



Godly Husbands

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Ephesians 5:25-33

Clint Pressley

²⁵ 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.

(Pastor prays)

As we discussed last week, there is more at stake here than meets the eye. Marriage, with all of its rich history and life-giving effects, is in trouble. But let's not speak in rhetorical platitudes about culture that's lost its way. Let's talk about a religion that's lost its voice. Christianity's robust view of marriage is undermined by passivity in the pew and ambiguity in the pulpit. Just this week, Brian Houston, the pastor of the Hillsong movement, wasn't clear on where he stands on same sex marriage. And even as he sought to clear up his position, his ambiguity, and first answer caused great confusion for those of

us that have historically appreciated what Hillsong does. We are in strange times indeed, times that call for you and I to be clear on marriage and convictional in how we live it out. And the beauty of knowing Christ is that we are not left to figure it out on our own. We have God's word. We spent 2014 going through Ephesians. This is the 39th sermon, and by the Lord's good province he brought us to chapter 5, the household code, at a time in our lives when the laws are falling apart. This text about husbands, we dealt with wives last week, must be read under the same rubric as the passage about wives. What I mean is, verse 21 tells us to submit to one another out of the reverence for Christ. That is the prevailing Christian attitude that displays the gospel. The way wives live the gospel is found in verse 22 where wives are to submit to your husbands out of the reverence for Christ. Marriage is a gospel issue and wives display the gospel through submission. That is willingly putting yourself under your husband. Now we turn our attention to the husbands and their roles because we believe....

A Godly Marriage Sends a Gospel Message

Man and woman were both created in the image of God. They are bound as one flesh in marriage in order to be a living picture of Christ and the Church. It's what this passage is getting at. Now as we look at a husband's responsibility, he needs to understand some things. Let's look at the wives first and everybody's favorite word, submission

A godly husband understands sacrificial love

Let's read the text. ²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.* Brothers, there's not one of us here that can read that and not feel the punch of it. Husbands love your wives as in the same way Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. This is a gospel call for you to put down all the false expectations, all the selfish desires, all the unreasonable dreams, and demonstrate the gospel in your home. As Christ loved the church, this is not object driven love. This is grace driven love. Object driven love is loving someone because she's physically attractive, has a good sense of humor, and is fun and exciting to be around. That's not gospel

love, that's playground love. A Christian man doesn't love his wife because of what she is or is not. Look, when every winsome virtue of a wife disappears, a gospel driven husband loves her as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. It's grace driven love. Object driven love needs some virtue to be there to be worthy of the love. Grace driven love, Gospel love, is described in verse 25, it's like Christ. Christ, who loves the unlovely and unworthy. The Bible says that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. How did Christ love the church? He was mocked, ridiculed, maligned, beaten, and crucified. He gave up his prerogative of God and did what needed to be done. That kind of love acts and moves forward. It does what needs to be done. Let's look at this one verse just for a minute. What does it mean to love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her? Let's talk about what kind of love that is.

It is a selfless love. Paul tells us in Philippians 2:6-8, ⁶ *who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,* ⁷ *but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.* ⁸ *And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.* And Paul is saying, that's how a Christian marriage looks, like that!

A selfless love is a praying love. We see that in Romans 8:34. ³⁴ *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.*

In Hebrews 7:25, The writer says of Jesus, ²⁵ *Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost^[b] those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.* That is Jesus going to the Father on our behalf. To love her like Christ does the church means praying for her in every way. You pray for her growth, joy, health, well-being, peace of mind, clarity of thought, stable emotion, good friends, sound sleep and the patience of Job to live with us. There's more to say, but let me move on to the next point.

A godly husband understands a sanctifying love.

Sanctifying love, that is a love that moves the wife towards holiness and a stronger, more vibrant walk with Christ. Let me show you where I get this. Let's read verses 25 through 27 so we have it in context. ²⁵ *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.* A sanctifying love is a love that lives to protect your wife's purity. Your compelling motive is to see her like Christ, protecting every virtue and removing every obstacle that might get in the way of her being more like Christ. To understand this, we must break out of the Pop-Philosophy that speaks to marriage. "His Needs, Her Needs", "The Five Love Languages" Every time I would learn the language it would change. Those are helpful books that were written by great men that do not tell the full story of marriage. In marriage, the gospel is at stake. Your relationship as a husband or a wife is designed to be a living parable of the gospel so that the wife is submitting and putting herself under the leadership of her husband like the church does for Christ. And the husband is submitting to the wife by loving her so much that he sacrifices and gives himself up for her. And in verses 25 through 27, he works to help her grow in Christ. What does this sanctifying love look like? It looks like Christ loving the Church.

A godly husband understands attentive love. 1 Peter 5:7 says, ⁷ *casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.* That means paying attention to what's going on with her, fixing what you can fix, and then waiting on what you don't really understand. You understand that if she has a problem, you have a problem, so you seek to do whatever is necessary, defined by God's Grace, to find a resolution to the problem. It is an attentive kind of love.

It is a rejoicing kind of love. The Bible says that the joy of the Lord is our strength. Therefore, a husband finds joy in seeing his wife growing in the Lord. And he does those things that will press her to the joy. Marriage is designed by God in part to press two Christian adults forward in their growing in Christ. It takes a wife being submissive and humble and Christ-centered and a

husband being an affectionate leader, a praising partner and giving her unconditional love. In other words, loving her as Christ loved the church. There are two words in verse 29 that I think you could spend plenty of time with. And when you do, you would have a deeper understanding of how Christ loves the church and how a husband is to love his wife. Let's read verse 29. *29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church.* The first word I want you to see is nourish, to provide that which will help the wife develop and thrive and grow and excel. That is nourishment. The other word is more difficult for many of us, and it speaks of tenderness. It is the word cherish. The intent of cherishing is the attempt to bring warmth, to help her feel secure, protected and confident. It has the feel of exclusive love, a love that is uncommon and not shared. Notice the end of verse 29, just as Christ does the Church. Paul is saying that is the point of marriage. It is more than having a companion or being attracted to someone. It's more than starting a family and being in love. A godly marriage sends a gospel message. It is the message that a holy God has a higher love than we can imagine. This holy God looks at the people he created in his image, people that have distorted his image in all kinds of ways because of their sin. Yet even when we were sinners, Christ died for us, purchased us. And any sinner here, and we are all sinners, can experience the faithful love of God when you turn from your sin, that is repentance, and by faith turn to Christ. Your sin has separated you, but grace will restore you at the cross.

(Pastor prays)