

HUSBAND AND WIFE RELATIONSHIP

Eph.5:22-33

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In this study we will not be discussing just any husband and wife relationship, or just any man and woman who are married.
2. We will be discussing the one that is spoken of in the Bible which is acceptable to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. It's a relationship into which two people enter with a solemn vow before God and man. Think about what they are swearing to each other before God. Furthermore, God and honor expects vows to be kept!
4. Thus we begin by noting:

II. DISCUSSION

A. THE NATURE OF THE HUSBAND AND WIFE RELATIONSHIP

1. It's divinely appointed, Gen.2:18-24a; Mt.19:4,5a; Mk.10:6,7; 1Cor.7:2; Heb.13:4a.
2. It's divinely regulated (More on this later)
3. It's of such nature that the two become "one flesh" as husband and wife: Gen.2:24: "and they shall be one flesh"; Mt.19:5b,6a; Mk.10:8; "they twain (two) shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain (two), but one flesh..."; Eph.5:31: "and they two shall be one flesh."
 - a. But what does that mean? What does it involve, and or necessitate?
 - b. Strongs' Concordance says it means: "United into one."
 - c. Crudens' Complete Concordance says: "To be one flesh, denotes an intimate communion, as if the two were but one person or one body, Gen.2:24. This phrase is used by the Apostle to show the union between Christ and believers, Eph.5:30,31."
 - d. Barnes' Notes: "Becoming one flesh" involves the complete identification of one personality with the other in a community of interests and pursuits, a union consummated in intercourse."
 - e. The Pulpit Commentary says: "This language points to a unity of persons and not simply to a conjunction of bodies, or a community of interests, or even a reciprocity of affections."
 - (1) However, I might add, in view of other passages dealing with this relationship and their duties and attitude one toward the other in it, that the latter naturally grows out of the former.

- f. The words of Moses, of Jesus Christ, and of the Apostle Paul in Gen.2:24; Mt.19:5,6; Eph.5:31, in saying, that by leaving father and mother, which applies to both the man and the woman, “they twain (the two) shall be one flesh,” confirm they are of God, or divine revelation, in both O.T. and N.T., declaring that this oneness or being united in one is a vital communion of heart as well as of body, in which it finds its consummation.
 - (1) Therefore this union is of a totally different nature from that of parents and children.
- g. The husband and wife relationship, notwithstanding the fact that it demands the leaving of father and mother and cleaving to each other, is a holy appointment of God; hence, celibacy is not a higher or holier state than that of a scriptural husband and wife relationship.
- h. The scriptural husband and wife relationship is of such nature that they are married by God, united in love; it’s a relationship of something much more than a social or a civil contract; something much more than a union of convenience or a diplomatic alliance; something vastly different from a mere legalized connubium, or the state of connubial rights or connubial love making.
- i. The sexual act or sexual relationship is so intimate that one person becomes “one body” with his partner. The personalities merge in the sexual act, whether that be in a scriptural husband and wife relationship (Gen.2:24; Mt.19:5,6; Eph.5:31), or with a harlot (1Cor.6:16).

B. THEIR RIGHTS, PRIVILEGES, AND PURPOSES IN IT.

- 1. They have the privilege of intimate companionship suitable to all of each others needs as male and female, Gen.2:18; Mal.2:14.
- 2. They have the right and privilege of the marriage bed, Heb.13:4; 1Cor.7:2-4.
- 3. They have the right and privilege of producing offspring from the marriage bed, Gen.1:26,a,27,28a; Gen.4:1; 1Cor.7:14; Cf. Psa.127:3.

C. THEIR DUTIES OR OBLIGATIONS TO ONE ANOTHER THEREIN, Eph.5:22-33; Col.3:18,19; Tit.2:3-5; 1Pet.3:1-7.

- 1. The duty of the wife is submission to her husband.

- a. It's a submission defined by religious obligations: "Wives, submit yourselves unto yourselves unto your own husband, as unto the Lord," Eph.5:22, or "as is fit (suitable) in the Lord," Col.3:18.
 - (1) A submission in harmony with the will of the Lord; in harmony with his written word.
 - (2) This submission implies no inferiority of the wife to the husband as a human being. Cf. Jesus' submission to the Father; our submission to civil rulers, etc.
 - b. It's a submission recognizing the headship of the husband:
 - (1) It's analogous to the headship of Christ to his church in one sense: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church...(V.23a). Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything," (V.24). Cf. 1Cor.11:1-3
 - (2) But it is unlike Christ's headship in that Christ is not only the head but also the Savior of the church, which the husband cannot be for the wife: "...and he is the savior of the body," (V.23b).
 - c. It's a submission after the pattern of that of the church to Christ: "...as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing," (V.24).
 - (1) True faith in Christ sanctifies all holy relationships and makes duty a joy.
 - (2) Therefore as the faithful wife obeys Christ in all things required, so she will submit to her husband in all things righteous.
 - (3) Cf. Eph.5:33b; 1Pet.3:1-6.
2. The duty of the wife is to love her husband, Tit.2:3,4.
 3. The duty of the husband is to love his wife.
 - a. It's to be a love that seeks to provoke the highest spiritual interests of his wife, Vv.25-29,33a.
 - (1) It must be a Christ-like, self-sacrificing, all-devoted love.
 - (2) It is greatly within the power and influence of the husband to help or hinder the spiritual life of his wife.
 - (3) The husband is apt to become so self-absorbed in other things, and to become so forgetful, that he needs reminding of his duty to love and cherish his wife – the one who

should be nearer and dearer to him than any other human being.

- (4) Assured of the reality and unselfishness of her husband's sacrificial love, if she is the loving wife she is supposed to be, there is no sacrifice she will hesitate to make, nor will she spare any effort, to attain to the Christ-likeness of character to which he may wish to lead her.
 - (5) Remember this: They are no longer twain or two but "one flesh", and if they are truly one with Christ, they will have no trouble being as nearly as possible one person, with one interest in all things pertaining to the husband-wife relationship.
- b. It's to be a love arising from the intimacy and sacredness of the marriage bond, and one strengthened by the observance of mutual duties, Vv.30-33; 1Pet.3:1-7.
 - (1) Love manifested begets love, and strengthens with exercise
 - (2) The loving reverence of the wife follows on the genuine love manifested by the husband.
4. The text of Eph.5:22-33 speaks of a precious bond between husband and wife.
- a. But let us not overlook or de-emphasize that important factor which serves as the basis of this precious bond, which is headship and submission based on mutual love.
 - b. A love that must be a sacrificial love, like unto that of Christ and his love for the church.
 - c. It must be a purifying love, an uplifting love.
 - (1) Any love which drags a person down is false, not genuine love.
 - (2) Any love which coarsens instead of refining the character of its object, which necessitates deceit, which weakens the moral fiber, is not love; it's a mere hypocritical pretense.
 - (3) Real, genuine love, is the great purifier of life.
 - d. It must be a manifested, caring love.
 - (1) The husband must love his wife as himself, as he loves his own body, and manifest it, Vv.28,29,33a.
 - (2) The wife is to reverence his husband, V.33b.
 - e. It must be an unbreakable love.
 - (1) For the sake of this love they each must leave father and mother and cleave to each other – joined together becoming "one flesh" for life.

- (2) They are as joined or united together as the members of their fleshly bodies are united to each other.
- f. The whole relationship of this precious bond is “*in the Lord*”!

D. THINGS PROHIBITED IN THE SCRIPTURAL HUSBAND AND WIFE RELATIONSHIP.

1. Any and all denial of the rights to the marriage bed, 1Cor.7:2-4.
2. Any and all permanent separation, 1Cor.7:5.
3. Any divorce for any cause except that of fornication committed by the guilty spouse, Mt.19:9
 - a. With no right of marriage to another if one is the guilty spouse.
 - b. With no right of marriage to another if one departs from a spouse or puts away a spouse for a cause other than fornication, 1Cor.7:10-13.
4. Any failure to love one’s spouse, or reverence one’s spouse, or give honor to one’s spouse, or submit to one’s spouse as the case may be.
5. Any failure to support one’s spouse with the necessities of life, 1Tim.5:8.

III. CONCLUSION

1. In this relationship either one or both are guilty of sin if and when:
 - a. They neglect or violate anyone of these divine principles, rights, privileges, obligations, or things prohibited.
 - b. They ignore or neglect each other as husband and wife.
 - c. They can converse with others but not with each other.
 - d. They discuss their family problems with others but not with each other in an effort to solve them in harmony with scriptural principles.
 - e. They simply live under the same roof or in the same house but not in the same marriage bed!
 - f. They thus fail to keep their vows to each other and to God as husband and wife!
2. Sins of this nature render your prayers to God ineffective; they will not be heard, 1Pet.3:7; 1Pet.3:12.
3. Sins of this nature will send your soul to hell just as surely as any other type of sin if not repented of!
4. Sins of this nature often foment unrest, even suspicion, and strife, even division in the local body of Christ, thus bringing shame upon the body of Christ – it’s a serious matter – this husband and wife relationship!