

Ephesians 5:25-33  
"Here's To The Husbands"

What is the secret to finding harmony in the home? Paul tells us in the 18<sup>th</sup> Vs of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ch of the book of Eph. It's not found in being drunk w/wine, in which is dissipation (a decision which will dismantle & destroy your life personally & work ruin in your family) it's found in being filled continually w/the Spirit of God. When we are right w/the Lord individually we will be right w/one another as family.

A life that is "Spirit filled" will be a life of worship (both in the public assembly & in my heart/life personally/privately). It'll be marked by a disposition of thanksgiving, & I'll be willing to prefer others before me. (Vs 21) "Submitting *one to another* in the fear of God."

Jesus said that like this, "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."<sup>1</sup> Love doesn't parade itself or demand its own way, but rather it gives way to others, it *prefers* others, it's characterized by selflessness & sacrifice.

Last week we took note of the fact that if (as believers) we're to submit one to another *generally*, how much more does it apply in our *family*? If we want the ministry (the body of Christ specifically) to be healthy, than it's imperative that families be healthy (spiritually) because as goes the family so goes the church. So Paul zeroed in on the nucleus of the family, the marriage relationship.

& Beginning w/the wives Paul shared the heart of God concerning her role in the Christian marriage. That she submit to her husband; not because he's more important, or because he's more intelligent, or more capable or any of those things. But that she might glorify J.C. This is His calling upon her as a godly wife. For God has ordained that the husband be the head of wife as Christ is also the head of the church; & because God is creating a model of the relationship between Christ & the church in the marriage union... (Vs 32) Even as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be subject to their own husbands...

Now, had Paul stopped right there, wives would certainly feel as though the brunt of obligation was placed upon them (& rightfully so). I mean, fellas, we have to confess that this is no small task that God has entrusted to our wives... Because (I'm just going to say it) you're not exactly a dream submit to! 😊 If *you* had to submit to you, you probably wouldn't like it one bit! & The truth is that many men make their wives submission to them a *grievous* thing. & I'll tell you this to, that's sin before God.

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<sup>1</sup> [The New King James Version](#). (1982). [In 13:35]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Why are you making it so difficult for her to submit to you? That's a service that she's seeking to render unto the Lord! & You're tempting her to disobey the Lord in making it such a grind, such a trial to submit to you... *If your wife finds it difficult to submit to you, you would do well to get down on your knees & pray to God that He would give her the strength she needs to find victory in that spiritual battle & give you the grace that you need to make you the kind of husband that she would gladly submit to. In short, you need God to help you learn to love her right!*

So lest the husbands feel as though God has signed off on a tyrannical license by which to lord over their wives, we read in Vs 25.

### Vs 25-27

Now men, God knows that most of us aren't that bright. So when it comes to being the godly husband that He's called you to be, there's only 1 thing He's required of you. You've got 1 job to do 😊! Should be simple right?

*Husbands, love your wives... & here's the qualifier, "just as Christ also loved the church & gave Himself for her." Paul is here lifting the love of the marriage union to the highest possible level (again because it's an illustration of the relationship between Christ & the church & there can be no greater love than that of Christ for the church).*

So listen, when we read in Vs 23, "For the husband in the head of the wife" we can't divorce that statement from the context in which its stated can we? & What we discover here is that at the root of the husband's headship it's not contention for control, it's love. & Beyond that (& we'll develop it more in a minute) it's certainly not selfish love, it's not even *sentimental love* (though even that would be a great improvement in many cases). The love that a husband is to have for his wife is a *servant, sacrificial* love.

*What that means is that his leadership in the family is servant leadership. Which means that as the head he goes 1<sup>st</sup>. There you are, you've locked horns on an issue & things can't move forward until someone dies to self, humbles themselves & says, "I'm sorry". Guess what men? That's not your wife's role, that's yours! You're responsible to die to self 1<sup>st</sup>. You're responsible to repent 1<sup>st</sup>, to love unconditionally 1<sup>st</sup>, w/out waiting for or insisting on your wife's submission 1<sup>st</sup>...*

"Husbands, love your wives..." Btw, let me just get this out there, love your wife not *someone else's* wife! There are certain things, (fears, dreams, hopes, vulnerabilities) that you're not to share w/any other woman, those are the intimate things (the treasures) of your heart, they're for your wife.

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be. Love your wife, not a woman at work (or whatever the case may be).

& As you might imagine the word for “love” here is the word “agapao” or “agape”, which is the love the bible ascribes to God Himself when we read, *“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”*<sup>2</sup> God *is* agape. & What you discover when you study the scriptures is that “agape” is a self-sacrificing love that impels the one loving to give himself in self-sacrifice for the well-being of the one who is loved. It’s the same love that was in effect in God’s sending of Christ to the world. You’re familiar w/the Vs. Jn 3:16, *“For God so loved (agapao) the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*<sup>3</sup>

So understand that this is a love that rises above emotions. So many people cash in their marriage chips predicated upon how they feel. But the scriptures aren’t commanding, “Husbands, ‘phileo’ your wives, ‘storge’ your wives, ‘eros’ your wives” (have a deep affection for [or even erotic feelings for]) though again in many cases these things would be a great improvement. *But the love of God rises above all of those things, it operates on another level altogether, it flows not from the emotions, but from the will. It’s not based upon what “feel” but what I “choose.” It shows itself not in passivity, but activity & self-sacrifice for the well-being of the one loved.*

& Here’s something else to think through, it’s *not based* upon the well-deserving or worthiness of your wife. God didn’t love us because we *deserved* it or were somehow *worthy* of it. He didn’t wait for us to clean up our act or demonstrate *our* goodness... He didn’t offer us His love as a reward for good behavior. *He loved us & gave Himself for us when we were rebellious, ungrateful, depraved sinners. In fact, we were His enemies! Yet He chose to love us & give Himself for us.* The bible declares, *“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*<sup>4</sup>

Husbands, love your own wives, just as Christ also loved the church & gave Himself for her. Jesus placed the church before Himself, even so your wife takes priority over your wants, your goals, your dreams... You lay down your life for her. *The sacrifice of Christ was a sacrifice of humility, He gave us the priority. Husbands, does your wife know that after Christ she has the #1 spot in your life? That you love her supremely? Sacrificially? Unconditionally?*

*I promise you that if she understands that she will submit to your headship gladly.*

<sup>2</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [1 Jn 4:8]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>3</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Jn 3:16]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>4</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Ro 5:8]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Who among us would even so much as hesitate to submit our lives to Christ? Why? Because we know He loves us. He's for us, has it in His heart to tend *to*, take care *of*, provide *for* & protect us. He has given His all for us & it's our *honor* to stand behind Him & submit our whole lives to Him...

I should say this as well. Agape doesn't expect nor demand repayment. "I've sacrificed for you, now you should sacrifice for me." It gives because it loves, it doesn't love in order to get something in return.

& Don't read this & interpret it to be saying, "Husbands, be kind to your wives." "Husbands, be chivalrous to your wives." Though no doubt that as well would be a huge improvement in many marriages. What Paul is really saying is, "Husband, continually decide to practice self-denial for the sake of your wife."

So we're seeing this beautiful balance, right? The wife's willful submission is balanced by her husband's self-sacrificial love. Love that doesn't put him first, it puts her first. Notice

**Vs 26-27**

The husband is the head of the wife. What's the responsibility of the head toward the body? It lovingly tends to & takes care of the body, right? If your leg starts twitching when you don't want it to (it's not submitting to your head), you don't take a bat & start laying in to it, seeking to force it into submission. You recognize that will only create greater damage, it's counterproductive to the overall design. You'd seek to get to the root of why that's happening so that things might be in order.

Even so, if your wife isn't submitting to you, you don't start tearing into her, yelling at her, seeking to force or impose your will upon her, that's counterproductive. It's indicative of a deeper problem. (& We'll speak to that in a moment).

But I'm saying these things to say this, as the head takes care of the body. So the husband tends to his wife. Not only is his love for her a *sacrificing* love, we discover here that it's also a *sanctifying* love. Notice, "That he might *sanctify* (set her apart) & cleanse her w/the washing of water by the word." As one man (J. Allan Petersen) put it, "I do not know whether or not your marriage was made in *heaven*, but I do know that all the maintenance work is done on *earth*."

Guys, we have a responsibility to see that our wives are being cleansed by the waters of the word... & Yes the word of God is in view here, though I'm not sure it's saying you need to read the bible to her all the time (though kudos if you do).

& Yes we do well to ensure our families are regularly under the waterfall of the teaching of God's word as we gather weekly to feed on God's word (& certainly that's an acceptable application here).

However, the word Paul uses here for "word" isn't "logos", it's "rhema", the spoken word. In other words; men, you do well to use your words (out loud) to encourage your wife, to ensure her that she's loved, cared for & appreciated. Communicate w/your wife in ways that edify her.

You see, as the bride of Christ, Jesus recognizes, we're not perfect ☺. So He washes us w/the water of the Word. It's His blood that has cleansed us from all sin, but certainly His word works *in* us, washes over & sanctifies us.

Guys, here's the deal. If you don't like your wife, it's not because she's failed you. It's because you've failed her... 1 Cor 11:7 tells us that the woman is the *glory* of the man. She simply radiates w/the light you give her! **If you look at your wife & don't like what you see, it's because you're seeing a reflection of your own failure. So don't think if you just had a different wife it'd be all better... She'll come to reflect those same shortcomings. When's the last time you invested into your marriage, intentionally complimented, built up & encouraged your wife, prayed together & sought the Lord together?**

You see, by the very fact that Jesus invests in us, gives His life for us & intentionally works to sanctify us, that tells us that as husbands we need to invest in our wives, give our lives for them, & work to edify them. The results will take care of themselves, did you see that in Vs 27? (Read)

Christ gave Himself for us (that's the past). He's sanctifying us (that's the present), He will present us a glorious church, pure & perfect, no spot (outward blemish) or wrinkle (inward imperfection), that's the future (when we see Him & stand before Him we will be like Him).

### Vs 28-29

Paul gave 3 reasons for a wife's submission (her service unto the Lord, the order of creation & the model of the church). Even so he gives 3 reasons for the husband to love his wife. #1 We're to love our wives because Christ loved us. #2 Just as w/the wives it's the pattern of the relationship of Christ to His church & #3 We're to love our wife because we're one w/our wife. & Notice in Vs 29 Paul speaks of the nurturing, cherishing attributes of this love. So it's a sacrificing love, it's a sanctifying love & it's a *satisfying* love.

But here in Vs 28 we're given revelatory insight into why our love for our wife is so critical. & Because we're gonna run short on time I want to get straight to the point. When Paul says, "Love your own wife as your own body." He's not saying, "Just as if she's your own body" you know, in the same way you love your own body (though again that would be an improvement many times) but rather, "she, *being* your own body."

Here's what he's pointing to, the woman was taken *from* the man, she is part of the man. The meaning here is, "It behooves you to love your own wife, because she's a part of your own body!" The 2 become 1. Men, do you understand that Eve was taken from Adam's side? Your wife is literally part of you! Love her *as your own body!*

That's why Paul says, "He who loves his wife, loves *himself*." When you neglect your wife, you're neglecting yourself, when you bless your wife, you bless yourself. How many of you have heard the phrase (sort of tongue in cheek) "Happy wife, happy life!" ☺

To neglect your wife (men) is to hurt yourself! Only a fool neglects his broken arm or infected wound, yet how many husbands hurt or neglect their wives & in so doing they suffer from it themselves? She's your own flesh, you can't damage her w/out damaging yourself! But here's the beautiful other side to that, you can't bless her w/out blessing yourself... So if you know what's good for you, you'll nurture & take care of her, she's part of you.

Now, what are you to do if that fire goes out? You're thinking, "I'm hearing you preacher but it's too late. The fire is gone." Well, the world would tell you go ahead, dump your spouse & try again w/a new one. The word of God tells you, relight the fire (& even fan the flames a bit).

In the book of Rev Ch 2 you discover a church that looked good on the surface but underneath it all they'd left their 1<sup>st</sup> love. The fire for Christ had gone out. But Jesus taught them how they could recapture it if they were willing to obey. He said, "**Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works,**"<sup>5</sup> Jesus says the 1<sup>st</sup> things to do when you leave your 1<sup>st</sup> love is to *remember*. Listen, every relationship has it's ups & downs. It's natural for the passion to ebb & flow, come & go. But don't settle for a cold relationship. Remember what it was like when you 1<sup>st</sup> met, that's the direction you need to go. You're going a different direction now, so 1<sup>st</sup> of all *remember*.

2<sup>ndly</sup> Jesus says, "Repent". Turn around, recognize you're going the wrong direction & turn back. What's drawing your heart away? Turn away from that.

<sup>5</sup> [The New King James Version](#). (1982). [Re 2:5]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Spend less time at work, less time w/your hobby & more time w/your spouse. Focus more on her needs & less on your own. (Remember Christ *gave* Himself for you).

3<sup>rdly</sup>, Repeat the 1<sup>st</sup> works. Remember, repent, repeat the 1<sup>st</sup> works, do the kinds of things you used to do, return to that place. Don't fall into the trap of thinking, "If I had passion I'd repeat the 1<sup>st</sup> works". Because Jesus says, "If you repeat the 1<sup>st</sup> works, you'll regain the passion". Invest in your marriage. Help her out around the house, take her to dinner, compliment her, encourage her. Marriage requires work fellas, put in the work & it'll pay off, believe God's word!

### Vs 30-32

Check it out. Paul again reminds us of the 1<sup>st</sup> marriage, the woman taken *from* the man, brought back *to* the man, made one *with* the man. God joined them together. Husbands you can resent it, you can resist it, but you can't change it.

In order for your marriage to be successful you've got to focus on this oneness aspect. Leaving former associations (regardless of how close) & cleaving to your wife (together as one).

Paul says, "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ & the church". Who would've thought that when God joined Adam & Eve way back in the beginning He was demonstrating a principle that would go far beyond a physical marriage union. But that He was in fact giving us a foreshadowing of the great work of joining Christ to the church...

Eve fell into sin, the church was in sin. Adam sinned that they might be together, Christ became sin that we might be reconciled to Him. Woman was taken from man's side, Christ's side was pierced for us upon the cross. Eve shared in Adam's nature, we're partakers of Christ's nature. She was one w/him & we are one w/Christ.

### Vs 33

The summary statement of a godly marriage. "Let each one of you." There's no exceptions, we each have a role & a responsibility.

Husband, love your wife, she herself being part of you. The emphasis is upon unity. So many marriages fail because people never catch sight of this. They're thinking in terms of individuality, so you have 2 people each asserting their rights resulting in discord & separation. The answer is to understand unity, you're not 2, you're 1. 1 Body. Husband, love your wife.

Wife, see to it that you respect your husband. Recognize his biblical responsibility & accountability. Yes you are 1, but he is the head of the marriage unit.

Neither of you look to impose the others role, worry about being whom Christ has called *you* to be. Concern yourself w/your personal role & responsibility before Jesus & you'll have a healthy, biblical relationship w/one another...

### Prayer Points:

God we look to You & to Your word to change our hearts, & change our lives. Help us not to resist Your word, but to *receive* Your word. Surely You've given both the wives & the husbands plenty to occupy ourselves with. Help us to honor You in our obedience *to* You. I pray for every marriage represented her, each marriage in this church. Jesus that You would be the center of them all. That we would be good & faithful servants in the stewardship of our marriages, reflecting Your love for us & our submission to You.

You never need doubt God's love for you. He's demonstrated that love in the giving of Christ *for* you. Jesus has loved you & given Himself *for* you upon the cross. You can be washed of your sin, set free & made new today. Believe on the Lord J.C. & you will be saved.