

Two Into One • Part 4: The Husband

INTRO – Ephesians 5 →

What We Learn

1. Last Wednesday we considered the role of the Wife. Tonight, we look at the Husband's.

THE HUSBAND

Vs25-26

25 Husbands, love your wives,

1. Most men would prefer Paul had ended there. He doesn't.
2. He *qualifies* the love he's speaking about →

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

3. The love a husband is to show his wife is the same kind of diligent, selfless, sacrificial love Jesus showed us in becoming one of us, living w/knuckleheads for 33 yrs, then going to cross.
4. **THAT'S** how a husband is to love his wife → Selflessly, sacrificially, practically, patiently & **daily**.
5. A husband's love isn't **merely** something he **feels** for his wife. Hopefully, he **does** feel it.
 - a. But it isn't to be **limited** to an emotion. It **works itself out** in **practical** ways.
 - b. And it goes **all the way**.
6. Being a man, Paul **understands** them.
 - a. He knows when he says love is to **sacrificial**, many guys will jump to the **heroic** sacrifice of the cross.
 - b. So a man vows to be a **hero** → **One day** ... in the unlikely event the need arise.
 - c. He rehearses it in his mind.
 - 1) He pictures throwing themselves in front of a runaway car to save her.
 - 2) They're flying somewhere on vacation when the plane is hijacked by terrorists. When his wife is taken as a hostage he offers himself in her place.
 - 3) They're at the park & a chopped Impala drives slowly by. A Mac 10 comes out the window, aimed at his wife. He sees the muzzle flash & throws himself in the bullets' path. Falls to the ground, bleeding from a half dozen holes. As his wife cradles his head in her lap, with his last breath he looks up into her tear & admiration-filled eyes & says, "I. Love. You."
 - d. So heroic. So manly!
7. But that **isn't** really what Paul has in mind. So he goes on in v26 ...

26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

1. Far from a husband saving up all his love & showing it to his wife in one heroic act of sacrifice, he's to love her **daily**, in **small** as well as **big** things.
2. Jesus didn't save up His love then expend it all at the cross.
 - a. His **whole life** was a constant & steady expression of love.
 - b. It's difficult imagining Jesus spending His life playing video games, doing sports, rebuilding a classic chariot, or sitting on the couch watching TV w/the remote in one hand & a bag of Cool-Ranch Doritos in the other, then in April of his 33rd yr, his iPhone alarm goes off, He looks down to see it says, "Head to Gethsemane for Arrest."
 - c. Jesus didn't **just** come to die. He came **first to live** & to show **us** how to live.
 - d. Do you think it was **easy** for God the Son, enthroned in glory, bearing all the power & rights of deity, to lay it all aside, wrap Himself in humble human flesh, then live among people who misunderstood & mostly rejected Him?
 - e. There's only one thing that can explain **WHY** Jesus did all that – **LOVE!** → Selfless, sacrificial, patient love.
3. There's a moment in Jesus' life where all this becomes crystal; at the Last Supper.
 - a. When He washed their feet.
 - b. John describes it this way in 13:12–17

¹² So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³ You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

1. This brings us back to what we looked at last week in the role of the wife in vs22-24.
 - a. The wife submits to her husband **because** God made him her covenant-head, just as Jesus is our covenant head.
 - b. Jesus acknowledges that headship here when he accepts the title Lord & Master.
 - c. But what had He as the Master just done?
Served them in one of **THE** most humbling ways possible.
2. Just as Jesus loved **& so served** His disciples, the husband is to love & **serve** his wife; **daily**, in simple & humble ways.
 - a. Men, that's great if you **vow** to take a bullet for her.
 - b. But more than likely, you'll never get a chance to prove your love that way.
 - c. So how about **putting a bullet to your selfishness** & doing something for her that seems less heroic but is far more helpful & loving; like taking out the trash?
 - Mow the lawn.
 - Give the kids a bath & put them to bed.
 - Give your wife a foot-rub.

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- Listen to her without interrupting on how she can “fix it.”
 - Being around, being a friend.
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3. In v26 Paul means Jesus loved us with His whole life, not just at the cross. That’s what he means by Jesus **sanctifying & cleansing** us.
4. To **sanctify** means to set something apart as special.
 - a. A husband is to **treat** his wife as **special**.
 - b. He’s to **diligently** attend to her in a manner unlike anyone else.
 - c. She should know that next to God, **no one else comes close to her in his affection**.
5. Paul also says Jesus **cleansed us with the washing of water by the Word**.
 - a. Jesus faithfully taught & lived God’s Word.
 - b. In the same way, a husband is to **lead** his wife in spiritual things.
 - 1) Many guys claim their headship when it comes to **decision-making** but neglect **this**.
 - 2) They’re large & in charge when it comes to ...
 - money & spending,
 - where to vacation,
 - what to watch on TV,
 - whose car gets parked in the garage,
 - 3) But they do **nothing** in terms of spiritual leadership.
 - c. It’s the husband’s **duty** to lead in spiritual things.
 - d. Just as Jesus served us by faithfully ministering God’s Word, so husbands are to faithfully serve their wives in being the **pastor** of that **mini-church** called their home.
 - e. From talks I’ve had w/men over the years, I can say being a spiritual leader is **difficult** for many.
 - 1) Even men who are solid, mature believers find it difficult to take spiritual leadership at home.
 - 2) They feel like they’ve done well just getting their family to church 3 wks each month.
 - 3) Sitting down regularly w/the wife to pray is like pulling teeth.
 - 4) And though guys universally acknowledge they **ought** to, they don’t & find it difficult to explain **why**.
 - f. It should be obvious → Satan doesn’t want husbands loving their wives this way so he puts up a huge fight.
 - g. Here’s why; It goes back to the curse that came on the woman in the Fall.
 - 1) Having bypassed Adam as her covenant head when Eve ate the forbidden fruit, the curse that came on Eve’s daughters is the tendency to **distrust** men.
 - 2) That distrust zeroes in on their husband, whom they then seek to rule over them by manipulating & controlling them.
 - 3) But the man **remains** the head she’s to submit to.
 - 4) What makes her submission **difficult** is that lingering distrust from the curse of the Fall.

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- 5) Nothing goes further to build a wife's trust in her husband than when he **takes responsibility for being their spiritual leader**.
 - 6) And **nothing** makes that clearer than his **praying** with & for her.
 - 7) When she's sees & hears him seeking God for direction & blessing for her and their marriage.
 - 8) This opens a new level of security in her that allows her to **give herself in greater freedom to him**.
 - 9) And when he sees **that**, it **empowers** him to be **more** the man God intends him to be.
 - 10) They grow in **spiritual intimacy** & that **shuts the door** on the enemy's access.
 - 11) **That's** why the devil resists this so fiercely. It's the key to his domination of their marriage.
 - a) A strong marriage means a strong family & home.
 - b) Strong homes means strong churches.
 - c) Strong churches means a strong community.
 - d) Strong communities means a strong society.
 - e) A strong society is a bulwark against evil.
- h. Men: Close that door on the devil! Be the spiritual leader of your home. Pray with your wife!
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Responding to Adam • Gen. 3

1. Before we carry on in Eph5, we need to pitch our tent for a while here on this issue of what happened in the Fall to Adam & Eve.
2. That first marriage is the template for all marriages.
And the curse God pronounced in Gen3 goes on today.
3. Gen3:6 -

⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

1. Where was Adam when satan tempted her? **Right there**.
 - a. What was he doing? Don't know, but certainly **not** his job as the covenant head.
 - b. He wasn't **taking responsibility**; the opposite, he **neglected** it.
 - c. And Eve, bereft of Adam's involvement, took the lead he forfeited & interacted with the devil.
2. Who did God come to **first** after they sinned? Adam!
 - a. Yeah, but Eve was the one who ate **first**.
 - b. Doesn't matter. Adam was **still** the covenant head & **responsible**.
3. So, God announces the curse –
 - a. Eve will have pain in childbirth & out of distrust in her husband will seek to control him.

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- b. Adam's curse is that his work will be hard.
He's still the covenant-head but that responsibility which was originally a **privilege** will be a **difficult burden**.
 - c. From that point on, the gender wars ensue.
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4. Listen Men -

- a. We've lost sight of what God originally meant by what it means to be a **man** & bought into the world's distorted idea of **masculinity**.
 - b. We've gotten **especially** tweaked on what it means to be a **husband**.
 - c. The sons of Adam tend to go in 1 of 2 directions →
 - 1) They either follow their father Adam into **cowardice**,
 - 2) Or they **react against** that by **overcompensating** & becoming **bullies & brutes**.
 - d. History is marked by these 2 kinds of men: Chauvinists or Cowards – Too much or too little.
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5. The men who follow Adam's **passivity** are **cowards** who **refuse to take responsibility**.

- a. They don't like conflict & will do anything to avoid it.
 - b. They unload a part of **their curse** on the women in their lives; their mother, their wife – & make **her** responsible for providing.
 - c. These guys are often **sweet guys, cute little boys** in their 20's & 30's but can't keep a job because they won't shoulder responsibility.
 - 1) They don't set their alarm, are forever late to work or class; which even though they're 32 they're still in school because getting an AA takes them 10 years.
 - 2) They still live at home with mama, or if they have their own place, mom still does his laundry & pays his bills.
 - 3) This guy's goal is to find a woman with a good job & a nice house so he can move in.
 - 4) Some women are attracted to these man-boys & marry them, only to realize they were attracted to them as a **mother** is to an orphan; not as a woman to a man.
 - 5) There's no a **romantic** attraction, it's a **protectiveness that** wears out real quick.
 - 6) A mature woman can't **respect** a guy like that.
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d. Another version of the passive coward is the **Cold Provider**.

- 1) This guy takes only partial responsibility; to pay the bills and put food on the table.
 - 2) But he's emotionally distant from & uninvolved with his wife & kids.
 - 3) He's **physically present** but **relationally absent**.
 - 4) He comes home & gets on the computer, parks in front of the TV, goes into the garage.
 - 5) Or he's got his own social circle outside the home that leaves no time for his wife & kids.
 - 6) Softball, basketball, racquetball, ballroom dancing, bingo – whatever.
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e. Then there's the **rare breed** of coward who hides behind a **hyper-spirituality**.

- 1) This guy knows he's failing to provide for his family financially or relationally, so he over-compensates by hiding behind a ton of God-talk.
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- 2) He turns every encounter into a sappy & artificial religious discussion, so that his wife & kids are embarrassed to be around him.
 - 3) He's Ned Flanders.
 - 4) But it's all a dodge because the fact is, he's **NOT** taking responsibility to either **provide** for his family or to build a healthy relationship with his wife & kids.
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6. The other direction men tend to take is to **overcompensate** for Adam's cowardice. They become brutes, bullies, thugs, & bad-boys.
- a. They don't really know what a man is, but they know he's not a woman, so whatever a woman is, they do the opposite.
- 1) Some of you had this guy as a dad.
Your mom hugged you, kissed you, said "I love you." **So he *didn't*.**
 - 2) Being a man is **not** the opposite of being a woman; that's NOT the way to define masculinity.
 - 3) Being a man is not being gross!
 - Spitting farther
 - Belching longer
 - Punching harder &
 - Yelling louder
 - 4) That's not a man. That's a **joke!**
 - 5) No woman is praying, "God, send me that man."
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- b. A common version of the Bully is the guy who thinks **success** makes him a man.
- 1) His life is defined by Income, Possessions & Position.
 - 2) His wife is a trophy he parades before others to mark his success.
 - 3) He probably doesn't have any children because they're a drain on his financial resources.
"Let's see: Kids or Skidoo. Kids or vacation home." That's the way he thinks.
 - 4) If he **does** have kids, they're like his wife; trophies. So the pressure is on to be the best.
 - 5) When his wife & kids fail to his expectations, he's **brutal**, because it's all about him!
They exist to make him look good. When they don't he rages!
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- c. Then there's the **Thug**.
- 1) He's angry, violent, harsh; this guy is just scary!
 - 2) Is your wife **afraid** of you? Do you **scare** her?
 - 3) What fool thinks that he's a man because he can terrorize women and children?
 - 4) That's not a man, that's a **punk**.
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- d. **Mr. Bossy** is the Bully who thinks he's the **king** of where ever he is.
- 1) This guy thinks he's the smartest person in the room & is forever telling others what to do.
 - 2) He orders his wife & children around like a tyrant.
 - 3) He can't keep a job because he's smarter than his boss and thinks he should be the boss.
 - 4) This guy wants to be **in** authority but never **under** it.
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- 5) You can't tell this guy anything!
 - 6) He drags his wife to a new church then stays just long enough to find out if the pastor is going to do what he says.
 - 7) When he doesn't, he leaves in a huff and eventually stops going to church altogether, saying he can't find a decent church.
 - 8) Really, he hasn't found a pastor dumb & cowardly enough to let him be in charge.
7. Jesus was the perfect man who gives us the model for masculinity.
He was neither a coward nor a bully.
 - a. Jesus **took responsibility** for us. // He went to the cross to pay for OUR SINS.
 - b. He made our sins His responsibility.
 8. A man is not someone who can spit the farthest, belch the longest, punch the hardest, or yell the loudest.
 9. A man is someone who takes responsibility for his role as the covenant head; to lead, protect & provide for his wife & family.
 - a. Some guys aren't **physically** strong. They aren't athletes.
Put them into the octagon & it isn't going to go well.
 - b. But that doesn't mean they aren't men. What makes a man **manly** is that he **takes responsibility**.
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1. Marriage is for MEN, not boys.
 - a. Ladies: Hear this → Marriage won't make a boy into a man.
 - b. When a boy marries all it does is ruin a woman.
 2. You single guys: Be a man.
 - Get a job.
 - Pay your bills.
 - Be responsible for your own life.
 - Have your own walk with God.
 - Join a church.
 - Get into a small group.
 - Plug into ministry.
 3. Getting married does not mean finding a woman you can pawn your curse off to.
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Back to Eph5 – Vs27-30

²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

1. All Jesus' love & sacrifice for us will in the end rebound to His glory.
2. In the same way, a husband's love & service of his wife ends up benefiting him →
 - a. Because as the wife is built up and blessed,

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- b. She responds with blessing to her husband.
 3. Last week we saw that as a wife submits to & respects her husband, it empowers **him** to become the man God wants him to be **FOR HER**.
 4. In the same way, as husband loves his wife it empowers **her** to become the woman God wants her to be **FOR HIM**.
 5. A husband **needs** submission; a wife—sacrificial love.
 6. Think about it:
 - a. As the wife **submits** to her husband, she becomes **vulnerable**. His decisions **affect** her.
 - b. That's where the curse kicks in & she **distrusts** & tries to control so she'll be safe.
 - c. But if the husband loves her as described here, she has **confidence** in his leadership because she knows he's taking responsibility in the sight of God.
 - d. He takes careful & tender **thought** for her.
 - e. Look at v28 again -

Husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies

7. Paul is being **blatantly** realistic here.
8. As a man he knows men are pretty simple: We like to eat, sleep & play.
 - a. We're good at knowing what we want & think about ourselves **a lot**.
 - b. So Paul just cuts to the chase & says, "Husbands, just as you take care of & think about yourself, show the same kind of care for your woman."
 - 1) You're hungry & go into the kitchen to get a snack, ask her if she wants something.
 - 2) You hate it if you're sleeping in, but she makes a racket & wakes you up.
So, when she's sleeping in don't make noises in the bathroom like a wild beast is dying.
 - c. You crave her respect; show her some.
9. Paul goes on . . .

²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. ³⁰ For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

10. This reveals the **depths** to which marital intimacy can & should go.
11. It's part of the husband's responsibility as covenant-head to **take it there**.
12. It's captured in that phrase – to **nourish & cherish**.
 - a. This is something women know intuitively but men tend to be oblivious to → **Romance**.
 - b. Nourishing & cherishing a relationship is **romance**.
13. Romance is not that sentimental goo you find portrayed in cheap novels with some long-haired, shirtless stud on the cover.
14. **Real** romance is here in the example of Christ.
15. I've looked for a good definition for romance.
 - a. I've asked men & women alike to give their definition.

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- b. While several women have been able to -
- c. Men return a blank, glaze-eyed stare. They have no idea what romance is.
16. Romance is the environment created between lovers when they know that whether together or apart, each is thinking **tenderly & longingly** about the other.
- a. And because of that, there isn't a decision made not first passed thru the filter of what's best for the other.
- b. Will this **nourish** our love? Does it **cherish** her?
17. Where there's this **romance**, there's a **on-going expression of thoughtfulness**.
18. Paul calls husbands to this because **a wife thrives** on it!
19. Guys typically look at romance this way: It's a **tool** they use to win her.
- a. A guy show himself to be romantic because he know she's a sucker for it.
- b. When they date he sends her cards & flowers.
- 1) He calls her in the middle of the day → Just to say "Hi."
 - 2) When he picks her up for a date there's a single red rose waiting on the dashboard of his immaculately washed, waxed, vacuumed & suitably scented car.
 - 3) He's purchased Kenny G's latest to play for some romantic music as they drive to the *Olive Garden* for Caesar salads then on to LA for an opera or ballet.
 - 4) She's swept off her feet by his charm & romantic poise as he tips the valet & gives her his arm as they stroll into the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.
 - 5) She thinks to herself, "What a catch."
- c. Here's what he's thinking? "I hope she appreciates all this and thinks I'm suave & **debonair**. I don't even know what **debonair** means but I hope she thinks I am."
- d. She does, & a few months later when he asks her to marry him, she gladly replies, "YES!"
- e. In his mind, he's **won** her. The tool called romance did its job. Time to hang it up.
- f. After the honeymoon, instead of a rose on the dashboard ...
- He buys her a Swiffer & a year's supply of dusting pads.
 - The car rarely gets washed, & instead of a romantic music it's hip hop.
 - Caesar salads at *Olive Garden* turn into burritos at Supertaco &
 - The opera in LA is traded in for *Monday Night Football* on the tellie.
20. **She** wants to know where the **romance** went.
- a. She thought it was **advertising** for the kind of life she'd enjoy forever.
- b. Now she realizes it was **false** advertising & feels cheated.
21. Husband! LOVE your wife → As Christ **loves** the church.
- a. Nourish & cherish her.
- b. Make your thoughts toward her special & tender, then **treat** her that way.
- c. That's the essence of the romance she needs & enables her to blossom.

1 Peter 3:7

1. Peter wrote of much the same thing.

⁷ Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

2. The word “weak” has a *negative* connotation for us.

- a. But Peter’s **NOT** saying the wife is **weak**.
- b. It’s a word of comparison to her husband.
- c. **HE** needs to NOT treat her as one of the guys, because she’s **NOT**.
- d. Rather, he’s to render her a **special honor**.

3. The words he uses picture 2 vessels -

- a. One is a plastic bucket you use to wash the car with or mix paint in.
It’s utilitarian & tough. You keep it in the garage. → The husband.
- b. The other is a delicate vase. It’s meant to hold something precious.
It’s kept in the house, in a prominent place → The wife.

4. Peter calls a husband to tenderly & carefully **lift his wife up**, placing her on a pedestal so she’s protected, safe.

5. There’s a warning at the end of v7.

- a. Peter says a husband is to honor his wife as a joint-heir of the grace of God.
- b. If he fails to, God won’t hear his prayers.

6. Men: **Hear that** & be **warned**.

- a. You can be neither a coward nor bully & think all’s good with God.
- b. Your wife is God’s daughter.
 - 1) Do you imagine you can **neglect** her, **abuse, mistreat & disrespect** her →
 - 2) Then pray & God is going to bless you?
- c. You single guys with girlfriends: Those are God’s daughters.
 - 1) Do you think you can put your hands all over her, cheat on her, lie to her.
 - 2) And ask God to bless you so you can do it some more?

CONCLUSION // Learning To Love Like That

1. I want to end with a story told by Richard Selzer, in the book *Mortal Lessons*.

2. It well captures the kind of self-sacrificial love that Paul calls us to as husbands . . .

I stand by the bed where a young woman lies, her face postoperative, her mouth twisted in palsy, clownish. A tiny twig of the facial nerve, the one to the muscles of her mouth, has been severed. The surgeon had followed with religious fervor the curve of her flesh; I promise you that. Nevertheless, to remove the tumor in her cheek, I had cut the little nerve.

Her young husband is in the room. He stands on the opposite side of the bed, and together they seem to dwell in the evening lamplight, isolated from me, private. Who are they, I ask myself, he and this wrymouth I have made, who gaze at and touch each other so generously?

The young woman speaks. "Will my mouth always be like this?" she asks.

"Yes," I say, "it will. It's because the nerve was cut."

She nods, and is silent. But the young man smiles. "I like it," he says. "It is kind of cute."

All at once I know who he is. I understand, and I lower my gaze. One is not bold in an encounter with a real man. Unmindful, he bends to kiss her crooked mouth, and I am so close I can see how he twists his own lips to accommodate to hers, to show her that their kiss still works.

3. Husbands are given the privilege of loving our wives as Jesus loved us in the midst of ***our*** imperfection.
 - a. Their perfection isn't the condition of our love.
 - b. Rather, God intends that a husband's love will be a part of their perfecting.