

Men, love your wife!

Ephesians 5:25-31

Mom and Dad were watching TV when Mom said, "I'm tired, and it's getting late. I think I'll go to bed."

She went to the kitchen rinsed out the dishes, took meat out of the freezer for supper the following evening, and started the coffee pot for brewing the next morning. She then put some wet clothes in the dryer, put a load of clothes into the wash, ironed a shirt and secured a loose button.

She picked up the game pieces left on the table. She watered the plants, emptied a wastebasket and hung up a towel to dry. She yawned and stretched and headed for the bedroom.

She stopped by the desk and wrote a note to the teacher, counted out some cash for the school trip, and pulled a textbook out from hiding under the chair. She emailed a birthday wish off to a friend and wrote a quick shopping list.

Mom then washed her face with 3 in 1 cleanser, put on her Night cream & age fighting moisturizer, brushed and flossed her teeth and filed her nails.

Dad called out, "I thought you were going to bed."

"I'm on my way," she said.

She put some water into the dog's dish and put the cat outside, then made sure the doors were locked. She looked in on each of the kids and turned out their bedside lamp, hung up a shirt, threw some dirty socks in the hamper, and had a brief conversation with the one up still doing homework.

In her own room, she set the alarm; laid out clothing for the next day. She added three things to her 6 most important things to do list. She said her prayers, and visualized the accomplishment of her goals.

About that time, Dad turned off the TV and announced to no one in particular. "I'm going to bed." And he did...without another thought.

Well, Happy Mother's Day!

As we continue our series, A Summer of Love, we thought this would be a great day to focus on...your husbands.

Ephesians 5:25-30, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body.”

OK guys, buckle up. Today we are going to explore how Christ loved the church, so we know how we are to love our wives. And when guys love their wives well all is right at home.

The first way Christ loves the church:

#### I. Sacrificially

Not only did Jesus give up His life for the church, He also endured physical discomfort by living life on earth. You see, he gave up his home in heaven and all its glory in order to come to live among us.

Men, how do we sacrifice to demonstrate our love for our wives? Too often we are seeking our own comfort and pleasure. How do we think about the needs of our wife and then try to fulfill those needs?

The second way Christ loves the church:

#### II. Actively/Serving

During the last supper Jesus set the example by washing the feet of His disciples.

When James and John came to Jesus asking to sit on His right and left when He came into His kingdom.

This is how Jesus responded:

Mark 10:42-45, “Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Men, if we want to be first, we will serve others, we will serve our wives. What is one thing that comes to mind that you could do to serve your wife?

One writer states this, “The danger for marriages is not that the husband would love another woman more than his wife; it’s that he would love himself more than his wife.”

Will you love your wife more than you love yourself?

The third way Christ loves the church:

#### III. Purifies It

Going back to our passage we see these words in verse 28, “husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies.”

We care for our own bodies. We eat right for the benefit of our body. We work out to strengthen our bodies. This symbolizes the work Jesus does to present the church as radiant, holy and spotless.

Jesus’ love for us seeks purity.

John 15:2, “He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.”

Men, do we encourage holiness in our wives? Do we lead them in a way that motivates them in their walk with Jesus, or do we discourage righteousness by our lack of attention to our personal holiness?

What area do you need to yield to Jesus to become more like Him?

The fourth way Christ loves the church:

#### IV. Patiently

When Jesus was teaching His disciples there were times it was like talking to a brick wall. Jesus didn’t drop them, leaving them for more attentive students. No, He was patient with them knowing that in time they would understand.

Hebrews 4:15-16, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. 16 Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”

Catch this, Jesus understands us. He experienced the same temptations that we experienced. He gets us!

He gets you! A matter of fact, He understands you better than you understand you and He still loves you.

1 Peter 3:7, “Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.”

Men, when you are patient with your wife, being considerate of her, it will strengthen your prayers.

Is there an area in which you need to demonstrate more patience with your wife?

The fifth way Christ loves the church:

V. He pursued her

If we simply read the next verse in our passage, we see this:

Ephesians 5:31, “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”

Men, when we make the decision to leave our past behind, leave mom and dad, leave our singleness, we

commit to this one person to join with them. This is a commitment to faithfulness and unity.

At some point we pursued this woman just like Jesus pursues the church. Jesus hasn’t stopped, should we?

Check out God’s consistency and commitment to those He loves:

Deuteronomy 7:7-8, “The Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. 8 But it was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.”

Men, our commitment, our consistency in loving our wives must always be there. She needs to count on us, depend on us, that we will always be there loving them. Is there something preventing you from consistently loving your wife? Is there something you value more than your wife?

The sixth way Christ loves the church:

VI. Involved in the prayers for the church

In Jesus' High Priestly prayer in John 17 He asks the Father that everyone of us that has chosen to follow Jesus would be one just like He and the Father are one. He prays for our unity. Verses 20-21

He prays that His disciples would be protected from the evil one. Verse 15

He prays that they would be sanctified, which means being set apart by the truth of God's Word. Verse 17

He prays for them as they are sent into the world to impact it for the Gospel. Verse 18

He prays that we might be with Him. Verse 24

Jesus modeled prayer for His disciples and for the church. Men, do you pray for your wife? How could you start doing that daily?

The seventh way Christ loves the church:

VII. Provides grace for it

Jesus, through His actions, has empowered the church through the Holy Spirit to love one another and to fulfill the mission of the Gospel.

Jesus did this through His substitutionary death, burial and resurrection.

Through these actions He provides grace, not judgement and condemnation.

Romans 8:34, "Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us."

Men, since God has provided such beautiful grace to us, how much more should we extend grace to the one person in this world that we should love the most?

So, today it may sound like I am picking on the guys the most. I am! That doesn't let the rest of us off the hook, ultimately love goes both ways, but today is Mother's Day so guys, let's love them like Christ loved the church. Also, Father's Day is coming so you won't want to miss that day.

One last thing: Couples who have been married for over 35 years, would you please stand. For those of us married for a shorter time, these are the couples we should look too to share their secrets.

Some of you may feel overwhelmed right now, so do I. Remember, we are measuring ourselves against Jesus. That's a pretty high bar!