

Husbands, love your Wives

Ephesians 5:25

As we celebrate Father's Day, I want to wish each father a happy Father's Day. I can say without hesitation, that being a father is one of the greatest blessings and joys in my life. I am truly thankful for the two daughters the Lord blessed Tanya and me with.

Some might think my text a bit strange for Father's Day, but I want to be obedient to the Lord. I have had this verse on my heart for some time for today. Actually, I am convinced it is a very fitting text for today. If we are to be the fathers God desires of us, we must first be the husbands God desires of us. Paul reveals the foundation for being a good husband, as well as, being a good father – loving our wives. I cannot love my children as I should if I do not love my wife as I should.

Now, I will be the first to admit that this command is quite difficult to fulfill. On the surface it may appear that the Lord expects us just to love our wives, and I will agree that is what the text implies. However, there is much more to the love Paul spoke of in the text than most realize. We are to love our wives as Christ loved the church. That is significant love. *This is a sacrificial love that does well and wishes well—no matter the circumstance. It is a love that disciplines and corrects harmful indulgence and misbehavior, no matter the cost to self. It is a love that demonstrates kindness, benevolence, and esteem even in the midst of stormy situations. It is the love of the mind, reason, and choice. Simply stated, agape love is a sacrificial love, that is, a love that cares, gives, and works for another person's good—no matter how the person may respond or treat one.*ⁱ

As we examine this challenging text, we must consider the love Christ had for the church if we expect to love our wives as Christ loved the church. Let's consider the [aspects](#) of such love as we discuss the command: [Husbands, Love your Wives](#). Scripture reveals Christ's love was:

I. Sacrificial Love ([Eph.5:25](#)) – [Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it](#). We know that Christ made the supreme sacrifice for the church; He willingly laid down His life on the cross in order to purchase our redemption. The Lord surrendered all of Himself as He died for our sin. His love for the church compelled Him to endure the horrors of the cross, drinking the cup of God's wrath and judgment, and die an agonizing death in our place. Such love is beyond our ability to comprehend, and yet He loved that much!

- Men, this is profound and greatly challenging. Paul declared that we are to love our wives as Christ loved the church, being willing to give ourselves for her. Likely, under extreme circumstances, most husbands who love their wives would be willing to die in her place. We would

put ourselves in harms way to ensure her safety and security; but, what about ordinary living? Do we daily express a sacrificial love for our wives? Do we place her needs and desires above our own? Are we willing to sacrifice our time and plans in order to genuinely show our love? In essence, do we love her more than life itself? These are sobering questions, but ones we must answer if we are to fulfill a biblical love for our wives. She must be more important than our desires, our goals, and our pursuit of success. In fact, our love for her must be second only to our love for the Lord. Are we showing our wives sacrificial love?

II. Substantial Love (1 John 3:16a) – *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.* It is impossible to question or deny the love of Christ for the church. Our text revealed that he gave His life for the church. John declares that He laid down His life for us. This is substantial love – love that withholds nothing; love that is willing to give one’s all; love that is proven without doubt, not just in word, but also in deed. *Phil.2:7-8 – But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: [8] And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* Christ emptied Himself of the glory He enjoyed with the Father, making Himself of no reputation, adorned a body of flesh as a servant of others, and humbled himself in obedient death on the cross for the church! That is substantial love!

- Men, does your wife know you love her? I hope you convey your love to her on a consistent basis. I also hope you realize that while she enjoys hearing you say those words, she needs to see your love in action. Does your life reveal the treasure she is to you? If we speak the words, and yet fail to back them up with appropriate actions, eventually she will begin to question our sincerity. I do not imply that we can offer what Christ alone provides, but we can love her substantially, as set forth in Christ’s example.

III. Impartial Love (1 John 4:10, 19) – *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. [19] We love him, because he first loved us.* The love of Christ is not based upon our love for Him, nor was it dependent upon our love for Him. He loved us while we were yet in our sin. Christ loved us when we had no desire to know Him, while we yet rebelled against Him, seeking to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. We now love the Lord because He first loved us. He chose to love us while we were yet unlovable.

- Such an impartial love must be shown for our wives. We cannot love them only when things are going well in the relationship. We cannot reserve our love for our wives to times when she meets our expectations or supports every desire we may have. Even when life is difficult, (and it is for all of us at times,) we must show the same love and affection. We must be consistent in our love for our wives, regardless of the situation or circumstance.

IV. Devotional Love (John 10:17-18) – Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. ^[18] No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. The death of Christ upon the cross was not a tragic mistake. He was not there because the Jews had condemned Him and Pilate consented to His crucifixion. Jesus went to the cross by choice. He chose to love us; He chose to die for us, willingly laying down His life. Love compelled Christ to make the supreme sacrifice for sin, becoming our substitute while embracing the death we deserved. Such devotional love was and remains profound.

- Men, the love we have for our wives must also bear this characteristic. We must love her because we choose to do so. If our love for our wives is nothing more than compulsory or self-serving, then we fail in loving as we should. While we should desire to love our wives according to the dictates of Scripture, I hope our love is not merely used as a means to check a box in our supposed Christian duty. Our love must be as Christ's love – love out of choice not selfishness.

V. Visual Love (1 Peter 2:24) – Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. The love Christ had for the church was certainly not hidden or secretive. His love took Him to the cross where He openly displayed His love and commitment for those He came to redeem. If anyone should question the love of God for fallen humanity, there is no need to look anywhere but the cross. Christ not only proclaimed His love for us, He revealed His love as He bled and died on the cross.

- This goes hand in hand with the substantial love discussed earlier, but I cannot emphasize the importance enough. Men, we must be willing to openly show our love for our wives. (Illus. I told you when we married; if I change my mind, I'll let you know.) She needs to hear that we love her, but she also needs to be shown our love. Live in such a way that she will know your love apart from your words. This is one situation where actions speak so loudly, our wives will not be able to hear a word we say. If our actions do not reveal our love, mere words will never convince her otherwise. Don't be afraid to show your love for your wife.

VI. Motivational Love (1 John 4:19) – We love him, because he first loved us. This statement reveals that one cannot truly know love apart from a covenant relationship with Christ, and it also reveals the motivational aspect of His love for us. Because Christ loved us long before we loved Him, His love motivates us to love Him and love others. Such love and commitment cannot be ignored or forgotten. Christ's love for us creates a desire to love Him in return. His love motivates us to live our lives in light of His righteousness, seeking to please Him in all we do. His love for us shapes not only our love, but the lives we live.

- The same is true in our marriage relationships. If we want our wives to love us, we must love them. While showing love for another may not always guarantee love in return, it certainly will not hurt the relationship. As we continually and consistently show our love for our wives, the marriage relationship has a much greater chance of being strengthened. I have never known an absence of love and affection to be viewed positively. However, sacrificial, consistent love will generally motivate love in return. Our love should motivate her love. Strong relationships are built and sustained by mutual love for one another.

VII. Reverential Love (John 6:38) – For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. One cannot examine the life of Christ, which included His love for fallen man and death upon the cross to redeem us from sin, without embracing His obedient submission to the will of the Father. He did not come to fulfill personal desires; He came to fulfill the plan of redemption, ordained before the foundation of the world. His committed submission to the Father was a significant factor in His life, ministry, and death. He loved because the Father loved, and He was determined to please the Father through His love for us. Heb.10:7 – Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

- This is humbling and convicting. The Word of God commands us to love our wives as Christ loved the church. Men, if we fail to keep this command, we are living in open rebellion to God's will for our lives. While there are many reasons to love our wives, our submission to the Lord should serve as a motivator to love. One thing is certain, if we fail to love our wives as we should, we cannot live in a way that pleases God. The desire to honor the Lord is a significant factor to consider in regard to the love we possess and show our wives.

Conclusion: Men, I will admit this is a sobering task. While I love my wife, there is clearly room for me to love her more. As I consider the command to love her as Christ loved the church, I know I fail in many ways. The Lord is able to equip us to love in a way that pleases Him, but we must walk in close communion with Him. If our love for the Lord is lacking, likely our love for our wives will be as well. If there are needs, bring them to the Lord.

I realize everyone here today is not a husband or father. However, we have discussed the great love Christ has for the church. If you have yet to come to Christ in salvation, I hope you realize the sacrificial love He has for you and the provision made on your behalf. If the Spirit has dealt with your heart regarding salvation, come in repentance and faith.

ⁱ Practical Word Studies in The New Testament, WORDsearch, Lifeway, Inc. (Electronic Edition.)