

The Sustained Marriage: A Sacrificial Leader

11:39



ANNOUNCE

Nolan and Marie Shockey from Juarez, Mexico are here. Will be sharing in between services.

VBS - 5:30 dinner.

wife wrangling

lassoing your lover

QUOTE

“ Every marriage needs... A Sacrificial Leader.

Men, how would you feel if Jesus loved you the way you love your wife?

INTRODUCTION

Since 1992, Finland has held an annual event that has gone worldwide. **It's called the "wife-carrying" competition.** In it, a husband-and-wife team competes through a grueling obstacle course in which the husband carries his wife on his back and in various positions throughout the entire course. I tried to find the husband-carrying competition, but it doesn't seem like anyone has adopted it yet... perhaps because most people understand the logic. Husbands are created differently; they are created with the strength to carry, endure, lead, and protect.

- Our culture is desperately trying to erase gender boundaries, suggesting that true equity and equality require us to erase our differences. But in erasing our differences, we are setting our entire society up for failure. We are creating men who don't know how to work, don't know how to lead, and avoid carrying any heavy load to provide and protect those under their care. ***Instead, our men are becoming narcissistic, self-serving, abusive, and manipulative.***
 - **One recent study published by the Journal of Marriage and Family shows that in the past 20 years, the amount of men who do not want to become fathers has doubled in our nation.**
- This also affects women's culture. We are raising women who think that the only way they can be strong, confident, and successful is to shake themselves free from the oppression of men and become independent from men. **It used to be said that men were at least still required in order to propagate the human race, but now science is telling us that they can genetically engineer sperm without men!**
 - **It's called IVG - in-vitro gameto-genesis**
 - **One Doctor, Paul Amato, suggests, "In theory, you could reproduce with yourself. And the resulting child would be 100 percent related to you..." -- Talk about being full of yourself!**

But when we get back to God's design and His intention for the sexes, the family, and the marriage, we find all the answers we need for men and women to be secure in their God-given roles.

As we examine the husband's role today, we will find that we are called to carry our wives. We are to lift them above the obstacles of this world, support them through the storms of life, and sacrifice our own comfort to lead our wives to victory.

I want to read three specific passages before we dive in:

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Col 3:19 NKJV] 19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.

[1Pe 3:7 NKJV] 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.

[Eph 5:25-33 NKJV] 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 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. 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. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

APPLICATION

We could speak so much, but as time allows I want to go over the four S's of a husband's love for his wife.

- Every husband needs a love that Sacrifices, a love that Sanctifies, a love that Sees, and a love that serves.

1 A Love that Sacrifices

APPLICATION

Ephesians teaches us that husbands are not only called to LOVE their wives, but that their love mimics a higher love.

- Who knows what someone means when they mention the word LOVE these days?

I read a short article on psychology today where one Ph.D decided to tackle the question, "What is love." After reading the very first line, I knew we were in trouble. It read,

"Love is a force of nature."

Oh no... She continues to define love according to what were clearly cultural standards and convictions. No authoritative standard for love, just a bunch of natural forces we can't control. She writes, "you cannot dictate how, when, and where love expresses itself... Love does not come with conditions, stipulations, addenda, or codes..."

This all nice and fluffy, very poetic, and a good attempt for someone who doesn't know God, but unfortunately it just falls tremendously short of the kind of love required to sustain a marriage.

One Psychology 101 textbook defines love as, "an agitated state of psychological arousal." Boy, doesn't that just warm the heart.

APPLICATION

Paul qualifies the husband's love and defines it: **"...as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her."**

There's no question: Jesus is the head of the church. He is the head in the sense that he supplies, and he is the head in that he leads and directs.

- Likewise, men are to be the heads of their wives and families. Most men fail to grasp the delicate biblical concept of headship. ***As head of the church, Jesus is the savior of the body. Thus, headship is not only a position of authority, but of great and grave responsibility. Jesus took our sins on his shoulders. He died in our place. In essence, he took responsibility for what was not his fault. And that's biblical***

headship in a nutshell. It's the willingness to take responsibility for what's not my fault. This is the responsibility that a man accepts when he becomes a husband.

- We will discuss that more in our next message, but the Bible is clear, **when men refuse to lead, everyone around them suffers.**
- But how they lead matters. Male leadership, like any other good thing God created, has the potential of being abused and creating toxic environments for wives and children. This is not the love of Jesus. Jesus didn't come manipulate us into controlling us. He doesn't manage us by creating an environment of fear.
- When I talk about male leadership, I'm not giving ANY excuse for the kind of male leadership that abuses, uses, and chokes out trust, love, and intimacy.
- But godly, servant-hearted, sacrificial leadership is a blessing and protection to those under its umbrella.

In a letter to his son, author Charlie Shedd gives this advice to husbands.

"Take charge, but not as a mighty potentate sitting on his throne, ruling his cowering subjects with an iron hand. No, take charge more like a conductor standing on his box, directing a symphony, delicate but definite, subdued yet powerful."

Sadly, many husbands are acting more like the rear end than the head (forgive me if that's a little crass, but it's true!). Instead of taking charge in a sacrificial way, they complain about how they get no respect and are shown no honor while never putting in the sacrificial effort of building confidence in those they are leading through consistency and selflessness in their leadership.

Christ loved his bride by descending and humbling himself to the place of sacrifice in order to elevate his bride's position, glorify his bride, and beautify his bride by clothing her in white.

[Phi 2:5-8 NKJV] [5] Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, [6] who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, [7] but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. [8] And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church.

APPLICATION

On the other end, some men may not take carnal control, but rather they pass the buck and take no ownership at all.

You've heard the phrase, "Happy wife, happy life," or, "Two words every husband needs to learn: "Yes, dear." Both of those are sad! Men, you don't serve your wife because she is your slave master; you serve her because you are her leader. A man who simply bows and complies to every whim or want of his wife is not leading; he's capitulating. A husband is not called to passively give everything his wife wants; he is called to look above and see what his wife needs and give his life to ensure that she has it. He does this by counting his own desires and pleasures as nothing in order to carry his bride to a place of holiness and health.

APPLICATION

A husbands sacrificially loves his wife in four ways:

1. Valuing his wife above His own life - [Eph 5:25-33 NKJV] 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

1. It's been said that every Jewish man would pray three things in the morning, "Lord, thank you that I wasn't born a gentile, a slave, or a woman. Many people don't recognize how revolutionary Paul's Words were. In both Jewish and Roman culture at the time, the patriarchal view was that women were expected to be subservient to their husbands, but that's where it ended. The husband owed nothing else to the wife. When Paul not only makes it mutual but places the greater responsibility on the man to love his wife, he does something to elevate women that has changed their position in the world from that point forward.
2. **Husbands, does your wife feel safe under your leadership, or does she feel as though you're always going to look out for numero uno (that is yourself), even if that means leaving her vulnerable and hung out to dry?**
3. **EXAMPLE:** At a wedding, I use the funeral example to launch the new couple into their marriage. In marriage, husbands have the greatest opportunity to be shaped into the image of Christ by dying daily to themselves.
4. Gave Himself - it was a willing sacrifice, not a forced sacrifice. Yes, it was hard. Yes, it was surrendered, but no one took Jesus' life. He laid it down of his own

accord.

1. Also, it was HIMSELF - and guys, that's what your wife wants most... YOU. More than what you can give her, she wants to see your attention, affection, praise, and love. the greatest gift you can give your wife is the gift of yourself.
2. Ladies, you also need to remember that you didn't marry your girlfriend. Most men are not known by how they display their emotions through romantic speech. Unlike chick-flicks, no one writes a script for us to have the perfect responses and words to say to express how we feel. Most of our love and sacrifice is displayed through actions. When we discover something important to our wife, we tend to find a way to make it happen for her, even when we don't want to. Yes, we should always be willing to grow in our weaknesses, but ladies, also try to see your husband's love in the small things he does to see you happy.

2. Valuing his wife as an extension of himself - 28 So husbands ought to love their own 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 the Lord does the church.

1. Initially, we guys might think, "Oh, I don't care about myself that much. I don't spend time pampering my body and hair and fashion..." Well, how's your car? How are your gold clubs and your swing? How are your tools? How's your hobbies? How's your career? Trust me, you love yourself... and if your wife doesn't feel more valuable than those things in your life, then chances are you are viewing her not as part of yourself but another item of your shelf.
2. Adam saw "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." When Jesus looks at the church, he sees us a part of himself. We are the "Body of Christ." We are literally connected to Christ as he is our head. He treats us as his own. We aren't simply some separate entity for him to take care of, we are part of him.
3. Men, your wife is part of you. What you do to her, you are doing to you.

3. Valuing his wife as a daughter of God - 1 Peter 3:7 (wives) as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

1. **It's important to realize that headship and authority don't imply a greater value or a more important role. The Bible says that wives and husbands are "co-heirs" in Christ. We are equals at the foot of the cross but are called to operate in different roles within the oneness of marriage. I love how one pastor put it:**

".. if being the head goes to the husband's head, and he gets the big head, if his attitude just gets twisted just a little bit, rather than a head heir, he can just as easily be an heir head."

4. Valuing His wife's differences - **giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel**

1. In this sense, the thought of your wife being a weaker vessel does not mean "less than"; it means "different than." We are to walk in an understanding way that God created us with a different level of strength to carry the heavy weight of leadership.
2. Men are like a **steel mug**, and women are like **fine china**. You don't get your grandma's fine china out when you're having an outdoor BBQ with all the guys. You treat it differently, and you handle it with care.

2 A Love that Sancitifies

BIBLE PASSAGE

Ephesians 5:26-27 (NKJV - New King James Version)

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

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.

INTRO

Can I get a raise of hands for how many of you are a work in progress?

- When we think of sanctification, we think of Jesus patiently working with us and on us to make us holy and set apart. I thank God that he doesn't expect me to wake up

perfect, under the threat of rejecting me for my insufficiencies.

Men, as the savior of the body, also need to recognize that just as you are in progress, so is your wife. She isn't perfect yet. She has past pains, hurts, and traumas that affect her view of herself. If she feels safe and vulnerable with you, she will probably let some of her more imperfect parts show. that is where your sanctifying love comes in.

APPLICATION

Jesus sanctifies us by speaking his truth over our lives so that we can become less stained by the world and more washed by the word.

- Many people misunderstand this verse as saying, "Husbands, read your Bible with your wife." While it certainly can include that, it's more than that. It's the power of the identity you speak over your wife.
- Jesus looks at us and speaks forgiveness, wholeness, beauty, and sometimes hard truth in order to give us a picture of ourselves that is contrary to the lies of the enemy.
- Husbands are to speak life into their wives' life, beauty, hope, encouragement, seeing and advocating for God's giftings and callings in their life. Why, so that she might be set apart for the purposes and work of Christ.

Sadly, in my life, many times, this has looked more like a bossy older brother than a loving, intimate husband. Having a sanctifying love can't be a self-righteous love, it can't be a bullying love or a pushy love. It's a love that wants the highest and best for the woman God has entrusted to my care, and comes against her insecurities, weaknesses, failures and flaws with grace, truth, compassion and empathy,

QUOTE

“ How you speak God's Word over your wife has the power to form her into the woman God wants her to be.

BIBLE PASSAGE**Colossians 3:19 (NIV - New International Version)**

¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

HARSH

To be bitter, exasperated, or irritated. To visit with bitterness.

We are called to pursue and display the fruit of the spirit in the face of the weaknesses and frailties of our wives.

Galatians 5:22-23 (NKJV) 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

3 A Love that Sees

BIBLE PASSAGE**1 Peter 3:7 (ESV - English Standard Version)**

⁷ Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

ILLUSTRATION

Here's a story published in the Focus on the Family magazine. "At 1:00 AM I heard a cough and bolted from bed. I made it to the bathroom to find my 6 year-old daughter sitting on the edge of the tub. The stuff from her tummy was all over the floor, the lid of the toilet, and herself. I cleaned up the mess - then placed Sarah in the tub... As I turned on the shower, Sarah hesitantly said, "Mom, I threw up on Collett." Collett is Sarah's 9 year-old sister. They share a bed. I met Collett in the hallway. When I turned on the light in the bedroom, I saw the dreaded sight of Sarah's dinner on five blankets, two pillows, two sheets, a baby blanket, and Collett's pajamas. I bundled it all up – then replaced it with fresh bedding. After I got the girls back to sleep, I crawled into bed... At which time, my half-asleep husband inquired, "What's wrong?"

Sad to say, but every husband in this room has probably slept through a midnight tummy-ache. Yet there's no excuse for a husband to sleep through years of a wife's pain and suffering. We need to be tender toward our wives.

APPLICATION

Hey, if a hammer hits my thumb or I get hungry, those are needs that don't get overlooked. When my body is suffering, I do all that I can to make it well again.

- Guys, we need to be as sensitive to our wives' needs as we are to our own. She might have a need that I can't fill, but she shouldn't have a need that I'm not aware of.
 - ***This comes down to one word – Attentiveness. Be attentive to what your wife needs and where she is.***
- Shame on us. We let weeks, months, and years go by while ignoring our wife's pain or her needs.
- If it is a need that we can't fill, at least we know how to pray and direct our wife to the Lord to get that need met. Turning a blind eye is not the answer and it does not reflect the love of Jesus.
- **But notice that Jesus is sensitive to all our needs, not always all our wants.** Wives, this is the kind of discernment the Lord gives to your husband. You need to trust that.
- A husband is not called to give his wife everything she wants, just as God does not give us everything we want. But the husband should always consider what is in his

wife's best interest before he considers what is in his own best interest.

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Luk 13:11-12 NKJV] [11] And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. [12] But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity."

Woman caught in adultery - **[Jhn 8:10 NKJV] [10] When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"**

Hagar and Ismael - God saw her and how she was treated by Abraham and Sarah - **Genesis 16:13 (NKJV) Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me?"**

QUOTE

“ In order to see one must have eyes that are looking.

4 A Love that Serves

APPLICATION

When I think of the image of Jesus, bent down on His knees, draped in a slave's towel instead of a king's robe, with a basin of water and a towel, washing dirty feet, I see the heart of Jesus for His bride. Jesus did not see his bride as a tool for self-fulfillment or a slave who

exists only to serve His needs. Jesus saw a bride worth serving: the King of all Kings, creator of all things, and the one who possesses all authority, wilfully taking on the position of a lowly servant.

- That picture would be even further illustrated in the cross where the king chose a crown of thorns rather than a crown of God, a wooden cross rather than a golden throne, and mocking instead of praise to give himself for His bride; absorbing what He did not deserve for another, taking responsibility for things that weren't his fault, considering his own life and divine rights as not dear to himself.

APPLICATION

Many people think of servanthood as something that brings misery, but Jesus showed us it's something that brings joy and greatness.

APPLICATION

Husbands, let's humble ourselves today to confess the ways we haven't modeled the love of Christ... a love that sacrifices, sanctifies, sees, and serves, and ask for a fresh empowering of the Holy Spirit!