

CULTIVATE: WHAT A WOMAN NEEDS

EPHESIANS 5:22-33

JUNE 24, 25, 2023

PASTOR RICKY JENKINS

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INTRODUCTION:

This week we conclude our series, “*Cultivate: The Marriage Series EVERYONE Needs to Hear*” with a reminder that, “*Marriages and Relationships Only Work When We Work.*”

Today’s teaching focuses on women, raising many questions. How can men love, respect, care for, and appreciate the wives, mothers, daughters, co-workers in our lives, when even brilliant minds like Stephen Hawking and Albert Einstein admit that they are stumped when it comes to understanding what women want. We must go to God’s Word.

Pastor Ricky uses words from Robertson McQuilkin to emphasize an attitude shift, “*It’s not that I have to - it’s that I get to.*” In McQuilkin’s writing, “*A Promise Kept: The Story of an Unforgettable Love,*” he tells of his love story with his wife, Muriel. They marry in 1945; raise a family; serve as missionaries to Japan. He then becomes President of the Columbia International Seminary in 1968, wherein his life goals as an influential leader, writer, speaker in evangelism are being realized. And then tragedy happens. Muriel is diagnosed with Alzheimer’s and Robertson makes a decision that shocks even the evangelical world. He resigns his Presidency of Columbia Seminary to care for his wife. Ricky encourages us to consider this attitude - not of what men *have* to do, but what they *get* to do. They must: **Love Spiritually; Love Unconditionally; Love Primarily.**

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LESSON:

Reminders from Ephesians 5

- Christ calls us to look at marriage and relationships through this gospel lens of *mutual* submission as captured in verse 21.
- *We submit to one another* out of reverence for Christ.
- Verse 32 points to the metaphor of the Church as the Bride of Christ; it tells of the awesome responsibilities of the husband to love his bride as Christ loves the Church.
- **Watch our Savior** - Verses 1 and 2 remind us to be *imitators of Christ* and not imitators of the world.
- **Watch our Behavior** - Verses 3 and 5 remind us to put all impurity away.
- **Watch our Mouths** - Verse 4 reminds us that what we say and how we say it matter.
- **Watch our Mission** - Verse 11 instructs us not only to stop doing unfruitful works of darkness, but also to expose them and do good things instead. This is the call on lives of Jesus focused men.

WHAT A WOMAN NEEDS: LOVE

1. Six times in our passage, God calls men to love their wives; the language is directed towards a Man showing LOVE towards his wife.
2. The word ‘love’ in our text is **AGAPE**, a love that seeks the highest good for another person.
3. This AGAPE love is the unselfish love that Christ has for His Church, Verse 25, so much so that He would die for His Bride.

GOD’S CALL TO MEN

LOVE HER SPIRITUALLY (VS. 26-28):

1. Pastor Ricky recognizes that not every man of God is united with a woman of God.
2. Look at verses 26-28 as instruction to what a gospel vision of marriage should be. Reject the world’s vision. Keep Jesus as the center of your life and expect great things.

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3. Remember to lead your wife spiritually with great love. Ricky posed this challenge:
 - ASK HER TO PRAY TOGETHER.
 - PRAY DAILY FOR HER AND LET HER KNOW THAT YOU ARE PRAYING.

LOVE HER UNCONDITIONALLY (VS. 28b-29, 31):

Paul says that whoever loves his wife, loves himself; this is a reciprocal feature of marriage. How a man loves his wife “*directly comes back to him indirectly.*”

1. **Think - Unconditional Affection** - Give consistent words of affirmation.
2. **Think - Unconditional Communication** - Listen more and fix less.
3. **Think - Unconditional Pursuit** - Whatever you did to get her, you should do to keep her.

LOVE HER PRIMARILY (VS. 31):

Paul says that a husband leaves and cleaves.

1. **Your marriage will prosper only if it is your priority.**
2. No relationship - no recreational activity - no child is equal in importance to your spouse.
3. Words in marriage vows say, “*Will you keep her ONLY*”

QUESTIONS:

1. Consider Robertson McQuilkin’s situation with his wife’s illness. Can you think of any other world examples of such personal sacrifice for the sake of another? How about Biblical sacrifices? How is this example an “attitude shift” from culture?
2. Discuss how Paul’s encouragement to be “imitators of Christ” can improve our relationships. What does Pastor Ricky encourage us to WATCH?
3. Discuss the idea of *mutual submission*. How is this godly principle applicable in marriage relationships?
4. Discuss the importance of *AGAPE* as applied to marriage relationships.
5. Describe day to day applicable ways a husband is called to: LOVE SPIRITUALLY; LOVE UNCONDITIONALLY; LOVE PRIMARILY.