



Marriage: a sacrificial, unconditional, one flesh witness of the gospel

SACRIFICIAL LOVE

[25] Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

- **Love -**
- **loved -**
- **Gave himself for her -**

A HUSBAND'S LOVE for his wife is defined by the limitless self-giving love of the cross. You cannot fulfill your roles or carry out your responsibilities as a man without sacrificial love.

- You must sacrifice to lead
- You must sacrifice to protect
- You must sacrifice to provide

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

[26] that (purpose) he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word (promise),

- (Gave to) **sanctify -**
- **Washing water..... Word -**

[27] so that (purpose) he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

God has set the church apart by an unconditional promise to make her pure by the power of the Spirit in the Son. *Your marriage is an unconditional promise which in essence is meant to sanctify your wife.*

ONE FLESH COMMITMENT

[28] In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. [29] For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, [30] because we are members of his body.

- **own body -**
- **loves himself -**
- **Christ does the church...**

You are not bound to anyone or anything before the Holy God of the universe the way you are bound to your wife.

The greatest way to love your wife as yourself is by committing to make sure she is experiencing the love of God in Christ found in the gospel.

As her husband, commit to her

- Knowledge of the gospel (theology)
- Belief of the gospel (faith)
- Application of the gospel (life)
- Experience of the gospel (your relationship)

MARRIAGE AS MISSION

[31] “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” [32] This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. [33] However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

- **Genesis 1:26-28**

- **Mystery**

Marriage was created for the gospel. Your marriage exists to witness the gospel to the world. As a husband, your first and main mission is to love your wife as Christ loved the church.

- Witness sacrificial love?
- Witness unconditional love?
- Witness one flesh love?

If marriage is our mission, marriage must be the priority in our home around which all others plans, goals, dreams revolve!

HOMEWORK

Read Genesis 1:26-31, Revelation 19:6-10, Ephesians 5:22-33

- **HUSBANDS** (1) Answer the following question pertaining to you personally. (2) Have your wife answer any questions addressed to her. (3) Go over all your answers with your wife.

- **SINGLE MEN** (1) Answer the questions on the last page. (2) Meet with an older man who can help you sort through your answers.

Sacrificial Love

Most husbands tend to lead in one of two extremes; as a demanding tyrant or as a weak pushover? From which extreme do you tend to lead?

- In what specific areas do you lean toward tyranny?
 - Finances
 - Parenting
 - Church
 - Schedules
 - House work
 - other_____

- In what areas do you tend to be a pushover?
 - Finances
 - Parenting
 - Church
 - Schedules
 - House work
 - other_____

Instead of tyranny or being a pushover, what would sacrificial love look like in each of these areas?

- Finances
- Parenting
- Church
- Schedules
- Housework
- other_____

As the leader in the home, what specific decisions are you refusing to make because you know it would cost you something?

What specific actions can you take specifically those that may be uncomfortable for you so that you may effectively lead your wife spiritually?

As the protector of your wife, are there ways in which you should step in to protect your wife mentally, physically, emotionally?

Are there ways in which you are holding back, distracted, or just being lazy because you are refusing to sacrifice to provide more or better for your wife?

What specific steps can you take in sacrifice for your wife?

- *To lead*

- *To protect*

- *To provide*

Unconditional Love

What about your relationship with your wife has exceeded your expectations?

What about your relationship with your wife has fallen short of your expectations? Has this caused you to withhold attention, care, or even affection from her?

What are the biggest life changes over the course of marriage that have affected your relationship with your wife?

What will you say to your wife and do for your wife to turn from the sin of loving her conditionally and embracing the unconditional love of the gospel

One Flesh Love

Ask your wife the following questions so that you may in turn encourage her with God's love for her in Christ.

- Do you believe God loves you unconditionally?
- Do you genuinely believe God has forgiven you for your sins?
- What things do you do believing God is more happy with you when you do them than when you don't?
- Are there areas in which you feel like you are failing God?

Take some time and pray with your wife, specifically encouraging her with gospel truths (God's love, forgiveness, acceptance based on Jesus and His work for her.)

One of the ways your wife will feel or experience the gospel is by you initiating reconciliation. Is there a lingering conflict you need to address? Should you be asking for or granting forgiveness? What step will you take today to initiate reconciliation with your wife?

Love as Mission

What are the greatest threats to overwhelming the centrality of your marriage in your home?

- School
- Academics
- Kids
- Athletics
- Hobbies / Recreation
- Job
- Finances
- Other_____

If there is one area in which you and your wife are fighting for the purpose of your home, what is it? What do you set out as the purpose and mission of your marriage? What does she set out as the purpose and agenda of the marriage?

PLAN TO MAKE MARRIAGE THE MISSION

DAILY 15 minutes in prayer | **Time:**_____

WEEKLY 30 minutes talking about your relationship | **Day and Time:**_____

MONTHLY A date without kids | **Day/Date:** _____

ANNUALLY Days away from and without the kids | **Dates:** _____

Signature (husband)_____ (wife)_____

Talk with your wife about other changes you can make together to assert your marriage as the priority in your home.

For Single Men

- When you think about the prospect of getting married, do you think about a pursuit or something that might happen for you by chance?

- What is your purpose behind remaining single? Is this biblical? Is it just wise? Is your motive to serve self or Christ?

- If you are dating, what are the biblical reasons for delaying marriage with this person? Why do you believe it is wise to continue to date and not marry?

- If dating, what are your boundaries to remain sexually pure? Are they realistic?

- Are there ways you are dependent upon your parents or others that are keeping you from pursuing marriage and then caring for a wife?

- What steps can you take to establish a healthy independence as a man?

- What ways can you begin to cultivate sacrifice in your life through choosing inconvenience for others?