

Ephesians Chapter 5
Week 11, v. 26-30

Last week we ended our study with Eph 5:25, which says, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her".

Christ's example of love towards the church is sacrificial. Husbands are to love their wife sacrificially.

Eph 5:26-27 that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.

Christ came to redeem His church and make it holy. His truth is revealed through His word. The church is currently being made ready to be presented without spot or wrinkle - in purity, worthy of the love of Christ.

Paul continues to use the association of the church (the bride) and Christ (the Bridegroom) to that of a marriage relationship between husband and wife. The wife (the church) being submissive towards her husband and the husband (Christ) leading his wife in love towards holiness.

Your husband and those in leadership over you are responsible to take notice of your spiritual growth. To be responsible means to have the authority to make decisions.

Being a spiritual leader is a huge responsibility. *As you look at these verses, what do think of your husband's role in your marriage?*

If God has blessed you with a husband, recognizing the difficulty of his role in your relationship should cause you to be on your knees in prayer for him.

How can you find ways to encourage the leadership he is to exercise for your benefit?

1Pe 3:1-6 In the same way, you wives, be **submissive** to your own husbands so that even if any [of them] are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your **chaste and respectful behavior**. And let not your adornment be [merely] external--braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but [let it be] the hidden person of **the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit**, which is precious in the sight of God. For in this way in former times the **holy** women also, who **hoped in God**, used to adorn themselves, being **submissive to their own husbands**. Thus Sarah **obeyed** Abraham,

calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

According to this section of scripture, what are some characteristics found in a godly wife?

- she is submissive to her husband
- she displays clean, pure, modest behavior *and conversation*.
- her behavior is derived from a heart that is humble and peaceful
- she is holy
- her hope and trust is in God
- she demonstrates obedience towards her husband
- she shows respect for her husband, recognizing his leadership
- she is unafraid and undeterred by circumstances

How does the character of the woman described above encourage her husband in his role to leadership and sacrificial love?

Review verses 25-27. There are four actions stated regarding Christ's relationship toward the church. These verbs also relate to a husband's care of his wife. ***It is important to remember that we are approaching these instructions to learn how we personally can encourage the men who are in leadership over us, not to evaluate their performance.

- 1- v. 25 speaks of Christ's **love** for the church. A husband is to love his wife. **What does it mean to love someone as Christ loves? How can you encourage this? How can you make it difficult?**
- 2- v. 25 also says Christ **gave Himself up** for the church. A husband is to put his wife ahead of himself – to sacrifice for her. **How can you promote your husband's desire to sacrifice for you? Do you recognize what he does for you? (even if it isn't exactly how you would do it or what you expect)**
- 3- v. 26 says Christ came **to make** the church **holy**, to **cleanse** the church **through the Word**. A husband is to promote his wife's holiness. **Are you submissive and teachable to his direction in this area? Do you support his decisions to be involved in different ministries, to reach out to others, to study the Bible and to pray? Do you complain when ministry takes his time? Do you have excuses *not* to be involved in serving? What do your priorities look like? Do you pray for your husband's spiritual growth? What can you do to encourage his spiritual maturity and accountability?**
- 4- v. 27 says Christ will **present** the church **holy and blameless** to Himself. A husband has a role in his wife's spiritual development to encourage her

to become all that she is to be in Christ. As a wife, do you recognize the important responsibility your husband has been given as the spiritual leader in your family? Are you faithful to pray for your husband's leadership? What are you personally doing to mature in your relationship with the Lord?

In order to fulfill what God intends marriage to be, you must be a Christian. Without knowing the One who designed marriage, it is impossible to completely follow the instructions and roles as they were intended. However, being a believer does not automatically mean that your marriage will honor God. Go back to Eph 5:18. It says 'we are to be filled with the Spirit'. We need to be controlled by the Spirit to honor God in any relationship. Unconditional love comes from God and is only possible through His strength and the desire to please Him in everything.

How difficult is it to show love to someone who does not want our love or who doesn't love back? How difficult is it to love someone who, in our mind, is not deserving? In our flesh, we would quickly give up this kind of relationship. Only through the Spirit's control are we able to love sacrificially and unconditionally.

If your husband is not following Christ, how does your role as a godly wife change?

1Pe 3:1 In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any [of them] are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.

Eph 5:2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

Col 3:18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

Tit 2:5 [to be] sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.

Eph 5:28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies..

Following Christ's example of love for the church, in the same way, a man is to show sacrificial love towards his wife. (v. 25-27).

A man is to love his wife as he loves himself. Every person does things to care for himself. We clothe ourselves, feed ourselves, seek physical comfort, etc. A man should take the same care for his wife since she is part of him.

The words 'ought also' is not a suggestion. It is the moral obligation for a husband to love his wife as himself.

In Ephesians chapter 4, we talked about the importance of spiritual oneness in the church. Each individual needs to work together and offer his or her unique gifts. Working together as one helps the church body to work most effectively.

Spiritual oneness, or working together as one body, is accomplished by subjecting ourselves to one another because we fear God. The motivating factor is our reverence for God. This is an extremely important concept within the church and within marriage.

[Ephesians 5:21](#) says, "*Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*" When we genuinely reverence, fear, and worship God, we submit to one another. Submission is vital in the church. [James 4:1](#) says, "*What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members?*" (NASB). Conflicts in the church arise because people want their rights, they want their way, they want to lead the group, and they want their opinion to dominate, so they push their way to the top. ***But someone who is Spirit-filled doesn't fight for the top; he fights for the bottom.*** Throughout Scripture we are called to submit ([1 Cor. 16:16](#); [1 Pet. 2:13](#); [5:5](#); [Heb. 13:17](#)). John MacArthur 'The Fulfilled Family' Eph 5:21-6:4 (emphasis mine)

When a man and woman become one in marriage, they are most effective working in unity together. **How do your actions or attitudes affect your husband? In what ways have you experienced the blessing of being united in your thinking with your husband?**

What happens if one part of your body is not functioning properly? Almost everything you do becomes more difficult. It takes greater effort and takes longer.

It benefits the husband when his marriage is working in unity just as the church benefits when all the members are working in unity towards the same goal.

[Eph 5:29](#) for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also [does] the church,

What does it mean to nourish or cherish someone or something?

Nourish <ektrepho> to rear up to maturity, to cherish or train, to bring up
-To nourish someone means to feed, to encourage, to support
-The sense here is, that he provides for it, and guards it from exposure and want. (Barnes' NT Commentary)

Cherish <thalpo> to brood, to foster

- to foster something means to promote, to encourage, to cultivate, to look after
- Primarily it means to warm (Latin foveo), then to foster with tender care (Robertson's NT Word Pictures)

Isa 40:11 Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, In His arm He will gather the lambs, And carry [them] in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing [ewes.]

Isa 49:10 "They will not hunger or thirst, Neither will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; For He who has compassion on them will lead them, And will guide them to springs of water.

Christ nourishes and cherishes the church. He has a genuine concern to provide for it so it flourishes because of His love. In the same way, a husband who is following Christ should be motivated to care for his wife because he loves her.

Why is a husband's love to be demonstrated in this way?

Eph 5:30 because we are members of His body.

Ultimately, because we are God's children, members of His body, the church. Remember what Eph 5:1 says? We are to be imitators of God.

The marriage relationship is a small picture of the relationship between Christ and His church. We have an intimate relationship with our heavenly Father. A union so close that men are willing to forego everything for God's sake. A union so close that there is nothing we can accomplish that is good without Christ in our lives. We are to submit to God in everything. He is the reason we live, He is our passion, He is our purpose.

John 15:1-6 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every [branch] that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit. "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither [can] you, unless you abide in Me. "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

This week: Read Ephesians 5. Consider the questions below and use the “Apply It” bookmark and your journal notes to guide you. Ask God to show you His will for your personal application. You may want to record additional insights in your journal. We will use these questions as a quick review next week. Review **memory** verses **Eph 5:1-2** in the NAS version and if you are trying the memory challenge, review Eph 5:15-21 and add Eph 5:22 to your memory verses.

In Eph 5:25-27, the Bible speaks of Christ’s sacrificial love for the church and relates this love specifically to how a husband ought to love his wife. However, we all are to love following Christ’s example. [Read John 13:34-35](#).

Christ loved us even though we are undeserving. [Read Rom 5:8](#). Are you following this example?

Christ’s love was characterized by humility. [Read Phil 2:3-8](#). Do you put others before yourself? Christ willingly let go of His ‘rights’. Christ came to serve. Do you love others in a way that demonstrates Christ’s love? Where do you need to improve?

[Revisit Eph 5:16](#). How do you use your time? Is it spent on yourself or on loving others? Do you love with humility, laying down your rights? Do you love your husband and serve him?

Read 1Pet 3:1-6. What character qualities do you see in this example of a godly wife? Where do you need to improve: submissiveness, modesty in behavior, humility, holiness, trust, obedience, respect? What will you work on specifically this week? Pray that the Holy Spirit will make you continuously aware of this area. How will this encourage your husband’s leadership?