

# **Sermon: On Being Family: The Husband's Role**

**Text: Ephesians 5:21-33 ESV**

**Gary L. Wackler**

**May 31, 2020**

**Ephesians 5:21-33 ESV** <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. <sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> 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.[a] <sup>28</sup> In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup> because we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup> “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” <sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup> However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

**Footnotes: [a] Ephesians 5:27 Or holy and blameless**

**Introduction:** When I ask about what the ideal husband should look like, I do not mean physical characteristics. I am not here today promoting good looks or bad looks. I am here today to tell you that the ideal husband looks like Jesus.

**Before we marry:** “We have a picture of the perfect partner, but we marry an imperfect person. Then we have two options: Tear up the picture and accept the person, or tear up the person and accept the picture.” - J. Grant Howard, Jr.

There is a story of a man who died and went to heaven and saw two signs above two different lines. One sign said: “ALL THOSE MEN WHO HAVE BEEN DOMINATED BY THEIR WIVES, STAND HERE.” That line of men seemed to stretch off through the clouds into infinity.

The second sign read: “ALL THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER BEEN DOMINATED BY THEIR WIVES, STAND HERE.” Underneath the sign stood one man.

**He went over to the man, grabbed his arm and said, “What’s the secret, how did you do it? That other line has millions of men, and you are the only one standing in this line.”**

**The man looked around with a puzzled expression and said, “Why, I am not sure I know. My wife just told me to stand here.”**

**If you have not submitted to the lordship of Jesus Christ, and if the Bible is not the authority in your life, then you may have a real problem with what I am about to say. Married, single or single-again, I hope you will appreciate God’s pattern for the family. The ideal husband is responsible to Christ and his wife. The husband needs to be the leader in the family.**

**Gallup Survey - By a margin of 46% to 38%, women are more likely than men to have attended religious services in the past week. What’s more, by a margin of 57% to 37%, women are more likely than men to say they give serious and consistent attention to the development of their faith.**

**I am very thankful for godly women, but in the context of a marriage the husband should make every effort to lead:**

## **I. Spiritually**

**In his book “American Manhood,” author-historian, Anthony Rotundo tells us that the increasing absence of husbands and fathers from the home “*has* entrusted women with the care and nurture of communal values - of personal morality, social bonds, and, ultimately, the level of virtue in the community.” With men out of the picture, mothers become the primary providers of moral and spiritual leadership in the home and the most active person in the pew.**

**To be what God wants, men must be leaders in their home, especially spiritually. They need to be leaders when it comes to:**

**God’s word**

**Prayer**

**Being examples of forgiveness**

**Being examples in holy living**

**Being examples in their speech**

**Husbands are to be an example of Jesus’ commitment to the church...no pressure!**

If the man is fulfilling his role as husband, it will be:

## **II. According to God's Plan**

### **A. There is a creation pattern.**

It is talked about throughout the New Testament. The husband is the “head” of the wife (v. 23). And by that I do not mean that the wife is the neck ( *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*). That might be funny in film, but played out in real life it is sad.

**Illus.** One man boasted he was the head of the house. He said, “My wife came crawling to me on her hands and knees the other day.” A man who knew him well was startled, and he said, “REALLY? She came crawling on her hands and knees? What did she say?”

“She said, ‘Come out from under that bed and fight like a man!’”

To fulfill the proper role of a husband you don't need to be like a caveman, nor does God want you to be a wimp.

When it says: <sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, ([Ephesians 5:22, 23 ESV](#)).

Someone has to be responsible for the family. There must be a designated leader.

**Illus.** A football coach selects one player on the field to be the quarterback in the huddle. That is not discrimination; the coach just knows if there is more than one spokesman in the huddle, there is going to be chaos. A corporation does not have a co-presidency because organizational minds know that the slightest disagreement between the two would be divisive and send mixed signals throughout the company.

**Illus.** Co-ministry, Wedding Coordinator.

### **B. There is also a covenant relationship.**

Hosea is an O.T. example of how God, as Israel's husband, loved her. In a covenant relationship love is not based on performance.

God expects marriage to be permanent - “till death do us part, and what God has joined together, let man not separate.”

**“Christ loved the church and gave himself up for 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, i.e., blameless,” (Ephesians 5:25-27 ESV).**

**Christ does not love us only if we are perfect or because we are perfect. His love cleanses us of our sin, and He sees us without defects. Husbands must love their wives just as they are. Even if you think maybe she is too talkative or too heavy or too inhibited, your role as husband is to love your wife without criticism, without comparing, and certainly without any abuse.**

**A husband will love his wife:**

### **III. Sacrificially**

**i.e., Not always my way. A husband’s needs differ from that of his wife’s. The man wants sexual fulfillment, recreational companionship, physical attractiveness, domestic support and admiration. Compare that to what a woman wants: affection, conversation, honesty and openness, financial support and family commitment.**

**Our model is Christ. He gave up everything for the Church (His Bride). Strength does not come from always getting everything your way, but allowing others to have their needs met as well.**

**Illus. Mother Teresa certainly made a huge impact on many people. It was largely in part to her willingness to sacrifice. Nuns marry Jesus Christ in a manner of speaking. In a similar way, the Church is married to Christ as His Bride.**

**Where examples of sacrificial love may be difficult to find these days, one place it ought to be seen is in the husband-wife relationship. Husbands, if they are to imitate Christ, must give of themselves to their wives - not just to imitate Christ, but to clearly show Jesus to his family and also to the world - even die if necessary...**

**The text says: <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her;” (Ephesians 5:25 ESV). Christ didn’t demand His own way. He gave up all his rights on the cross. If a husband wants to be a Christ-like leader, he looks for ways to sacrifice himself for his mate. This is more than women and children first/and more than an heroic moment. It means a life-time of love the way Jesus loved.**

Lastly, the husband must act:  
**IV. Kindly toward His Wife.**

**I Corinthians 13:4a** ESV opens with: “Love is patient and kind.”

Later it says, too: It is not irritable or resentful or as the NIV says: “Love keeps no record of wrongs.” (13:5b)

Gordon Clinard tells of stopping at a truck stop where he was served by a rather rough-looking waitress who had a tattoo on her arm that read “Charlie.” So he struck up a conversation and said,

“How’s Charlie?”

She said, “Pardon.”

He said, “How’s Charlie?”

“Oh,” she said. “That, well, that was years ago and I was high and it was night and -- You know, I haven’t seen him since.” And then she went on to say, “But you know, I am married now to a wonderful man named Richard, and we have been married for ten years.”

Clinard said, “What does Richard think about Charlie?”

She said, “Oh, you know - from the first time I explained it, he has never mentioned the tattoo again, I don’t think he even sees it anymore.”

In **I Peter 3:7** ESV it says, <sup>7</sup> Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel (*partner*, NIV), since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

One mistake you should not make is to think “weak” means inferior.

Weaker does not indicate less value either.

**Illus.** Fine-china tea cup vs an LCC mug.

Zig Ziglar said once: “If you treat your wife like a thoroughbred, she will seldom act like a nag.” Men like the idea of being a leader, but Christ does not call us to a leadership of power, but to love and service and caring in our leadership.

**Big Difference!**

**Conclusion:** To be responsible for a wife, in the way Christ wants, will be quite a challenge, but to do it any other way will court disaster. W. Bradford Wilcox, a leading sociologist at the University of Virginia and director of the National Marriage Project, finds from his own analysis that "active conservative Protestants" who regularly attend church are 35 percent less likely to divorce compared to those who have no affiliation. Nominally attending conservative Protestants are 20 percent more likely to divorce, compared to secular Americans."

What do you think makes sense - God's way or the world's?

Patrick Morley in *The Seven Seasons of a Man's Life*, a letter from God to man:

You have wanted success. Success is elusive, isn't it?

That's because you have been living by your ideas.

I *do* want you to be successful, but on My terms, not yours.

You measure success in the quantity of your possessions and achievements.

I measure success in the quality of your character and conduct.

You are interested in the success of your goal.

I am interested in the success of your Soul.

True success is to satisfy your calling, not your ambition. Live as a *called* man.

The biggest problem I see in your life is that you have spent your whole life looking for something worth living for.

It would be better if you found something worth dying for.

Give your life to that, and I will give you joy, no matter how hard the path becomes.

What is the cause you would be willing to die for?

Better still, who is the one you would be willing to die for?

How, then, should you reorder your life?

I made you with dignity. I created you to be significant. I have put within you the spark of divinity. You are my crowning achievement. You are the full expression of My creative genius.

You're My most excellent creation.

I was at My best when I created you.

Do you understand and believe what I have just said?