

# Husbands, Love Your Wives

Some of this material is adapted from David Pratte's site at [http://www.gospelway.com/family/marriage\\_improvement.php](http://www.gospelway.com/family/marriage_improvement.php)

**Ephesians 5:22-33 (ESV)** <sup>22</sup>Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup>For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. <sup>24</sup>Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. <sup>25</sup>**Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,** <sup>26</sup>that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup>so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. <sup>28</sup>In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup>For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup>because we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup>"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." <sup>32</sup>This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup>However, **let each one of you love his wife as himself,** and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

**Husband: Servant-Leader (Provider, Protector)** *1 Cor 11:3; Eph 5:23; 1 Tim 5:8; 1 Pet 3:7*

**Wife: Servant-Helper (Bearer of Children, Manager of the Home)** *Gen 2:18; 1 Tim 5:14; Ti 2:4-5; Prov 31:27-31*

In God's order, both husbands & wives are servants. They serve God and one another in carrying out the primary roles God has ordained for them.

## I. The Importance of Love

- The ultimate goal of Paul's instruction **1 Timothy 1:5 (NASB)** <sup>5</sup>But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.
- Sums up the whole Old Testament Law **Matthew 22:40 (ESV)** <sup>40</sup>On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."
- The distinguishing mark of the Christian **John 13:35 (NKJV)** <sup>35</sup>By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
- The crowning virtue of all others **James 2:8 (ESV)** <sup>8</sup>If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, <sup>9</sup>"You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. **Colossians 3:14 (ESV)** <sup>14</sup>And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.
- Sums up the Christian's responsibilities **Romans 13:8 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup>Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.
- Without love a Christian is nothing **1 Corinthians 13:3 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup>And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body <sup>4</sup>to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

## II. Love Is a choice of the will to GIVE.

**John 3:16** - God so loved the world that He **gave** His only-begotten Son.

**Ephesians 5:25** Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and **gave** Himself for her,

**Luke 6:27-28 (NKJV)** <sup>27</sup>“But I say to you who hear: **Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,** <sup>28</sup>bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

**Couples can LEARN to love one another. We can learn to GIVE.**

### **III. Love is an action verb – we give in WORD and in DEED**

**1 John 3:18-19 ( NKJV )** <sup>18</sup>My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. <sup>19</sup>And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.

**1 Peter 3:7 ( ESV )** <sup>7</sup>Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, **showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel,** since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

**Love is shown by choosing to honor our wife at all times,** even when we disagree or see a fault. Speak respectfully, consider her views, and show common politeness and decency.

**A husband owes his spouse “due affection.”**

**1 Corinthians 7:3-4 ( NKJV )** <sup>3</sup>Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. <sup>4</sup>The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does*. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*.

Husbands need to learn that the most intimate affection is just the culmination of other forms of affection. Without other forms of affection, intimacy is hollow, lacking beauty and meaning. When a couple is kind and affectionate in the course of daily life, there is a deeply satisfying beauty in their most intimate union.

**You may say, "I'm just not an affectionate person." Then *choose to change!*** It may be harder for you, but love is a choice, not a mood. You can change and become affectionate, just like you can change anything else necessary to please God.

### **IV. Must be a sacrificial love.**

**Ephesians 5:25 ( ESV )** <sup>25</sup>Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and **gave himself up for her,**

***A selfish, proud, controlling headship will destroy a marriage.***

- Christ-like headship is not lording over, but is persuasion by the example of serving.
- Headship is not a dictatorship
- Headship is not a tool to use to get your way

**Matthew 20:25-28 ( ESV )** <sup>25</sup>But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. <sup>26</sup>It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and <sup>27</sup>and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, and <sup>28</sup>even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

**1 Peter 5:2-3 ( ESV )** <sup>2</sup>shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, and not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; and not for shameful gain, but eagerly; <sup>3</sup>not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

**Hebrews 13:17 ( ESV )** <sup>17</sup>Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

## V. Must be a sanctifying love.

**Ephesians 5:26-27 (ESV)** <sup>26</sup>that he might **sanctify her**, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup>so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, **that she might be holy and without blemish.**

**How do I “sanctify” my wife? Is my wife a better Christian and a better person because she is married to me?**

**A faithful husband will...**

- join with you in worship, not hinder you
- pray with you, not avoid spiritual fellowship
- support your Bible study, not hinder it
- encourage godly morality not discourage it
- help relations w/ friends, in-laws – peacemaker
- help, not hinder, your efforts to teach the Word
- work with you, not against you, in helping you raise godly children

## VI. Must be a sensitive love.

**Ephesians 5:28-30 (ESV)** <sup>28</sup>In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup>For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup>because we are members of his body.

**You honor and care for yourself when you honor and care for your wife!**

**1 Peter 3:7 (ESV)** <sup>7</sup>Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you<sup>£</sup> of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

**One way to put love into your marriage is to say and do the things that led you to first love your wife!**

**Often the reason couples stop loving one another is that they stop doing the things that led them to love one another! How do couples learn to love in the first place?**

We know how to put love into a relationship. We did it before we were married. We act in certain ways to nourish love before marriage; then we get married and quit doing those things! What did you do that led you to decide that you loved one another and wanted to get married?

- Before marriage, the young man sends the girl gifts, flowers, cards. After marriage, he stops.
- Before marriage, the young lady chooses her clothes, her perfume, her hair style deliberately to please him. After marriage, she says, "My girlfriends like this on me. If he doesn't like it, something's wrong with him."
- Before marriage, you take the time to listen to her. After marriage, you don't have time.
- Before marriage, you showed politeness and respect: You held the door for her, let her go first, said "please" and "thank you"? Do you do those things now?
- Before marriage, you complimented her hair, her dress. You used expressions of affection, told her often how much she means to you. Why not now?
- Before marriage, you went places and did things together. What about after marriage?

We all know what cultivates love in a relationship. We did it before! Go back and act the way you acted that led you into love. Don't wait for feelings or a special mood to strike you. Make a deliberate choice to do these things.

### **Many couples have excuses for why they don't do these things.**

#### **\* "We don't have time."**

Did you have time before marriage? You made the time, because it was important to you.

**\* "We can't afford it."** You can't afford not to. What did you do and where did you go before you got married? The point is to spend time together.

**\* "We don't enjoy the same things."** She likes to shop, he can't stand to shop. He likes ball games, she can't stand ball games. Etc. When courting, you didn't insist that your spouse do only the things you wanted to do! You find something to do and a way to do it, just like you did before you got married.

**When we make these excuses, we are saying we don't spend time together because the other person and our relationship with that person are not important enough!** We may not say it or think it, but our actions show it. And at least subconsciously, our spouse feels it.

### **Marriage Advice I wish I would have had...**

From <http://geraldrogers.com/marriage-advice-i-wish-i-would-have-had/> (Adapted – jrc)

After losing a woman that I loved, and a marriage of almost 16 years, here's the advice I wish I would have had...

**NEVER STOP COURTING. *Ephesians 5:29 (NKJV)*** <sup>29</sup>*For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.*

Never stop dating. NEVER EVER take that woman for granted. You promised to be that man who would OWN HER HEART and fiercely protect it. This is the most important and sacred treasure you will ever be entrusted with. SHE CHOSE YOU. Never forget that, and NEVER GET LAZY in your love.

**ALWAYS SEE THE BEST IN HER. *1 Cor. 13:7*** – *"Love... bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."*

Focus on what you love about her. If you focus on what bugs you, all you will see is reasons to be bugged. If you focus on what you love, you will know without a doubt that you are the luckiest man on earth to be have this woman as your wife.

**FORGIVE IMMEDIATELY. *Colossians 3:12-13 (NKJV)*** <sup>12</sup>*...put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;* <sup>13</sup>*bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*

Focus on the future rather than carrying weight from the past. Don't let your history hold you hostage. Holding onto past mistakes that either you or she makes is like a heavy anchor to your marriage and will hold you back.

**BE PRESENT. *1 Peter 3:7 (NASB)*** <sup>7</sup>*You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.*

Give her not only your time, but your focus and your attention. Do whatever it takes to clear your head so that when you are with her you are fully WITH HER. Treat her as you would your most valuable client. She is.

**ALLOW HER TO BE SAD OR UPSET. 1 Cor. 13:4** – “Love suffers long and is kind;”

Do not be quick to express irritation or frustration at her emotions, and do not always try to fix it. It’s your job to HOLD HER and let her know it’s ok. Let her know that you hear her, and that she’s important to you. Stand present and strong and let her know and that you are that pillar on which she can always lean and that you aren’t going anywhere.

**BE SILLY... don’t take yourself too seriously. Proverbs 17:22 ( NKJV )** <sup>22</sup> *A merry heart does good, like medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones.*

Laugh. Make her laugh. Laughter makes everything else easier.

**DON’T BE AN IDIOT. Proverbs 11:29 ( NKJV )** <sup>29</sup> *He who troubles his own house will inherit the wind, And the fool will be servant to the wise of heart.*

You will make mistakes and so will she. Try not to make too big of mistakes, and learn from the ones you do make. You’re not supposed to be perfect, just try to not be too stupid.

**TAKE FULL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR YOUR OWN HAPPINESS: Romans 12:18 ( NKJV )** <sup>18</sup> *if it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.*

It’s not your wife’s job to make you happy, and she CAN’T make you sad. You are responsible for finding your own happiness. Never blame your wife If YOU get frustrated or angry at her. They are YOUR emotions, and your responsibility.

**CHOOSE LOVE.** Always choose love. Always, always choose love. In the end, this is the only advice you need.

## **VII. Will be a satisfying love**

**Ephesians 5:32-33 ( ESV )** <sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, and I am saying that **it refers to Christ and the church.** <sup>33</sup> However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

**God designed marriage to be the happiest and most fulfilling of all earthly relationships.**

**Ecclesiastes 9:9 ( ESV )** <sup>9</sup> Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun.