

Lesson 29

Teacher's Manual

CHART-37

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH HUSBAND

READ & MEDITATE ON: Ephesians 5:25-33 MEMORIZE: Ephesians 5:25

INTRODUCTION

The key directive to the wives in the fifth chapter of Ephesians is "submit." The key word to the husbands in the same chapter is "love."

Since every major directive of the Bible has a counterpart, the opposite of "submit" would be "take charge of" or "assume authority over." But Paul does not use these words. He does not instruct the husband to take the headship. He simply assumes that he will do so.

Paul places the emphasis in this chapter right where husbands seemingly need to have the emphasis laid. Elsewhere, the husband is strongly instructed in the Bible to head his house in spiritual and material matters. In the following verses of scripture, Paul teaches the husband that this particular administration should be done in love.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

Ephesians 5:25-26, 28, 29, 31, 33

I. THE SPIRITUAL HUSBAND'S HEADSHIP

A. The Position Of Headship

When we take a close look at God's directive toward husbands and wives here in the fifth chapter of Ephesians, we can acknowledge readily that it is more than theory. God's love is to be exercised and demonstrated in the marriage arrangement.

"Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

Ephesians 5:24

This, of course, is the counter balance to the instruction:

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;"

Ephesians 5:25

From what position is a husband to love his wife? This twenty-fourth verse clearly tells us. He is to love his wife from the position of assumed headship. This is absolute marital Christian love. Jesus Christ loved us from a position of headship. The Scripture tells us that we were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. The first chapter of Ephesians tells us that we were predestinated to the position of sonship in Him.

Husbands could all learn from the results of an international survey taken by the League of Large Families in Brussels (cited in "The Seven Stumbling Blocks Ahead Of Husbands," a publication of the American Institute of Family Relations), indicating the seven most common failings of husbands, in the opinions of wives:

1. A lack of tenderness.
2. A lack of politeness.
3. A lack of sociability.
4. A failure to understand the wife's temperament and peculiarities.
5. Unfairness in financial matters.
6. Frequency of snide remarks and sneers at the wife before company or the children.
7. A lack of plain honesty and truthfulness.

CHART-38

II. THE SPIRITUAL HUSBAND'S LOVE

A. Responsible Love

THE SPIRIT FILLED MAN IS TO LOVE HIS WIFE WITH A RESPONSIBLE LOVE.

The word love is always central.

"Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."

Colossians 3:19

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

I Peter 3:7

This is the primary responsibility of the husband. Many married people can be heard to say glibly, "I loved my companion when I married them." This is really true in most married people's lives. From the observed conditions of their homes,

C. Exclusive Love

THE TYPE OF LOVE THE SPIRITUAL MAN IS TO EXTEND TOWARD HIS WIFE IS EXCLUSIVE LOVE.

The love which Jesus Christ has toward the church is a very personal, tender love. In Romans 1:7 the church is called the "beloved of God." In Colossians 3:12, "holy and beloved." Paul instructs us in Ephesians, "so let each love his wife."

Very often in the Scripture, reference is made to "the beginning" in order to demonstrate to us God's perfect plan. Jesus Himself said, "From the beginning it was not so." His reference was to the fact that divorce was not originally in the mind of God. There was only one man and only one woman in the beginning. No one else is to come to man's side unless death intervenes. Marriage is more sacred than any of us could explain. The love that God has for his church is sacred and exclusive.

D. Sacrificial Love

THE LOVE THAT THE SPIRIT FILLED MAN IS TO HAVE TOWARD HIS WIFE IS A SACRIFICIAL LOVE.

"As God loved the church and gave himself for it." Jesus said in His own teaching,

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep."

John 10:15

It was love that moved Him to do this.

Lust and infatuation can lead any man to a marriage altar and off on a honeymoon. But only sacrificial love can make him a good husband and a faithful provider.

This kind of love should prompt a husband to give of his time. He should be willing to sacrifice personal pleasures and things he prefers to do. This means that for the sake of his own home, some of his personal ambitions should be disciplined so that his home can be preserved.

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:2

Thus the Christian husband should have a vision of what his wife is going to be. The power of his love and his trust has a tremendous lifting effect upon her. Purposeful love was evident when Boaz loved Ruth and became the kinsman redeemer of the seed of her deceased husband Mahlon. (Study Ruth chapter four.)

It is not enough for a husband to simply supply the physical needs of his wife, but he is obligated also to supply spiritual and psychological needs.

F. Selfless Love

THE SPIRIT FILLED HUSBAND IS TO LOVE HIS WIFE SELFLESSLY.

"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself."

Ephesians 5:28

We are told in the dawn of creation that husbands and wives were no longer to be twain but to be one flesh. They are to grow together. Verse thirty tells us:

"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."

Ephesians 5:30

Therefore, the Christian husband cannot regard his wife as separate and apart from himself. He attends to her interest, knowing that her interest is also his interest. He knows that when he cares for his wife, he is also caring for himself. This is very reasonable. Paul states, "no man ever yet hated his own

flesh." How is a man to treat his wife? The answer is found here. How does he treat his own body? Thus he is to treat his wife.

No man has a right to ask a girl to be his wife unless he is willing to be all of this for her and to her. He is marrying a woman who is, in reality, to be an extension of himself. A man may have a body that he is not satisfied with. He may wish, for example, that he was taller, or that his body was slimmer than it is. But it doesn't matter, he still takes good care of it.

So the woman a man marries, may not be the loveliest. She may have some weaknesses in her character, but still a Christian man is to love her. This is not a suggestion. God is not saying here that this would be a good thing for the husband to do. This is an ABSOLUTE COMMAND to all Christian husbands.

God never asks us to do anything that we cannot do. Let no man say that he cannot love his wife. He is COMMANDED TO LOVE HER. God commanded Hosea to love Gomer the harlot as a living object lesson of His love for idolatrous Israel, who had gone whoring after strange gods. (See Hosea chapter three.)

It is quite obvious that if a man so loves his wife...the wife would not have very much trouble submitting herself to him. The Bible is so fair. For every directive in God's Word, there is a counter directive. It lies within the fifth chapter of Ephesians. The woman is to submit; the man is to love.

Christ's headship is always mirrored in self-sacrifice. When a young man says to a young lady, "I love you," she ought to ask him, "What do you mean by that? Are you ready to give up your circle of friends in order to be my best friend?"

This particular principle could so very well be applied to Jesus Christ. Certainly He was our Saviour. Certainly He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. But also, He is our very best friend.

"Henceforth I call you not servants: for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."

John 15:15

This kind of sacrificial love was displayed in Jacob's long and patient labor for his beloved Rachel. (Study Genesis chapter twenty-nine.)

E. Purposeful Love

THE LOVE THAT THE SPIRIT FILLED MAN IS TO HAVE TOWARD HIS WIFE IS A PURPOSEFUL LOVE.

"That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,"

Ephesians 5:26

"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Ephesians 5:27

Jesus Christ had something in mind for each of us when He chose us. He not only saw us as we were, but He envisioned us as we were going to be. On His way to Calvary, we are persuaded to believe that one of the things that sustained Him was the perfect bride that one day would be His.

it must be assumed that whatever it was that drew them together, it soon dissipated. A husband should learn to love his wife in a biblical way. A marriage should never be built upon a worldly foundation.

What type of love do you think the Apostle Paul was declaring that the husband should have for his wife?

Not infatuation; this cannot be commanded. A person can become infatuated with another person without knowing anything about their character. They may never have been exposed to the other's particular temperament. All that they are experiencing at the moment is some particular feeling that has attracted them, but this is not love. Although it is very real, a marriage cannot be built upon this feeling.

B. Realistic Love

THE SPIRIT FILLED MAN IS TO LOVE HIS WIFE WITH REALISTIC LOVE.

Jesus Christ loved us while we were yet sinners. There were no conditions that were established as a prerequisite to us receiving His love. He loved us as we were.

"But God commendeth his love toward us,
in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ
died for us."

Romans 5:8

It is possible for a man to be rudely surprised by some surfacing characteristics in his wife after they have been married and lived together for awhile. What must a man do when he finds characteristics in his wife that repel him? He is to love her just as Christ loved him while he was yet a sinner. He is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. There are times when married people must love with the love of God, because human love itself is not redemptive nor sufficient. But God knew all about us when He loved us. We are to love as He loved.

I Corinthians chapter thirteen tells us that this kind of love, "Suffereth long and is kind," this type of love looks for an opportunity to manifest itself. I Corinthians thirteen tells us what this kind of love does in the face of difficulty. "It beareth all things, it hopeth all things." There are times in every man's life that he needs to bear with. His wife is not perfect and neither did she marry a perfect man.

Jesus Christ is ever and always in control, from eternity past, through time, and into eternity future. From this exalted position He loved us with great compassion.

B. The Purpose Of Headship

Certainly He humbled Himself to redeem us. This was an act of His love. But even through this, He never gave up His headship in the process. Even when He laid down His life on a cross, He still remained distinctly the head. When a man seeks to love his wife any other way than from the position of headship, their relationship degenerates into weak sentimentalism.

If the man takes the headship from any other position than love, the relationship also degenerates.

Headship is not cruel tyranny, for this is childish and selfish. Neither does headship guarantee respect, for respect begets respect and must be earned. Nor does headship mean a husband makes all the decisions, for this is surely a sign of insecurity on the part of the husband.

Christ-ordained headship has a purpose to it. What is the purpose in the home? It is the salvation of that which the man is head of.

A headship exists for the good of that over which it rules; it never exists for selfish interests. Ephesians 5:26 tells us why Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it:

"That he might sanctify and cleanse it
with the washing of water by the word,"

Ephesians 5:26

Christ moved toward the church with love; thus love became the motivation.

Paul not only showed the position from which a man was to exercise this particular type of love, but he also qualified it. "As Christ loved the church and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). This means "even as"—or "equal to." This means that I am to have this quality of love toward my wife. I should not deal harshly with my wife, according to Colossians 3:19, but should give honor to my wife so that my prayers will not be hindered (I Peter 3:7).

