

“What You Need to Know”

Mother’s Day

Ephesians 5:25-31

- I. Introduction – Today I’m stepping out on a limb.
 - A. It’s Mother’s Day and it’s traditional in the church to address moms on this day.
 - 1) And we’re going to do that, only in the most round about way.
 - 2) We’re going to talk to Dads.
 - B. The limb I mentioned is that I risk setting myself up as an expert on relationships, marriages, men, and women.
 - 1) An expert is someone who believes they know more about your situation than you do.
 - 2) That’s not me. But, I think I can share some things this morning from both Scripture and my experience (even my mistakes) that will help us.
 - C. Ephesians 5 is one of those “problem texts” in the New Testament.
 - 1) Men we like to start in verse 22 because it works for us. “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. 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. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.”
 - 2) The key word is “submit”. We think we know what that means. We think it makes us Lord, King and Uncontested Ruler.
 - 3) But, it doesn’t. The reason we think that is we stop reading too soon.
 - D. So that’s why we started in verse 25 today. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.”
 - 1) Here’s the deal. How much did Christ love the church? {So much that he died!}
 - 2) In fact, Paul says that Christ “submitted himself to death, even death on the cross.”
 - a) “Wives, submit to your husbands.”
 - b) “Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church.” Submit yourself even unto death.
 - c) What’s going on here?
 - 3) God is telling us to mutually submit ourselves to one another.
 - a) How do we do that? By thinking of submitting in a more expansive.
 - b) Submitting is simply putting another’s needs ahead of your own.
 - E. So this morning I want to talk to husbands, those who one day wish to be husbands and really everyone else – I want to share what you need to know in order to love your wives as Christ loved the church.
 - 1) First, I need to acknowledge the help of M. Garlinda Burton and an article she wrote in the UM Men’s Magazine (“What Wives Want Husbands to Know”).
 - 2) Second, I need to get your attention again. Some of you have already turned me off because you think you know where I’m going.
 - a) Let me say this. I’m amazed at how many men will say, “I would die for my wife,” but they won’t even load the dishwasher.
 - b) I think we could all stand to be reminded of some of the basics we’re going to talk about this morning.

- i. So often our expectations in marriage are unmet because we can't be honest about what we want and need in our marriages.
 - ii. And our expectations are often unrealistic. Men marry women hoping they will never change and women marry men hoping they will. That's a recipe for disaster.
- II. First, love her through thick and thin!
 - A. Paul said, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."
 - 1) Treat your wife as you would yourself. To do otherwise, is to criticize and demean yourself.
 - 2) The two of you are one flesh!!
 - a) So if you do something that is frustrating or upsetting to her – stop!
 - b) Stop yourself and ask, "How will this affect her?"
 - 3) That's not sissy stuff or weak. That's Godly and Biblical!
 - B. Three things. First, nothing is more hurtful than deriding your wife. Whether it's because of weight, her hair, or her personality, whatever.
 - 1) Jesus said, "Husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies."
 - a) Guys if there's one thing we're good at its loving ourselves.
 - 2) Chances are your wife has done enough to deserve your love and respect.
 - C. Second, don't drool over other women.
 - 1) No matter how confident she is, it hurts your wife when you stare or flirt with other women.
 - 2) It just makes sense, don't fawn over another woman's beauty in front of your wife. It's tacky.
 - D. Third, thick and thin – that means that you stick!!
 - 1) You're in.
 - 2) Now and tomorrow! Someone said, "til death do us part" and I think it was you.
- III. Second, it's not just women's work.
 - A. Your home, your kids, your lives are your responsibility as much as they are your wife's.
 - 1) Clean up after yourself! {99% to 1%}
 - 2) Spend time with your kids.
 - 3) Spend time with your wife.
 - B. Play to each other's strengths. That's why you're together!
 - 1) There are no rules. There's no such thing as women's work and man's work.
 - 2) Determine your strengths and then play to them.
 - a) Do what interests you and what you're good at.
 - b) So what if your wife's a better carpenter.
- IV. Third, there is an art to romance.
 - A. Love your wife.
 - 1) Show your wife that she's important. Romance her.
 - a) It's not something just for when you're dating.
 - b) Accept her gestures of caring for you and show your gratitude. {Guys can get flowers, too.}
 - 2) Don't be helpless! This works two ways.
 - a) Don't patronize your wife and treat her like an incompetent.

- b) Don't become a functional idiot who needs help finding his socks.
 - B. Little things are not little.
 - 1) Jesus said that if your faithful in little things you can be trusted with big things.
 - 2) The implication is that little things are far more important than we may have first believed. {Little things are not little.}
 - 3) Write a note. Give a kiss. Rinse off the dishes. Buy a gift just because.
 - C. I believe that your job is to worship the ground your wife walks on.
 - 1) Not literally of course. Only God is worthy of worship.
 - 2) But, there should be no one on earth more important to you than your wife.
- V. Fourth, pray together and you may stay together.
 - A. Several studies say that couples who share a spiritual life together are more likely to stay together, even during tough times.
 - 1) The most important relationship in your life should be the one you have with Christ.
 - 2) Find a place together if you can. {Carol and I}
 - B. Your service in the church community and for the body of Christ is an important expression of the bond of your marriage.
 - 1) You can learn to see yourself and your wife in a new light as you serve in the church together.
 - 2) And you become a tremendous witness to other couples in your church community.
- VI. Finally, don't get competitive with your wife.
 - A. Her friends are not your competition.
 - 1) Don't be threatened by her female friends.
 - a) Friendships are an important part of a healthy person.
 - b) There should never be a reason to force your wife to choose between you and her girlfriends.
 - 2) Don't try to one-up her.
 - a) Remember, you are one flesh.
 - b) Her successes are yours and vice versa.
 - c) Instead, lift her up. Encourage her success and support her in her failures.
- VII. Conclusion – Serve each other. Submit your desires, plans and hopes to hers.
 - A. I've been married for almost 17 years.
 - 1) If it's not immoral or illegal and I can – my wife gets what she wants.
 - a) Because I'm whipped.
 - b) No, because I try to love my wife the way Christ loved the church.
 - B. I'm not Tom Cruise. She's not Julia Roberts.
 - 1) I'm bald. She's starting to get gray.
 - 2) I like James Taylor. She likes U2 and the Police.
 - C. Yet somehow we manage.
 - 1) And in the process we are learning what love is.
 - 2) It's not what we dreamed and it's not what Hollywood has promised.
 - 3) But, I know this: "He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord." Proverbs 18:22.