

WORD

²¹Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. . . . ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her . . .

Ephesians 5:21,25

WHAT *What does the Bible say?*

Contrary to the world's definition, the Bible shows us that to be a husband means to reflect Jesus' example of service and sacrifice. It also emphasizes on God's command for husbands to love their wives, having mentioned it six times in Ephesians 5. Come to think of it, it is a high calling and can only be done with God's help and power. Let us look further at what God's Word says about what husbands should do.

- **Husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies.**

In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Ephesians 5:28

How does one love his body? Doing this would mean nourishing it, keeping it away from harm, looking after its own good. The Bible says that husbands should love their wives just as they would take care of their own bodies. Why is this commandment often hard to follow? What can enable you to obey this?

- **Husbands love their wives by exercising their leadership in everything.**

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 5:23

The husband is to be the leader-model for the wife, helping her to submit to him being the head of the family. A husband loves his wife by giving of himself sacrificially in leadership. Give examples of how a husband can lead lovingly.

- **Husbands love their wives by taking personal responsibility of their wives' well-being.**

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

1 Peter 3:7

Second to God, a husband's priority is his wife—her welfare, happiness, and completeness. Just as a shepherd takes care of the sheep, a husband is to take care of his wife her entire life. Why did the Bible emphasize the wife as a husband's priority second to God and not the children? Why can we be secure about God's order of things?

- **Husbands love their wives by taking the initiative for reconciliation.**

¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Colossians 3:12,13

Since husbands are leaders, they are also the initiators of forgiveness and reconciliation. This principle of self-giving is the best way to show unconditional love. When a husband initiates forgiveness and reconciliation, what do you think will be the response of his wife?

SO WHAT *What is the relevance of the Word to my life?*

- What happens when the husband allows his wife to lead his household?
- What is the difference of worldly leadership and godly leadership as a husband?
- What are the things that a husband should do to be a leader of his home?

NOW WHAT *How do I apply the Word to my life?*

- What areas in your life do you think are influenced by self-centeredness instead of unconditional love? How do you plan to deal with these?
- How can you best demonstrate love to your wife? What practical steps can you take towards doing this?
- Give three ways you can show sacrificial service to your wife this week.