

Ephesians 5:25-33

I. The Responsibility of the Husband's Leadership

A. The husband is the "head" of the wife (v. 23)

1. "Head" implies authority/leadership and, thus, ultimate responsibility
It does NOT imply a set of abilities/talents/gifts that a husband has that are superior to his wife's but rather a role/position he has been assigned in the relationship
2. John Piper's definition: "headship is the divine calling of a husband to take primary responsibility for Christ-like, servant leadership, protection, and provision in the home."

B. An overview of the husband's role

1. Provision
 - a. Physical provision
 - b. Spiritual provision
 - 1) The Word of God
 - 2) Spiritual direction and vision for the marriage/family
 - 3) Spiritual community (church, friends, etc)
2. Protection
 - a. Physical protection
 - b. Spiritual protection
 - 1) Prayer as protection
 - 2) Protection from harmful ideas/trends
 - 3) Protecting the relationship: Relational repair

C. Men do leadership well in the work context but often fail to think and act as leaders in the marriage context.

1. Husbands are to bring the same initiative, pro-activity, intentionality, and mindfulness in marriage as they bring in the work context
2. But many men feel much less comfortable in the world of relationships and emotions than they do in the world of tasks and ideas
3. Many men give the first fruits of their leadership energy to their work, and they don't have any leadership energy left for marriage/family

II. Christ-centered leadership

A. Christ loved the church sacrificially (v. 25-27)

1. Christ gave himself up for the church for her good
He put the church's needs ahead of his own, and loved her at the cost of his own life
2. Husbands, you are to do the same
 - a. = Sacrificial commitment to her good no matter what the cost
 - b. = Always ask: what would be good for her, what will build her up, what will lead to her health and wholeness? How can I use my strength, resources, authority to serve her/meet needs?
 - c. Examples: when you come home from work and are tired and she wants to engage you in a conversation, engage. Or, when you

have a fight, you should be the first to apologize and re-engage.
Or when you're making a big family decision, put her needs ahead of your own.

B. Christ loves the church as his very self: (read v. 28-33)

1. Christ and the church

- a. v. 32: the mystery is that Genesis two ("one flesh") is ultimately talking about the spiritual unity between Christ and his bride, the church
- b. v. 30: so we are Christ's body
- c. v. 29: so Christ cares/feeds us because we are one with him. In caring for us, he is just caring for his own body!

2. Husbands, you are to do the same

- a. v. 28: love your wife as your own body
- b. your wife is a part of you! She is your one-flesh partner
- c. So in loving her, you are just loving a part of yourself
- d. Loving her is the most wonderfully selfish thing you can do

C. So, loving our wives is 1) a sacrificial act but 2) ultimately an act that is loving ourselves in the process

III. Conclusion

This week, ask your wives: "how am I doing at loving you?"

- a. What do I do that feels loving to you?
- b. What could I do that would feel more loving?

Discussion Questions

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?
2. Husbands, as you look at the overview of the husband's role in section I.B. of the notes, where would you like to see yourself taking more initiative and leadership responsibility in your marriage?
3. Considering Christ's example of sacrificially giving himself up for the sake of the church, what is an area in your marriage where you feel you need to lean into being more sacrificial in order to love your spouse? Or to put it another way, what's an area where you are tempted to be selfish and demand your own desires?
4. Wives, if your husbands were to ask you the question asked in the conclusion of the notes, how would you answer?
5. As you think back over this 4-week series on marriage, what have been the most helpful or impacting ideas for you? What is your main takeaway?