

Love Your Wife

By David Bunting

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her” (Ephesians 5:25). Loving your wife is a commandment of the Lord. This is NOT a personal liberty husbands may choose to neglect or from which they may exempt themselves. Every man who is lawfully joined by God to his wife is obligated to love his own wife. No ifs or but’s about it. All husbands will give an account to the Lord on the Judgment Day whether or not they loved their wives.

Love is not selfish (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:4, 5). Yet, the world and our society are such that the promotion of self interests and selfish pleasures are at the forefront of men’s pursuits. Success is often gauged by personal happiness and immediate gratification. Today, many marriages begin with a passionate affection but then end because of a lack of love. The world assumes, since couples supposedly stumble into love and then fall out of love, that an ending of the marital union is acceptable. The excuse “I do not love my wife anymore” is unacceptable and cowardly. Husbands must man up to their responsibility and love their wives. A diminishing love is no reason to bail out on the marriage, but rather, a call to get busy loving your wife.

The standard and measure for true love is Jesus Christ. He first loved us before we loved Him. He showed His love while we were still sinners at enmity with God. He put our needs before His own. He was moved by compassion. He was merciful. He served. Godly love desires and seeks the well-being of another. It is not moved simply by emotional impulses. It is kind and suffers long. It “hopes all things” and “endures all things” (1 Corinthians 13:7). Husbands must love their wives even when they are being unlovable.

The love of Christ was a sacrificial love. He gave Himself both in life and in death. He humbled Himself to esteem others. He made Himself poor to enrich others. “... though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). He died on Calvary’s cross so that others may live. Husbands must learn to love as Christ has loved, who willingly laid down His life in service and in death. Men, empty yourselves of all selfish ambitions and look out for your wife’s interests and well-being (cf. Philippians 2:3-7).

Love sees the true value of the other person. Long ago Solomon wisely stated, “He who finds a wife finds a good thing” and “a prudent wife is from the Lord” (Proverbs 18:22; 22:14). King Lemuel’s mother reminded him that the value of a virtuous wife is “far above rubies” (Proverbs 31:10). The Lord’s will is that wives are to be nourished and cherished by their own spouses. Understandably, men take care of that which they treasure, and where their treasures are, there will be their hearts (cf. Matthew 6:21). “So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.” (Ephesians 5:28)