

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Lesson 10

The Christian Husband

Ephesians 5:25-32

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. A Christian husband is more than a provider and protector. In fact, the key to the Christian home is the husband. As goes the man so goes the marriage and home. If a man is a spiritual bulwark, his family will usually follow suit.
- B. Most everyone has heard the saying, "Behind every great man there stands a great woman." This is certainly true, but according to the Bible, "Behind every good wife there stands a godly husband."
- C. The secret to successful marriages is Christ-centered husbands. Most men today feel it is effeminate to read the Bible, pray or shed a tear over the spiritual condition of their families. They say the Bible is out of date and not relevant. Yet just the opposite is so -- the breakdown in homes is a failure of husbands and fathers to take their proper roles.
- D. A reversal of husband and wife roles produces chaos in a home, for children soon come to believe the Christian home, the Christian church and the Christian life are for females and weak men.
- E. The husband is the leader in the home. God holds him responsible for the spiritual, physical, economic and emotional activities of the household. He is to give intelligent leadership and direction to his wife and children.

II. THE HUSBAND MUST LEAVE PARENTS *"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife"*

- A. The first principle is that a man must break with his family so as to establish his own home under Christ. This does not mean there is not love and respect for his family. It does mean he is not to be dependent on his family any longer.
- B. There is nothing more nauseating than a "momma's boy" who is trying to be a leader in a home. There are many men who still have a mother's complex, for they have never been psychologically weaned from their mother's breast. They want their wives to assume the roles of mothers and give them care and protection instead of them giving love and protection to their wives. The result is that many husbands are little boys who never grew up and they are oversensitive, spoiled children.
- C. The mother complex may subtly shows up when husbands call their wives "momma."

III. A HUSBAND IS A REPRESENTATIVE KING IN THE HOME.

- A. According to the creation mandate in Genesis, God designated the man to be a prophet, priest and king in his home. As a prophet, he teaches his family about God and life. As a priest, he prays for and leads his family spiritually. As king, he rules in his house. God has delegated His authority to the man in the family. God's authority is centered in the man. Therefore, the man is responsible to see that this authority is exercised properly in ways that honor Christ. Rulership or leadership means assuming the responsibilities which go with such authority. A man will give an account to God!

- B. The husband-father is responsible for everything which happens in his home. Nothing must go on in the home which he is not aware.

IV. A HUSBAND IS TO MANAGE HIS HOUSEHOLD “*Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground . . . He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect.*” (Gen. 1:28; 1 Tim. 3:4).

- A. God created Adam to rule (Gen. 1:28) and this responsibility extends to his wife. Yet, the husband is to be the leader and this is found all through the Bible. He is the leader of his wife, family and home and is held accountable to God for the successful management of his home. According to I Tim. 3:4, one of the qualifications to be an elder is one must manage his own household well and this is God’s standard for all men, but only those who attain to it are qualified to be elders.
- B. A good manager knows how to delegate authority and how to put other people to work, and so a husband should manage his household in such a way that every person in it is developing in a responsible way. A manager should know everything that is happening in the home and delegate responsibilities. A good manager does not make all the decisions or crush his wife’s talents and gifts. He has control of the situation and steps in only to change or modify when absolutely necessary.

V. A HUSBAND IS TO BE THE LOVER AND LEADER TO HIS WIFE (Eph. 5:25-32)

- A. A Command to Love “*Husbands, love your wives*” (Gen. 2:24).
1. The Apostle Paul addresses “husbands”. This is a command not to husbands in general but to Christian husbands who acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ over their lives and who are willing to submit their lives to the teaching of inspired scripture.
 2. Christian husbands are under a lot of pressure from the unsaved world today not to love their wives, not to be good providers, not to give her sufficient attention and not to be faithful. The world looks at Christian husbands and says, “Get with it man. This is the 20th century. We don’t keep those archaic commands anymore. Sure love your wife, but love your mistress too. Neglect your wife in order to make lots of money. Stay with your wife until you get tired of her/ These are thoughts which come from the pit of hell and Christian husbands will reject them to truly love their wives.
 3. This is a command for the Christian husband to love his wife; therefore, it is not an option. Husbands, the God of heaven and earth has commanded us to love our wives. The Commander in Chief of the universe has given this holy imperative; therefore, we must obey or we have sinned against the Sovereign God.
 4. Did you know that five times it is mentioned in the New Testament that husbands should love their wives but it never commands a wife to love her husband. I believe the reason for this is that the man by nature is a rough, crude and insensitive being and needs to learn to love other than on a macho, physical level. Women by nature are more tender, soft and caring beings and love comes more naturally. It is not that the woman is not to love her husband, but her main role is to submit to her husband.
 5. Notice carefully Paul takes three verses in Ephesians 5 to tell women to submit and six verses to tell men to love. The conclusion might be that it is twice as hard for men to learn to love as it is for women to learn to submit.
 6. The word for “love” is the Greek word *agape*. The Greek language had three words for love.
 - a. **Eros** which was a deep, sexual passion for a person. The word *eros* was not used in the New Testament.
 - b. Another word for love was *phila* which was the love of affection or friendship as parents would have for children or sisters would have for brothers. *Phila* is used quite often in the New Testament. Both *eros* and *phila* love occur

because there is something in the object loved which arouses that love. Both are loves of reciprocation.

- c. Then there is the word *agape* which is the word used here in Ephesians 5:25. *Agape* is rarely found outside the Greek New Testament. It is a love of the will or volition. It is a love of feeling but there is nothing in the object which arouses that love. It is non-reciprocal love. It is an unconditional and unselfish love which comes from within and can only be produced by the Holy Spirit in a Christian (Gal. 5:22). It is a supernatural love which loves not "because of" but "in spite of."
7. A marriage of two non-Christians can never have *agape* love present. *Agape* love can only be received from God and only Christians who know God and have the Holy Spirit in them can produce *agape* love.
8. A non-Christian marriage can have *eros* and *phila* love but never *agape*. On the other hand, a Christian marriage will have all three loves present in it - *eros*, *phila* and *agape*. *Eros* is for sexual passion in marriage. *Phila* is for friendship and companionship in marriage. *Agape* is supernatural fellowship in marriage.

My wife Carol has her own definition of *agape* love. She says, "Don't give me all that stuff about volitional and intellectual love. What I want to know is, "Will my husband pick up his dirty underwear and put it in the hamper? Will he get up at two in the morning to help me with a screaming baby? Will he come into the house, seeing it a mess and say, 'This place is a pig pen!' or will he say, 'Honey, I see you have had a rough day, is there something I can do to help?' That is love."

9. The world most certainly has a different concept of love than does the Christian. Love is a word grossly misused today. It is used to describe everything from sordid sexual passion to patriotic emotion. Usually the world gets love and infatuation all mixed up.
- B. A Command to Love as Christ Loved the Church. "*Just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without tain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*" 5:25b-27).
 1. The husband is not only commanded to love his wife but he is told how to love his wife.
 2. He is to love her "just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."
- C. A Selective Love. Christ died for a particular group of people, the Church. The Father chose the Christian in eternity past for salvation and Christ died for the sinner to make him righteous. The love the Christian husband is to have for his wife is a selective, special, particular love. Husbands have picked out their wives and are to love them in a very special way.
- D. A Sacrificial Love. Christ loved the Church enough that He died for her, so husbands should love their wives to the extent that they are willing to die for them. Husbands, if you cannot say today, "I'm willing to lay down my life for my wife," then you really don't love her as Christ loved the Church.

There is a story told about King Cyrus of Persia and one of his generals. The general's wife had been apprehended for treason, found guilty and was condemned to die. When the general discovered what had happened, he rushed into the presence of King Cyrus, prostrated himself at the feet of the King and said, "O Sire, take my life instead of hers. Let me die in her place!" Cyrus was so touched that he said, "Love like that must not be spoiled by death," and he pardoned her and gave them back to one another. As the husband and wife left the throne room and the presence of King Cyrus, the husband turned to his wife and said, "Did you notice how kindly the King looked upon us when he gave you a free pardon?" The wife turned to her husband and said, "I had no eyes for the

King. I only had eyes for the man who was willing to die for me.” He won his wife by his sacrificial love.

- E. A Self-Giving Love. Notice it says, “Christ gave himself up” for the church.
1. Christ sacrificed His rights, self-interests and divine prerogatives to pursue the interests of sinners who deserved nothing. Husbands do not abuse their authority over their wives, but set aside personal rights, interests and prerogatives in order to please the wife. He must learn to die daily for his wife, and that is far more difficult than dying physically once for her.
 2. The husband does not “give in” but “gives up” to his wife. No husband is taking his proper role in marriage until he learns to give himself up for his wife. He is to open his heart to her, to share his emotions and dreams with her, his thoughts with her and his disappointments, joys and sorrows with her. He is to expose his true self to his wife without reservation. By giving up to his wife he then allows her to fulfill her role as a helper.

A judge in a divorce court case said to the husband, “You mean to say that what your wife tells me is true, that you actually have not spoken to her for two years. The man said, “Yes sir.” The judge said, “Why is that?” He replied, “I didn’t want to interrupt her!”

I suspect that such a marathon of talking shows this wife was trying to fill some vacuum in her life, and the husband was not loving her as Christ loved the Church.

- F. An Initiating Love. Christ took the first step and purchased the Church, His bride, to Himself. He did not wait for the Bride to make the first move. Husbands are to assume the love initiative in marriage. We are not to wait for our wives to make the first move or wait until they are deserving of our love. We are to move out and win the love of our wives by positive, initiating leadership.
- G. A Generous Love.
1. Christ graciously gave Himself without reservation to the Church and by the act of His death committed Himself to meet every spiritual, emotional and financial need of the Church. The Christian husband gives himself to his wife, promising he will meet her physical needs, financial needs, emotional needs and spiritual needs.
 2. The three major causes of divorce are money, sex and time (neglect). The husband will find a way to meet these three needs so as to have a healthy marriage.
- H. A Purposeful Love.
1. In Ephesians 5:26-27, we see there was a definite purpose for the death of Christ for the Church. the NASB catches the sense best. It says, “*That He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.*”
 2. Christ’s purpose was to cleanse the Church, giving her forgiveness, to sanctify or make the church holy, which is making her progressively righteous over sin, and present the Church perfect before God. The work of Christ for the Church is past, present and future. By application, Christian husbands are to sanctify their wives; that is, they are to set them apart by being spiritual leaders to them. They are to encourage their wives to grow spiritually so they will develop into full womanhood and be tremendous helpers.
 3. Husbands are not directly responsible for the spiritual lives of their wives (each wife is personally accountable) but the husbands are indirectly accountable as they become motivators for godliness, initiators for holiness and leaders for righteousness. According to Ephesians 5:23, just as Christ is the Savior of the

Church, the Christian husband is the savior of the wife. That is, men are responsible and accountable to God to be providers, protectors and leaders for their wives.

4. Since the husband is the savior of the marriage, then if a marriage goes sour. who must take the blame? The husband. Men, we are responsible for the success or failure of our marriage. What a challenge! What a responsibility!
- I. A Command to Love His wife as He Loves Himself *“In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the Church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.”* (Eph. 5:28-32)
 - J. A Caring Love (28-30). At the moment of salvation, the Christian was mystically and organically put into union with Christ so as to make up the body of Christ.
 1. The Christian at conversion became one with Christ. In marriage, a man and woman become “one flesh,” the wife becoming mystically a part of the husband’s body. They become one organism, one member. The wife becomes an extension of the husband’s self and personality.
 2. Marriage is much more than two people sharing the same name, house and bed. The wife becomes one with her husband in personality and body. The Apostle’s point is that the husband *is* to love his wife as his own body because the wife is part of him. A man loves himself most of all but now he is to love his wife as though she were himself.
 3. Because of his union with his wife, he is to seek what is best for her because what is best for her is best for him. A man may reason, “If I always go about sacrificing for my wife, I am cutting my own throat. It is suicide to give all and receive nothing!” Wrong! A man giving of himself sacrificially to his wife is really benefiting himself because the wife is very bone of his bone.
 4. A man “feeds” his own body. He does not abuse his body. He feeds it, protects it, grooms it, clothes it. He makes sure he gets a balanced diet and proper exercise. Every man probably takes anywhere from 2-3 hours a day just taking care of his body. What would our marriages be like if we gave two hours a day to our wives?
 5. A man “cares for” his own body. This an interesting Greek word. It means “to warm” or “to heat.” It was used of a hen gathering her chicks under wings or a mother holding her child to her breast. Sometimes it was translated “to cuddle.” The husband needs to meet the emotional and physical needs of his wife. He needs to know how to say, “I love you” without any hidden motives for sex. He needs to learn how to sit down on the couch, hold his wife’s hand and listen to her. He needs to whisper in her ear that she is the greatest wife in the world. He needs to learn how to tenderly and softly cuddle his wife. When cuddling happens, there will be plenty of sexual sparks in the marriage.
 - K. A Permanent Love (31a). In marriage a man leaves parents and unites to his wife alone, becoming united joined to, glued to one woman. God’s ideal for marriage is that it would be permanent; that is, for life. When a man and woman take their marriage vows they say, “For better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and health until death does part us.” How tragic it is that so many men in their forties and fifties leave their wives for some younger woman. His wife has given her life to him, borne his children, sacrificed for the marriage, and now, as she grows older with bulges, gray hair and wrinkles, the man, in some kind of mid-life crisis, leaves it all behind for a fling. What a travesty! He lied to his wife and to his God when he said, “Until death does part us”.
 - L. A Faithful Love (31b). A man and woman in marriage become one flesh. To become one flesh is to consummate marriage with the sexual union. The sex act constitutes a man and woman as one physically and spiritually. The husband who loves his wife is

faithful to her sexually. Husbands, in our marriage vows, we promised God and our wives before witnesses that we would be a faithful husband. This means we are committed to one woman sexually for a lifetime.

- M. An Honoring Love (32). A man is to so love his wife, honoring her, that his love causes her to respect him. So much of a man's concept of love is tied up in the sexual, macho image, but for a woman love is all tied up in respect for her husband. When a man is taken off the pedestal by his wife, he is in big trouble.

There are certain things a husband must listen for in his marriage. If the wife says, "You bug me," or "I need sate space," or "I'm fed up with the set up," this will pass because she is merely venting her actions. But if she says things like, "I'm losing respect for you," or "You are disappointing me terribly," or "You just aren't the man you used to be," watch out because that is her way of saying you are coming down off her pedestal. Remember, her love is all tied up with respect.

VI. CONCLUSION

Christian husband, listen very closely. Your wife does not expect perfection, but she does expect a willing heart to be a leader and lover in the marriage. Always remember, a wife will have very little difficulty submitting to a husband who is loving her as Christ loved the Church.

There was a truck driver whose wife was required to fill out some kind of form. For her occupation she wrote down "housewife," and he objected. He said, "You're not a housewife, you're MY wife."

That went a long way cement their relationship in marriage. Women are often impressed with the simple things done in honesty and sincerity.