

# Two For One Part 3

## Ephesians 5:28-33

**Main focus of this series:** This series is a formulation of key teachings and understandings from the book of Ephesians. It is the textbook for Christian living, affective church growth and unity. It is also a manual for harmony in the home and an affective lifestyle in our work place in the world. Ephesians draws many lines, it is clear and very defined. Why many Christians fail to live fully in the shadow of the cross is because they have never ventured into the truths documented in Paul's writings to the Ephesians. In an effort to decipher each statement of Paul in Ephesians we believe we will learn how to successfully operate in the three positions of the believer: to sit (Ephesians 1-3), to walk (Ephesians 4-6:9) and to stand (Ephesians 6:10-24) . The first half of Ephesians (chapters 1-3) tells us what a Christian is and the last three chapters define how to live that out in harmony with other believer's and separately from non-believer's.

**The importance of this message today:** Last week I dealt with some challenging issues of marriage, primarily, "Husbands love your wives." I encouraged everyone to **Stop Waiting, Take Action when it comes to their marriage**

- "Every successful man I have heard of has done the best he could with conditions as he found them..." ~ Edgar Watson Howe

I find it interesting that Paul would write:

*"But if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this."*

I Corinthians 6:28

### THE THREE KEY LOVE FACTORS:

- I. KEY LOVE FACTOR #1- Love Your Wife Like Christ Loved The Church
- II. KEY LOVE FACTOR #2- Love Your Wife Like You Love Your Own Body
- III. KEY LOVE FACTOR #3- Loving Your Wife Is Leaving And Cleaving

### Why Couple's Divorce

"As a couples therapist for more than 20 years, these findings are consistent with my own clinical experiences," said **Dr. Mark Goulston**, an **Assistant Clinical Professor** at **UCLA's** Neuropsychiatric Institute. He continued in his article:

**"Marriages end not because couples stop loving each other but because they can't stop hating each other. When couples find a way to excavate and work through the misunderstandings, hurt and disappointment that hardened into anger, they often discover that they still have a strong bond underneath..."**

The prophet Malachi declares,

*"The LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage"*

**covenant. . . 'I hate divorce,' says the LORD God of Israel"**  
**Malachi 2:14,16**

It is amazing that before marriage Satan will try everything he can to get you to get together in every wrong way and after marriage he does all he can to separate you from it.

### **Last Week We Discussed the Two Great Realities:**

- 1. A lack of commitment to your spouse is a lack of commitment to your marriage.**
- 2. A lack of commitment to your marriage is a lack of commitment to God**
  - We learned how wives respond to their husbands is the example to the world how the church is. The greatest example of the church on the earth is the wife.
  - We also how husbands respond to their wives is the example to the world how Jesus is. The greatest example of Jesus on the earth is the husband.
  - When the church does not function properly either the wives examples are being ignored or the wives examples are being expressed.
  - When the example of Christ is not being exemplified properly, either the husbands are being ignored or the husbands examples are being expressed.

The Bible's high expectations of men and calls on them to be leaders in their home. Without a doubt, some men have taken advantage of the privilege of being created as an example of Christ on this earth. A man can be ridiculous and make unreasonable demands by claiming the biblical authority delegated to them but for their own selfish pleasure and control.

But what does it mean to be "THE MAN?" I believe it is to have a MANLY LOVE and I believe that a MANLY LOVE is best displayed in obedience to the Biblical definition of how that is defined. What we learned last week is that true "manhood" is marked by the first Key Love Factor:

### **THE THREE KEY LOVE FACTORS:**

#### **I. KEY LOVE FACTOR #1- Love Your Wife Like Christ Loved The Church**

**"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."**

**Ephesians 5:25-27**

#### **What Women Are Taught To Hear**

It is possible when a woman hears Ephesians 5:22-23,

**"Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.**

**Ephesians 5:22-23**

All she hears is, submit, submit, submit!!! Be under, stay down, be less, be a door mat.

#### **What Men Hear**

Love your wife. Love, Love, LOVE her. Romance her, buy her things, take her out, be with her all the time, work hard for her, date her, be with her, talk to her, keep eye contact with her, hold her, surprise her, call her, write her notes, be better, be astounding, be a movie star, be infatuated with her, love her, love her love her!

Christ became the head of the church, not because of his authoritative position but because he loved the church. How did Christ love the church? He laid down his life for it. Our greatest impact on our marriage, our family and our community is to look like Jesus by laying down our life for our wives. **Some men are good at asking their families to make sacrifices, but not so good at making sacrifices which would provide for their needs, protect their safety and promote their well-being.** These are the men who make demands, but who do not listen to their wives or children.

An article in a Christian magazine tells the story of Dr. Robertson McQuilkin. The author says, "Recently I read a book called A Promise Kept. It turned out to be one of the best books I've ever read. . . . The author of the book is Dr. Robertson McQuilkin, who was the president of Columbia University in South Carolina for 22 years. In 1990, he decided to step down from his prestigious post in order to take care of his wife Julie. Julie had Alzheimer's disease and required constant care 24 hours a day. Although he didn't think much about his decision, the impact of his decision was tremendous around many parts of the world. Some people lauded his "love with no regrets" for his wife, while others felt his decision was a great loss for the academic world. Dr. McQuilkin and his wife Julie were full-time missionaries in Japan for 12 years. Julie also worked in the academic field, public broadcasting and student counseling for many years. When Dr. McQuilkin walked away from his position as the University president, he was at the peak of his career. Nevertheless, he chose to give up his fame, accomplishments, job and wealth solely to take care of his wife 24 hours a day. Some people suggested that he should get a caretaker to do the job. Or consider placing her in a nursing home to free him up. But he refused to do either. It is simply because he made a promise before God at his wedding many years ago. That 'For richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, and for better or for worse, he will love her, take care and protect her, for as long as they both shall live.' 'My wife needs me to accompany her and walk by her side to complete the final stage of her life,' he added.

**According to research, when a wife is struck with a terminal disease, 90% of the husbands in that situation will choose to leave.** So what power helped Dr. McQuilkin to win the battles against the tragedies in his life? In a short span of time, the life of his eldest son was lost in an accident, then his wife developed Alzheimer's disease. That led him to walk away from a glorious career with unlimited potential. He could choose to grumble and regret, but instead he chose to continue loving his wife and keep his vow before God." That is sacrificial, loving leadership.

**True Manly Love is modeling the life of Jesus.** He said,

***"The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."***

**Matthew 20:28**

Today I would like to continue the last two key love factors and will be reading from

Ephesians 5:28-33. These teachings are helpful whether you are single, married or divorced.

### THE THREE KEY LOVE FACTORS:

- I. **KEY LOVE FACTOR #1- Love Your Wife Like Christ Loved The Church**
- II. **KEY LOVE FACTOR #2- Love Your Wife Like You Love Your Own Body**

*"In this same way, husbands ought to **love their wives** as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body."*

Ephesians 5:28-30

#### 1. Loving Her Is Like Loving Yourself

Learning to be a lover of your wife will:

- a) Bring stability and vitality to your marriage
- b) Provide a sense of stability for the children in your home.
- **So/In this same way** (3779) (*houto*) means in this manner, on this wise, thus, so. It refers to what precedes.
  - We ought to love their own wives as our own bodies - The meaning of this statement is made clear in Ephesians 5:31 (note) where Paul quotes from Genesis 2:24 which shows that a husband and wife become "one flesh". It follows that a husband's love for his wife is his love for his own body.
- **Ought** (3784) (*opheilo* from *ophelos* = profit) conveys the basic meaning of owing a debt or having a strong obligation - he is bound by moral obligation and personal duty. The present tense indicates this is the husband's continual duty.
- **Love** (25) (*agapao* related to noun *agape*) describes the love God gives freely, sacrificially and unconditionally regardless of response -- love that goes out not only to the lovable but to one's enemies or those that don't "deserve" it. *Agapao* speaks especially of love as based on evaluation and choice, a matter of will and action.

Agape love is commanded of believers, empowered by His Spirit, activated by personal choice of one's will, not based on **one's feelings toward the object of one's love and manifested by specific actions**. In this case the compelling desire a man has toward his wife is that his actions in life will compel her to grow into the full maturity of what Christ has called and gifted her to be. In this action, the man actually takes on the attitude of God and Christ:

*"The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness. ."*

Jeremiah 31:3

In Romans Paul explains that even while we were helpless and ungodly, Christ died for the ungodly adding...

**"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."**

**Romans 5:8**

I'm reminded of the man who buys a cell phone for everyone and says, "It's because you're #1!" But the last scene is him leaving the house and referring to himself, saying, "Because you're #1!" The man loves himself. Truly we want our way. Everyone is selfish, but our love of ourself is overwhelmingly controlling and demanding in our thoughts and actions. This self love will manipulate any situation and relationship to gratify the simplest of wishes.

## **2. No One Hates His Own Body**

**"In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, *no one ever hated his own body*, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body."**

**Ephesians 5:28-30**

- **No one** (3762) (*oudeis* from *ou* = absolute negation + *de* = marker of an additive relation + *heis* = one) means that absolutely no one hated his own body (flesh). This pronoun emphasizes not even one person ever!
- **Hated** (3404) (*miseo*) means detested, rejected or abhorred. *Miseo* means to have a strong aversion to something.
- **Flesh** (4561) (*sarx*) can be used in many ways in the NT, in the present context, Paul is referring to the physical body as functioning entity.

**Paul was saying that you cannot hate yourself, "his own body," women do, but men don't mind it. They may not *like* it, but they don't *hate* it. In a recent article about men's health it stated, "Men...manage to remain blissfully unaware of how their bodies work and how to recognize the signs when things are going wrong with it." We just think it will always work.**

**The Battle For Women: In general, women seem more dissatisfied with their appearance than men.** According to Dr. James Rosen, body image researcher and psychology professor at the University of Vermont in Burlington, women who develop eating disorders tend to hate their bodies. In fact, the best predictor of who will develop an eating disorder relates to who struggles most with body image. Weight issues are often self-esteem issues. Concern about what you look like is really a mask for how you feel about yourself, your self-esteem. Given about twenty-five percent of self-esteem is tied-up in how you look, you can't feel good about yourself unless you like your body and feel confident with your appearance.

Perhaps it was:

- a parent who way-back-when lovingly remarked, "You look good, honey, but if only you'd lose a few pounds, you might get a better job..."
- the siblings who teased you about your "thunder thighs", or
- the relative who molested you. (Sexual abuse is a common cause of body-hate).

**The Battle For Men: Bigorexia- Reverse Anorexia: Men are being preoccupied**

with muscle development may involve a disturbance in body image similar to anorexia. Bigorexia (muscular dysmorphia) is now affecting hundreds of thousands of men. For some men muscle development is such a complete preoccupation that they will miss important events, continue training through pain or broken bones, even lose their job rather than interrupt their physical development schedule. Curiously, these same men are not in love with their bodies. Despite a well developed physique they are unlikely to show it off and will shy away from situations that expose their bodies.

### **Muscle Dysmorphia**

The term 'muscle dysmorphia' was coined in 1997 to describe this new form of disorder. Other people refer to the condition as 'reverse anorexia', and now more commonly 'bigorexia'. Compared to normal weightlifters who report spending up to 40 minutes a day thinking about body development, men with bigorexia report being preoccupied 5 or more hours a day thinking their bodies are under-developed.

**The picture here is to be reminded that the husband and the wife are one and to “hate” ones spouse is an impossibility for the man...because he doesn't hate his own body. But he responds to it, actually to the point of over care. Here are two ways he does it:**

**“...but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body.”  
Ephesians 5:29-30a**

#### **A) He Feeds Her**

##### **A Real Man Nourishes His Wife**

- **Feeds/Nourishes** (1625) (*ektrepho* from *ek* = out or intensifying meaning + *trepho* = nourish, rear, feed) means **to nourish up to maturity**, to nourish in general, to nurture, **to bring up from childhood, to raise a child to maturity** by providing **not just for physical and but also for emotional, soul needs** (see note Ephesians 6:4). *Ektrepho* means to provide food for with the implication of a considerable period of time and the food being adequate nourishment. **This word could mean that the man is to be the "breadwinner" or provider.**

I am amazed at those who will not provide for their family's needs. I'm not talking about someone who finds it difficult to get a killer job. I am talking about those who refuse to provide for their family. I recall one man in the church that I had pioneered that he refused to work and would not do it nor would he ever do it. His wife was a corporate secretary in Dallas who made an incredible salary. But she was struggling to keep the pace of getting up early every morning and driving into Dallas and working late making sure her kids were feed and taken care of. She had talked to him about quitting and he went through the roof. He couldn't understand her

jeopardizing the family like this. He was very quick to say that she was selfish and controlling and he wouldn't put up with it. This had gone on for years and it was affecting her health. One day she came home for good. She quit. She couldn't do it any more. The last conversation I had with him was that he needed to go and get a job. The last conversation I had with her she told me through tears that they were living on food stamps and was more than likely going to lose their home. This had gone on for more than ten years.

This is not the love of Christ. This does not represent his image. The Bible says,

***“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.”***  
**1 Timothy 5:8**

Real Manly Love means taking responsibility for those under your care. The real man is the one who lives up to his responsibilities and meets the needs of his family. This may not mean that he provides the latest in designer clothes or living in the newest neighborhood, it means that more than anything, your family, and especially your wife is your love and your life. It is amazing to know the men I have got to know here at Cornerstone Church, I know first hand examples of what I am talking about today. I know many men here who step up to the plate and do whatever is necessary to make their family life good. They work, they help, they encourage, they are a Real Man.

The story is told of a young woman who brought home her fiancé to meet her parents. After dinner, her father wanted to find out more about the young man and invited him into another room, where he asked: “So what are your plans?” “I am a Bible scholar,” he replied. “A Bible scholar. Hmm,” the father says. “Admirable, but what will you do to provide a nice house for my daughter to live in as she’s accustomed to?” “I will study,” the young man replied, “and God will provide for us.” “And how will you buy her a beautiful engagement ring such as she deserves?” asked the father. “I will concentrate on my studies,” the young man said, “and God will provide for us.” “And children?” asked the father. “How will you support children?” “Don’t worry, sir, God will provide,” replied the fiancé. As the conversation continued, each time the father questioned him, the young idealist insisted that God would provide. Later the mother asked, “How did it go, honey?” The father said, “He has no job and no plans, but the good news is he thinks I’m God.”

**A Real Man Nourishes His Wife. He doesn't leave it to the government. He doesn't leave it to the distant relatives or the church. He knows it is his responsibility and his example to this world.**

***“...but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body.”***

## Ephesians 5:29-30a

### B) He Cares For Her

#### A Real Man Cherishes His Wife

- **Care/Cherishes** (2282) (*thalpo*) originally meant **to warm**, to brood, or to keep warm (as with with body heat), to soften by heat. The idea is to cherish with a tender love and care. *Thalpo* is used in the Septuagint (LXX) to describe a bird sitting on her nest.

Webster says that cherish (Old French *chier* = dear) means to hold dear, to feel or show affection for, protect and care for lovingly, to keep or cultivate with care and affection.

**Husbands are to provide a secure, warm place for their wives.** The Septuagint (LXX) usages of *thalpo* suggest that men are **to provide their wives with a nest, which pictures a place of a security, a place of warmth, and a place of nourishment.**

**“Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.”**

**Colossians 3:19**

#### (1) Just Like Christ Does The Church

**“...but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body.”**

**Ephesians 5:29-30a**

Now we have a more accurate view of Christ love for the church. Jesus clearly nurtures and cherishes every need of His body the Church and husbands likewise are to do the same for their wives. The provision of the husband are based upon the need of his body, not the demanding wants. Husbands are not to provide for her every want but her every need. However even in this situation the husband is to help her discern the difference between wants and needs, but to do it with gentleness and kindness. The husband is the provider, the protector and the preserver. Husbands are missing the mark when they view their wives as objects - cooks, baby sitter, house cleaner, sex partner, etc. She is God's gift and is be continually cherished and nourished.

- **Just as** (2531) (*kathos*) means that the manner and the extent of the care of the husband for his wife is to be in a measure identical to that of Christ for His Bride, the Church.
- **Christ** (5547) (*Christos* from *chrío* = to anoint, rub with oil, consecrate to an office) is the Anointed One, the Messiah, *Christos* being the Greek equivalent of the transliterated Hebrew word Messiah.

### 3. We Are Members Of His Body

How a man treats his body is compared to how Christ treats the church; he “nourishes and cherishes” the church.

- **Members** (3196) (*melos*) is literally a limb or member of the body. Here *melos* is used metaphorically of “members” (“limbs”) of the Church of which Christ is the Head.

***“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”***

**John 15:5**

We are nothing apart from Christ and marriage is a God idea, for it to be successful you need many tools, for it to be Godly you need to do it His way. We must be connected to the place where our nourishment and encouragement comes from, from the head...our Lord.

### **THE THREE KEY LOVE FACTORS:**

- I. KEY LOVE FACTOR #1- Love Your Wife Like Christ Loved The Church**
- II. KEY LOVE FACTOR #2- Love Your Wife Like You Love Your Own Body**
- III. KEY LOVE FACTOR #3- Loving Your Wife Is Leaving And Cleaving**

***“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”***

**Ephesians 5:31**

#### **1. Love Is Leaving And Cleaving**

It is important to notice that the man has the responsibility leave his father and mother and it is the man's responsibility for the unified pursuit of his wife, to be joined with her. Here, Paul is quoting Genesis....

***“For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”***

**Genesis 2:24**

In the Hebrew the word for “man” is “*ish*” and for “woman” it is “*isha*”. The word is almost the same—she was taken out of man. I believe that the bible is very clear that the relationship that existed in the Garden of Eden between Adam and Eve is a figure of the future union of Christ and the church as Bridegroom and bride.

**Leave** (2641) (*kataleipo* from *kata* = intensifies meaning + *leipo* = leave behind) means to leave behind and here speaks of the shift of the husband's loyalty and devotion from his parents to his spouse.

**United/Joined** (4347) (*proskollao* from *prós* = to, toward, in compounds *prós* implies motion, direction + *kollao* = to glue) **is used 5 times in the NT, three referring to the marriage bond.** The literal meaning is **to glue one thing to another so that it cleaves or adheres.** *Proskollao* was a medical term used **to describe the uniting of wounds.** Here this compound verb denotes the **most intimate union.** This verb emphasizes not only permanence but also unity

of the two who have been "glued" together.

Sandra Lundberg writes, **Are we to cut all ties from our families?** (Excerpted from Focus on the Family's *Complete Guide to the First Five Years of Marriage*, © 2006, Focus on the Family. Published by Tyndale) **If your family is reasonably, biblically healthy, a relationship with our parents should be beneficial. But here are some tale, tale signs of unhealthy ties:**

- When one spouse relies too heavily on the parents to help in decision-making, leading the other spouse to feel insignificant.
- When one spouse looks to the parent, not the partner, to get his or her emotional needs met, leading the partner to feel ignored.
- When one spouse reveals details of marital conflict with his or her parents, leading the other spouse to feel betrayed.

Let's take a closer look at these and what you can do about them.

1. **Decision-making dysfunction.** Couples need the freedom and autonomy to make their own decisions. Some parents are better than others in this area; many wait for their adult children to ask for advice, but others try to inject unsolicited wisdom. The latter are often deeply caring people who want the best for their children, but their behavior communicates a lack of respect and trust in the judgment of their child and his or her spouse.

2. **Emotional apron strings.** If your spouse **gets his or her emotional needs met in his or her relationship with parents instead of with you**, there's a problem.

Sometimes this problem begins when a wife feels frustrated over her husband's seeming lack of interest in conversing about her day; she starts talking with her parents instead. Sometimes the husband is the frustrated one; it's common for mother and son to have long or frequent conversations that leave the wife feeling ignored. Neither scenario is appropriate.

3. **Betrayal.** It's a common story: After a fight with his or her mate, a spouse goes "home to mother" or calls the parents on the phone and spills the details. This is detrimental to a marriage. It communicates disrespect to your spouse and makes it hard for the parents to maintain a healthy relationship with him or her. Even if you and your spouse reconcile within hours or days after your argument, family members may not know that. They might carry that memory of the fight you had, have a hard time believing that everything is okay, and remain suspicious of your partner. Expecting parents to referee your conflicts isn't realistic or wise. It would be hard for them to be objective about your marriage. The best thing they can do when you come to them in the midst of an argument is to send you home to work it out.

If you have an "apron strings" problem in your marriage, keep the following tips in mind as you talk with your spouse about it.

1. **Pray** for wisdom and insight about what to say and how to say it.
2. **Tread lightly when it comes to criticizing your in-laws.** Your spouse knows more negative things about his or her parents than you do, whether or not they're expressed. Even repeating a complaint your spouse has made about his or her parents could be taken as an offense by your mate.
3. **Approach your spouse when you're both rested, fed, and healthy.** Right before falling asleep at night is not a good time to have this conversation.
4. **Remember that you're a team.** Because you're committed to each other, you can work through this even if you don't agree on the details — like your in-laws' intent, how to best meet your spouse's needs, or exact limits to place on parent-child conversations.
5. **If parents need to be confronted or informed, agree that their own child — not the son- or daughter-in-law — will do the talking.** Protecting your marriage is a priority; the newest addition to the family doesn't need another reason to be dissected by in-laws. Each spouse needs to know that he or she will be protected by the other, even if husband and wife disagree and the in-laws are meddlesome.

## 2. The Two Shall Become One Flesh

**Only In This Can The Two Become One** – There is something so mysterious and deep here. It is the mystery of real love in the confines of marriage. For marriage to be taken outside the mystery of which it was to display the love and reunion of Christ and His bride is to make little of it, it is a season without a savior. Marriage is nothing more than a marketing scheme that keeps families, churches and hundreds of businesses scurrying around mindlessly until the final date. Under the Biblical components of marriage there is no deeper love, no greater companionship. This mystery is found in it's relationship as an example to Christ and the church, but the mystery is also that there is no deeper love on earth than a Biblical love and marriage.

Paul's charge to the husband to love his wife as Christ loves the church is an "unbreakable" love. The Spirit filled husband is to lay aside the "old man" with his selfish thoughts of separating from the "one body" that God has put together.

John writes...

*"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

1 John 4:10

**Flesh** (4561) (*sarx*) can be used in many ways in the NT and needs to be described in proper context. In the present context, Paul is referring to the divine creation of one man and one woman into one supernatural body as a functioning entity. The blending of these two people are not two individuals under the same roof. They the same one no matter where they are. What ever hurts one hurts the other and when one is happy the other is most happy as well.

In **Dr. Henry Brandt's** helpful book **The Struggle for Peace**, he tells of a woman who came to him because of a great fear she had of going into supermarkets. She came to him for help in this problem, and he relied, as he always does, on the wisdom of Scripture. Remembering the verse "Perfect love drives out fear" (1 John 4:18b), he began to look for a violation of love in her life, for fear comes when there is something inhibiting the flow of love. He said to her, "With whom are you angry?" Finally she was able to realize that she was angry at her husband for an incident that had occurred a number of years before in a supermarket when they had had an unpleasant flare-up. As a result, she was emotionally disturbed whenever she went into a supermarket. When she dealt with her lack of love, her fear left. What happened, because of her injury toward him, reflected right back on herself. This is also true of the husband toward the wife. If we would understand this and realize that injuring our mate is the same as taking a hammer and pounding ourselves on the head or neglecting some part of our own body, we would stop trying to hurt one another. Injury to our mate is bound to come back upon us in some way.

### 3. This Is A Profound Mystery

***"This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.  
Ephesians 5:32***

- How wives respond to their husbands is the example to the world how the church is. The greatest example of the church on the earth is the wife.
- Husbands respond to their wives is the example to the world how Jesus is. The greatest example of Jesus on the earth is the husband.
- When the church does not function properly either the wives examples are being ignored or the wives examples are being expressed.
- When the example of Christ is not being exemplified properly, either the husbands are being ignored or the husbands examples are being expressed.

James Dobson writes,

"Nothing is more inspirational than the uniting of two unique and divergent personalities in a marital commitment that will last for a lifetime, with God's help.

Who can comprehend this mysterious bonding that enables a man and woman to withstand the many storms of life and remain best friends to the end of their lives together? This phenomenon is so remarkable that the Apostle Paul, under divine inspiration, chose it to symbolize the unfathomable bond of love between Jesus Christ and His bride, the church." (From article, "Hope for Couples in Crisis)

John MacArthur writes that, "**by your marriage, you are either a symbol or a denial of Christ and His church.**" (MacArthur, J. *The Fulfilled Family*. Chicago: Moody Press)

**Mystery** (3466) (*musterion* from *mustes* = one initiated [as into the Greco-Roman religious "mystery" cults] from *mueo* = to close or shut)) *Musterion* in the

Greco-Roman since were religious sects that held to secret teachings, initiations, symbols and secret societies and teaching thought to be divine in nature, beyond comprehension.

Paul uses *mysterion* as completely different meaning and does not refer to truths know only to a select, initiated few. What he is saying is what was previously the hidden purpose of God is now openly revealed and taught by the Spirit-filled believer. It is somewhat like the statement about the Old and New Testament:

**The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed.**

This *mysterion*, mystery is only a mystery to those who have been give the Spirit to understand. Jesus was clear with Peter when asked, "Who do you say that I am?" When Peter answered Jesus said, "...the Spirit revealed this to you."

- "to know the mysteries", (Mt 13:11)
- "revelation of the mystery", (Ro 16:25)
- "made known...the mystery", Eph 3:3)

We too often forget that those who are not hungry for Christ or have the desire to even try God does not have the ability to see any value of it, no matter how many benefits there are. The Holy Spirit draws man to him and some take pride in that mystery. Paul warned the Jews of this pride and we should be warned as well. Thinking that people are just selfish, stupid, or hardheaded is just not the case. They have not had an encounter with the Holy Spirit and until He reckons with their heart they will continue to believe they are on the same road as you or that they have as much freedom to walk in the direction that they are taking as you do.

I need to try and communicate my experience of my little church that I attended growing up. After looking back I see my pastor who had a huge gapping wound and full of insecurities. He was a wonderful soul winner, but then he would immediately attempted to control these new converts. It was my experience that as soon as they would walk in our church, they would walk out within a few weeks. A couple of things seemed to be a continual problem. He expected immediate clean-up. My friends would come and give their heart to the Lord and after he would pray with them he would say, "Now you need to go out and cut your hair or you don't need to come back here." I brought so many guys to church. I worked on them and got them to the point of receiving Christ, God was revealing Himself to them and then in one message they would make the decision, give their heart to the Lord and get kicked out all at the same time.

I contribute the reason for our little church to peak at 65, and then it was time for another church split, mostly to the inability to understand the process of "Sanctification." (The process of cleaning up!) Anyways, my pastor would preach and preach how people wanted to step through our doors and be a part of our congregation but they desired the world more. He would share in detail how the larger churches in our community were full of compromise and they

were the country clubs of churches. This bizarre teaching I heard literally made me think that people walked past me thinking, "I can't talk to him, I'm afraid if I do I'll give in and go to church with him, and I can't do all these worldly things anymore." I can't tell you how many times I heard how people had to resist going to our little church. In a perverted way, we were God's chosen people. We looked down on everybody and anybody who did not dress like us or act like us. The reason we were small was because we were the "Holy People of God." Not everybody was Holy, only the little, committed people who were willing to sell out to God." Can you smell the stench of PRIDE? Sounds spiritual doesn't it? It sounds mysterious, like a sect or a cult to me now.

An amazing thing happened to me. In my attempts of bringing people to the knowledge of God I come to realize that I was only assisting the work of the Holy Spirit. All the people who I had been taught were under so much conviction, who knew they needed to go to our church were actually able to drive by our church every single day without a thought ever entering their mind of our church, much like a vacant lot. As a matter of fact, I believe the Holy Spirit blinded them from our church. Why would God bring them under so much unhealthy teaching?

This mystery, or secret understanding of God, the gospel, *is* hidden from the ungodly (to them the truths of God are a true "mystery") but this mystery is not the same as the awkwardness and unhealthy collaboration of attending a mismanaged and cultic church. The many distorted faces I have seen in my life when I have presented the gospel of God reveals mans inability to comprehend God's wonderful "mystery."

I must insert here that all churches have their quirks, but if the Word of God is not being compromised, I believe God can work there. Many people being drawn by the Holy Spirit have to work too hard to get over *too many* quirks in churches and it causes them to loose interest. In a society full of competition for the customer, excellence is in high demand...and so it is with the church. Those unwilling to keep up with the times are more likely to fall behind and look *uncaring* more than those who do consider excellence seem ultra *cool*.

When we come to an understanding of what God has wanted to reveal in His great "mystery," the truth of the gospel, it suddenly becomes clear what you were missing. Until that time, it is easy to spot a person who has Biblical theory as their gospel and the true revelation, at least in part, of what God has intended for their life and the work of Christ in their heart.

These mysteries still continue for the active Christian. Some of them have already been revealed, like the need to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior because He was God's plan for the restoration of man. Then there are those we are still to understand, what we will be in heaven will only be fully understood when we get there. Who the Antichrist is and the understanding of Daniel and Revelations will one day come to a complete revelation.

We as the Church, the bride of Christ are to cleave to Him for ever, and He is faithful to cleave to us. Christ's greatest desire is that you and I become one,

not only in our church but in our relationship with Him. This mystery, this revelation that you and I and Christ become one as we humble ourselves before Him, RESPECT Him, fall on our faces before Him. And in turn He promises to LOVE us, to forgive us, to constantly, carefully be in mind of us. Is it too arrogant to believe that we, earth people, our little planet in all of the galaxy's to be the stopping off point for a celestial love affair? Somehow...yes! And He is in love with us. As a man this is an awkward emotion and the understanding of it is often challenged in our day. But the perversion that is so demonstrative in our society, that is attempting at it's best to distort and confuse proper love between two people of the same sex will not win in the end. This mystery of God's unperverted love is an added dimension to His glorious revelation. God will prevail and His mystery will be made known.

### A) Christ And The Church

*"This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church."  
Ephesians 5:32*

This mystery, the full revelation of Christ and the church is symbolized in the sacred process of marriage. To loose the marriage rites, not as a cult, but as a symbol of the emotion, commitment, pursuit, preferences, and mystery of God's love toward us is to loose the closest and greatest means of practical revelation that we have on this earth of God's plan and process toward man.

A round about example of this is looking at all the collections of ancient manuscripts. Of course the NT writings is the number one, all time amounts of manuscripts of any ancient writings. There is something like 250,000 of them. The next and closet to it is Homers Odyssey with somewhere around 900 manuscripts. What a vast difference and what a remarkable confidence you can place on the manuscripts that exist in a greater number. In all my college years, there has never been a class challenging the validity of Homers Odyssey. To this date, I have never heard a challenge to it at all. Yet many continue to fight over the validity of the New Testament...I just don't get it. Anyways, the symbolism of marriage as God's display of His love and plan is like the accumulation of the NT manuscripts. It is way out there, ahead of the pack, it is the number one illustration of this mystery of God on this earth. To dissolve it, to minimize it, to make it a legal contract and not a Biblical understanding is a crime and is a cover-up of the greatest revelation of the existence of God on this earth and His plan for man. The Word of God screams out at us to woo us into this mystical relationship:

*"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes  
refuge in Him."  
Psalm 34:8*

**Christ** (5547) (*Christos* from *chrío* = to anoint, rub with oil, consecrate to an office) is the Anointed One, the Messiah, *Christos* being the Greek equivalent of the transliterated Hebrew word Messiah.

**Church** (1577) (*ekklesia* from *ekkaléo* = call out in turn from *ek* = out + *kaleo* = call) literally "called-out ones".

The only true way for any couple to **love** and **respect** each other is that **both partners in the marriage relationship fulfill their responsibility to Christ**. And as we have discussed earlier, our action toward our spouse is not dependent upon what the other does. We are not to **"Wait until he starts loving me, and then I'll submit to him,"** or **"Wait until she starts submitting to me, and then I'll love her,"** but our responsibility is before Christ no matter of what the other one does.

## **LOVE AND RESPECT**

***However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."***

**Ephesians 5:33**

**Our greatest need is to pursue God's presence through praise and worship and pursue His purpose through His Word and prayer. Two things will happen in response to this:**

### **1. We'll begin to see things as God sees them**

a. Begin to see things through the perspective of eternity and your priorities will begin to change.

### **2. We'll begin to see people as God sees them**

a. And our love for others will grow deeply as our love for God grows, this will include and be of the most benefit to the way you relate to those in your own family. The way you love your wife and children. A healthy and pure love for others will grow out of your love and devotion to God.

On many occasions I have seen those who were committed to their marriage in this way, either to submit or love, and it was absolutely the turn around in the marriage or it brought it to a quicker conclusion. I do not commend divorce but I have seen many agonizing individuals who suffer far more than their wayward companion. I don't believe that the committed individual should be passive in that relationship nor do I believe that person should be controlling as well. I have seen too many "Christian" women who served God until their husbands came to Christ. Somehow there was a sense of spiritual superiority that became threatened when the husband comes to know the Lord. My heart goes out to the man of a controlling husband and wife, what comes with it is much pain. But if one will commit to the way that God asks us to function there are absolutely beneficiary reasons to obey. Therefore, husbands, love your wife as yourself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

## **4. Each Man Love Your Wife As You Love Yourself**

When we as believers, a Christian husband and wife are committed to being “filled with the Spirit” and submit...not obey the mandate of Christ, humble before Him and committed to His Word there is a blessing of that unity. It is not loving me equally the same, it is loving the mandate of Christ and His Word as the standard of our relationship. It is not how Hollywood describes it, it is not the example of your parents, it is not the latest explanation from psychology today, it is the uncompromised description of love and marriage from the manual of God.



**This Spirit of God must take residence in us and have open input in our everyday interaction between all our relationships, but mostly in our marriage. STOP describing your relational circumstances according to how you feel abandoned or how left out you “feel.” Stop determining the level of your relationships based on the observation of others who seem to have the “perfect” marriage. Stop allowing something else, Red Book, Talk Show Host and the latest poll to describe how you should view your spouse. Stop allowing your friends to continue to support your angry and aggressive feelings of unforgiveness and separation. Stop searching for another reason to be disappointed and one more reason to be miserable and happy in your marriage. STOP! This is not God's plan for you, but you and I have to either take the Word of God as a whole or we must move on and continue the demented thought process that will end in bitterness, compromise or divorce. You DO have a choice, it is a choice of the attitude. Your happiness is not based upon a persons actions, they are based upon *your* feelings, and someone else cannot take responsibility for them and you cannot make them take responsibility for them, only you can. Happiness is a choice, getting along in a unified relationship is a discipline, not a lucky event.**

In this culture, a love-dominated society, a woman tends to talk far more about her need for love than her husband talks about his need for respect. Biblically there are two sides to the marital coin: love AND respect. We need to think ? Biblically not just culturally. Though Paul penned the Love Chapter (I Corinthians 13) and Peter walked with the Lord of Love for three years, neither command a wife to agape- love her husband. Only the husband is commanded to agape- love his wife (Ephesians 5:25, 28, 33) Both Peter and Paul reveal that the secret for a wife is to show unconditional respect (I Peter 3:1,2; Ephesians 5:33). Unconditional respect is as powerful to a husband as unconditional love is to a

wife. This truth needs to be put back on the marital radar screen.

Sin continues to try to smudge and mar the idea of marriage. Sin constitutes for the whole of this challenge of marriage. If there was an on going sanctification process that can last a life time, it can be found in the marriage. Paul's teaching, actually his command, a present imperative- as a habitual, continuous practice is a husband to keep on keeping on loving his wife as he would his own self. I have to understand it is my responsibility.

## RESPONSIBILITY

I learned a few years ago what the definition of responsibility is: **My response to His ability!**

We can't love our wives in our strength, but we need the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. A little note...Listen to these stats on the influence of a father in the spiritual well-being of their child.

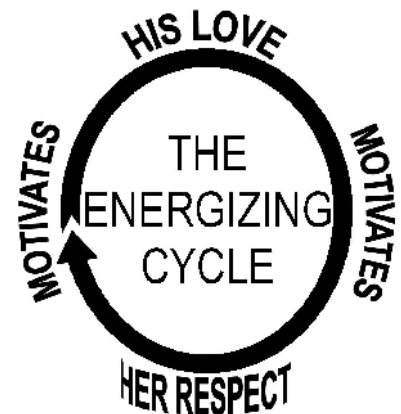
- Both parents attend church – 72% of children remain in the faith
- Father – 55%
- Mother – 15%

**Love** (25) (*agapao*) describes the love God gives freely, sacrificially and unconditionally regardless of response -- love that goes out not only to the lovable but to one's enemies or those that don't "deserve" it.

### 5. Wife Must Respect Her Husband.

THE CULTURE HAS BEEN DEMANDING THAT MEN NEED TO GET IN TOUCH WITH HIS FEMININE SIDE, BUT WHY DON'T WE HEAR THAT WOMEN SHOULD GET IN TOUCH WITH THEIR MASCULINE SIDE?

**Respects** (5399) (*phobeo* from *phobos* = fear, reverence, respect, honor) means to be afraid of someone, clearly not the meaning in this context. The idea of *phobeo* here is **to have a profound, continuous, (present tense), measure of respect for one's husband.**



## THE THREE KEY LOVE FACTORS:

### 1. **KEY LOVE FACTOR #1- Love Your Wife Like Christ Loved The Church**

*"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."*

**Ephesians 5:25-27**

1. **He Gave Up His Life For Her (vs. 25)**
  - A) **To Make Her Holy (vs. 26)**

- B) To Make Her Clean (vs. 26)
- C) So I Can Present Her To Myself (vs. 27)
  - (1) Present Her As A RADIANT Church (vs. 27)
    - a) Present Her Without SPOT OR WRINKLE OR ANY OTHER BLEMISH: (vs. 27)
    - b) Present Her HOLY AND BLAMELESS (vs. 27)

**2. KEY LOVE FACTOR #2- Love Your Wife Like You Love Your Own Body (vs. 28)**

*"In this same way, husbands ought to **love their wives** as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body."*

Ephesians 5:28-30

- 1. Loving Her Is Loving Yourself (vs. 29)
- 2. No One Hates His Own Body (vs. 29)
  - A) He Feeds It
  - B) He Cares For It
    - (1) Just Like Christ Does The Church
- 2. We Are Members Of His Body (VS. 30)

**3. KEY LOVE FACTOR #3- Loving Your Wife Is Leaving And Cleaving (vs. 31)**

*"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must **love his wife** as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."*

Ephesians 5:31-33

- 1. Love Is Leaving And Cleaving (vs. 31)
- 2. Only In This Can The Two Become One (vs. 31)
- 3. This Is A Profound Mystery (vs. 32)
  - A) Christ And The Church
- 4. Each Man Love Your Wife As You Love Yourself (vs. 33)
- 5. Wife Must Respect Her Husband. (vs. 33)