. In some marriages, the price is higher than for others, but in every marriage, there is a price that a man must pay in order to be the husband God has called him to be.
5. Ask yourself this question: "What could I give up for my wife that would make my marriage stronger?" For some, the answer to that question is as simple as getting off the couch and doing a load of laundry.
6. For others, the price of that sacrifice may mean that you give up a hunting trip or tickets to a ball game in order to spend time with your wife and family.

7. Jesus Christ drowned in His own blood, with spikes through His hands and feet, all because He loved His church. All your wife may require is for you to get out of the bed and go to church with her.

8. The Bible teaches us that selfish husbands are sinful husbands. The godly husband is concerned with making whatever sacrifices are necessary for the sake of the wife he dearly loves.

9. Notice something else about this sacrificial life. Notice not only the price of this sacrifice, but notice also further:

B. The purpose of this sacrifice

1. Look again at our text, and notice the section following verse 25. Paul says that Christ gave Himself for the church, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

2. Notice that Christ's sacrifice for the church was for the purpose of beginning a relationship in which He would cleanse, sanctify, and make His church into what she ought to be.

3. Jesus does not save us, and then just demand that we become perfectly holy. No, His grace is extended to us on a daily basis, and He gives Himself to us throughout our Christian experience to improve us and to build us up.

4. Now let's apply that principle to marriage. A godly husband is willing to sacrifice himself for the sake of his wife, *not* because she is everything she should be, but because he wants to help her become everything she should be.

5. You say, "Preacher, you just don't know my wife. I would do more for her, and I would be a better husband if she was a better wife." Friend, you need to look at the example of Jesus, and understand that by being a better husband, you will create a better wife.

6. Years ago, during the Persian Empire, the wife of one of the generals serving under King Cyrus was accused of treachery, and was condemned to die. As soon as her husband heard what was about to take place, he rushed to the palace, and burst into the throne room of Cyrus.

7. Once there, he threw himself on the floor before the king and cried out, "Oh, my Lord Cyrus, take my life instead of hers. Let me die in her place!" Cyrus was so touched by the man's devotion that he said, "Love like that must not be spoiled by death." He released the man's wife and let them both go free.

8. As they were leaving, the husband said to his wife, “Did you notice how kindly the king looked at us when he gave you the pardon?” The wife answered, “I had no eyes for the king. I saw only the man who was willing to die in my place.”ⁱⁱⁱ

9. Husbands, if you want a wife whose heart beats only for you, and whose eyes are fixed lovingly and loyally upon no one else, live a life concerned only with sacrifice for her. That is how the Word of God describes a godly husband.

10. Notice a third truth we draw from this text. Notice not only that a godly husband is *called to a supreme love, and concerned with a sacrificial life*, but notice also finally that a godly husband is:

III. CONSCIOUS OF A SIMPLE LAW

1. The Apostle Paul finishes his address to husbands with some important instructions. When these instructions are grasped, they are so simple and practical that they can help every single husband who applies them to their marriage.

2. Look again at the text, and notice verses 28 and 29. It says, “So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.”

3. Listen very carefully to the simple law that Paul lays down in this text. He basically says that by loving our wives as Christ loved the church, we are only helping ourselves.

4. Let me show you what I mean. Notice a couple of things about this simple law of which all godly husbands are conscious. First of all, this simple law involves:

A. The reality of the marital connection

1. In verse 28, Paul says that when a man loves his wife, he actually loves himself. How can this be? It goes back to a principle that was first taught in Genesis chapter 2, and then later taught by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 19.

2. Paul even quotes the same Scripture that Jesus used in Matthew 19. Look at verse 31 in our text. Paul says, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.”

3. We talked last week about the fact that when a man and a woman are married, according to the Bible, they are fused together. The word that is translated as “joined” in verse 31 is a word that literally means to be glued.

4. When a husband and wife are married, they are glued together, and bonded so that they are no longer two separate lives, but one single life.

5. A godly husband always keeps in mind the fact that he is no longer an individual, single person. Whatever decisions he makes inevitably affect the wife to whom he has been bonded.

6. I read about an interesting epitaph that was put over the grave of a man named Elisha Philbrook and his wife Sarah. The marker read:

“Beneath these stones do lie,
Back to back, my wife and I,
When the last trump, the air shall fill,
If she gets up, I’ll just lie still”

7. There may be times that you feel like you want to get away from your wife, but the truth is that until death parts you, you must keep in mind that according to the Word of God, you are inviolably connected to your wife.

8. Notice something further about this simple law for a godly husband. Notice not only the reality of the marital connection, but notice also further:

B. The result of the marital connection

1. One writer that I studied this week entitled his comments on this passage of Scripture: “Loving Husbands, Happy Wives!”ⁱⁱⁱ

2. That is a good title for this text, but I would add a little to it. Loving husbands do make happy wives, and happy wives in turn make happy husbands. If your wife is happy, chances are that you will be too.

3. This is the simple principle that Paul lays out in verse 29. He essentially says that because our wives are so intimately connected to us that are actually a part of us, that by taking care of them, we are actually taking care of ourselves.

4. Look at verse 29 again. It says, “For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.”

5. It is as if Paul is saying, “Husbands, listen. You are never going to hurt yourself by loving your wife. You are only going to help yourself by treating her with the care that Christ has shown to His church.”

6. I remember hearing an old man say once, “Years ago, I learned that in my marriage I had a choice. I could either be right, or I could be happy, but I couldn’t be both.”

7. According to the Word of God, you can be right, and you can be happy! Your wife can have a husband that she adores, and you can have a marriage that is healthy and strong.

8. All you must do is keep it in mind that every time you show your wife sacrificial, Christ-like love, you are helping yourself as much as you are helping her.

1. As we close, I want you to look at one more verse in this text. In verse 32, Paul says, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

2. Which is it? Is Paul talking here about marriage, or Christ and the church? The answer is, both.

3. You see, one of the greatest privileges of being married is being able to produce a living picture of the gospel in our relationship with our spouse. Your greatest witness for Christ *should* be your marriage.

4. With that being said, how are you doing as a husband? The way to know that is to ask yourself this question, "Do I treat my wife the same way Jesus treats me?"

5. Regardless of her faults and failures, shortcomings and sins, you are called to love her unconditionally and unendingly, with a sacrificial and selfless love. If you will love her, the way Jesus loves you, you will have no trouble being the husband both God and your girl want you to be.

ⁱ Hughes, R. Kent, Ephesians, (Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL, 1990), p. 190

ⁱⁱ Boice, James Montgomery, Ephesians, (Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 2001), p. 200

ⁱⁱⁱ Boice, James Montgomery, p. 196