

April 29, 2018

(Master Plan Series) Ephesians 5, 6

“A Word to Husbands”, Ephesians 5: 25-33

In Ephesians 5, Paul teaches us that Christian marriage is the human echo of the relationship of Christ and His Church. Last week, we learned that wives are to submit to their husbands as they do to the Lord, just as the Church submits to Christ, and Christ to the Father (Eph. 5:22-24.) This week Paul instructs husbands to love their wives as Christ loves the Church (Eph. 5:25).

I. The Nature of True Love (Eph. 5: 25-33)

A. True Love Sacrifices.

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her..” (Eph. 5: 25) In Christian marriage, men are to give themselves up for their wives, and put the well-being of their wives ahead of their own desires, wishes, and at times, even needs. This love is an underlying attitude of gifting ourselves sacrificially for others, in order to love them truly. We are then reflecting the love of Jesus who deliberately suffered and died in our place to make us (His Church) right with God.

B. True Love Purifies.

“Christ...gave himself up for the church..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.” (Eph. 5:25-27) This is the reverse of what normally happens at a modern wedding where the bride is prepared by others, and the groom waits until the actual ceremony even to see his bride. Here Paul teaches that Christ accepts and loves all of us who believe. In the midst of our flaws (before purifying), He loves us and then His Spirit transforms us to “make..” His bride (the Church) holy and blameless. In marriage, the husband’s love exists to bring the wife to her best (accepting her as she is and helping to make her lovely).

C. True Love Invests.

“Husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.” (Eph. 5:28) Just as Christ loves the Church and totally invested in/gave Himself for their lives (Eph. 5:29), husbands are to love their wives so completely that they are described as “one flesh” (Eph. 5: 31).

II. The Source of True Love is Christ.

Although true love seems to be in short supply in our self-centered world today, Scripture teaches us to have an underlying attitude of submission (Eph. 5:21), sacrifice (Eph.5:25), and investment (Eph.5:29) as we walk in love with one another (Eph. 5:2).

True love will never work without Christ, or even with Christ only as a model/pattern for loving. We just cannot do this type of love alone. Christ (our source of True Love) can fully love us as we are because He is God. We are limited because sin blocks us, but thankfully we can be freed to love truly by the daily leading, guidance, and power of the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Christ within us). As both model and source, if we ask Christ, He will continually give us True Love for our spouse...our family...and Christian brothers and sisters.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does SACRIFICIAL love look like in marriage? in friendships? in church relationships? What might we have to give up/sacrifice?
2. What does PURIFYING love look like in marriage? in friendships? in church relationships?

3. What does it mean to INVEST ourselves in relationships, of marriage? friendships? church folks?

4. Who is it that we are to show True Love to, according to Eph. 5 and to all Scripture?

5. As believers, we all have a “love debt” for Jesus’ love toward us. Do you find yourself paying off this debt with the “Christian” obligation of “good works”, or is it a paying forward to glorify God with an attitude of the overflowing of His love in us?