



What Is True Love Series
“Honey Tell Me”
Loving Each Other
Ephesians 5:22-33
Westport Christian Church
February 14, 2010

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so 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 would be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband. (Eph 5:22-33NASU)

A wife woke up one morning and said, "Honey, I just had a dream that you bought me a new gold necklace. What do you think it means?" "I don't know, but Valentine's Day is coming soon. Tuesday, you'll know," He replied. A few nights later, she again woke up after having a dream,

"This time, I dreamed you gave me a pearl necklace. What do you think it means?" "You'll know Tuesday," He replied. The night before Valentine's Day, she again woke up telling him about her dream, "This time I dreamed that you brought me a diamond necklace. What do you think it means?" "Honey, be patient. "You'll know tonight." he said. That evening, the husband came home with a package and gave it to his wife. Delighted, she opened it--to find a book entitled, "The meaning of dreams." (Sermon Central Illustrations)

We live in a time where love and marriage is totally misunderstood. Where love is simply considered an emotion, something you can fall into and something you can fall out of. Marriage is often seen as a formal ordeal and if it doesn't work, you simply bailout. Now, that may sound strange to some of you, but the other night while I was driving back from Louisville, I was listening to a radio talk program on dating and marriage. The intro to the program was this, "Courtship and dating rituals were once a lot more straightforward. You asked your parents or your intended's parents before coming to call, always had a chaperone, and didn't make any moves before marriage. Today things are a little more complicated, and the romance scene includes things like speed dating, 3rd and 4th marriages, blended families, cross-cultural romance, online matchmaking, and more horror stories than imaginable."

Love and marriage in the Church is just as confused as the rest of the world. The reason for that is we bring the culture into the church instead of taking the church to the culture. In Paul's time, pagans saw women as inferior beings, playthings for the dominant male. To be "head of the house" was to accept the common notion that authority was the male's rightful providence. Children and wives were only responsible to obey. The wife was not equal to her husband as a person, or in any other way. His needs and concerns dominated the household, and the wife existed to fulfill those needs and to serve him.

Our attitudes and understanding of what makes a good marriage and of the roles of husband and wife may or may not be right. Even in Christian circles, we have come to accept the attitudes of our culture without critically examining them in light of Scripture. On the one hand, there is the male chauvinist pig movement masquerading as manliness. On the other, there is the women's radical feminist movement masquerading as freedom. Both are dead wrong.

In the book, "Fulfilled Family," by John MacArthur Jr. He writes, "It's time for Christians to reiterate the divine pattern. Our marriages and families should demonstrate a way of living that is rewarding, meaningful, and fulfilling. That divine pattern should be evident to the world as it looks at Christian marriages and families. Unfortunately, the

world's problem of divorce has also become a problem of the church. But God has the divine standard that can make marriage and the family what they ought to be."

So, today I want to simply look at what the Bible teaches us about love in a marriage. So, honey tell me.

I. Husbands are to love their wife!

Verse 25, "Husbands, love your wives" . . . verse 28, "So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself. . .verse 33, "each individual among you also is to love his own wife."

Now, usually when a person repeats themselves it is important and we should pay attention. Paul writes not once but three times that a man is to love his wife. He not only says a husband should love his wife, but tells us it must be a sacrificial love! The husband is told that he is to love his wife like Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her. This passage does not tell the husband to dominate the wife or treat her like a slave, but instead he is to love her so much that he is willing to lay down his life for her if necessary!

The word that he uses is agape. The word for love that is used of God's love toward man. This implies that the husband is to love his wife unconditionally, no matter what she looks like or what she does. Most worldly love is love based on self-interest. As long as the object of our affections do what we want, we will love, but when the object stops performing for us, we quit loving the object. Agape love does include an appreciation for beauty, but agape love is based on our sincere interest for the best interests for the other person. It is a permanent concern.

Husbands are to nurture their wives, seeking always to help the wife grow as a person and as a Christian. If the husband makes Christ's love for the church the pattern for loving his wife, then he will love her sacrificially (Eph. 5:25). Christ gave Himself for the church; so the husband, in love, gives himself for his wife. If a husband is submitted to Christ and filled with the Spirit, his sacrificial love will willingly pay a price that she might be able to serve Christ in the home and glorify Him.

Dear Ann Landers:

My husband doesn't talk to me. He just sits there night after night, reading the newspaper or looking at T.V. When I ask him a question, he

grunts "huh, or Uh'huh." Sometimes he doesn't even grunt uh'huh. All he really needs is a housekeeper and somebody to sleep with him when he feels like it. He can buy both. There are times when I wonder why he got married.

The husband who never helps his wife with raising the kids or in keeping the house is not loving his wife sacrificially. The man whose only interest is his own relaxation and entertainment can hardly say that he loves his wife like Christ loved the church. By giving himself to her – totally dedicated, totally committed to her, giving up his personal desires for her so she may be made as happy as possible! He provides for her – He provides for the family – He works to meet her needs! Just as Jesus did the church.

Husbands, love your wife sacrificially!

II. Wives submit, respect your husband.

Wives; The word for "submission" or "be subject" is a military term meaning to be arranged under the authority of someone voluntarily. The same phrase is used in Romans 13 when dealing with the Christian's role to the civil authority we are submit ourselves to it.

I want to go ahead and state one of the reasons that God intends for marriage to be this way. So the wife can be an example of Christ to the unbelieving husband.

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. Your adornment must not 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; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear. (1Peter 3:1-6NASU)

A submissive wife can win over an unbelieving husband. Holy women of God did it. Sarah. Her husband was not perfect, but Sarah submitted to him and she was blessed. The main reason though is that the husband is the functional head of the house as Christ is the head of the church. This does not mean that the husband never listens to the wife. If he is loving her and trying to do what is in her best interests, then he will talk

over things with her.

Wives are to be subject to their husbands, they are to do it voluntarily, the husband is not to force it on her. The husband is not to take advantage of the wife. She is not your doormat! Submission does not denote one person being better or lower than the other. Jesus submitted himself to God, is Jesus inferior? I think not! God is more concerned with what you contribute to your relationship than with what you demand of them.

Why would God require this in a marriage?

III. To Bring About Unity.

Who established marriage, man or God? The answer to that question will determine how a person views marriage. If man came up with it, then man can undo it. But if God created and ordained it, then man has no right to redefine it!

When God created man, we read where God said it is not good for man to be alone. And we read where God brought all the animals to Adam to name them, but for Adam there was not found a suitable helper for him. So, God took flesh from Adam and fashioned him a helpmate. Adam looked at her and said, "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." (Gen 2:23NASU)

In the very next verse of this account in Genesis we read the same thing that Paul wrote, "FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH."

We must understand this is a perfect picture of unity, working together to bring glory to God. God has already established the roles for the husband and wife to bring unity to the family. To bring unity in the bond of love and marriage which brings about a beautiful picture of Christ and His church.

In the book "Sacred Marriage" by Gary Thomas, Gary share this wonderful concept that God did not create marriage to make us happy, but He created marriage to make us holy people. It is in our striving to be the husband and wife that God would have us to be that we find happiness, joy, fulfillment and everything we want our marriage to be.

Our Christian homes are to be pictures of Christ's relationship to His church. Each believer is a member of Christ's body, and each believer is

to help nourish the body in love (Eph. 4:16). We are one with Christ. The church is His body and is bride, and the Christian home is a divinely ordained illustration of this relationship. This certainly makes marriage a serious matter.

Conclusion; When it comes to a marriage relationship, our love is an act of the heart and an act of the will. There must be a constant, 'honey tell me.' We must understand that God has given us instruction to have the marriage we all desire. A marriage that is based upon Godly principles which bring unity in a marriage and glory to the Father. Men, we are to love our wives as Christ loves the church and gave Himself for her. Ladies, show your husband the respect he should have even when he doesn't deserve it.

Even though in this message I have focused on marriage, it goes beyond that. This message is a message of love from the One who gave His all. Today is valentines day and God has a message for you. Be mine!

Amen