

Probably one of the most misused words today is love. It is used in a variety of ways and often distorts the true meaning of love. Books about love and romance are written and people buy and read them. Movies are made about love and people buy and watch them. And of course we have Valentine's Day, which says if you truly love me you will get me chocolate, flowers, a nice card, you'll take me somewhere nice to eat and if you do all this I will feel loved. Sometimes people see others and want to be like them. I feel sorry for someone who has a spouse like this. Everything is superficial and for outward show. This can drive a wedge between two people.

I heard of a man and a wife who both retired at the same time. He was a business man who travelled a lot and she was a flight stewardess who traveled a lot. They retired in this nice retirement community. She got off the phone and burst into tears, her husband asked her what was wrong. She said that her friend down the street was sitting down with her husband drinking hot tea and having pleasant conversations. So the husband told her to make some hot tea. She made the hot tea and excitedly brought it in the den and they both sat down drinking the hot tea, after about 5 minutes the husband told his wife to call up her friend and find out what they were talking about.

Love is not a feeling; it is a choice you make. True Biblical love does not fade or fail. When you get old it is still true. When the husband and wife are both Spirit filled Christians their view of love is radically transformed to a Biblical view.

Verse 25- Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Jesus is our example; He is the Standard. It is obvious we need His help. Again, back up to verse 18. If we are not Spirit filled we cannot love our wives as Christ loved the church.

Love- agapao- To love, to regard with strong affection.

Willing to give up all for the one loved. Remember our example is Christ and His love for His bride, the church.

This is different from phileo love which is to love, indicating feelings, warm affection, and the kind of love expressed by a kiss.

Colossians 3:19 Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

bitter- to embitter; to make bitter.

Bitter- Sharp; cruel; severe; as bitter enmity. Sharp, as words; reproachful; sarcastic. Sharp to the feeling; piercing; painful to the mind.

Be not bitter means to stop being bitter toward your wives and start loving your wives as Christ loved the church.

Don't treat your wife as if she is inferior. Don't treat your wife as a door mat or as simply a baby maker. She is God's gift to you. Some of you may say the devil gave you your wife; these are some of the words that you need to change. She may be the devil in disguise, but you are to love her as Christ loved the church.

Proverbs 5:18, 19 Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.

Proverbs 18:22 Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it.

How did Christ love the church? Unconditionally. Romans 8:35-39.

Nothing and no one can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Christ's love is not and will not ever be toward another bride. His strong affection will not be stolen away by some harlot or by some hobby or by His work or His ministry. He lives to make intercession for His bride. His ministry starts with His bride.

Christ's love for His bride is unchanging.

John 13:1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

He loves His church to the uttermost, or forever more. His love is unchanging and unending toward His bride.

We will grow old with Christ. We will go through good times and bad times with Christ. In sickness and in health Christ will never leave us nor forsake us. When our hair turns colors or turns loose Christ's love will be the same as it was from the beginning. His love for His bride doesn't fade or falter. He is longsuffering with His bride for she is the weaker vessel.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

And gave Himself for it.

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Galatians 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

In being obedient to the Father and because of this strong love Christ has for His church He willingly gave Himself for His bride.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Why did Christ give Himself for His bride? Let's look at verses 26 and 27.

Ephesians 5:26, 27 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

might sanctify- to make clean, render pure.

Sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit on the heart.

cleanse- purge; to cleanse free from filth.

washing- the act of bathing, washing, ablution. Spoken of the washing of the Word of God as the cleansing instrument.

Christ gave Himself that He might sanctify and cleanse His bride. This is beneficial for His bride. His Word is the cleansing instrument.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

It is our responsibility to give the Word of God to our families, and especially our wives. It is the cleansing instrument. How sad it is to see families drop out of church and not stay in the Word, over time there is no cleansing, and the result is a miserable family and one usually leaves the other. You end up with a family ripped apart: and much regret.

Psalms 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.

Psalms 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

The Word of God is the cleansing instrument, not you and I. We are to be faithful to give the Word and live what we give. We are to be lights, not baseball bats. We are to give the Word of God, and we are to know the Word of God.

I Corinthians 14:34, 35 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

Verse 35- will learn- understand

verse 35- any thing.

verse 35- ask- inquire, seek: - ask (after, questions), demand, desire, question. To ask; inquire of, beg of.

verse 35- their husbands.

verse 35- at home.

This puts a tremendous responsibility on the husband. We are held accountable to God for what we say. The answer we give to our wives will be the answer she will give to our kids. It would be better for you to have a millstone hung about your neck and to be cast into the water than to offend one of these little ones.

The pastor is not the spiritual leader of your home. That's not his place. The Sunday school teacher is not the spiritual leader of your children. Husbands, we are the spiritual leaders of our homes. This means we must be verse 18, and that we must constantly give ourselves over to the Word of God. We must labour in the Word and make time for the Word.

II Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

This means we must take inventory of our lives: what are those things that is keeping us from loving our wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it?

This could be a number of things.

The example Christ gave us is He always sought the Father's will, this means we are to put God first in our lives; the next example Christ gave us is giving Himself for His bride, this means our wife comes after God.

How many wives are longing for their husbands to love them? Some men love and give themselves to their work, their hobbies, their friends, their ministry, etc... and the wife is left home alone, and feeling used at night. The result is a wife who is miserable, and a marriage that is on the edge of destruction.

We are to give our wives the Word, this purifies her, and she grows in knowledge. She becomes more like Christ, this is beneficial for you.

Being a husband is not a part-time job, it's a full time job. We must do this in-spite of the sin nature in the midst of evil influences and even if our wives don't want us to. Again, we must be lights, not baseball bats. We must encourage the reading of God's Word and welcome questions from our wives and our children. This also helps us grow.

Verses 28-33-

nourisheth- to support; to maintain by feeding. To cherish, to comfort. To educate; to instruct; to promote growth attainments.

cherisheth- to treat with tenderness and affection; to give warmth, ease or comfort.

In verses 29 and 31 the words one flesh is speaking of the union of husband and wife as one flesh.

Mark 10:1-8.

Verse 33- love and respect.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

We are to love and to lead, as Christ loves and leads us by His Word.

When we love we will support, encourage, and treat with tenderness our wives and our children. We will also instruct and educate them in the Word of God so that they will be grounded and won't be carried away with strange doctrines.

We can look at ourselves and say we can't do this. Of our own power you are right, we can't. Let's close by going back to verse 18.

We are thankful to be caught by His grace. To God be the glory.