

HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES

Eph.5:25,28,29

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. A marriage as God ordains requires more than a marriage ceremony ending with a kiss and a certified license authorized by the state.
2. A God-ordained marriage relationship requires that the man and the wife engage in such things as mutual attention, constant cooperation, joint effort, abundant affection, two-way communication, and working together in harmony with all of God's laws pertaining to husbands and wives.
3. Psychologists have labeled the phenomenon of "I have to be me and she should meet **my** needs" as **arrogant individualism**, which is contrary to the very spirit and function of the God-approved marriage relationship.
4. Marriage is obviously a two party relationship involving the duties, the interests, and the physical, as well as the spiritual welfare of both, and the love and respect therein as commanded in Eph.5:25-33.
5. Our present study is designed to deal specifically with one partner in the marriage relationship – the husband – with special focus on Eph.5:25,28,29.
6. Husbands who **truly** love their wives as Eph.5:25 requires will avoid all forms of selfishness as if it were the plague.
7. Not only does Eph.5:25,28,29 require but encourages husbands to love their wives, including all that involves, which includes at least four different things we shall discuss in developing our subject.

II. DISCUSSION

A. THAT ALL MEN WHO BECOME HUSBANDS, BE LOVING HUSBANDS, RECOGNIZING THE PERMANENT NATURE OF THE MARRIAGE BOND.

1. Gen.2:18-24; Mt.19:3-6; 1Cor.7:10,11,39; Heb.13:4.

2. In spite of this, families in this country are in crises today more so than at any other time in modern history, with one of every two new marriages in the United States ending in divorce.
3. Statistics reveal that for the first time in the history of this nation more couples are living together in unwedded sin than are married.
4. Why is this the case? Part of the blame lies with husbands who ignore the demands of Eph.5:25,28,29.
5. No husband will divorce his wife if and when he truly loves her:
 - a. As Christ also loves the church, and gave himself for it.
 - b. As he loves himself as his own body.
 - c. For the husbands who truly love their wives will avoid selfishness in all forms as if it were the plague; and divorcing one's wife for any unjust, unscriptural cause is a form of selfishness, especially is this true when children are involved!
6. Husbands who fail to recognize the permanence of the nature of the marriage bond and willfully violate it:
 - a. Are not practicing love as our text requires, but rather are acting selfishly, which is sinfully.
 - b. Are deceived, whether self-deceived or otherwise, and clouded in their judgment as to what is right for life. Cf. Prov.14:12.
 - c. Are men whose wants are never satisfied. Cf. Eccl.1:2,3.
 - d. Are following their own way, not God's. Cf. Jer.10:23; Isa.55:8.
7. Therefore, there is a need for such men to become real God-fearing men who become really loving husbands.

B. THAT THE HUSBAND UNSELFISHLY REALIZE HIS WIFE'S WANTS AND NEEDS BECAUSE OF THEIR PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL DIFFERENCES.

1. One of the major causes for even a loving husband's not knowing **how** to meet his wife's needs is because of a lack of understanding of the general differences between men and women, which is a problem for both husband and wife.

2. The two sexes are totally opposite emotionally, mentally, and physically, which affects how they view things, react to things, or even do things.
 - a. Even very simple things: such as, the way they put on their coat, which sleeve of the coat they put on first; or the direction from which they put on belt.
3. These differences between the male and female, which do not automatically disappear when married, and which are manifested in so many ways, are so extreme that, without a willingness on the husband's part to make some sort of an effort to understand them, it is nearly impossible to have a peaceful marriage.
4. In fact, in recognition of this, God, by the Holy Spirit, moved the Apostle Peter to write 1Pet.2:7 instructing the husband.
 - a. In this, God has insisted that the husband learn how to deal with his wife who is different in emotional need, as well as physical.
 - b. This verse doesn't imply that the female is inferior to the male and is to be downgraded in any way as to ability or intelligence.
 - c. Remember, both were created in the image of God – both male and female.
 - d. He is to dwell with her in accordance with an intelligent view of the nature of the relationship, giving honor to her – she is not his slave, or a mere instrument to be used by him!
5. The following was written by a husband who did not value his wife until it was too late:

O God, where is my right side?
The one that I fell in love with when I was young.

O God, where is my right side?
The one I married, the one you said was bone of
My bone, flesh of my flesh.
(And I took for granted.)

O God, where is my right side?
The one who has the beautiful smile and laugh.
(I never told her every day.)

O God, where is my right side?
The one who wanted me to hold her hand and put
My arm around her.
(Not just as a prelude to sex.)

O God, where is my right side?
The one who loved you and prayed over our family.
(I didn't lift her up in prayer or jump for joy when I
felt her loving touch.)

O God, where is my right side?
The one who wanted to be a wife and mother.
(Not the breadwinner and part-time father who
handled the bills alone.)

O God, where is my right side?
The one who finally got tired and left.
(Because I couldn't or wouldn't be the man she
wanted me to be.)

O God, where is my right side?
I look for her in the now-empty recesses of my life.
(Not wanting to admit that I just didn't value her
the way You wanted me to.)

O God, where is my right side?
I know in my heart I found her once,
In the wife of my youth.
And I know I can't win her back without You.

So I pray for a second chance.
I hope that a spark of the love might blaze once more
Ten times greater than before
So that our lives together will be
A powerful witness for You. Amen.

6. A loving wife needs and wants from her husband who loves her, not only to be affirmed in what she does as his wife, but who she is as his wife, the female in the relationship.

- a. Her emotions must be heard and valued for being “different”.
 - b. Her dreams and desires are for him to include her in his world, just as he doesn’t want her to exclude him in her world.
 - c. If all his non-working time is spent with his hunting, fishing, and golfing buddies, or other hobbies and sports events, that totally exclude his wife, how on earth can she feel she is loved as a wife, or how can he ever be classified as a loving husband concerned about the needs of his wife?
7. How can the husband who fails in this area of the marriage relationship be classified as anything but a selfish, unloving husband in violation of Eph.5:25?
- a. The husband who operates on the basis of what I want and what I think I need is going to govern, is going to be, the norm in this marriage, is unloving and selfish, and has certainly failed in the area of the marriage relationship.

C. THAT THE HUSBAND DILIGENTLY STRIVE TO REACH AND MAINTAIN THE GOAL OF LOVE IN THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP.

1. Love, in 1Cor.13:1-4,8, is the **noun** form – agape – meaning “affection, good-will, love, benevolence.” Thayer, 4 (also in Gal.5:6; Heb.6:10)
2. Love, in Eph.5:25, is the related **verb** form – agapao – meaning “to have a preference for, wish well to, regard the welfare of” Thayer, 3 (Also in Rom.13:8; 2Cor.12:15; Gal.5:14; 1Pet.1:22)
3. Both words, the noun **agape**, and the verb **agapao**, as used in the N.T. give us “a beautiful picture of sacrificial love.”
 - a. The verb, love, agapao, is the word used in Eph.5:25 where the husband is commanded to love his wife, even as Christ also loved (the verb, agapao) the church, and gave himself for it (or gave himself up for it, or sacrificed himself for it; died for it).
 - b. Thus the husband is here required to be willing to make sacrifices for his wife, even as Christ loved the church and sacrificed for it.

- c. How can one deny that the husband's love for his wife is to be a sacrificial love?
- 4. If one loves God, he will also love other people.
 - a. Including him that is begotten, or his brother in the Lord, 1Jno.4:20-5:2.
 - b. Including his neighbor, and even his enemies, Mt.5:43-46
 - c. Surely this would include one's wife!
- 5. Moreover, love is something that is learned. We even learn to love God, indicated in 1Jno.4:19.
- 6. Love for a husband or wife is something to be learned, or is a learning process; something that increases or grows, which is indicated by several passages, 2Pet.1:5-7; 2Pet.3:18; 1Th.4:9,10; even 1Cor.13:4-8.
 - a. That love is a learning process, something that increases or grows, is the reason – as shocking as it may often seem to young adults – that married couples in their fourth, fifth, and sixth decades of married life can honestly say, “we love each other more now than we ever did while we were dating or when we were newlyweds!
 - b. Based upon the characteristics of love set forth in 1Cor.13, and the fact that we are to add love to our faith, according to 2Pet.1:5-7, and can increase in it, according to other passages 1Th.4:9,10, we certainly can say that “love is a decision, a learned art.”
 - c. We both learn what love for our wives is and how to practice it from God's word, not from Hollywood!
 - d. Love can be known only from the actions it prompts – proven by what it does. Cf. God's love for us! Also see 1Cor.13:4-8:--
- 7. Love is “long-suffering,” 1Cor.13:4a.
 - a. It suffereth long; is very patient.
 - b. This verb means “patience in respect of persons.”
 - c. This love with respect to a husband regarding his wife causes him to “love the unloveable” in her because such a love looks beyond the act to the person; that is (as noted earlier) it looks at what she is.
- 8. Love is “kind,” V.4b. –not harsh in nature; seeks to lift up in a sweet, gentle manner.
- 9. Love “envieth not,” V.4c, never envies; knows no jealousy.

- a. “Envieth” is from the Gr. which lit. means “to seethe or to boil.”
 - b. When the husband is self-centered this emotion reveals itself as jealousy.
10. Love “vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, V.4d.
- a. That is, is not “boastful,” and is not “arrogant.”
 - b. An unloving husband may not be the least bit jealous simply because he is smugly, selfishly, self-satisfied.
 - c. When one is self-centered, self-righteous, he never properly considers the other person, even if it be his wife. Cf. Lk.18:9-14.
11. Love “doth not behave itself unseemly,” V.5a.
- a. It is never “rude, ugly, shameful, and base.”
 - b. That is, the shape it takes before others.
 - c. This would include the husband’s attitude and actions toward his wife.
12. Love “seeketh not her own,” that is, it is unselfish. And being unselfish, “is not easily provoked,” V.5b.
13. Love “thinketh no evil,” V.5c; that is, it never bears malice.
14. Note several ways an unloving husband can hurt his spouse:
- a. By frequently criticizing her.
 - b. By not paying attention to her wants, needs and ideas.
 - c. By trying to “explain away her hurts” rather than trying to understand her feelings and empathizing with them.
 - d. By showing preference to others over her.
 - e. By not going out of his way to add romance to the marriage.

D. THAT HUSBANDS REMAIN FAITHFUL THROUGH THE YEARS TO HIS MARRIAGE VOWS AND THE WIFE OF HIS COVENANT.

- 1. Remember Gen.2:24; Mal.2:14-16; Mt.19:3-6; 1Cor.7:10,11.
- 2. This means it is “till death do us part” – one man, one woman, joined together by the Lord as one flesh for life.
- 3. In terms of the marriage vows, husbands are to love their wives until death.

III. CONCLUSION

1. Without a doubt, the challenge for husbands to “love their wives (Eph.5:25a.) carries with the command a sacrificial attitude.
 - a. For husbands are instructed to love their wives with the same intensity that Christ had when he allowed himself to be sacrificed for His bride – the church, Eph.5:25b.
 - b. This hard work, however, bears much fruit – to man’s benefit and to God’s glory!

2. The husband who loves his wife will:
 - a. Recognize the need.
 - b. Realize what she really wants of him as his faithful wife.
 - c. Reach the goal of agape.
 - d. Raise the level of intimacy in the marriage.
 - e. Remain faithful through the years.