

HOPE IS HERE FOR THE FAMILY

Ephesians 5:22-33

April 24, 2011

INTRODUCTION: How does the Lord Jesus Christ influence and offer hope for the family? I would answer this question by defining the difference God can make in each individual life that has embraced the Gospel.

◆ **What God Does For Us**

Ephesians 2:1-8, “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.”

◆ **What God Does In Us**

Ephesians 5:15-18, “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit”

1. Yielding To His Control.

There is no filling of the Spirit without a conscious, intelligent choice to surrender the will to the revealed will of the Lord.

2. Submitting To His Direction

Under the control of another.

◆ **What God Does To Us.**

2 Peter 1:3-4, “as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature..”

The “**Hope**” that God offers is not contingent on my **capacity** to live for Him, but His **choice** to live through me.

Whether you are a teenager, college student, young single, divorcee, or married couple; ***Hope Is Here!***

The Apostle Paul, being moved along by the Spirit of God, penned some encouraging, inspiring, and incredible truths about relationships.

In the context of marriage, the Apostle gives us great truths that apply to us all as it pertains to roles and relationships. It has an overarching theme of our relationship with the Lord and our responsibility to obey.

I. THE ROLE OF THE WIFE. 22-24

◆ 3 verses to the ladies

◆ 9 verses to the men

A. WILLINGLY SUBMISSIVE. 22

Paul follows the theme of submission in v.21 in defining it as a voluntary response to God's will in giving up one's independent rights to other believers in general, and to ordained authority in particular, in this case the "wife's own husband."

A husband is not to treat his wife as a servant but as an equal for whom God has given him care and responsibility for provision and protection, to be exercised in love.

The husband's primary responsibility as head of the household is to love, provide, protect, and serve his wife and family.

"Your own husband" suggests the intimacy and mutuality of the wife's submission. She willingly makes herself subject to the one she possesses as her own husband. They belong to each other in an absolute equality. He has no superiority and she has no inferiority.

"as to the Lord" – to be done first of all for His glory and to please Him.

B. NATURALLY SUBMISSIVE. 23a

The head gives direction and the body responds.

"For the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is the head of the church"

A wife who willingly and lovingly responds to her husband's leadership as to the Lord is an honor to the Lord, her husband, her family, her church, and herself.

C. SPIRITUALLY SUBMISSIVE. 23b-24

"and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything."

The supreme and ultimate model of submission is Jesus Christ Himself, Who performed the supreme act of submission by giving His own sinless life to save a sinful world. Christ is the Savior of the body, His church, for whom He died on the cross. He is the perfect Provider, Protector, and Head of His church, which is His body.

Jesus Christ is the divine role model for husbands, who should provide for, protect, preserve, love, and lead their wives and families as Christ cares for His church.

Things Men Should Know About Women

Mark Merrill “All Pro Dad”

◆ **Women want to feel secure.**

Financial security is important but it comes second to emotional stability. Their feeling emotionally connected and close to us, and knowing we are there for them, no matter what, is what really matters.

◆ **Women want to feel loved.**

We need to reassure her because she often feels insecure about our love for her. In times of conflict with our wives, we should tell them we love them no matter what and that everything will be okay; I love you.

◆ **Women want to be listened to.**

She doesn't want us to fix it, she just wants us to listen. She doesn't want or need our solution to the problem, even if she asks for our opinion. She does want us to understand how she's feeling about the problem and identify with her in that feeling. “*Thanks for sharing that with me.*” “*I'm so sorry that happened.*”

◆ **Women want to feel beautiful.**

She needs to know, deep within, that we find her beautiful and that we only have eyes for her. She doesn't just want to know, “*Am I beautiful?*” but “*Am I beautiful to you?*”

◆ **Women want to be understood.**

Women need us to understand how they think and feel, even though that is virtually impossible. If we can ***generally*** understand how women think, we might be able to understand how they feel; be sensitive and considerate.

II. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HUSBAND. 25-33

Remember, life is made meaningful by relationships.

Dr. Carl Rogers, *Becoming Partners: Marriage and Its Alternatives*, writes:

“To me it seems that we are living in an important and uncertain age, and the institution of marriage is most assuredly in an uncertain state. If 50-75 percent of Ford or General Motors cars completely fell apart within the early part of their lifetimes as automobiles, drastic steps would be taken. We have no such well organized way of dealing with our social institutions, so people are groping, more or less blindly, to find alternatives to marriage (which is certainly less than 50 percent successful). Living together without marriage, living in communes, extensive childcare centers, serial monogamy (with one divorce after another), the women’s liberation movement to establish the woman as person in her own right, new divorce laws which do away with the concept of guilt – these are all gropings toward some new form of man-woman relationship for the future. It would take a bolder man than I to predict what will emerge. (New York: Dell, 1973, p.11)

A. SACRIFICIAL LOVE. 25

Obviously, no sinful human being has the capacity to love with the divine fullness and perfection with which Christ... loved, and will forever love, the church. However, because a Christian has Christ’s own nature and Holy Spirit within him, God thereby provides for husbands to love their wives with a measure of Christ’s own kind of love. The husband who submits to the Lord by being filled with His Spirit is able to love his wife with the same kind of love Jesus has for His own bride, the church.

“gave Himself for her” – the world’s love is always object-oriented. A person is loved because of physical attractiveness, personality, wit, prestige, or some other such positive characteristic. However, as soon as a person loses a positive characteristic or that characteristic is no longer appealing, the love based on the characteristic also disappears.

God’s love is not of that sort. He loves because it is His nature to love, not because they are attractive or deserve His love.

It seems to be a principle that whatever we choose to love and practice loving soon becomes attractive to us.

The husband who loves his wife as Christ loves His church gives everything he has for his wife, including his life if necessary.

SPECIAL NOTE: If a loving husband is willing to sacrifice his life for his wife, he is certainly willing to make lesser sacrifices for her.

Winston Churchill, romance and your marriage:

“Towards the end of his life, Winston Churchill was honored at a banquet and someone asked him, ‘If you could come back as anyone after you die, who would it be?’ Churchill thought for a second, stood up, turned to his wife, and said, ‘Mrs. Churchill’s second husband.’ Winston was totally captivated by her.”

B. SANCTIFYING LOVE. 26-27

Divine love does not simply condemn wrong in those loved but seeks to cleanse them from it. Love wants only the best for the one it loves and it cannot bear for a loved one to be corrupted or misled by anything evil or harmful.

He will seek to protect her from the world's contamination and protect her holiness, virtue, and purity in every way. He will never induce her to do that which is wrong or unwise, or expose her to that which is less than good.

1. It Is Caring Love. 28-30

The loving husband seeks to supply all the needs of his wife. She is his God-given treasure to be loved, cared for, nourished and cherished.

To nourish is to provide for her needs, to give that which helps her grow and mature in favor with God and man.

To cherish is to use tender love and physical affection, to give her warmth, comfort, protection, and security.

Not to provide for your wife is not to provide for yourself.

2. It Is Cleaving Love. 31

“joined” – cleave to his wife; glued or cemented together. Speaks of an ever-lasting love, *“till death do us part.”*

Therefore, when a husband harms his wife, he harms himself. A husband who violates his marriage violates himself. A husband who destroys his marriage destroys a part of himself.

“If you live for your private pleasure at the expense of your spouse, you are living against yourself and destroying your joy.” John Piper

3. It Is A Considerate Love. 32-33

A man who was afraid that he loved his wife too much was asked if he loved her as much as Christ loved the church. When he answered no, he was told, “Then you must love her more.”

v.33 “respect” – man's greatest need. When a wife puts her husband down it probably affects him negatively as much as anything she could possibly do, however, the opposite is also true; **“respect”** builds him up.

When a Christian husband and wife walk in the power of the Spirit, yield to His Word and His control, and are mutually submissive, they are brought much happiness, their children are brought much blessing, and God is brought much honor.