

Sunday School

Marriage Series #5: Cultivating Courage—Instructions for Husbands

Opening Check-in: Anyone make plans to extend the blessings of their household out into the broader community? Examples to share? Any further insights from weekly marriage meetings?

Ephesians 5:22-33 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ³³ However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Within [the] Christian vision for marriage, here's what it means to fall in love. It is to look at another person and get a glimpse of the person God is creating, and to say, "I see who God is making you, and it excites me! I want to be part of that. I want to partner with you and God in the journey you are taking to his throne. And when we get there, I will look at your magnificence and say, 'I always knew you could be like this. I got glimpses of it on earth, but look at you now!'" –Tim Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*

Main Points:

- Self-sacrifice (v. 25; dominion)
- Seek wife's sanctification (vv. 26-27; work)
- Nourish and cherish (vv. 28-32; keep)

I. Self-sacrifice (v. 25)

II. Work: A Christian Husband Cultivates his Wife's Sanctification (vv. 26-27)

Christ-like Courage Overcomes Fear:

- Looking like a misogynist (cultural pressure: women assumed holier since 19th century)
- Taking the lead (internal pressure: inertia and effort)
- Wife's bad reaction (relational pressure: it's easier to just let her carry on)

III. Keep: A Christian Husband Protects his Wife's Honor and Provide for her Needs

Christ-like Courage Overcomes Fear:

- Interdependence
- Insufficiency (time, resources, energy for entire life)
- Failure

[Discussion] How might husbands overcoming fear in working and keeping their marriages change families? The church? The world?

[Wrap-Up] So much of our culture has a negative view of men and husbands. It's my sincere hope after our time in Proverbs 31:1-9 in week 3 and after today that we have gained a positive view of men and husbands, that both the men and women of the church are striving to create a culture (at every level) where men and husbands are valued, encouraged, supported, and called ever more into their creational design and gospel calling in the world, in the church, for their kids, and for their wives.

[Discussion] What would it look like for City Church to develop this kind of culture?

[Extension Activity] At your marriage meeting, during the business portion, do an audit of how your household spends your time. Does your reality reflect the priorities you imagine you hold together?