

Eph 5:25–33 (ESV) Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ⁽²⁶⁾ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ⁽²⁷⁾ 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. ⁽²⁸⁾ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ⁽²⁹⁾ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ⁽³⁰⁾ because we are members of his body. ⁽³¹⁾ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ⁽³²⁾ This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ⁽³³⁾ However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

1. Review: Looking at the results of the Spirit-filled life

That life that is lived in submission to the Spirit – under his control

- A. Seen that it affects our relationship with God – we will be grateful worshippers
- B. Seen how it affects our relationships with one another
 - 1). We will be humble and willing to submit to one another
 - 2). Wives will be willing to submit to their husbands as an act of submission to their Lord
 - 3). We began to look at the husbands responsibility to love the wife
 - a). She is not submitting to a harsh dictator but to breathtaking love
 - b). Just as we submit to Christ knowing he has our best in mind – so does she

Transition: We began to look at what the husbands love – Agape - looks like – the characteristics

2. First characteristic of this Agape love - it is a sacrificial love

Eph 5:25 (ESV) Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

- A. This is not a romantic love –though that should be in the marriage
- B. This is love expressed through sacrifice even when the recipient might not deserve it
 - 1). Even when the least thing you feel is romance – it is a choice more than an emotion

Transition: That brings us to our next heading for what the husbands Agape love for his wife looks like

It is a sacrificial love – we love like Christ loved the church and GAVE HIMSELF

SECOND: AGAPE LOVE IS A SANCTIFYING (PURIFYING) LOVE

Eph 5:26–27 (ESV) that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ⁽²⁷⁾ 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.

1. When Jesus gave himself for the church – he not only died so we’d be forgiven

- A. That shed blood cleansed us from every stain that sin made
 - 1). IOW - God is not just saying – I forgive you and choose to overlook all your sins
He says because of the work of my son – I forgive you because there are no sins left
 - a). Your record in heaven is completely clean – nothing is left to condemn you over

Transition: God’s love is a purifying – cleansing love – the husband’s love is to be the same

- A. How are we cleansed? Look at v. 26

The agent of this cleansing is the Word

Eph 5:26 (ESV) that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,

1. Not talking about baptism – it says washing of water **WITH the word**

- A. Probably alludes to a ritual in Ancient Greece for the bride-to-be
 - 1). She’d be taken down to a river to be bathed and ceremonially cleansed from her past life
 - a). Whatever had happened in her life before was now symbolically purified – washed away
So she would enter the marriage without any moral or social blemish
 - 2). This is what Christ did in giving himself up for the church – his bride

Eph 5:26–27 (ESV) that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ⁽²⁷⁾ 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.

- a). All of our past is cleansed at the moment of salvation
- b). We enter into our new relationship with him without any moral blemish

2. The agent God uses to cleanse us is his word

- A. The word brings us the truth of the Gospel that leads us into a relationship with Christ
 - 1). After being saved - It brings us the truths that lead us from sin into greater holiness
 - 2). It is the agent God uses in *salvation* THEN in *sanctification*

3. Husbands the Word of God is to be a priority in your home

- A. If it has no prominent place in your home – it will be hard to have this purity

John Calvin: Unless God's Word illumine the way, the whole life of men is wrapped in darkness and mist, so that they cannot but miserably stray.

 - 1). The natural flow of spirituality is downward without the Word of God
The toxicity of this world and its thinking will begin to degrade the home
- B. The solution is to apply the Word as a cleansing agent

Ro 12:2 (ESV) Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

 - 1). It has the power to scrub the mind from the lies the world wants to implant

Question: Where do you start? With yourself

Leaders always set the pace – spiritual leaders set the pace spiritually

- A. You can't expect your wife to do what you're not willing to do – so YOU read your Bible
- B. Then pray daily for your wife – cover her in intercession – like Christ prays for you

Ro 8:34 (ESV) Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

 - 1). He died for us – first element – gave himself - sacrificial love
 - 2). Now he prays for us – second element – purifying love

Point: Husbands make the word important in your home

- A. Make praying for your wife – her holiness – fire for the Lord – a priority in your life
 - 1). Let me add – pray with your wife
It is the man's responsibility to create a godly atmosphere in the home
- B. This is being the Spiritual leader – this is loving your wife like Christ loves you

Agape Love is a Sacrificial Love – It is a Sanctifying (Purifying) Love

THE HUSBANDS AGAPE LOVE IS A CARING LOVE

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

1. Husbands you need an example of how to love your wife

- A. It's the same way Christ loved the church – loved you - see how he loved you and duplicate it
- B. Here's another way to go – in the same way you love yourself – that will be a big improvement
“He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church.”

Love Their Wives as Their Own Bodies

1. Christ provides for us because we are members of his body

- A. Not to provide for His church would be to bring harm to himself

1 Co 6:17 (ESV) But he who is *joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.*

- 1). The church is called “His Body” – we are fused to him intimately – what hurts us affects him

- 2). Remember when Saul was persecuting the church – what did Jesus say

Acts 9:4 (NIV) ... "Saul, Saul, *why do you persecute me?*"

- a). There is such a unity – such and intimacy – fusion – you hurt us you hurt him

Thought: That shouldn't surprise us – all of us who are parents know this well

- A. When Taylor was suffering I suffered too – His pain affected me big time

- 1). Why – we were bonded together by deep love

Transition: But this is how it's supposed to be with the husband and the wife

2. Scripture says the husband and wife are one

Eph 5:31 (ESV) “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, *and the two shall become one flesh.*”

- A. This bond creates a deep caring – empathy – what hurts my wife hurts me

- 1). My love should cause me to care about her pain like I care about mine

It should drive me to do what is necessary to alleviate that pain like I do with mine

- B. But this kind of love has a habit of slipping away through the years – we need to fight to maintain it

Several years ago, the *Saturday Evening Post* published an article entitled “The Seven Ages of the Married Cold.” It revealed the reaction of a husband to his wife's colds during their first seven years of marriage. It went something like this:

The first year: “Sugar dumpling, I'm really worried about my baby girl. You've got a bad sniffle, and there's no telling about these things with all this strep throat going around. I'm putting you in the hospital this afternoon for a general checkup and a good rest. I know the food's lousy, but I'll be bringing your meals in from Rossini's. I've already got it all arranged with the floor superintendent.”

The second year: “Listen, darling, I don't like the sound of that cough. I called Doc Miller and asked him to rush over here. Now you go to bed like a good girl, please? Just for papa.”

The third year: “Maybe you'd better lie down, honey; nothing like a little rest when you'd feel lousy. I'll bring you something to eat. Have you got any canned soup?”

The fourth year: “Now look, dear, be sensible. After you've fed the kids, washed the dishes, and finished the floor, you'd better lie down.”

The fifth year: “Why don't you take a couple of aspirin?”

The sixth year: “I wish you'd just gargle or something, instead of sitting around all evening barking like a seal!”

The seventh year: “For Pete's sake, stop sneezing! Are you trying to give me pneumonia?” The decline of marriage as seen through the common cold. A funny look at a not-so-funny reality

- C. That's funny but it's too close to reality – but God's love for us doesn't diminish

- 1). His care and concern for me is just as great today as it was 40 years ago when I met him

- b). Scripture says we are loved with an *everlasting love* – it will never change

Scripture also says God is immutable – unchanging

- D. That is the high calling to the husband – that takes the Spirit's power = Spirit-filled

Agape Love is a Sacrificial Love – It is a Sanctifying (Purifying) Love – It is a caring love

THE HUSBANDS AGAPE LOVE IS A CONNECTED LOVE

Eph 5:28–30 (ESV) In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ⁽²⁹⁾ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it...

1. Lloyd-Jones had an interesting application to this passage

“The Apostle puts it in this form in order that a husband may see that he cannot detach himself from his wife. You cannot detach yourself from your body, so you cannot detach yourself from your wife. She is a part of you, says the Apostle, so remember that always.”

- A. Men we don’t know this instinctively – why God has to teach it to us
 - 1). We grow up in a world that exalts self-sufficiency
The uber-Macho don’t need anybody mindset
 - a). I had a rebellious – I don’t need you – I don’t need anybody attitude
- B. Problem we can carry that independence into the marriage – live isolated lives from our wives
 - 1). She does her thing – I do mine – in the same house but strangers
 - 2). It’s OK to do separate things – but not always – you two are to be one
 - a). This is a real challenge for a very contented loner like me – but it’s not right

Point: I must make sure my wife is a part of my life – that I’m a part of hers

Agape Love is a Sacrificial Love – It is a Sanctifying (Purifying) Love – It is a caring love – it is a connected love

THE HUSBANDS AGAPE LOVE IS A LOGICAL LOVE

Eph 5:28–30 (ESV) In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ⁽²⁹⁾ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it...

1. Because your united – fused - what happens to her will always affect you

- A. You love her properly and you will benefit – *happy wife – happy life*
 - 1). But neglect her and it will always come back to cause trouble
 - 2). So much trouble – you are actually hating yourself when you don’t love her properly
- B. Have you noticed when you neglect something important it usually has disastrous results
“What’s that grinding noise in the transmission? Whatever!”
 - 1). Month later the transmission freezes up – mechanic says
“If you would have brought it in a month ago a simple fix – but NOW...”
- C. It’s the same with marriage – you neglect your wife – she is weakened and so are you
 - 1). How could it be any other way – when you are one
 - a). Neglect her – cause her to be unhappy – you’ll go down with her
 - 2). That’s like being surprised the rest of your body starts to lose its energy – declines
When you neglect a bad infection on your arm – the arm is connected to the rest

Transition: If we are to love our wife as we love ourselves – *how do we love ourselves?*

For No One Ever Hated His Own Flesh, But Nourishes and Cherishes It

Eph 5:29–30 (ESV) For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ⁽³⁰⁾ because we are members of his body.

1. We really take care of our own flesh don’t we

- A. We pamper it – feed it the food it likes
We buy it a big TV to watch Sports on – and a nice chair to watch Sports in
 - 1). We take care of its every need – why because we *cherish it*
- B. We get sick and we do what we have to do to get better – take it easy
 - 1). We get tired and make sure we can rest

Point: We should have the same concern for our wife

- A. Like we’ve seen - that concern should be steadfast

-
- 1). We should care about her needs as much as we do ours
 - B. **Nourish** = Speaks of a fond – loving provision
Cherish = “to comfort, foster with loving care.”
 - 1). It speaks of warmth - loving provision and care
 - 2). Out of that love we take care of her needs like we take care of our own
 - a). Her needs are just as important
“To cherish her is to use tender love and physical affection to give her warmth, comfort, protection, and security.”
 - C. I have a confession – remember when my computer crashed
 - 1). Well I NEED a computer for all I do – I did what I had to do to fix it
 - 2). My wife had been struggling with her computer for awhile
 - a). She ALSO does a lot for the church – worship group etc.
 - b). I let her struggle while I fixed mine – guess what – God didn’t like that
 - 1a). He took me to the woodshed right before I left for Israel
I got back and the next day did what I had to do to buy her a laptop
 - 2a). Found a deal 16 month interest free – took it up and set it up for her
 - 3). I was nourishing and cherishing myself – I’m good at that – but was neglecting her
 - a). I’m so glad the Lord opened my eyes – so is she
- Thought:** This is why men need Ephesians 5 – we aren’t naturally like this
- A. But our God is like this – to us – and says now duplicate that to your wife
 - B. This also means a successful marriage is one where the husband thinks rather than just feels
 - 1). We think about what God expects from us – regardless of what we feel at the moment
And we love our wife as an act of love towards him
 - a). Our priority list becomes God – then wife – then us
 - b). Isn’t that the priority of Christ on the cross – for the glory of God THEN us
 - 1a). Aren’t you glad he wasn’t thinking about himself
 - 2). It is still his priority – nourishing and cherishing us because we are members of his body
-

Agape Love is a Sacrificial Love – It is a Sanctifying (Purifying) Love – It is a Caring love – it is a Connected love

THE HUSBANDS AGAPE LOVE IS A WIFE HONORING LOVE

Eph 5:31–32 (ESV) “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

1. **Paul is quoting Gen 2:24 – which Jesus also quoted in Matthew 19:5**
2. **This is the normal pattern in marriage**
 - A. The man leaves his father and mother and is joined to the wife
 - 1). She becomes the preeminent woman in his life – because God fused them together
 - 2). The wife has a special place in his heart that no other woman is allowed to compete for
 - a). This includes his mother
 - B. The husband is not fused to his mother – no matter how much a saint she is
 - 1). Listen men if you’re always comparing your wife to dear old mom – knock it off!
 - a). Your mom is not in competition for that place that God has reserved for your wife
 - b). Your wife should never feel like she’s competing with your mother
 - 2). I may get myself in trouble here – but that’s OK – the truth is not always easy to hear
 - a). If your mother is causing the competition – man up and tell her to knock it off

- b). I had to do that with my mom – she was jealous – envious - whatever
- 1a). I had to sit her down and tell her that bad mouthing my wife was not acceptable
And if she ever wanted us to come over again – that WILL stop – it did

Point: Agape love – is a protecting love

1 Cor 13:4-7 (NIV) Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. (5) It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. (6) Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. (7) *It always protects...*

- A. Men protect your wife – she is the priority – just like the Lord protects us

II. A SUMMARY COMMENT TO HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

Eph 5:32 (ESV) This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

1. Paul says all this submission and love I've written about is modeled in the church

- A. The saved recognize the Lord's authority and willingly submit
 - 1). Just like the wife recognizes the authority God's given the husband and follows him
- B. The Lord in the church loves his bride (us) with this incredible agape love
 - 1). Which takes the fear of submitting to him away – he wants our best – he's not selfish

Transition: Now Paul closes up this section with a summary statement to the husband and wife

Eph 5:33 (ESV) However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

1. Paul has been teaching about marriage – woman's part – man's part

- A. Then he spoke of Christ and his church
 - 1). But wants to finish up with the main thought – “However” – gets back on track

Let Each of One of You

1. Every husband and wife is called to live out this godly pattern of marriage

- A. No married individual escapes these commands – this sweeps away all excuses
 - 1). The husband who might say “I'm just not very loving. It's not the way I was raised.”
 - 2). The wife who would say “Submit! This is 2018 not 1950. I'm a modern woman.”
- B. Christ is Lord – the Bible is the final authority in our life – so Paul says “Each of you”

2. The husband is to love his wife as himself

- A. She rises up your priority list to be as important to you as you are
 - 1). Love her – care for her – nourish her – protect her – in the same way you do you
- B. His love is to make her submission easier – like the Lord's love makes ours
- C. Can I say this – his Christian walk with the Lord is to make it easier for her to trust him
 - 1). If she knows you only want God's will – that you seek him – read his word and pray
 - a). That will make it a lot easier to follow you

3. The wife is to respect the husband

- A. This simply means that she recognizes the Biblical truth about marriage
 - 1). God has set up an order in the family – Christ. Husband. Wife. Children.
 - a). You might not like that – but that doesn't change this truth

4. Final encouragement: Remember the big picture

- A. Marriage is meant to bring glory to God – when both want that above all else this becomes easier
 - 1). Each will do their part as an act of love and worship to their Lord
- B. Marriage will work when it lines up with God's principles

-
- 1). He wants your marriage to be filled with joy – harmony – these are the divine principles
 - 2). He didn't bring you together to produce strife
- C. As each obey God by submitting to these principles– the promise is it will bring blessing into your life
- 1). God always blesses obedience – one great blessing - greater manifestation of himself
 - a). Where in every place in your life
Josh 1:8 (NIV) Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. ***Then you will be prosperous and successful.***
 - 1a). Doesn't mean huge bank accounts – but a life filled with satisfaction – contentment – joy and peace