

# HUSBAND AND WIFE RELATIONSHIPS

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## PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENT

## INTRODUCTION

Right now I have another opportunity to share a message from our friend Johnny Hunt. He is a pastor of a very large church in the USA and he believes in building solid marriages.

Behind every good man, is a **better** woman! We say it this way in America--behind every good man is a very surprised woman. All of the ladies here please stand for just a minute. Men you should applaud and let them know you appreciate them. Let us turn to Ephesians 5 just for a few minutes. I want to do a short lecture on husbands and wives relationships.

The Bible tells us, how men ought to treat their wives and it tells our wives how they ought to treat their husbands. If you are a leader in your community, your families look to you to be an example of marriage. Also you ought to be the proper example to your children.

Every person has three witnesses in particular. My first witness is to Jesus Christ. Jesus knows me better than anyone in the whole world. And so I can hide nothing from Him. So my witness is to Jesus Christ, first and foremost. But then I have a wife, and two daughters, and I am to witness to my family. I am to live a good Christian life before my wife and my two daughters. They should have no question that I love Jesus. And then my witness is to the rest of the world. If I am not a good witness to my Lord Jesus, I will not be a good witness to the lost world. If I am not a good witness to my family, I will not be a good witness to the lost world. So it is Jesus first, then my family, and then my ministry.

We need to know what expectations there are in marriage. I want to do two things in this short lecture. I want to talk about what the Bible says is...

### **Woman's Greatest Need and A Man's Greatest Need**

EPHESIANS 5:25-33

25. *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it,*

26. *that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,*
27. *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.*
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."*

NKJV

Two of the greatest needs in marriage, are clearly outlined in the Word of God. When Jesus wanted to teach the church about a man and a woman's relationship. He likened this relationship unto Himself and the church. Is there any question that Jesus Christ loved the church? No one can ever question God's love in Jesus Christ for the church. Our marriages are to give witness of God's love for the church. Jesus loved the church **sacrificially**. That means that Jesus gave Himself for the church. The husband is to give **himself** for his wife. Jesus Christ loved the church **supremely**. And a man is to love his wife more than anyone else. The Bible says that Jesus loved the church **sanctifyingly**. That means that Jesus set the church aside for Himself. A man is to set his wife aside as a very **special** possession.

So I want to introduce to you what the Bible says about what our needs are in our marriage. Now one thing all of us know about our relationship with our spouses, we know that we are very **different**. We have been taught that it is our differences that attracted us. My wife is very different from what I am. If she were like me, I could not live with her. So our differences are what **attracted** us. Differences not only attract. Differences sometimes **attack**.

## I. A WOMAN'S GREATEST NEED — AFFECTION

If I want to have a wonderful relationship with my wife, I need to know what her needs are. When I came here, I tried to find out what your needs were, so I could try to teach to meet your needs. We men need to know what our wife's needs are. I have been married for over 23 years. I do not have a perfect marriage, but I have a very wonderful marriage. Men I want you to listen to me very carefully; I am not going to tell you what I think about women. I am going to tell you what God **says** about women. God says, that your wives greatest need, before anything else, their greatest need is \_\_\_\_\_. Now those of you that are not married yet, you need to make very good notes. And you need to put them away in your Bible and you need to hold on to them until you get married.

Men, our wives need to know that we love them just like they are. Well, if I find out and I believe that my wife needs affection, what am I going to do about it?

### A. I need to express it

I heard about this old man and his wife riding in a car down the road. The wife made this statement to her husband. She said, "I do not remember the last time that you told me, 'I love you.'" She said, "It must have been twenty five years ago." He said, "When I married you, I told you, 'I love you', and if I ever change my mind I will let you know." She was sitting on this side of the car, he was sitting on this side of the car. He was sitting behind the steering wheel. She was over at the window. She said, "I remember when we used to sit real close to each other. If you came behind our car, it looked like one person. But look now. You are behind the wheel; I am way over here at the window." He looked over and said, "I have not moved."



She expressed a need but he failed to react to it.

A woman's greatest need is to know that she is loved. You need to **express** it. You need to tell your wife every day, "I love you with all of my heart." Affection creates **security**. It shows you caring for her needs. Remember it is the relationship of Jesus Christ to the church. I feel very secure in my relationship with Jesus

Christ. It is because I know of His love for me. He set me aside as a unique possession. Jesus had selfless love for me. The Bible teaches that affection is displayed in your **protection**. God has built into us men automatic defense mechanisms. We are the protection over our wives. Affection is the environment of the marriage.

## B. Communication

Much discussion speaks of affection. Many times the number two reason for divorce is a lack of communication. Men and women no longer talk to each other. Before they got married they talked all the time. Then they got married. The wife continued to talk, and the husband no longer wants to talk. There has to be communication.

There was a study done on how many words we speak every day. The average man speaks **twenty five** thousand words per day. The average woman speaks **fifty thousand** words a day. Men go off to work in their ministry. They talk all day to the people they are teaching and training. They use up all their words. They go home and their wife has been with the little children all day. She has had no one to talk to. She has fifty thousand words she has to give to somebody. The husband sits there with his mouth shut, his words all gone. And the woman speaks faster than a fast train. Men if you are going to show your wives that you really care, you need to \_\_\_\_\_ to your wives. **Communication** shows affection for your wife.

Men have this built in mechanism of, "I can fix it." Sometimes your wife simply wants to talk to you. So she begins to tell to you about her problems from the day. She just wants to know that you care enough to listen. So she mentions her problem. You don't want to talk, so you say, "Don't worry about it. I will fix it. I will take care of it." But she really just wants you to listen. So the next time you come home from a long day at work, men, and your wife begins to talk to you about her day, say these words to her, "Tell me **more**." It shows that you love her and are concerned about what is on her heart.

## C. Show affection

I tell you another way that you show affection is by holding **hands** with your wife. Now I realize that we have different cultures, but we have the same Bible. We have the same God. He did not give you one standard and me another standard. Sometimes I have found that people who live over in the East are very stoic. Many people do not show their feelings. But the Bible says that you are to love your wife, just like Jesus Christ loved the church. If Jesus did not show his love for the church, none of us would be saved. None of us would have anything to share about God's love. So men, you ought to **show** affection for your wife. You may not do what I do, but I try to teach my people publicly how they ought to treat their spouse.



One of my daughters is nineteen; the other daughter is sixteen. When my wife comes into the church on Sunday morning, she slips down to the front and there are a couple of thousand or more people there. I walk over and I give her a little kiss, and I say, "I love you." That shows my affection for my wife. My daughters come into the sanctuary, they come to where I am and they give their father a big hug. I believe that we ought to show **affection**. I believe that we ought to give our wives flowers every now and then. I believe there are times that there ought to be dinner for the two of us only. I believe I ought to talk to my wife as many times a day as I can.

## D. Spend quality time with your children

Let me tell you another way that you show affection for your wife. It has been proven that when you spend \_\_\_\_\_ time with you children, that you are actually showing affection for your wife. Let me give an illustration. I have been gone from home for eleven days. When I get home in just a couple of days, if I told my wife that I was going to go spend the day with another preacher, she would get very angry. But if I said, "I am going to spend the day with the children." She would feel very much loved. So when you spend time with your **children**, it is a display of affection to their mother.

## E. By complimenting

Now not every lady likes to wear cosmetics. Most of our younger ladies like to wear cosmetics. But you know where the word cosmetics comes from. We find the root word in Genesis 1. It is the word that speaks of 'cosmos', the world. That word comes from the word, where we get the word chaos. Chaos means no order. Cosmos means, order. Cosmetics means, putting in order. When a lady gets up in the morning, everything is out of order. So they go to the table, they get out their cosmetics and they put everything in

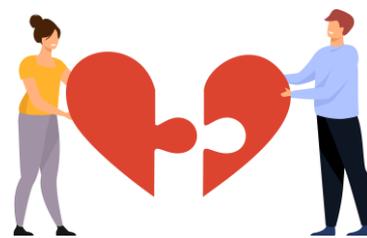
order. They work very hard to look very good. The least we men could do is **compliment** them. We need to say, "Your hair looks very good." "Your eyes they look very nice." "Your dress looks very pretty." In America ladies used to put their hair in very high buns. One day a lady went to the beauty shop and had her hair put up in a very high bun, her husband said, "What happened to your hair?" She said, "Today I had it set." He hurt her by saying: "I wonder when it will fall over". Men you should compliment your wives. It is your way of showing affection.

Let me tell you a way, men, that you can show affection to your wives. It does not have to be a special occasion. You can **create** a special occasion. It catches your wife 'off guard'. She says, "Why are you doing something so nice? Today is not a special day." You say, "No. But you are a very special person." Your wife needs to feel that you love her.

Now I am going to give you a very serious truth. We feel that you are the answer to the spiritual need of Ukraine. Men, as gospel preachers, if you are the answer to this country, that means that your wife is the second most important person in that ministry. If you lose your spouse, people do not want to hear what you have to say. God created the home before He created the church. The devil does not have to concern himself with tearing up our churches; all he needs to do is tear up our homes.

## F. Love is affection

Affection is love. It is a feeling of strong, personal attachment. It is induced by sympathetic understanding. It is a very strong affection. I am not going to ask you to raise your hands, but I do want to ask you a question and let you answer it in your heart. There is a special day set aside to honor women. I wonder how many of you men get up that day and say: "Happy ladies day, you are my special lady?" How many other days do you get up and give a special word of encouragement to her? If affection is the greatest need that a wife has, we should express it. Let me explain what it is.



The Bible goes to great extent to tell us what love really is. I am just going to take the words out of 1 Corinthians 13, and I am just going to give you the words. Here is what love is:

- 1) Love is patient.
- 2) Love is kind. Sometimes we can be very critical of each other, but the Bible says we are to be kind to each other. Have you ever heard this statement before? "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Proverbs 15:1 NJKV) Love is always kind.
- 3) Love is not jealous. That means that you desire God's best for your spouse.
- 4) The Bible teaches that love is not boastful. So you do not have a **superiority** type complex.
- 5) Love has manners. It means that you are not \_\_\_\_\_ to your wife. It means that you have manners for your wife. Let me give you an example. You have been out working all day, very hard. You come home and your wife has a very nice meal for you. You should not treat her like, 'this is what you are supposed to do!' You should be very grateful to God for her, and you should thank her for that meal. There is a terrible sin in the Christian community. It is the sin of **ingratitude**. Love has manners.  
  
How many of you have ever heard of John Wesley, the preacher from the Methodist church many years ago? Did you know that John Wesley stood only four feet eleven inches tall? His wife was much bigger than he was. Did you know that John's wife would not go to church with him? She was a very strong woman. She used to grab him by the hair and throw him to the floor. She did not have love for him. He lived under that most of his life and became one of the great heroes of the faith. Now I realize that that is an exception to the rule, but love must have manners.
- 6) Love is not selfish.
- 7) Love is forgiving. It does not keep a record of wrong doing. This couple was having marital problems. They went in to see the pastor to receive some counsel. The man said, "I want to tell you pastor, what my wife's problem is." He said, "Every time we disagree, she gets historical." The pastor said, "No, you mean hysterical." He said, "No historical. She always brings up the past." Love is forgiving.
- 8) Love is truthful. The Bible teaches that love would rather hear good news.
- 9) Love is sensitive. Love covers sin from **public** view. A man should never speak harshly to his wife in public.
- 10) Love is optimistic. It means it is not suspicious. It **magnifies** the best in a person. Love is hopeful.

11) Love is enduring. The Bible says, "Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away." (1 Corinthians 13:8 NIV). That means that love always leads to victory.

Doctor Billy Graham and his wife Ruth were being interviewed on television. They had been married for fifty years. They asked Mrs. Graham, "Have you ever considered divorcing Billy Graham?" She said, "I have never considered divorce, but I have considered murder."

When you meet your wife's greatest need, the Bible teaches that you are basically meeting your own greatest need. Well I believe the wife's greatest need is **affection**. Husbands, love your wives like Christ loved the church.

## II. A HUSBAND'S GREATEST NEED — ADMIRATION

Now let us talk just a few minutes about the husband's greatest need. Look at Ephesians 5:33. "*Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she reverence her husband.*" Based on the Word of God, the word 'reverence' means 'fear', and also translates '**respect**'. Those three words reverence, fear and respect are synonyms. Let me give you a translation. A husband's greatest need is \_\_\_\_\_. When women admire their husbands, they reverence, fear and respect him. It means the wife gives pleased approval. It means to have high regard for. Admiration inspires motivation. Men need to be admired for what they are now, and not for what you want them to become. What you do NOT acknowledge in their lives, someone else will.

### A. Love reciprocated

Let me give you an illustration. Each week I preach to a lot of people. Many people tell me that they appreciate the message, but no one's compliment means as much to me as my wife's. Well, if a man's greatest need is admiration, ladies need to express it. It is not unusual for a wife to tell her husband he is the **greatest**. As a result of your reverence, fear, respect, you ladies joyfully submit to his God-ordained leadership. We are talking about a relationship. We are talking about a man loving a woman, and that woman **reverencing** and respecting her husband. It is not a type of fear that you are scared of your husband. The Bible says, "*Perfect love casts out all fear.*" The only reason a woman would be afraid of her husband, is because he was not full of the love of God. I have a reverential fear of the love of God. But I do not go around like I am scared of Jesus. It is a reverential fear of Him. I know who He is. I know He is an authority over me. But He also loved me, unconditionally, when I did not even deserve it. Therefore it does not cause me to hide from Him in fear. I reach up to Him and love Him because of the way He loves me. And so when the man loves the woman, the wife in a very beautiful way submits to his loving leadership and it makes a great relationship.

### B. Admiration must be...

#### 1. **Honest**

The first word would be honesty. Wives, what you say about your husband must be an **honest** appraisal. One day we were trying to get a big attendance to come to church. They announced that if a big number came, pastor Johnny would sing. I am not a very good singer, but that day I sang. People came by and said, "Oh, you are a good singer, Pastor Johnny!" But after I got home and had lunch with my wife, I said, "What did you think of my singing?" She said, "You had better stick to your preaching." It is an honest appraisal.

Did you hear about Abraham Bible, what he did with his wife? He told his wife, "There are many great preachers in the world." Then he asked her this question, "How many great preachers do you believe there are in the world?" She said, "One less than you think." Our wives will be real honest with us. If you **admire** your husbands, wives, be very honest.

#### 2. **Helpful**

Another word is the word helpfulness. Most of our self-esteem problems come from our homes. The Bible says that God gave me my wife to be my helpmeet. So God gave her to me to help me. My wife has **confidence** in me. I cannot always see what God is doing with my life, but my wife seems to have \_\_\_\_\_ into what God is doing with **me**. At times, God will honor me in certain ways and I will really be very surprised and my wife does not act surprised. And I will say, "Oh you are not shocked that God so honored me?" And she says, "No, I knew it was just a matter of time." So she has confidence in me and she **helps** me.

## C. Effects of admiration on a husband

### 1. *Inspiration*

When my wife expresses her admiration by telling me how well I did something, it inspires me to achieve **more**.

### 2. *Motivation*

Her being proud of me, pushes me to new **heights**.

### 3. *Appreciation*

It keeps my heart so **grateful** that God gave her to me.

### 4. *Satisfaction*

It means that God uses her to meet my **deepest** needs.

Let me tell you one of the major problems in marriage. It is when the husband or the wife allows their romance to become routine. Do not ever treat each other as though you do not appreciate them. Well, I have expressed what admiration is, let me take a few minutes and explain it.

## D. Biblical description of admiration

*“Likewise you wives, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your beauty be that outward adorning of arranging the hair, of wearing gold, or of putting on fine apparel; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.” (1 Peter 3:1-4)*

Ladies, three words describe ‘admiration’ in a Biblical way.

### 1. *Submission*

\_\_\_\_\_ is not dictatorship. It is headship. It is a divine **principle**. It does not imply inferior personhood. It does not imply inferior spirituality. It does not describe lesser **importance**. It parallels the principle of giving and receiving. Now let me give you an illustration. You must listen to this very carefully. Someone said, “A marriage is like a car battery. There is a positive terminal and a negative terminal. We could say that the man is the positive terminal and the woman could be called the negative terminal. But it takes both terminals for the car to crank. And so it takes them together.” And so the Bible talks about submission.

### 2. *Behavior*

Your admiration is shown through your character and your respect. God showed his love for the church by dying. The man is to love his wife even to the point of death. The wife shows her love by her admiration, respect and fear. This is displayed in her **character** and in her conduct.

### 3. *Attractiveness*

That is what the Bible is dealing with in 1 Peter 3:3. It is that word, ‘adorning’. And that is the word from which we derive our word ‘cosmetics.’ So there is an attractiveness about our wives. But there is something more important than the outward woman. From all I read in the Old Testament about Jezebel, she may have been beautiful on the outside, but she was a very wicked woman on the inside. The Bible teaches that a Christian should be one with a beautiful **spirit**. It means that you have a beautiful inner spiritual **personality**. It means that you are not insistent on your own rights. It means that you are not selfishly assertive. It means that you do not go around demanding your own ways.

## CONCLUSION

Let me close by reading Proverbs 21:9. “It is better to dwell in the corner of a housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.”

1. Women need affection, men!
2. Men need admiration, ladies!
3. But both of us need the Lord!

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by New Life for Churches. You have the privilege *upon completion of your practical assignment* to use this lecture with others.

## Practical assignment

Completed

- Do one of each of the following for your spouse every day for the next two weeks:
1. Words of encouragement (this includes saying, "I love you")
  2. Physical affection (this can be anything from holding hands on)
  3. Quality time (this means spending **uninterrupted** time with your spouse, even 15 min.)
  4. Act of service (doing the dishes, sweeping, folding the laundry, etc.)
  5. Gift giving (a dandelion, an apple, not necessarily big gifts, but given with love and thought for that person, perhaps a poem or song)
- Make a calendar to track how well you are doing. The calendar may look like you want it to, but it must contain five things. Each day must show whether you:
1. Spoke words of encouragement
  2. Showed physical affection
  3. Spent quality time
  4. Did an act of service
  5. Gave a gift
- Write down exactly what you did for each of the five items. Show the calendar to a leader, discuss and pray together .
- After doing this for two consecutive weeks, choose the one or two ways that you feel your spouse most appreciates you showing your love. Write them on your calendar and continue to keep track of what you are doing in these areas every day.

### Answer Key

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| <p>I. affection<br/>B. talk<br/>D. quality<br/>F. rude</p> | <p>II. admiration<br/>B. insight<br/>D. submission</p> |
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