

A Husband's Duty of Sacrificing

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[0 : 00] First, let me thank again all of those who have over the months memorized different parts! of Ephesians and then have willingly come to the front here and with all humility recited! for us. We have been blessed by the wide diversity of individuals that have tackled that challenge. Agreed? And probably more than once, as others have done it, you've thought to yourself, oh, I respect that, and I'm glad somebody else is doing it. I bring this up because we are, I am going to encourage one more pass at the book of Ephesians, and I want you to know already that Ephesians chapter 1 has been taken, and I understand that there is a small group that is working behind the scenes to pull this off. Remember, you don't have to do it solo. We've had a number of different groups do it different ways, and I appreciate the diversity, but we have

Ephesians chapter 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 that still remain to be taken for one last pass. And I bring this up to encourage you to prayerfully think of whether or not this is something that you can talk someone else into doing.

Do you follow me? So husbands could say to their wives, honey, I've been praying about this, and I think it's a great idea for you. Ah, I'll be in trouble. But I'm just encouraging you, just giving you a heads up that we're going to be looking for people that are willing to take, willing to give their best and work at Ephesians chapter 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 in the last pass. And I trust that I will be just absolutely swamped with volunteers so I don't have to ever bring it up again in the next week or two. Now, that being said, I want you to turn in your Bibles this morning, but before you do, I want you to hold it up like this. I want you to hold it. Some of you are holding up phones.

I saw a most touching video, little clip, this week. Someone posted it on Facebook of believers in China receiving their first copy of the Scriptures.

came in a suitcase. And these believers opened up. They were waiting in this room, and they opened up the suitcase, and they took out their Bibles for the first time, their own copy.

[3 : 08] And some of them kissed the Bible and opened their Bible and wept.

Oh, how I love thy law. It is my meditation all the day.

Now, I don't know about you, but I can't help myself sometimes. I kiss this book, not because I love this book, but because I love the Lord Jesus, who this book is all about.

And this book has been one of the principal ways He has blessed me, not only with salvation, but by progressive sanctification.

I want you to turn in your Bibles this morning to Ephesians chapter 5. And we are going to be looking together at Ephesians chapter 5, verse 26 through 30.

[4 : 28] Begin in 25, because that's actually where the thought picks up, but let me read it to you. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word, so that 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.

In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies, He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church.

Because we are members of His body. Father God, this morning, we are blessed by the undeserved privilege of prayer.

And as the author of Hebrews instructs us, we are to come boldly before the throne of grace, that we may find help in time of need. And we come this morning with humility, confessing the frailty of our flesh, the fickleness of our hearts, the effect that the culture we live in has upon our thinking.

And we ask that Your Word would be opened unto us, and that we would see the glory of Your wisdom, and that we would know the power of Your grace, and that we would grow in our walk for the testimony and the glory of Christ.

[6 : 17] And I am mindful, Father, this morning, that preaching is not merely the exercise of a human heart and will, but it is also a dependent discipline upon the enabling of the Spirit of God.

And this morning, I need Your help. And Your people need Your help. And we plead with You to answer our prayer.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Let me start out by kind of getting to the end and helping you see what is really going to be the heart of our lesson this morning.

I want you to put your finger, or even if you are so bold, go ahead and underline two little words. They are in verse 29.

And they are translated various ways in the English. Tish, I think she used the word feed.

[7 : 26] In verse 29, feed and cherish. In the ESV, it is translated as nourish and cherish. And it is actually, I think, probably a more accurate rendition of the text.

And I'm in no way belittling the translators, but the more accurate way to handle that word is over in Ephesians 6, verse 4, where it says, Fathers, don't provoke your children to wrath.

But then it says, But bring them up. That translation, that word, bring them up in the Greek, is the same word that is used over in 29, where it says, Nourish.

We'll get to that later. So I want you to circle those two words, Nourish and cherish. And what I want to announce this morning on the authority of the Word of God is that a Christian husband is responsible for the spiritual development of his wife.

In fact, God's intent is that he is to be the most significant instrument apart or second to the Spirit of God. And so, if you are at the point where you can nudge your husband and say, You've got this.

[8 : 43] Let's go home. Go ahead. Or you may think, Well, maybe a little refresher course. I mean, I've got this. It's basic. But it's all right. We'll sit and listen.

I want you to know that Satan's a liar. And really, he doesn't care which lie you are affected by so long as he can lead you away from the wisdom and the grace of God.

God intended from creation that many of his blessings should flow through marriage. And through the respective roles that he has appointed for a husband and a wife, and Satan, knowing God's plan and God's purpose, has done his very level best to lead men and women away from God's wisdom into their own inclinations and into his lies.

I mention that because what we're going to learn this morning from God's Word about a husband's role is really at odds in a very sharp way with our contemporary culture and its virulent feminism. But unless we get carried away with the idea, Well, things are a whole lot worse today than they used to be. I want you to understand that what is written here, written almost 2,000 years ago, was as much at odds with the culture of that day as it is on this day.

[10 : 09] Guess what? When Jeremiah penned the words in 17.9 that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, he wasn't just talking about ancient Israel. He was talking about, guess what?

Me, you. We all struggle with the reality of our own heart. And so while we would have to confess that the pendulum has swung from one extreme to the other, nevertheless, it is not where God wants our thinking to be.

And so this morning, we with humility must take up the text and say, what is God saying to us that reflects His wisdom and His will and His goodness?

The ancient world often viewed women as primarily valuable for producing legitimate offspring, caring for domestic order, or for man's personal entertainment.

I'll put it in a little more crass vocabulary. The idea was that she's good in the kitchen, she's good in the laundry room, and she's good in the bedroom. That was the attitude of the ancient world.

[11 : 19] Now, we'd have to say that the modern world may have made some minor amendations to that, but the truth of the matter is is that the modern world really has not a radically different view.

And so I want you to imagine just for a moment, just stop and think with me, of how unbelievably challenging it was to become a Christian as just a classic pagan in the ancient world and discover that God had some pretty pointed things to say about your marriage.

I thought getting saved was just about going to heaven. And here's God telling me as a Christian man that I have some profound responsibilities in relationship to the wife that I have.

And so I want you to understand as we take up this passage that here is the point that the Scriptures make. It is made on the authority of the Word of God. The Christian husband is responsible for his wife's spiritual growth.

If the idea was unusual in the ancient world, let me tell you, it's unusual in the modern world as well. I wouldn't deny that there are men who probably have some idea that they have some responsibility, but when it really comes down to the practice, I don't see much of it.

[12:48] My experiences in premarital counseling, in being involved in marital counseling and just general ministry for over 30 years do not, by any stretch of the imagination, provide a final authority on the subject.

One of the things I did this week was I checked with Amazon. I mean, that's the final authority after all. And I went to Amazon and I checked on how many books have been printed or have been authored by Christian authors about parenting.

And can I tell you that, you know, on the little scroll down at the bottom it says, one, two, three, dot, dot, dot, and you know how it goes on? I got the read from that and I just kind of paged down, and you know how it is.

I had a couple extra minutes and so I thought, wow, there are people that are cranking out books on how to be a good mommy and a daddy by the bunches. And a lot of women have done a reasonably decent job about writing how to be a good godly wife.

Can I tell you that the number of books that are written about being a godly husband, in particular, in relationship, now track this, to being the spiritual leader of the home, are not very many.

[14:04] In my Sunday school class several weeks ago, I asked the question, we have a well-informed body of believers for the most part.

I probably nag you incessantly about what does the Bible teach, you know, but for the most part, pretty reasonably informed scripturally. And I remember asking the question in my Sunday school class, how many of you men in here were trained explicitly, you grew up in a Christian home, I said, how many of you did?

The majority of the guys in the class grew up in a Christian home. How many of you men were trained explicitly at the responsibilities of being the spiritual head and leader of your home, not a one of the men raised their hand, oh yeah, my dad worked at that.

So I want you to understand that while we've heard, I'm not going to preach a passage that you guys have heard for the first time this morning. You've heard it many times.

But I want you to understand that it is not a passage that is applied or practiced. And God has a clear word for us. So let's take up the text and mark what it says as I did in reading that in verse 25 it says, husbands, love your wives.

[15:18] Oh yeah, right, I do. So, well, do it like Jesus. Oh. And Jesus in His love for His wife, He was willing, as it says there, to give Himself for her.

And so what I would like us to do this morning is understand the broad flow of what Christ's model in love looks like. I mean, when the Bible says, husbands, love your wives like Jesus did, if you're sitting there and thinking that Jesus is like the neighbor next door, you're thinking, well, I'm doing what He's doing.

In fact, maybe I'm a little upstep on Him. I'm better. Love your wife like, we better know what Jesus' love is like. So I want you to understand that Christ's love for the church meant, as we see in verse 25, that He was willing to die in her place.

He was willing to die in her place. He was willing to take the wrath of God and suffer the punishment that we deserve so that our defiled and filthy lives can be covered and made clean with His blood. Man, we are blessed beyond our imagination at the love of Christ that was willing to die for our sins.

[16:39] His love also means, as we find in the text, that He set her apart for a special purpose. I like the passage that John read earlier where Jesus, in His high priestly prayer, He commented on the fact that I sanctify myself so that she might be sanctified.

He was willing to take upon Himself a special purpose for the sake of the one that He loved to make her special. I want you to understand that to sanctify something is to take something that in Scripture is really pretty common and ordinary and to set it apart, particularly in the context of the Bible, for God's glory and for His purposes.

So, Christ's goal in dying for the church, in addition to our salvation, was to make us special for the sake of God, to make us valuable to the one that He so dearly loves.

And He did this with His own blood. Now, in verse 26, it says that He, let me read the passage, He might sanctify, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word.

And let me just kind of give you the short story on this one. There are some who look at this and believe that it means baptism. I don't buy that at all. And for several different reasons. For one, I do not find in Scripture that baptism is something that precedes conversion.

[18:15] I had an individual not long ago who said, would you baptize me? I said, absolutely. Once you know Christ. This morning, after our sermon, we are going to have the privilege of hearing one young lady share her testimony of faith and then following that, I'm going to baptize her.

It would be my privilege. Her family is down here somewhere near the front, I think. But that baptism in the Scripture follows. It's like putting on a wedding ring.

It's a declaration. Hey, I know Jesus! It's what it is. And I want you to understand that when it says here the washing of the water by the Word, I believe what it's saying there is that the way in which people come to Christ is through the ministry of the Word of God.

How shall they hear? Paul asks in Romans chapter 8 unless, actually it's 10, how shall they hear unless someone is sent? How beautiful are the feet?

The fact of the matter is that our understanding of the depravity of our heart and the desperate condition of our soul takes place through the preaching of the Word of God, through the announcing, here's what God says about your condition and here is the solution in the blood of Christ that's been shed for you.

[19:34] to summarize then what we see in the Scripture here in this passage that he died for the church to save her and to sanctify her. Now woven into the text, I believe in verse 25 and 26 in particular is the idea that his work of sanctification in part is positional.

There is a sense in which you and I are never going to be any holier than we are by virtue of the blood of Christ. Do you understand that? We are declared, we have, get fancy here with words, but we are given the righteousness of Christ and it is attached to our account.

Do we earn it? No, we receive it by faith and so there is a sense in which his salvation sets us apart from the moment of our salvation and puts us into this relationship and puts us into this state.

I do want you to understand, however, that his salvation also does a work of sanctification that is progressive. In other words, it continues to move us forward in spiritual development.

I love, I love, I love being able to say to people when I'm sharing the gospel, I've got incredibly good news for you after I've announced the fact that they are condemned in the eyes of God for their own sin.

[21:03] I say, good news, Jesus died to pay the penalty for your sins and he is ready to forgive you for all of it. And then I like saying this, and by the way, you don't have to stay the way you are.

I love that! And the scriptures make it clear that one of the marks of genuine conversion is that we stop the way we used to be and we begin changing to be more like Jesus.

Isn't that right? One of the things that I did this week as I was studying and praying for you, I was reviewing my heart, the lives of a number of you who I have known as a pastor and as a shepherd and one of the things that I took comfort and encouragement was saying, man, I've seen that change.

I like that. That makes sense, doesn't it? I think about the passage over in Philippians 2, verse 12 and 13 where Paul says, work out your salvation with fear and trembling for it's God.

What? What? It's God that works in you both to will. Do you know what changed my want to? It was Jesus.

[22:15] Both to will and do His good pleasure. If you're sitting here and there hasn't been some touch to your will and your doing, you probably ought to roll out the birth certificate and double check.

Whoa, do I really know Jesus? Because genuine conversion brings a change. And it's important that we understand here at the beginning that Christ's work, yes, it saves, but it also brings about progressive sanctification.

So, with that as background, and I'm kind of pressing together verses 25, 26, and a little bit 27, okay? Make holy and without blemish. I want you to go now to 28.

And in 28, the apostle is just kind of giving us some understanding, some application, moving it forward so we can make the connection for the real zinger. Do you know what a real zinger is?

It's a fast hardball driven by the batter right at the pitcher. So, they're starting to wear these dorky helmets. Do you follow that?

[23 : 22] I mean, they're not going to wear them, trust me. But anyway, here we go. Let's look at the verse. In the same way, what's that saying? That's saying, hey, Bubba, since you said I do, you took on some responsibility here, guy.

In the same way, like Jesus, husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it just as Christ does the church.

Now, woven into this whole thing is the idea that a Christian husband, I'm not talking to people here that don't know Christ. I want you to know that. This sermon is not for any man who is here who doesn't know Jesus.

It just doesn't work. First thing is, come to Christ. Not that I'm dismissing the evangelical call to a person's salvation, but this is for Christians. And by the way, it's for Christians who are filled with the Spirit.

Do you get that? That's Ephesians 5.18. Okay. So let's understand Christ's model. Let's fit it in. Verse 28 announces, love your wives like Jesus.

[24 : 35] That's in essence what it's being said. Follows along, and we find in the passage, care for your wife like Jesus cares for his own body. It's very interesting.

The Holy Spirit puts a great deal of emphasis on this in verse 28 and 29 so as to dispel the husband's natural tendency of being self-deceived. What do we mean by that?

You ask the average husband in a Christian circle, do you love your wife? What is the Bible answer supposed to be? Yeah. Duh.

I hired on for that job. Yeah, I love her. Do you really? And what I want you to do is ask yourself this question. I want you to be honest with the Lord. Do you love your wife like Christ loved the church? Question. The answer, Christian man, is found in whether or not you fit this model that we have in this passage. Does that make sense? That's what we're reading, and that's what we're discovering.

[25 : 39] Do I love my wife like Christ loved the church? And so we understand that caring for your wife is like Jesus cares for his own body, and he uses an analogy from human life that we all understand.

Look at that just for a little bit. In the passage, it says that, sorry, it says that a man should love his wife as his own body, and by the way, when you're cold, what do you do, man?

We have two choices. We either turn the thermostat up, and your wife says, oh, it's awful hot in here, you know, but we either turn the thermostat up, or what do we do?

We go get more clothes. Am I right? We're hard. When you're hungry, what do you do, guys? I don't love my body. You know, just suffer.

I'm not eating. I don't love my body. No, we take care of ourselves, right? Now, kind of stretch this out a little bit. I want you to understand that loving your wife properly is reasonable and rewarding, and when you take care of your wife, like you take care of your own body, you're paying attention to the things that are, and follow this, because this is tricky, the most important, okay?

[26 : 57] It says here, he who loves his wife loves himself. Now, let me take a little bit on this. This passage, because one of the things I have, now, do you know what it means to go apoplectic?

No, you don't. It means to get really kind of irritated. Now, pastors aren't supposed to do that. You follow that? I mean, pastors are supposed to be very calm and kind of, you know, naturally sweet people. That's not me, but I'm trying. I'm working at it.

So, when I have people in my office and I say, so what's your problem? And they say to me, well, I don't love myself. I say, what? Where did that come from? I really don't get that animated, but, you know, and the truth of the matter is I've never had a person in my office that wasn't room temperature.

How many of you understand what room temperature means? Dead. I have never had anybody in my office that wasn't room temperature that really didn't love themselves. Paul is using a comparison.

He's saying, guys, you're on it when it comes to taking care of yourself, right? What's the difference between a man and a boy? You know that answer? Price of his toys.

[28 : 07] You knew that? Guys, take care of your wives the way you take care of yourself. And he says, in verse 29, he says, for no one ever hated his own flesh.

I mean, you hit your thumb with a hammer, what do you do? I mean, everything in life comes down to this little index or digit right there and there you are.

Honey, I hurt myself. So, I want you to understand that the practical part of what Jesus is saying here and the Spirit is saying is when you give yourself away for Christ, you're blessed by Christ. That's what it means when it says, husbands, if you love yourself, you're loving your wife. It works out that giving your love away brings back benefit.

Now, I want us to really focus on how Christ loves and a husband should love. And so, we come down to verse 29 and this is very, very important. How Christ loves and a husband should love really is focused in on these two words, to nourish and to cherish.

[29 : 18] Actually, a more accurate translation of the text would be to say bring up. The Greek word, I'll give the Greek here to you, but the Greek word is only used twice in the New Testament.

It's actually used a number of different times where the Greeks translated the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek. I'll get bored with that, but the word appears often in the Old Testament in the Greek rendition.

And it's a word that speaks about nurturing someone on an upward path. Okay? That's the reason in Ephesians chapter 6, 4, it says that fathers are to bring up their children.

Now, husband, if you're hearing from the Spirit of God this morning, what it's saying is that as you're driving home, don't say to your wife, hey, I'm in this to help you grow, but think it.

In fact, if you have the nerve, go ahead and say it. Here's what the Bible is driving the point towards. The Christian husband nurtures when he cares for the spiritual development of his wife.

[30 : 43] That's your job. He has implemented divine order and he has charged the man with being the spiritual head of his home and he is responsible for the spiritual leadership of the home and the wife that he gives, that man.

The wife's principle spiritual encouragement and enrichment should come first and foremost from her husband. A pastor should be a helper. A godly woman should be a helper.

And I've been here long enough that when women in our church call me and ask me an opinion, guess what I often do? That first question is, so, have you talked with your husband?

What are his thoughts? I want to encourage that mindset which is biblical. biblical. I want you to understand as you look at this passage that it is not an exception to a Bible rule.

There are two different things that I bring to your attention that make it clear in God's economy and God's thinking that the husband is to be the spiritual developer of his wife.

[31 : 55] Two passages come to mind. One is in Genesis chapter 2 where God gave to Adam instruction that was literally spiritual death or life.

How many of you are aware of that? Eve was the one who sinned as it says but Adam was the one who received the instruction when God said to Adam, listen, y'all don't be eaten of that tree.

I mean, he made the point, don't do this. Who did he tell? He told Adam. And when sin came into the garden, who did God address? He addressed Adam.

There's another passage I want you to take a look at just for a moment. Turn over in your Bible to 1 Corinthians chapter 14 verse 35. Now, by the way, hey, everybody look up.

I'm just the mailman. How many of you understand what I just said? What's my job? Deliver the mail. If it gets put in your box, somebody else sent it.

[32 : 57] 1 Corinthians 14 35, look at the passage. It says, if there's anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands where? At home.

For it's shameful for a woman to speak in the church. Now, I believe that has application in particular, and we find other passages in relationship that's over in 1 Timothy chapter 2, but I believe that the particular application is characteristic of the learning style and structure that took place in the church.

And a lot of the teaching methodology was more interaction, Q&A, and challenging. Oh, yeah? Where did you get that idea from?

You know, there's a pastor up there teaching, and, you know, a woman raises her hand in the church and says, hey, where did you? And Paul, and by the way, who told Paul what to write? Does anybody know? Was it his culture or was it the Holy Spirit? What's the answer? It was the Holy Spirit that said, hey, you have a question, ask your husband. And by the way, a lot of husbands, including back then, they'd come from pagan backgrounds, so when the husband was asked the question at home, guess what he had to say?

[34 : 14] Same thing that probably some of you should be saying, well, let me do some research, I'll get back to you. I can tell you, a lot of times I don't have answers, but I do know the resource to try to lie on.

And so, here we have the apostle saying, hey, listen, the husband is responsible for the spiritual development of his wife.

The second word that is used there says that he is to cherish. And that is a very interesting word that we probably benefit from just understanding.

It means to really, to be affectionate of her. Can I say that again slowly? I just want the men to look up. Just the men. To be affectionate of her.

Well, I'm not really into affection. I'm not into the warm fuzzies. I want you to turn over. Remember, I'm delivering the mail. That's what we're doing here. 1 Thessalonians 2, verse 7.

[35 : 14] Actually, this word cherish that we find in Ephesians 5, 29, appears one other time in 1 Thessalonians 2, verse 7, where it says this, Paul, we were gentle among you like a nursing mother taking care of her own child.

Do you have any idea what a nursing mother is like? Like, they're all over it when it comes to that little child. Am I right? And having watched my wife care for four of our children and nurse all four of them, and I don't say that because I'm a member of La Leche League.

I just happened to say it. But here's the deal. I mean, now I'll tell you, cleaning bottoms, that's one thing, but nursing, I mean, that was a moment.

She had to have a special place. There's a lot that went into that. And she just loved, loved, loved, loved, loved that child. Paul says, hey, husbands, you're responsible for the spiritual upgrade of your wife's life, and you're responsible to be affectionate, to be, man, you're to wrap up in her.

I know one young man said, well, I'm afraid I love my wife too much. What? How close are you to doing it like Jesus does? Well, I'm not there.

[36 : 41] It's all right. You've got room to go. Go for it. Okay? Paul says, look at the passage, a husband is to care for his wife tenderly. So, and I'll close with this, if you're a Christian husband today, and the Holy Spirit is speaking to your heart, you understand that he is not asking you if you'd like to do this.

This is not a suggestion. It's a command. And it is one that I find profoundly humbling and drives me to prayer.

I, Tim Kenoyer, am responsible for my bride's ongoing sanctification.

You, husband, are responsible for your wife's ongoing sanctification. salvation. And all God's people said, amen.

Let's enjoy our baptism. And John, come and lead. Amen.