

BEING A BIBLE HUSBAND

"Husbands Love for Wives"

Ephesians 5:25-31

Introduction

1. This is the practical section of the Book of Ephesians (ch. 4-6). It is the application of the great doctrinal portions earlier (ch. 1-3).

2. The filling with the Spirit is the force behind this section (v. 18). That particular ministry of filling is the key for personal adjustment to the Lord (vv. 19, 20) and family adjustments too (vv. 21-33). Nothing recorded about the husbands love for his wife is of any possibility without the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life.

3. One specific aspect of the husband-wife relationship is love. The high level on which this subject is introduced and presented is worthy of careful study and concern. Look at the how and why of this love:-

1. THE MANNER OF HUSBAND-WIFE LOVE

a. Sacrificial v. 25 PAST

All through this section the comparison is drawn between Christ's relation to the church and that of the husband and his wife (v. 32). No higher comparison could be drawn into the picture than this! The standard is the very highest possible! The love of Christ for the Church is measured by His sacrifice for it; indeed, His death for the Church. Such love! This is the meaning of "so" in John 3:16. This aspect of the husband-wife relationship is not found elsewhere in the N.T. It points to the love being:

- 1) Excusive The love is for no one else.
- 2) Relational No other human being thus related.
- 3) Intimate No other has such intimacy.
- 4) Objective This is a special kind of love.

b. Purposeful v. 26 PRESENT

An expression of love is not the end of things between the Lord and the church. Neither should the expression of love be the ultimate goal between husbands and wives. There is a present or extended line relationship. It is expressed in two concepts:-

1) Sanctified This means to set apart. Being aorist the thought is expressed that the setting apart of the wife to the husband is like the Lord does for the church. It is something done contemporaneously with the love! The wife has this peculiar position energetically pursued through the life-relationship.

2) Cleansed This means to remove defilement. It has the idea of cleansing from pollution. It is really the means for sanctification. It is antecedent to the setting apart, albeit simultaneous with it. It is a temporal aorist participle. This cleansing is done by the Word. Although this is usually taken to be connected to baptism, it is far more consistent with Scripture truth to relate it to the written Word and the power which it bears in the life (Jn 15:3; 17:17; Titus 3:5). As the Church is cleansed by the written Word of God, so the husband-wife relation is cleansed and set apart by the human relationships suggested. The whole gamut of companionship and investment of life are commended here. As the husband, this role is to be expressed in development of relationships all through life. It is not a mere sense of saying "I will" throughout life in communicating ways. The object in all of this is to gain a sanctified (set apart) wife who is cleansed (clean) through the relationship which has been experienced. Marvelous!

c. Intentional v. 27 FUTURE

The verb "present" is a familiar one found in Ro. 6:13; 12:1. It means to "stand before, near, beside." The allusion is to a marriage ceremony where the bride is presented to her bridegroom (Rev. 19:6-9). Two pronouns are found in conjunction here to express this

wonderful truth. "He" presents to "Himself" the bride! Now, it is true that the event indicated is the Lord and the church, but the relationship of the husband to the wife is latent throughout the passage, hence this is the intent of the husband for the wife! Three items are specifically mentioned:-

1) Glorious This adjective anticipates brilliant purity, moral splendor. It is used of splendid clothing (Luke 7:25). Hence, a true husband functioning as he ought will come up with this goal in his mind. The wife will be glorious!

2) Flawless Three words are used in this connection:-

a) Without Spot There is nothing which shall mar the bride's beauty. This word is only used here and 2 Pet. 2:13. It connotes without defilement.

b) Without Wrinkle This suggests a freedom from indication of age. It is only used here in the N.T. There are substitutes offered for this, but here is true intent.

c) Without Blemish The concept expressed here is without fault. It may well suggest being immortal. How challenging is the husbands intent! By using the negative in all of these matters, the positive is heightened.

3) Holy The matter of purity and connection with God are suggested here. Nothing less than the highest is the goal expressed by this term.

2. THE REASON FOR HUSBAND-WIFE LOVE

The tremendous "how" of the husband-wife love is far beyond normal expectations. The thought of trite relationships is utterly destroyed while enormous depth is advanced for the kind of love to be experienced. To support this deep and quality sort of love relationship, the argument given is closely allied to Christ and the Church (His Body). In summary it is this: as Christ loved the church, because it was His body, so the husband ought to love his wife because she is his body (v. 28). The wife is the husband's body, hence he is to love her! It is axiomatic that by loving his wife, a husband in effect is loving his own body! The obvious reference here is to the O.T. (Gen. 2:21-23). The woman was taken out of the man. She IS his body! Out of this truth derive other important issues:-

a. Negative v. 29

There will be no hatred between a husband and his wife. This must be the case for no man hates his own body (v. 29). This is the proof of the previous verse (v. 28). It is a fantastic argument! An understanding of this one item would revolutionize some homes!

b. Positive

As the wife is the husband's body, she will have the following sort of treatment:-

1) Nourishment The verb employed is only found here and 6:4. It means outward growth and development. It means to nourish up to maturity. All the care and concern of the husband for his wife is suggested here. Failure to perform such a responsibility would in effect be mistreating his own body!

2) Cherishment Twice this verb occurs in the N.T. (here and 1 Thess. 2:7). It really means to warm. The idea of tender care is latent in the term. It is of a mother who comforts her infant in her bosom. There is the fostering of a warm breast. Solicitude and tenderness are dominant ideas here.

3) Commitment This matter is involved in the fact that the husband will leave his paternal arrangements and be joined to his wife. They (two) shall be unto one flesh! Therefore, the family of the husband by birth is replaced by a new one flesh situation. This is the answer to (so Greek for "for this cause" in v. 31) the body set up which the wife holds to the husband.

Conclusion It is sad to note the loose manner in which husband-wife relationships are held. The Word of God is clear on the depth of the matter. There is no place in God's program for lightness nor casualness. God has drawn the parallel between His Son and the Church as the ground for the most intimate human relationship possible (v. 32). May God grant an understanding and an appreciation of these truths for His praise and honor.