

"Following the Blueprint—A Husband's Love"

Ephesians 5:25-32

I. Introduction

- A. In our culture, marriage has become an uncertain institution; people are hesitant to marry because they're not sure it'll work out
 - 1. As a result, the world seeks to create an ironclad way to keep a marriage together—a prenuptial agreement
 - 2. "Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, and half shut afterwards" —Benjamin Franklin
- B. Ephesians 5 is the Home Depot for the smart home, to build and strengthen the marriage; in it, Paul clearly stated the God-given roles of husbands and wives
- C. There are several prerequisites for building a smart home
 - 1. We are to be controlled by the Spirit (see v. 18)
 - 2. We are to be thankful in all things, including the positions and conditions we find ourselves in (see v. 20)
 - 3. Mutual submission is achieved by fulfilling the roles of husband and wife (see v. 21)
- D. The basic scriptural role of the husband in one word is love; the husband's leadership is to be one of love—servant leadership
- E. Everyone on earth is incompatible with everyone else on earth; it's just a matter of time before you figure it out
 - 1. We are incompatible because we have a fallen, sinful nature
 - 2. "In any marriage more than a week old, there are grounds for divorce. The trick is to find and continue to find grounds for marriage" —Robert Anderson

II. A Singular Love (v. 25a)

- A. Love your wife—not anyone else's
- B. Originally, the word *husband* referred to a farmer/cultivator
 - 1. In John 15:1, Jesus referred to His Father as "the husbandman" (KJV)
 - 2. So, the husband is a cultivator—he cultivates the relationship by placing it in the soil of his singular love for his wife
 - a. "Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them" (Colossians 3:19, ESV)
 - b. A happy man marries the girl he loves; a happier man loves the girl he marries
- C. The Greek word used here is the present active imperative of *agape*—the most far-reaching, deepest, highest quality of love in the New Testament
 - 1. "Go all out in your love for your wives" (Ephesians 5:25, MSG)
 - 2. Women will naturally respond to that singular love that they receive from their husbands—willing submission
- D. The husband is the head of the home, but if love is lost, the marriage degenerates into a petty tyranny
 - 1. Loving authority must be mixed with affection

- 2. Love is not taught—it is caught; one burning heart will ignite another
- E. A husband is to be a leader, but a lover—and the balance of the two must be reached: a tender warrior and servant-leader
 - 1. If he's all leader, he's a tyrant
 - 2. If he's all lover, he's a mushy sap
- III. A Sacrificial Love (v. 25b)
 - A. Paul continued with a simile: "as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her"
 - 1. The cross of Christ is the most selfless, sacrificial act of love in history
 - 2. Paul took the highest human relationship—marriage—and compared it to the highest act of love in history
 - 3. Sacrificial is the manner in which the husband's singular love is to be expressed
 - 4. If a husband is willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for his wife, he should also be willing to make every other sacrifice short of that
 - B. Sacrificial love is not an emotional love—it's volitional, an active love
 - 1. This is the difference between worldly love and love in a Christian marriage—love that requires us to be filled with the Holy Spirit
 - 2. The world says, "Let's love each other until our feelings stop"; biblical love is not a flush of emotion
- IV. Sanctifying Love (vv. 26-27)
 - A. The word *sanctify* was originally a secular word that meant to take something and set it apart for a particular use
 - B. Isaiah 1:18
 - C. The husband takes his wife out of the world and never brings it up again
 - 1. He is willing to forgive her and present her to the Lord and to himself; she is set apart for a particular purpose
 - 2. When we come to Christ, we are forgiven and cleansed immediately, but we walk every day through the muck and mire of this world
 - a. We need forgiveness every day
 - b. As Jesus said when He washed His disciples' feet, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet" (John 13:10)
 - 3. A marriage is simply the union of two sinners, therefore a good marriage is a union between two forgivers
 - 4. Husbands set the temperature of the home—the temperature of love, forgiveness, and sanctification
- V. A Sensitive Love (vv. 28-30)
 - A. A man's wife is an extension of himself, thus he should care for her the way he cares for himself
 - 1. This will give her security, and she will respond with love and submission
 - 2. "Flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23)
 - B. When a husband takes care of his wife's needs, he develops her sense of well-being
 - C. "After interviewing hundreds of wives and daughters, there is one consistent plea. Please be comforting instead of lecturing and criticizing" —Gary Smalley
- VI. A Shatterproof Love (v. 31)

- A. Biblical love is shatterproof, permanent
 - 1. In verse 31, Paul referenced Genesis 2:24
 - 2. What was true over a thousand years before Paul wrote to the Ephesian church was still true as he wrote to them; what God once said, He still says
 - 3. The Greek word used here is *proskolláō*, which literally means to glue to or cleave to
 - 4. Matthew 19:6
 - B. In verse 25, Paul used the present active imperative form of *agape*—*agapâté*—which means that biblical love is constant, unwavering, active, and continually present
- VII. A Showcase Love (v. 32)
- A. In this verse, Paul provided the *why* after the *what*
 - 1. Biblical marriage ought to be an illustration of how Jesus and His church are one
 - 2. Marriage should be a horizontal microcosm of a vertical reality, a vertical relationship
 - 3. The unconditional love we receive from God ought to spread on a horizontal level
 - B. A good Christian marriage is a good Christian witness—it makes redemption visible
 - C. When you have a husband who lovingly leads by sacrificing, cultivating, and nurturing, and a wife who responds by submitting to her husband's needs lovingly, that is a good witness to the world
 - D. Marriage isn't perfect, but in an imperfect sense, it's a reflection of the kind of love that God has for His people
 - E. "A Christian marriage serves a threefold purpose: to enrich the lives of a man and a woman, to create a family, and third, to further the Kingdom of God" —Jack Roeda
- VIII. Conclusion
- A. Husbands are under attack in our culture, portrayed by the mainstream media as oafs who don't contribute to the family in any meaningful way
 - B. There is a strategy behind that: To neutralize an army, take out the commander; to ruin a nation's morale, kill the ruler; to ruin the church, destroy the pastor; to devastate a family, take out the leader
 - C. To counteract this attack, husbands need to rise up and be strong, tender leaders who love their wives as they are called to do

Figures referenced: Robert Anderson, Benjamin Franklin, Jack Roeda, Gary Smalley

Cross references: Genesis 2:23-24; Isaiah 1:18; Matthew 19:6; John 13:10; 15:1; Ephesians 2:18, 20-21; Colossians 3:16, 19

Greek words: *agapâté*, *agápē*, *proskolláō*

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