

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰because we are members of his body. ³¹“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³²This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ³³However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.—Ephesians 5:25–33

Fatal way to read this passage: emphasize rules vs. purpose

Why? Rules can be skirted and even abused.

Command: love your wife, v. 25a

Method: as _____ loved the church, v. 25b

Goal: _____, v. 26–27

Purpose: intimate _____, v. 28–33

Discussion questions and application of God’s Word:

- Men: what area(s) is God calling me to sacrifice for my wife / sister?
- Men: how can I increase my spiritual growth to better serve my wife?
- Women: might you be willing to pray daily for your (future) husband?
- Why is submission for wives, and sacrifice for husbands emphasized?
- Discuss Dr. Lloyd-Jones’ comment, “*The real cause of failure, ultimately, in marriage is always self.*” What are the implications?
- How can lost romantic feelings be rekindled?