



Lead Like Christ Our Great High Priest
Ephesians 5:25-33

Main Idea: A husband must follow Christ's sacrificial model of love in the way he loves his wife.

The Old Testament role of the prophet was fulfilled in Christ (Heb. 1:1-2). The prophet was God's mouthpiece, bringing God's Word to his people. The final and full word of the Lord, which was lived and spoken through God the Son, Jesus Christ, was recorded for us today through the Apostles in what is called the New Testament. While the office of the prophet who speaks new revelation is no longer needed, the work of speaking God's Word (the final and complete Word of the Lord found in Scripture) continues today. Last week we considered how the husband and father was to model the prophetic work of Christ in being the one who is responsible for speaking God's Word in the home. From teaching and instruction to discipline and correction, the husband and father must make God's Word the source of authority and direction for the home. In addition to the role of the prophet that was fulfilled in Christ, Jesus also fulfilled the role of the High Priest, who acted as an intercessor between God and his people, offering sacrifices and prayers on their behalf to the Lord (Heb. 5:1-2 and 7:25-27). Jesus completed the work of the High Priest, as he offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins (Heb. 10:12-14). This work doesn't need to be and can't be repeated. It's complete! But the work serves as a model for how the husband still today must love his wife. By God's grace, it's Christ's sacrificial model of love that the husband and father must model in the home, loving like Christ our Great High Priest!

Husband, love your wife as Christ sacrificially loved the church (25-27, 33a).

- *Sacrifice for the good of your wife (25).*
- *Sacrifice for the sanctification of your wife (26-27).*

The primary command for the husband is simple: Love your wife (verses 25 and 33), but the definition of that love is critical. The Lord uses the example of Christ's priestly service as the model for the husband to follow in how he loves his wife. The priest's service was connected to sacrifice, and Christ's fulfillment of that service was found in the cross. Jesus gave himself as the spotless and sufficient sacrifice for sin so that he may bring forgiveness and life to sinners. His sacrifice was made in order to bring good to his bride, the church! His sacrifice was made in order to cleanse and to purify his church! The husband – and no-one else – can replace this sacrificial work of Christ on the cross, so how is the husband supposed to emulate the priestly work of Christ? The husband can't cleanse his wife of sin, but he can love her sacrificially to model the love of Christ to his wife. The husband can encourage Christ's work of sanctification in his wife's life by loving her in a sacrificial way. He can do this in practical ways like praying for his wife and children. He can love sacrificially by giving of his time and sacrificing his desires to encourage his wife and children to be faithful to the Lord, first-and-foremost. Husband, love your wife as Christ sacrificially loved the church.



1. According to these verses, what did the sacrifice of Jesus do for the good of the church? How is sanctification described in these verses?
2. What are practical ways husbands can sacrifice for the good of their wives? What often gets in the way of doing these things? Why?
3. How can husbands sacrifice to encourage the sanctification of their wives and children?

Husband, love your wife as you love your life since the two of you are one (28-30).

- *Loving and caring for your wife is loving your life (28-29a).*
- *Loving and caring for your wife is service to Christ (29b-30).*

In continuing to build on the model of Christ's love, the Lord called husbands to love their wives as they love their own lives. Why? Because in marriage the two are one, and because in the church, we are all members of one body: The body of Christ! The argument Paul offered for a husband to love and care for his wife was logical. Loving and caring for your wife is loving your life. If a husband loves his own flesh (does what's needed to protect himself and get the care needed when his flesh is damaged), then he will love and care for his wife because they are one. Moreover, loving and caring your wife is service to Christ! It's not just that the two are one flesh in marriage. For believers, it's also true that the two are connected as one as members of the body of Christ. So just as Jesus loves and cares for his own body – the church – the husband must model the love and care of Christ for his wife. He can do this in practical ways, but it starts with a practical commitment in the husband's heart, which is to believe and to protect the truth that the two are one.

1. How does Christ love and care for his body, nurturing the church?
2. What are some practical ways that husbands can love and care for their wives as they love and care for their own flesh? What often gets in the way of doing these things? Why?

Husband, your love for your wife proclaims the gospel in and through your home (31-32).

Your love for your wife is connected to modeling the priestly service of Jesus Christ's sacrifice for our sin on the cross because your love for your wife is intended to proclaim the gospel in and through your home! God's desire is that our marriages would be a proclamation of the gospel. His desire is that husbands would reflect God's own love in the home. By God's grace, God's model for the husband's love would grow the wife to know and to love the Lord through the example of God's love in the husband's life. By God's grace, God's model for the husband's love for his wife would grow the children to know and to love the Lord through the example of God's love in their father's life. By God's grace, God's model for the husband's love would grow others outside of their home to know and to love the Lord through the example of God's love in the husband's life. Through sacrificial love and loving prayer, the husband must model Christ's sacrificial love in the home.

1. What is profound about the mystery of the gospel – union with Christ by grace through faith?
2. How does this connection add to the profound union in Christian marriage between one man and one woman?
3. Is the gospel being proclaimed through your marriage in your home? What's God's desire for this as it affects children in the home? What about others outside of your home?