

aired on KALS May 3, 2005

Ephesians 5:25-30

Part 2

25. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

26. so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,

27. 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.

28. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;

29. for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church,

30. because we are members of His body.”

In this passage Christian husbands are commanded to love their wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her. Verse 28 specifically states, “So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself.” So Christian husbands are commanded to love their wives even as they love themselves.

When asked in Matthew 22:26, “Teacher, which is

the great commandment in the Law?”, Jesus responded, “ ‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.” In our wives we find our closest neighbor.

So in a very concrete sense, love begins at home. In our wives, Christ compels the Christian husband to learn how to love; beginning with the woman chosen to be his companion for the rest of his life here on earth. And learning how to love--our mate, our fellow man, our God, and eventually even our enemies-- is the most important lesson we must learn as followers of Jesus Christ.

God has also stated the following in I John 4:20 and 21, “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.” Men, learning to love--to really love--to love someone even as you love yourself, begins at home with our wives, by God’s perfect design!

This morning’s Scripture goes on in verse 29 to describe how we are to love our wives, stating, “For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church.” Here we find that the

Christian husband is not only to provide for his wife's needs, but also her wants and desires.

The word "nourish" here indicates taking care of the basic necessities of life. This would include providing food, shelter, and clothing. And the word "cherish" indicates provision above and beyond the bare essentials for life--courtesies like opening the door for her or bringing her flowers. Taking her out to dinner or watching the children so she can get out to shop or attend ladies Bible study all would qualify as cherishing your wife. I often ask husbands in counseling if they know their wife's favorite type of candy. This is a good indicator if he is actively cherishing his wife.

And of course, husbands, leading your family spiritually and gently caring for your wife's spiritual needs and desires must be at the top of the list--in both the nourish and cherish categories.

Gentlemen, love your own wife, even as yourself.