

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

Becoming A Christ-Like Husband

Ephesians 5:25-33
1998

Introduction

Last week we considered the role of the wife in the marriage relationship. It can be summed up in one word: *Submission*. It is a voluntary yielding of herself to the leadership of her husband -- who, in turn, is under the leadership of God.

Some chafe at the concept of a wife's submission as being too challenging. But as we'll discover today, the calling and responsibility of the husband is far more than challenging -- it's humanly impossible. But what is impossible with man is possible with God.

Illustration:

My boys and becoming manly men: Running naked on the beach and chanting, "I'm a manly man."

The world's description of a manly man includes such characteristics as:

1. Rugged and handsome
2. Tough, fearless, an emotional rock of Gibraltar
3. Taller, bigger and braver than other men
4. King of your home

Nothing inherently wrong with these qualities unless they are divorced from:

1. Integrity, honesty, responsibility
2. Love, tenderness, compassion, devotion, transparency
3. Putting others first and sacrificing for the benefit of others

I Husbands Are To Love Their Wives

A. With the same leadership Christ offered the church

1. He was a servant/leader

Matt 20:25-28 "Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave--just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

The primary leadership role of a husband is to be the family's biggest servant! His concern is not for himself; his concern is not to give orders, to boss his wife around, or to have his own way. His concern is to meet her needs. If he is not willing to sacrifice himself -- his needs, wants, desires, aspirations, time,

money -- if the needs of his wife are not more important than his own, he has failed to fulfill his responsibility before God as a husband.

Quote: "If [a husband] has a servant's heart, he will act like a servant and react like a servant when he is treated like a servant."

2. He spent time with his disciples

The husband needs to arrange for frequent and regular companionship with her

1. Weekly date night

2. "Couch" time (Spending time together whether walking, sitting, etc)

3. He instructed his disciples

1 Cor 14:35 "If they [wives] want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home..."

The husbands #1 responsibility before God is to disciple his wife

The husband's #2 responsibility before God is to disciple his children

4. He was a good example

John 13:12-15 "When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."

The husband's life is to be an example in living color of what Christ was. He must strive to be an example, a model, a pattern of godliness, holiness, compassion, dedication, and devotion to God.

Now no earthly husband is going to be a perfect example. And when he fails, he should be quick to confess to God and his wife that he has failed and ask for forgiveness. Even in failure, the husband must be an example to his wife of how the believer should deal with sin.

5. He made decisions and delegated responsibility

Matt 10:5 "These twelve Jesus sent out ..."

Luke 10:1 "The Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two"

Matt 28:19-20 [The great commission]

Fifty/fifty marriages do not work. In marriage someone has to be the final decision maker. Someone has to delegate the responsibility, and God has ordained that this should be the husband. The wife is to be the husband's helper. She is to be his chief adviser, resource person and consultant.

When the wife's opinion differs from the husband's, the best course of action for the husband would be to assure his wife that he respects her opinion and ask her to pray with him for a clear understanding of what God wants them to do.

- B. With the same love Christ offered the church
One word now sums up the role of the husband: LOVE

"The wife has such a great need for love or the husband has such a great lack of love, that God commands the husband to love his wife three times within the space of a few verse in Eph 5."

Three words in the Greek for love:

Eros: sexual passion

Phileo: family or brotherly love

Agape: This is the highest and distinctively Christian word for loving.

A love that is totally unselfish

A love that seeks not its own satisfaction

A love that not is not reciprocal

A love that strives for the highest good of the one loved.

1. His love was *unconditional*

Rom 5:8 "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

2. His love was *volitional*

Eph 1:6-7 [God has] freely given us [His grace] in the One he loves."

3. His love was *intense*

John 13:1 "It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love [by serving them and by dying for them]."

4. His love was *unending*

Jer 31:3 "The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love ..."

5. His love was *unselfish*

Phil 2:6-8 "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!"

6. His love was *purposeful*

Eph 5:26-27 "[Jesus loved the church] to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."

7. His love was *sacrificial*

1 Pet 3:18 "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God."

8. His love was *manifested*

John 13:34-35 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

C. With the same objectives that Christ had for the church

1. He gave himself up for her

John 10:18 "No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

a. To make her holy

Holy = Sanctify; hagiozo = "To set apart"

Christ's purpose was that he should set apart a people for Himself

John 17:17 "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."

b. To cleanse her by the washing with the Word

Cleansing = katharisas = literally "having cleansed"

This cleansing is effected "by the washing with water".

1. This could be a reference to baptism

Titus 3:5 "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit..."

Calvin: "Having mentioned the inward and hidden sanctification, he now adds the outward symbol, by which it is visibly confirmed; as if he had said that a pledge of that sanctification is held out to us by baptism."

2. This could be a reference to the proclamation of the Word of God

John 15:3 "You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you."

Rom 10:8-10 "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."

c. To present her as a radiant church

1. Without imperfection: Stain, wrinkle, or any other blemish

Col 1:28 "We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ."

2. Without fault: Holy and blameless

Eph 1:4 "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight."

D. With the same devotion that Christ has for the church

1. He feeds it

John 6:57-58 "Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever."

The husband is to nourish his wife, cherish her, protect her, satisfy her, provide for her, care for her, sacrifice for her to the same degree and extent, and in the same manner as God does for the church.

2. He cares for it

1 Thess 2:6-8 "We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else. As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us."

a. As Christ does His body

Eph 1:22-23 "And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way."

Christ sees the church in all her weaknesses and failures, and yet loves her as his body, and seeks her true sanctification.

A wife is not to be treated as a piece of property, as was the custom in Paul's day. Instead she is to be regarded as an extension of a man's own personality and so part of himself.

II Husbands Are To Be Joined To Their Wives

A. He is to leave his family

The marriage relationship is to take precedence over every other human relationship

1. Sever emotional dependence
2. Sever authoritative dependence
3. Sever financial dependence

B. He is to be united to his wife

United = Literally; "to be glued"

But taken in conjunction with the reference to "one flesh" it refers to sexual union

1. A reflection of Christ and the church

- a. Leave our old nature with its relationship to rebellion and sin
- b. Be joined to Christ

John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

C. He is to love his wife

Each one of you ["one by one"] must love ["agape"} his wife

D. His wife is to respect her husband

Conclusion

So the question is men, *What kind of man are you?*

Are you becoming a "Manly man" by the world's standards or God's standards?

Are you aiming at

1. Rugged and handsome
2. Tough, fearless
3. Harsh king of your home

Or, are you aiming at Christ-likeness

1. Integrity, honesty, responsibility
2. Love, tenderness, compassion, devotion, transparency
3. Putting others first and sacrificing for the benefit of others

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