

SPIRITUALITY & MARRIAGE ENJOYMENT

By Rene Lussier

3- SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP.

1 Pet. 3:7 "treat them with respect as...heirs with you of the gracious gift of life."

We have a responsibility toward the spiritual life of our spouse to build them up, influence them, correct them, encourage them, to be a model by our Christian character.

For Christians, love has 3 dimensions – Physical attraction
Emotional attraction
Sacrificial love

Ephe 5:21 (NIV) Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ

22 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church-- 30 for we are members of his body.

31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." {[31] Gen. 2:24} 32 This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

WIFE'S ROLE

SUBMIT: 5293 hupotasso {hoop-ot-as'-so}-to subject one's self, obey

In non-military use, it was "a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden".

In our society, it carries the "Fear of being abused".

This text must be understood in its context (not from abuse), but in a context where the relationship is pure.

To submit it also requires faith (trust) in God

- Submitting does not imply "of a lesser value", to have less importance, but it is in the role to one another, in the way of sharing responsibilities. A helping role is a worthy one, not implying inferiority. The wife helps the husband to lead their family to serve and glorify God.
- The verb is an imperative. It is the subject who does the submitting.
- It is an action that continues. It is also the subject's responsibility to obey this command.
- It is not the husband's responsibility to force the subjection.
- The wife must choose to obey.
- What does verse 21 suggest before it introduces V. 22,23.

- According to V. 22, and 24, Is there a limit (a protection) for the wife to subject herself to her husband?

1. As to the Lord

2. As the church submit to Christ. **In everything?**

If the husband ask her something sinful against the Word of God? Or something that hurts, destroy?

HUSBAND'S ROLE

LOVE: 25 agapao {ag-ah'-o}

1a) to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly; 2a) to be well pleased, to be contented with.

- The verb is also an imperative, therefore the subject is commanded to love his wife. The responsibility rests upon him. It is an action that continues.
- This command helps us better understand his role "his headship".
- **His headship** is to be one of sacrificial love. (As Christ loved the church and gave himself for her.)
- 2 parallels to describe how the husband is to love his wife:
 1. As Christ loved the church
 2. As he loves his own body
- Who is the husband's role model for his behavior toward his wife?
 1. Christ loved the church and gave himself for her V. 25
 2. As Christ nourishes and cherishes the church V. 29

What is Christ's goal and mission for his bride?

In verse 27, we see that he wants to present to himself the church in all her glory. The way he treats her and what he has done and continues to do for her is to achieve his goal. That is the mission he continues to fulfill.

- Do we see in this parallel that the Christian husband has a similar mission? And that should be reflected in his attitude and behavior toward his wife.

- This thought is echoed in the writings of Peter:

1Pet 3:7 (NIV) Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

- The husband is also to love his wife as his own body. 28, 33
- Did you wash this morning? Ladies, how long were you in the restroom for your hair, make-up? Or preparing your clothes?

ILLUSTRATION: Our friend told us that his daughters used so much spray and stuff, that if someone would light a match in the room, it would explode.

- Did you have lunch today? What do you do when you're sick?
- In verse 29, no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it...
- These two words are part of the vows.
- They apply to both the physical and the spiritual.
- V. 30 adds because we are members of His body (members of the same family). It is natural to be protective, to provide and show a special tender affection to the members of our own family.

Verse 28 says that "*He who loves his own wife loves himself.*"

LAST COMMAND TO BOTH THE HUSBAND AND WIFE

33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

RESPECT: hesitate) to do something (for fear of harm); to reverence, venerate, to treat with deference or reverential obedience

1Pet 3:7 (NIV) Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect (HONOR) as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

HONOR: 5092 time {tee-may'} - honour, price, precious

THE HEADSHIP OF THE HUSBAND

Headship of Husbands. Headship does not mean that man is an unlimited monarch.

He is to cherish and nurture his wife as his own body ([Eph 5:28](#)).

He may not deprive her of what she needs for her happiness and well-being ([1 Cor 7:3](#)).

He must be understanding, considerate, and respectful of her as a joint heir of life ([1 Peter 3:7](#)).

His love for her is more than physical. It must be the same kind of sacrificial love Christ has for the church.

- The husband is to assume headship/leadership ([1 Cor 11:3](#); [Eph 5:23](#)).
- Although the husband leads as Christ leads the church, **the husband does not have all the rights and authority of Christ**. He leads his wife toward dependence upon Christ, not upon himself, for **all human leaders are fallible**.
- The husband leads like Christ, being considerate of his wife with respect and knowledge. He considers the ideas of those he leads, because they may be better than his own.
- Leadership's goal is not to show the leader's superiority, but to elicit all the strengths of people for the desired objective.
- Headship is not male domination, abuse or oppression. (cf. [2 Cor 1:24](#); [Eph 5:29](#); [Col 3:19](#)), for "no one ever hated his own body."
- Leadership assumes the responsibility to initiate and implement spiritual and moral planning for a family.
- The husband's leadership and its authority is a God-given responsibility to be carried out in humility.

MORE ON THE HEADSHIP

The order of God

As God made it, even society has rank and orders (army)

Example: A traffic policeman who would give a contravention to a rich corporation executive.

The head of the woman is man: Is a woman inferior? It is not a matter of inferiority.

It is a matter of rank and organization—the perfect symbol of subordination is Christ to body.

- **Focus on verse 3:** The relationship between God as “head” and Christ as Son is given as a model for the relationship between husband and wife.
 1. Husband and wife are to share mutual love (John 5:20, 14:31)
 2. Husband and wife have different roles and accomplish different functions in the marriage (Jn 10:17; 14:28; 17:4)
 3. Though having different roles, husband and wife are equal; they live in unity. (John 10:30; 14:9,11)
 4. Husband and wife esteem (value) one another. (John 8:49,54)
 5. Husbands express love through care, shared life, and ministry attentiveness. (John 5:20,22; 8:29; 11:42; 16:15; 17:2)
 6. Wives express love for their husbands by being one in will and purpose with them with humility and meekness, not striving, not competing; in a word, by showing respect both in attitude and action (John 4:34; 5:19,30;8:28; 14:31; 15:10; Phil 2:5,6,8, see also Gen 3:16; 1 Tim 2:8-15)

REFLECTION

After hearing this sermon and reading these texts, who do you think has the greater task before God—the husband or the wife?

When someone teach or quote verses about the role of the wife, do you think it wise to always include the role of the man as well?

Both the role of the husband and the wife can only be fulfilled when both have tasted the love of Christ.

That is why a Christian marriage is different of just 2 persons getting together.

It is impossible for the human nature to love or to submit, to respect and honor our spouse in the likeness of the standards we just heard.

- Only after one is born again and in renewed both by the word of God and the Holy Spirit in his daily life, is it possible to love in that way and understand the spiritual responsibility and the mission a Christian couple has to one another.

WHAT IS MARRIAGE?

Remember the pledge: The covenant made before God—“till death do us part”

- Marriage is more than feeling, more than a legal contract.
- It is a pledge of mutual fidelity made before God, mutual honor and respect
- Marriage does not demand perfection, but each one must be working toward perfecting each other.
- Marriage is a refining process in which 2 sinners are being transformed by God and led in love.
- Measure up to Christ, and to the church (Bride).

^{Mal 2: 14}Do you know why? Simple. Because GOD was there as a witness when you spoke your marriage vows to your young bride, and now you've broken those vows, broken the faith-bond with your vowed companion, your covenant wife. ¹⁵GOD, not you, made marriage. His Spirit inhabits even the smallest details of marriage. And what does he want from marriage? Children of God, that's what. So guard the spirit of marriage within you. Don't cheat on your spouse. ¹⁶"I hate divorce," says the GOD of Israel. GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies says, "I hate the violent dismembering of the 'one flesh' of marriage." So watch yourselves. Don't let your guard down. Don't cheat. *Message*

^{Mal 2: 14}You ask, "Why are our gifts not accepted by the Lord?" Why? Because the Lord saw the bad things you did—he is a witness ^{F14}against you. He saw you cheat on your wife. You have been married to that woman since you were young. She was your girlfriend. Then you made your vows ^{F15}to each other—and she became your wife. {But you cheated on her}. ¹⁵God wants husbands and wives to become one body and one spirit. Why? So they would have holy children. So protect that spiritual unity. Don't cheat on your wife. She has been your wife from the time you were young. *ETR*

¹⁴You ask why he no longer accepts them. It is because he knows you have broken your promise to the wife you married when you were young. She was your partner, and you have broken your promise to her, although you promised before God that you would be faithful to her. ¹⁵Didn't God make you one body and spirit with her? ^{F2}What was his purpose in this? It was that you should have children who are truly God's people. So make sure that none of you breaks his promise to his wife. ¹⁶<<I hate divorce,>> says the LORD God of Israel. <<I hate it when one of you does such a cruel thing to his wife. Make sure that you do not break your promise to be faithful to your wife.>> *CEV*

¹⁴Because the LORD witnessed the vows you and your wife made to each other on your wedding day when you were young. But you have been disloyal to her, though she remained your faithful companion, the wife of your marriage vows. ¹⁵Didn't the LORD make you one with your wife? In body and spirit you are his. ^{F5}And what does he want? Godly children from your union. So guard yourself; remain loyal to the wife of your youth. ¹⁶"For I hate divorce!" says the LORD, the God of Israel. "It is as cruel as putting on a victim's bloodstained coat," says the LORD Almighty. "So guard yourself; always remain loyal to your wife." *NLT*