

Ephesians 5:25-33

Husbands, Love

Main idea: A godly husband will sacrifice himself for his wife, living the gospel.

There's a lot of advice in the world and in the Bible when it comes to being a good husband, and a lot of it can seem contradictory.¹

- Work hard and long to be a provider, but be present.²
- Be a strong leader, but be easy-going.³
- Sacrifice for your family, but take care of yourself.⁴
- Be protective, but not controlling.⁵
- Be independent, but don't become emotionally disconnected.⁶

And some of this can be good advice, because there is a balance to be reached.⁷

- But with so much advice out there, it's easy to become overwhelmed with how we think we should be.⁸
- But God's word simplifies it not just for husbands, but for all of us: be like Jesus, and love.⁹

Read Ephesians 5:25-33

It's interesting that Jesus never married, but Paul calls husbands to copy the way Jesus loved the church.

- Because of His love for us, Jesus gave himself completely. [John 15:13]
- That's the standard: not mere feelings or duty, but self-giving, sanctifying, active love.¹⁰
- As Christians, we need to let the gospel shape what marriage, and every aspect of life, looks like.¹¹

So the command to husbands sounds very simple at first. (v. 25a)

- It sounds like advice anyone, whether religious or not, would say.¹²
- But it's interesting that for most of human history, love was not a primary motivating factor in marriage.¹³
 - Marriages were arranged for social and economic reasons. [chart]
 - And while love was certainly talked about, even in biblical days, it was impractical to marry for.¹⁴
 - But the Bible paints a different picture. Love is THE reason to do anything.¹⁵
 - It's the primary command of life to love the Lord your God. [Matthew 22:37-39]
 - But it's not a wishy-washy, feelings-based, fall-in and fall-out kind of love.¹⁶
- So Paul quickly goes on to explain the kind of love we're to have and show. (v. 25b)
 - The model for this love is Jesus: not culture, not romance novels, and not selfishness.¹⁷

¹ Proverbs 14:12

² Ephesians 5:15-16

³ James 1:19

⁴ Mark 12:31

⁵ Colossians 3:19

⁶ Galatians 6:2

⁷ Ecclesiastes 3:1

⁸ Proverbs 3:5-6

⁹ John 13:34-35

¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

¹¹ Romans 12:1-2

¹² 1 Corinthians 13:13

¹³ Proverbs 19:14

¹⁴ Genesis 29:20

¹⁵ 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

¹⁶ Psalm 136:1

¹⁷ Ephesians 5:2

- Jesus sacrificed Himself.¹⁸
- Jesus died for His bride.¹⁹
- This is the call to all husbands. It's an impossibly high call.
- This is not optional or merely emotional advice; it's a direct, moral imperative for husbands.
- And as we saw last week with wives, every Christian is called to pattern life on Jesus' love.
- We're to have a love that sacrifices for one another.²⁰

We're also called to have a love that sanctifies. (v. 26-27)

- This is not about controlling or "fixing" a spouse; it's about encouraging her and creating an environment where she can flourish in Christ.²¹
- I think I've mentioned enough times over the years that I cannot grow anything.
 - And yet, I have been trying lately to grow flowers in my backyard.
 - I can't make them grow, but I can work hard to give them good conditions to grow. [video]
- The husband is called to be the spiritual leader in the family. In a way, he's the pastor of his family.²²
 - He's to continually direct his wife and family back to the word of God. [Joshua 24:15]
 - Because it's only when we rest in Jesus that we're forgiven and purified from all our sin.²³

Godly love not only sacrifices and sanctifies, it also cares for your wife in every practical way. (v. 28-30)

- The truth is, neglecting your wife is neglecting yourself.²⁴
- You've probably heard the expression, "Happy wife, happy life." [infographic]
- Christ "feeds and cares for" His church; husbands imitate that by working hard to love and provide.

As we've seen several times, all of this illustrates Jesus's love for His bride. (v. 31-33)

- Marriage is God's design from the beginning.²⁵
- The "profound mystery" is that marriage pictures Christ and the church.
- Whether married or single, our relationships should reflect the covenant-keeping, self-giving love of Jesus.²⁶
- This passage is not just marriage advice; it's a living picture of the gospel.²⁷
 - For husbands: your model is Christ, and your mission is to show His love to your wife.
 - But for all the church: let your relationships be a display of the gospel to a watching world.

¹⁸ John 10:17-18

¹⁹ Romans 5:8, Revelation 19:7-8

²⁰ 1 John 3:16

²¹ 1 Thessalonians 5:11

²² 1 Corinthians 11:3

²³ Matthew 11:28-30

²⁴ Proverbs 31:10-12

²⁵ Genesis 2:18, 24

²⁶ Ephesians 5:1-2

²⁷ 1 John 4:9-10