

Where Men are Men and Women Are Glad of It

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Preacher: Don Coleman

[0 : 00] We're so thankful for this day and it's Father's Day and I want to make a confession to you.

! It's alright for a pastor, probably even a healthy thing for pastors to confess some things, not some big terrible sin. I don't think it is. Some of you fathers might think so, but you know this past week as I was preparing to preach, I forgot all about Father's Day. It didn't even enter my mind. Now, you know, I guess I could say that it's best if you're going to forget one, it'd be that one and not Mother's Day, though I must confess I have forgotten it over the years, but my wife can attest to that. So shame on me, but I forgot all about the fathers. And so that's why, you know, if you even look at the bulletin, look at the title of the sermon, you might notice there that it didn't really have anything to do with Father's Day. And so, fortunately, I recovered quick enough that I'm not going to preach that sermon. We'll hold that for next week. And actually, it worked out better because, as it turned out, because we couldn't get a flight with the ConocoPhillips shuttle this week. We're going to have to drive down, so that means I'm going to be gone longer.

And so, hey, good, I've already got my sermon ready for next Sunday. All right, so we'll get to Luke 18 next week, Lord willing, if God gives us that day. And this morning, we're going to be in another passage. And for you Wednesday night people, you're going to appreciate this. It's going to be Ephesians.

Ephesians chapter 5. And I'm going to read in a moment, not going to read it yet, but I'm going to read starting with verse 18 and eventually moving to that particular text that is obviously for fathers, husbands, husbands, specifically husbands. And so, I'll read that in just a moment. That will be our text for this morning. And so, maybe some of our Wednesday night crowd, they'll get a double dip. Although, really, I'm going to be sharing tonight some things that did not, was not part of my teaching on Wednesday night. And so, kind of a little different perspective on a few things. And so, I think there's something of value, even if you were here this past Wednesday night when I taught on this text.

[2 : 44] Before we read it, though, I want to invite you to come with me to what may seem to be a foreign country.

Kind of a far country. In fact, some might even call it a fantasy land. And it is a land where men are men.

And women are glad of it. A land where women are women. And men are glad of it.

And I'm talking about the land of marital bliss. Is there such a place? A land of marital bliss. Does such a place exist today?

We might think this is a fantasy land. A fictitious place. And we might even ask the question, or at least entertain the question, does or did such a land ever exist?

[3 : 53] The land of marital bliss. I want to apologize to our singles. We have a number of singles here. I don't want you to just kind of tune me out here, just because you're single and not married.

But I think you can relate to what I'm talking about here. The land of marital bliss. Did it ever exist? And my answer to that is, actually, yes, it did.

It did exist. In fact, in Matthew 19, verse 8, Jesus said, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives.

But, this is what he said, from the beginning it was not so. Now, that's important. And so, if in the beginning, marital bliss was the rule, the norm, then what happened to it?

What happened to it? Well, I guess we'd have to go back and ask Adam and Eve. And actually, you don't have to ask them. You can go to the Bible and find out. Sin happened to it.

[5 : 08] I mean, that's just the basic fact of the matter. Sin happened to it. The fall of mankind is what happened to the land of marital bliss.

As a matter of fact, I would tell you, and maybe you know this, that the battle of the sexes, and I know we don't hear that put that way much anymore. It's kind of passe, and yet the battle still exists. The battle of the sexes, did you know that it is the result of the curse of Adam, Adam's sin, way back there in the Garden of Eden? In fact, if you have your Bible there, you can just kind of quickly look back at Genesis chapter 3 and verse 16, and you'll discover this.

In Genesis chapter 3 and verse 16, this is after Adam and Eve had sinned in the Garden, and God is pronouncing a curse upon them and upon all mankind.

And listen to Genesis 3.16. To the woman he said, although this has great implications for the man as well, I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception.

[6 : 17] In pain you shall bring forth children. But this is the part that I want you to notice. Your desire shall be for your husband. That sounds real good, doesn't it?

Although, it's not really. I'll explain here in just a minute. This is part of the curse. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.

Now, that doesn't sound too good, does it? Huh, ladies? He shall rule over you. Now, it's interesting, and I want you to understand that the word desire, that is the Hebrew word that's translated desire, literally means, not only by definition, or at least it can be used in this way, but specifically by the context.

It means to seek control. To seek control over. Now, ladies, bear with me. It is Father's Day, and so, you know, got to pound the ladies a little bit here first.

Not really. That's what the word means. That's the idea here. It means to seek control. In fact, the very same word and phraseology is used a chapter later in chapter 4, verse 7, when God is talking to Cain, and Cain, you know, he's all bent out of shape because God did not accept his offering, his sacrifice, and there was a reason for that.

[7 : 40] It was the wrong sacrifice. God expected a blood and demanded a blood sacrifice, which Abel did offer, and Cain did not. He offered to sacrifice the fruits of his own labor.

Kind of a picture of works unto salvation type of thing. And God rejected his sacrifice, and Cain doesn't understand that. He's upset with that. And God says to Cain, in chapter 4, verse 7, if you do well, that means if you offer the right sacrifice, the one I demand, will you not be accepted?

And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. Listen to this. And its desire is for you.

Its desire is for you. But you should not, you should rule over it. Its desire is for you. Same word. Same, almost exact same phrase in the Hebrew text.

And so it's clear to see the context. The curse of Genesis 3.16 is two-sided. It's two-sided. It's two-sided. The wife will desire to control her husband.

[8 : 52] And the husband will desire to rule over. To rule over the wife in a suppressive way. That's the idea. To rule in a suppressive way with an authoritative kind of rule.

And it's been that way ever since. And the result is conflict. That's the answer, the reason why the battle of the sexes and why there is conflict within the home.

It is the fruit of the fall of mankind. And you go all the way back to the Garden of Eden, of course, where that took place and see it. All right, so then, does that mean marital bliss is not possible for us today?

Well, no. It doesn't mean that at all. Because praise the Lord, if you understand Scripture and understand the Gospel and understand what Jesus accomplished, what we lost in the fall, what we lost in Adam, we can gain again in Christ.

We can gain it in Him. So I guess we could say that only in the context of Christianity can there be true marital bliss. really.

[10 : 04] And, you know, you might be thinking, well, you know, even Christians struggle in their marriages. Even Christians get divorces and such. And yes, they do.

Absolutely right. In fact, sadly, the statistics show that divorce, the divorce rate among Christians and non-Christians is virtually the same. Whereas before, not too many years ago, it was kind of three to one.

That was bad enough. But now it's just virtually the same. Great tragedy. It's a tragedy that has touched many lives right here in this room.

Of course, God's grace is sufficient. That's a great tragedy and really ought not to be that way among God's people. And so we as believers ought to have and can have, can have, the best and strongest marriages.

And I would even say to some of you who are on your second marriage, that marriage can be the best. It can be the best and the strongest in the context of a Christian home.

[11 : 15] And the key is found in our text for this morning. And having said that, then let's look at it. And I've said I'm going to start really with verse 18 and there's a reason for that.

And I'll mention that a little bit later as we go along. But here, Paul in his letter to the Ephesians, he says, and do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit.

So that's where we begin. Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.

Now that all refers to the relationship within the body of Christ. Relationships between brothers and sisters. Then he moves to another subject or another relationship.

Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church, and he is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

[12 : 30] Now if you're interested in what I have to say about that particular passage, then you'll have to go to the website and get Wednesday night's teaching a couple of Wednesdays ago. But we're not going to deal with that tonight.

I mean this morning. Verse 25. Husbands, love your wives just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her.

That he might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word. That he might present her to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, his own body, but nourishes and cherishes it just as the Lord does the church.

The implication being just as husbands are to their wives. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

[13 : 37] For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery. But I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Nevertheless, let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Alright, so there it is.

Fathers, and speaking to you, and really specifically, husbands, so that may include more of you here. husbands and not yet fathers.

So I want to speak to the husbands. This is Father's Day, okay? We know that. And it's a day to honor fathers, and that's all right and proper.

But as a father and a man, can I say, the Bible says that honor is to be given to those who do honor. And so, this morning, really what I want to do is to challenge the husbands here in this building to strive to earn the honor that is due for those who will apply the teaching of this passage.

[14 : 57] Now, when considering the role of the husband, and really side by side, and though we're not going to spend any time on this, considering the role of the wife in the marriage, how that all comes together, we can boil it down to two words, primarily.

Two words, respectively. Love and submission, right there in the passage. Love and submission, only Paul reverses the order. And so, the Bible says that husbands are to do what?

To love their wives. To love their wives. Wives are to say it, ladies. Respect.

All right, it does say that a little later. Submit. Or, subject yourself to your own husbands.

So, love and submission. And so, since it's Father's Day, we're going to deal with the love part.

Husbands loving their wives. This is the command.

[16 : 00] Husbands, love your wives. Now, that sounds pretty simple, doesn't it? I mean, doesn't it? In fact, some guys are probably thinking, you know, I'd much rather have this command, love my wife, than to have the command the women get.

That is to submit to their husbands. It would be a lot easier to love than it is to submit. And yet, I would say to you, absolutely not. It's just the opposite. Much harder.

Much more challenging. If you're going to do what God has commanded here, much more challenging, difficult, to love than it is to submit.

And this is the command. Husbands, love your wives. And it sounds pretty simple and most of the guys are saying, well, of course, I love my wife. She knows that. Does she? Does she? And really, besides that, obviously, Paul is talking about more than just simply saying, I love you to your wife. And so, as we analyze this text, we can really pick out at least three things Paul is saying about the kind of love husbands are to have toward their wives.

[17:09] Now, last Wednesday night, I really delved a lot deeper into every single word and phrase and part of this passage. We're not going to do that this morning. But, highlight some of the things that Paul says as he describes this kind of love.

The kind of love. That's what we want to know. Right, guys? We don't know what kind of love is that that we're to have toward our wives. Well, first of all, and this kind of cuts against the grain of many a man's thinking.

Number one, it is a submissive love. The kind of love the Bible commands husbands to have toward their wives is a submissive love.

Now, the husband is the head of the wife. The husband is the head of the wife. Whether that husband takes that seriously or not.

Whether that husband lives up to that reality or not. Whether that husband expresses all that is meant by being the head of the wife, he is.

[18:25] And that's not just a man's opinion about that. That's what the Bible says. Right? Verse 23, For the husband is the head of the wife. And even gives us an analogy as also Christ is the head of the church.

So the husband is the head of the wife. Now, if we husbands see this headship only in terms of authority, then we've missed it. We've missed it.

You can see the broader context of this passage, and I kind of alluded to this at the beginning before I read the passage, the broader context in this larger passage is the Spirit-filled life.

And all these other things that Paul is saying about relationships, these things are tied to verse 18. Be filled with the Spirit.

See, all of this is about the Spirit-filled life. Now, being filled with the Spirit does not mean that you're giddy all the time. You know. Just kind of, you know, like someone who's drunk.

[19:31] It doesn't mean that at all. It does not mean that you are kind of always on some emotional high. You know, everything's just happy, happy, happy, all the time. Kind of like Phil Robertson, you know.

Happy, happy, happy. Well, you know, I understand what he's talking about and it's wonderful. It's great to be happy and happy all the time, but that's not what is meant here, by be filled with the Spirit.

The idea here is complete submission, absolute yieldedness to the control of the Holy Spirit of God. See, we can't miss and should not miss the analogy that Paul is using there in verse 18. like a person who is drunk that is under the influence of alcohol. A Spirit-filled believer is under the influence of God.

And that is so much so that all of my thoughts and all of my desires and all of my actions and all of my decisions and the way I relate to others, especially husband, my wife, your wives, all of that, everything, is to be under the divine control of the Holy Spirit of God.

[20:42] That's what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Not getting more of the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit getting all of you. That's the idea. And then, Paul goes from there to speak about all these various relationships.

So it's tied to that. So what does the Spirit-filled life look like? Well, you can sum it up in verse 21. It looks like, in terms of relationships, it looks like this, submitting to one another in the fear of God. In respect and reverence for God. That's what the Spirit-filled life looks like. And this is so key. Because submission is what sets the stage for what Paul has to say.

Not only about the relationships within the body, the relationship of believer to believer, but now also the marriage relationship, and then later the parent and child relationship, and then finally the employer-employee relationship.

All of those relationships are dependent upon submission to the Holy Spirit and submission to one another. Submission is the key to it all. So husbands, you're not off the hook.

[21:58] You have to submit to your wife as well. And understanding what that means. So when Paul says husbands, love your wives, he's talking about a Spirit-filled love. He's talking about a

submissive love.

And what kind of love is that, by the way? Not just in the marriage context, but in all relationships. Well, doesn't Paul tell us so?

And define that for us over there in that familiar passage in 1 Corinthians chapter 13. You can turn to it if you want to. Let me read part of it. In fact, I want to read starting with verse 4.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 13, that famous love chapter. You know, we only hear this chapter when we go to weddings, it seems like. And it does apply to the marriage relationship.

It certainly does. And it's very appropriate to be quoted and parts of it used there in the wedding ceremony. And certainly in the marriage counseling.

[23 : 00] I don't think there's ever been a time that I've done marriage counseling and premarital counseling that I've not gone to this particular passage. But look at verse 4. Love suffers long.

It is kind. Love does not envy. Love does not parade itself. It's not puffed up. It does not behave rudely.

Why have your husbands ever behaved rudely? Huh? How about getting an amen? A really high-pitch amen. It does not seek its own.

It is not provoked. Thinks no evil. Does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth. Bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, and he goes on and on from there.

This is the definition of love. And it's submissive love. I mean, it's obvious, isn't it, that the Spirit-filled love is never self-centered, never self-promoting, it's never self-seeking.

[24 : 10] love. A Spirit-filled, submissive love is always concerned with the welfare of the object of that love.

And guys, in this case, it's your wives. Your wives. And so, you know, any husband who thinks that being the head of the household means that every member of the household is there at their beck and call, has it all backward.

He is to love. Self-sacrificially. To love, to serve, to protect, to provide for his wife and for his family. So, first of all, it's a submissive love. Second, it is a sacrificial love. Sacrificial love. I don't miss the significance of Paul's analogy here.

Actually, it gives us two analogies and I'm just going to really deal with one of them. The analogy of Christ and his church. See, he compares the two.

[25 : 18] A husband love for his bride and Christ's love for his bride. The church. Verse 23, for the husband is head of the wife as also Christ is head of the church and he is the savior of the body.

Verse 25, husbands love your wives just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her. So, see, Christ's sacrificial love for his bride, the church, is a pattern.

A pattern to follow. A pattern to husbands to fit your love for your wife into. It's a pattern, a pattern for husbands to love their wives.

And so quickly, there are four aspects to this pattern of sacrificial love. First place, it is selfless. It is selfless.

I mean, talk about your unattainable goals. When you think about the analogy, how does Christ love his bride? Well, gave himself for her.

[26 : 31] What Paul said, he gave himself for her. Acts 20, verse 28, he purchased his bride, the church, with what? His own blood.

Very clear. 1 John 3.16, not John 3.16, but 1 John 3.16, John talks about what true love is, and we know what true love is by what Jesus did for his church, and what did he do?

1 John 3.16, he laid down his life for us. Then, he ends that with, and we also ought to lay down our lives for our brethren, or our fellow Christians.

And, if that doesn't include your wife, then, huh? Of course it does. And so, this is the pattern for husbands who are commanded to love their wives.

And, you know, it's easy for a husband, some husbands, to point out Ephesians 5.22, wives, submit to your own husband. Easy to hold that over their heads. But, how many of us are willing to place ourselves fully under the demand of Ephesians 5.25, husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for her.

[27 : 51] and we know what that meant for Jesus. He gave his life. By the way, and I mentioned this to the group Wednesday night, if that's all that is required, that you be willing to die for your wife, then that would be easy.

You say, really? Yeah, it's easy to make that commitment because it's probably never going to happen. But, you can say, I would do it, I mean, and really even mean it. That if it came to it, and it got down to that, and it was either her or me, I would sacrifice my life for my wife, and I think you probably would.

But, that's the easy part. How about the lesser commitments? The commitment of self to your wife throughout your marriage relationship?

But, here's the pattern, you see. It's a sacrificial love. It is sacrificial love. So, it is selfless. And then, it is sanctifying.

This kind of love is sanctifying. Most men, I think, have never really thought about this aspect of their love for their wives.

[29 : 10] If you look again at verses 25 to 27. Read it again. Just listen to it closely. Husbands love your wives. We got that. Just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her.

Okay? It seems like an unattainable goal, but we understand it. That he might, now here's the part you need to pay attention to, that he might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.

It's not about baptism. It's about the cleansing properties of God's word. That he might present her to himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

And one day Jesus will present his church just that way, perfect, holy, blameless, without spot, without wrinkle. But the point is, when Jesus died on the cross for his bride, the church, his work did not end there.

It wasn't just simply a dying ministry that Jesus had. He continues to have a ministry in the life of his bride. And so he is even now through the work of the Holy Spirit, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, working in us to make us pure, to make us holy.

[30 : 33] to cleanse us, mature us, and all of these things. That's what he's doing right now for every one of us who are part of his bride. And so when a man truly loves his wife as Christ loves the church, he's not only willing to die for her, but he is also doing everything that he can to protect her purity.

To protect her moral purity as well as her spiritual purity. So a husband who truly loves his wife would never, never lead his wife into any kind of sin.

Or even lead her to a place where there is the temptation to sin. Where she becomes vulnerable to the temptations to sin.

That's a pretty big responsibility. Rather, his desire should be to make the marriage relationship a sin-free relationship.

Now, obviously, it's not possible, not for any individual, and not as we would lead any group of individual relationship to be absolutely sinless, that they will come one day after we leave this place.

[31 : 52] But the husband's desire is as best he can, and in the power of God, and his submission to the power and control of the Holy Spirit to seek, to strive, to create his relationship with his wife to be a sin-free relationship.

And to go further than that, to make the home a sin-free environment. You ever thought about that? Honestly, I hadn't really thought about that until I looked at this again.

That's a pretty big order. Pretty big responsibility. You know, we can also, though, husbands, be guilty of destroying our wife's purity in a passive way too.

I'm talking about active things, active things that we do and say and lead and so forth, but also in a passive way. Things we don't do or allow to happen.

You know, why do you think some women commit adultery? It does happen. Why do you think that?

That happens? Well, it's because, chiefly because their husbands are married to their jobs or married to their favorite pastime or whatever it may be and pay very little attention to the emotional needs of the wife.

[33 : 19] So, you know, she meets a man who pays attention to her. Meet the man who at least expresses some tangible kind of love, even though it's not a real love, not a true love.

So, she was responsible. It doesn't happen overnight either. You know, when a woman commits adultery, it's almost never the beginning of something that has gone wrong.

It is almost always the end of something that went wrong a long time ago. It's a big responsibility. Why do you think women get hooked on romance novels?

I guess some men read those things too. Or soap operas. I've watched daytime TV in a long time. Do they still have soap operas? How do you know?

I'm just kidding. I know they have soap operas. I'm just trying to trick you. Why do they get kind of hooked on those things?

[34 : 24] Because, you know, they feed the need that a woman thinks she has or does have. So she's eating the wrong thing there, obviously, to satisfy that need.

The need for love. It's not being met by the husband. See, listen, the devil is alive and well. I mean, he's on the attack. And among other things, he's assaulting the purity of women.

But the spirit-filled husband who loves his wife with a sanctifying love, and he understands that need, that duty, that man will be committed to protecting his wife's moral purity and spiritual purity. Boy. So, a sacrificial love. It's selfless. It's sanctified. Third, it is serving.

It's serving. Look again at verses 28 to 30. So, husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. That's the other analogy that Jesus uses here, or Paul uses.

[35 : 39] He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Folks, the bottom line is, to fulfill the demands here, the demands of this command for husbands to love their wives, there must be a preoccupation, really kind of an all consuming priority, with meeting her every need.

Physical, material need, most husbands have that down. Emotional need, needs for intimacy, and I'm not just talking about S-E-X, needs, say that word too much.

I'm just talking about that. Spiritual needs, all these needs. Someone has rightly said, if mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy.

See, you know it, don't you? And it's so true. Now, Paul uses two words in this text to emphasize this particular aspect of love, this serving love.

[37 : 08] He uses two words, nourishes and cherishes. Nourishes and cherishes. Now, what does it mean to nourish your wife? Well, it means to take the lead and do everything you can to create an environment in the home where the wife, you know, can grow healthy emotionally, morally, spiritually, nourishes.

I mean, it is included in that is, you know, the physical needs that need to be provided for. And a man who doesn't take care of his family is worse than an unbeliever.

That's what the Bible says. What does it mean to cherish her? To cherish her? Well, the word means actually, literally, to warm with body heat.

Sometimes we have to do that, don't we? Sometimes we have to give her our coat. I remember one occasion I had to give my wife my shirt. Thankfully, I had a t-shirt underneath.

Then sometimes I've been asked to give the t-shirt. I've refused. I had some terrible husband. you can't just go out in public, you know, a guy bare with no shirt on.

[38 : 36] By the way, Chris Lloyd's not here this morning. I was going to tell him that last night I had a dream that we went to prison ministry and Chris came along with us and he didn't wear a shirt.

I thought it's the strangest dream I think I've ever had. Now this will get back to him. Can you imagine Chris Lloyd without a shirt on? My goodness. He's going to get me for that.

I'm talking about cherishing and the word does mean to warm with body. He speaks of intimacy of course and closeness and tenderness and understanding and security and strength.

All those are wrapped up in that idea of cherish. It's a beautiful expression. In fact the Greek word is used sometimes to describe a nesting bird.

I know that speaking of a female bird but that's the imagery. The bird nesting over the eggs and keeping the eggs warm so that they can grow and be healthy and hatch as healthy bird legs.

[39 : 54] I don't know what you call it. And all that but also protecting. Giving protection and security. And that's the idea.

The husband is to give warmth and security to his wife cherishing her as something of great value. something precious and and the women livers hate this something because she's fragile.

She's fragile. Peter said in 1 Peter 3 7 likewise husbands dwell with your wives live with them according to knowledge giving honor to the wife as unto the weaker.

Sacrificial love. It's selfless. It's sanctifying. It is serving. Got to have one more S word. It is securing.

[41 : 06] It is a securing kind of love. Look again at verse 31. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined.

The old King's English uses the word cleave cleave to his wife and the two shall become one flesh. One flesh. And it's a quote of course in Genesis 2 24.

And Paul thought this is very appropriate to add this here. Leaving and cleaving. Husband leaving his home his father his mother the security of that relationship leaving that behind which by the way some husbands have had trouble doing and cleaving.

And I know you've heard heard the explanation of that word cleaving. It's a bond to bond with the wife in such a way that it's not possible to pull it apart without damaging both sides.

You've heard the analogy of super glue and it really is a good one. You know have you ever had super glue between your fingers? And I know there's probably some smart ways to get out of that situation but sometimes you pull it apart and both fingers are damaged.

[42 : 33] That's the idea. And so that's that passage there in Genesis 2 24. more. But the point is that the husband has the responsibility for the permanence of the marriage relationship.

That doesn't mean the wife has no responsibility at all. That she's not a contributor to that and doesn't have certain commands in scripture related to that and duties and so forth.

But the husband is the head. He's responsible for the permanence of the marriage. I tell you church we need to get back to believing in and committing ourselves to the permanence of the marriage relationship.

We've gone way far away from that in the church. And so husband your wife needs to know beyond a reasonable doubt that your love for her is permanent.

It's not just for now. It's permanent. She needs to know that. She needs to know that your love for her will persevere anything that might happen.

[43 : 51] Including any failure on her part. As well as failure on your part. And no matter what even you know adultery.

May I say it? she should know that you are committed and that she should be committed to the permanence of that marriage no matter what.

And you need to tell her so. More than that you need to show her repeatedly that that is so. In fact a husband should never ever do anything in his life that might cause her to doubt that.

big lesson for a lot of husbands. You know having lunch dates with a female work partner. That should never ever happen. I don't care about the corporate world.

I used to be in it. You should never ever put yourself in a place that might cause your wife to be suspicious or to lose some confidence or have some doubt cast in her mind about your commitment.

[45 : 08] You should never. Never, ever, ever. It's a securing kind of love. Jesus said in Matthew 19.6 what therefore God is doing together let no man, no man separate.

No man pull it apart. Alright, so we've seen this morning that the husband husband's love for his wife is to be a submissive love, a sacrificial love and I guess having said all of that we know that.

I doubt very seriously I've said anything so far that you haven't thought about, you haven't heard before and anything that you would not be sitting there saying in your own heart when I know that's true.

I know that's true. that's right. How about this third one? It is a sacred love. It's a sacred love.

It's interesting verse 32 you might think that Paul is saying you're not understanding me. You think I'm talking about the marriage relationship but I'm not.

[46 : 19] I'm talking about the church. You might at first glance think that that's what he's saying because it says in verse 32 this is a great mystery. What's the mystery? That a husband would leave his home, his father and mother and cleave to his wife and the two would become one flesh.

You know one plus one equals one. It's very natural then to say this is a great mystery. How this could be, how this could happen.

Then he says but I speak concerning Christ and mature. Now listen, God did not create the marriage relationship as an answer to the problem of immorality.

God did not create the institution of marriage to make a pregnant girl honest. It wasn't about immorality.

Marriage was not instituted by God way back there in the Garden of Eden to make a cohabitation legitimate and legal.

[47 : 34] That's not why he did it. It is a sacred institution. A sacred institution. In fact, it's the first institution ever created.

Even before the government. Long before government came on the scene and God did institute government. Long before that. And even the church.

It came before the church. Those are some three great institutions. The church, the government, but the home, the marriage, came first.

and it is a sacred relationship. Now, you know, I guess I have to be honest, over the course of my ministry, I I've been criticized, really, for not marrying just any couple that comes along.

You know, I've really been criticized. Sometimes people get mad at me because I require marriage counseling. It's not an uncommon thing for couples to show up at the church office.

[48 : 47] Marriage, you know, marriage license in hand and they want a preacher to solemnize. I just don't do it. I require some time, some counseling.

People get mad at me for that. I'm serious. I've had church members get angry with me and threaten to leave the church because I would not marry their believing son to an unbeliever.

I'm serious. I don't make any apologies and no concessions either. Take the institution of marriage very seriously as every believer should.

There's got to come a time when we say enough is enough. We're going to stop this trend. Divorce in the church. So we ought to take it very seriously as a sacred institution.

Why should we take it seriously? For the same reason, for the reason that Paul gives us right here. Marriage, he is saying, is a living picture of the union between Christ and his church.

[50 : 04] Did you know that? A living picture of that. And that's why the devil hates the institution of marriage that is biblical marriage.

And that's why the devil is working overtime to destroy biblical marriage. And by the way, he seems to be making some headway in our society, doesn't he?

I mean, the Supreme Court right now, deciding upon, or they've already decided and not made it public, their decision about gay marriage, about the very definition of marriage, and the implications of that on the church, incredible.

Appreciate what our SVC president said this last week at the convention. He said to the Supreme Court, we will not obey. They hand down something that legalizes and forces pastors and churches to accept this new definition of marriage.

It's not going to do it. I'm not going to. I don't know what will happen. Look. Dear people, we have to take that thing.

[51 : 15] Can't deny the clear teaching of God's word on any subject. And we must be willing to take the consequence. See, at the heart of this, who is behind all of this, is Satan himself.

Do you know why the devil hates the institution of marriage so much and why he is trying every way he can in all different avenues to distort biblical marriage or redefine it or completely destroy it?

Do you know why he is? Because he hates Christ and he hates the church. Those two things. And therefore he hates anything that might picture the sacred union between the two.

And he would love to destroy that. See, marriage has a gospel connection. Have you thought about that? In relation to your marriage?

And the health of your marriage? That you, your marriage and your relationship, your love relationship for your wife and her, for you, pictures the gospel.

[52 : 29] that's what it was meant to do from the very beginning. So, husband, listen, the most sacred motive we have for loving our wives, you know what the most sacred motive is?

it is to perpetuate this picture of Christ and his church, to perpetuate that picture to a lost world.

The blessed union between Christ and his church. Loving your wife honors Christ. Loving your wife in the way prescribed here shames the devil.

Honoring your wife, loving your wife testifies to a lost world that Jesus loves them and he has made provision, provided a way for them to be a part of his holy bride.

pretty important. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her.

[53 : 49]