

Eph. 5:21-33 "Marriage in Christ: Reflecting His Love and Unity"

Primary purpose for marriage? **Glorify God** by living out God's metaphor. **Ephesians 5:31-32.**

Advice for Wives:

Ephesians 5:22 Sub-mission. Voluntary placing under the mission God has for our marriage (glorify him) as we live out the metaphor pattern of Jesus loving his bride and submitting to the Father.

Point 1: Submission has a purpose and a pattern.

Point 2: Submission is mutual. 5:21 Trinity is our model. Not a dictatorship but partnership. **How?**

Point 3: Submission is worship v.21-22 key- *out of reverence for Jesus. As unto the Lord.*

V.23-24 Chain of leadership. It doesn't imply inferiority, rather 2 headed leadership never works. The dictator husband forgets he is under the headship of Jesus and Jesus is a servant leader.

Advice for Husbands:

V.25- Paul tells us 6x in 9 verses to **AGAPE love our bride**. Characteristics:

1. **Love is a Choice** - Love is a verb. 1 Cor. 13:4-7 Put your name in there. Worship!
2. **Love is a Commitment** - Commit because of what Jesus did for you. Solution to lost love feelings? Rev. 2:4-5 *Do the things you did before.* Feelings will follow faith.
3. **Love is sacrificial spiritual leadership** - V.26-27 Men are to be the spiritual leader.

V.33 Practical ways to love: Unconditional Love is what every woman longs for.

- a. **Accept her** - you are the only one God called you to change.
- b. **Listen to her** - Don't naturally default into Mr. Fix it unless she asks.
- c. **Make her a priority** - Do the things you did at first! Show her love in word and deed.
- d. **Be a student of her** - Ask her how you can love her better.
- e. **Resolve conflict biblically** and learn to **communicate.**

V.33 RESPECT

Lack of respect is constant nitpicking, tearing down. Critical attitude. 94% predictor of divorce is contempt which is a critical heart with time. Don't react with defensiveness instead of humility as it never works as it just communicates that we don't take our spouse's concerns seriously.

Practical advice: 1. Instead of a critical heart: a culture of appreciation. *I appreciate that you _____ and I recognize your sacrifice.* 2. Use "I" words to describe your feelings without blaming.

Grow Group Questions:

1. As men or women, what are the biggest challenges to following through on this message?
2. Are you praying with each other? If not, why not? And why does this make a difference?
3. Why is communication the single greatest indicator of a vibrant marriage?
4. How does using "I" words when voicing a concern make communication more effective? Eg: *I feel this way when... Instead of You make me feel this way when...*
5. Women: Share how unconditional love would look to you. Men, describe how respect looks.

Extra Credit Homework (stuff that is ESSENTIAL to learn):

Dr. Gottman is not a Jesus follower as far as I know but has (in my opinion) discovered counsel that unintentionally parallels LOVE and RESPECT, especially when it comes to communicating.

<https://www.gottman.com/blog/the-6-things-that-predict-divorce/>

<https://www.gottman.com/blog/the-four-horsemen-recognizing-criticism-contempt-defensiveness-and-stonewalling/>

Drs. Les and Leslie Parrot's insight on Love and Respect: Go to www.Feathersoundchurch.com/free and sign up for a free RightNow Media account, and watch their 4 part message *CRAZY CYCLE* on love and respect if you want to know more about how this works (You can thank me later).

Top 2 books to Read:

When Sinners say I do by Dave Harvey

Sacred Marriage by Gary Thomas

Successful marriages only happen when you proactively invest in your marriage by learning.