

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Ephesians 5:25-33

Lesson #37

The hardship of Headship

04/29/2018

“Behind every successful man stands _____.”

- ☐ “a supportive wife”
- ☐ “a sovereign God.”
- ☐ “a surprised mother-in-law.”



“The only thing worse than a man you can’t control is a man you can.”

Jean Kerr
(author)



Ephesians 5

“²⁵ Husbands, love your wives,”

- Paul’s Stoic contemporaries taught husbands to love (phileo - warm affection) their wives.
- Paul taught husbands to love (agape - sacrificial service) their wives.

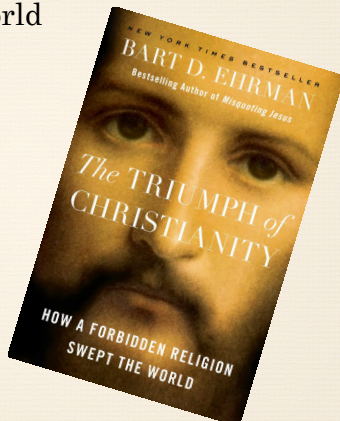
**Three reasons
Christianity came to dominate Western civilization.**

1. Its audience - It spread the Gospel beyond Judaism.
2. Its authentication - The resurrection of Christ and its promise.
3. Its affirmation - **It made the ground level at the foot of the cross.**

3

“... no one can deny that it (Christianization of the West) was the most monumental cultural transformation our world has ever seen.”

Dr. Bart Ehrman



4

Colossians 3:19

“Husbands, love your wives and do not be **embittered** against them.”

- “**embittered**” - “irritated”, “impatient”, “picky”.

1 Peter 3:7

“You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an **understanding** way, as with someone **weaker**, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.”

- “**understanding**” - “according to knowledge”.
- “**weaker**” - “delicate” “less recognized”. As we are to give “honor” to the less recognized gifts in **1 Cor. 12:22-24**.

5

“ . . . so that your prayers will not be hindered.”

“¹⁰ For, the one who desires life, to love and see good days, must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. ¹¹ he must turn away from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. ¹² For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and **His ears attend to their prayer**, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

- God honors those among us **whom the world does not honor**. If we fail to do the same, our ministry to the Lord is compromised.

6

“²⁵ . . . just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; ²⁶ that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.”

- Husbands are to mirror Christ's relationship with the church (his bride) - **sanctify through self-sacrifice**.
- The emphasis is not on the wife making the husband comfortable but of **the husband making the wife complete** and vice versa.

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“²⁸ So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; ²⁹ for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of His body.”

- Husbands are to nourish and cherish their wives **as they do their own lives**.
- “Nourish” is “**bring them up, nurture**” in 6:4. This suggests that husbands should renew the wife to a position of dignity in the world and in the relationship.
- The husband is a **provider, protector, director, perfecter**.

8

“³¹ “For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.””

Three mysteries revealed

- **Uniqueness #1** - With marriage, the husband's responsibilities shift from one family (his parents) to another (his wife and offspring). In Asia for example the marriages are arranged by parents and adult children are expected to never relinquish responsibility to parents.
- **Uniqueness #2** - Husbands were to renew their wives to a position of dignity and equality. This stands in contrast to most cultures outside Judaeo Christian influence.

9

“³² This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. ³³ Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.”

The third mystery

- **Uniqueness #3** - Marriage is a dynamic drama that mirrors Christ's relationship with the church. This is a mystery in that it was not evident without special revelation.
- Marriage is about more than individual fulfillment. It is about the Gospel.

10

Three key principles

1. EQUALITY - “one in Christ Jesus”

Galatians 3:28

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

- **Spiritual status** - This passage is not about posture or role but about spiritual access and value.
- **Relevance** - Posture or role are not to be driven by a sense of status, access, or worth.
- **Illustration** - Relationships in the family should never suggest a class system or special privilege .

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Three key principles

2. HEADSHIP / SUBMISSION - "The Trinity"

1 Corinthians 11:3

"But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ."

- **Headship / Submission** - Think inner attitude rather than outward behavior.
- **Relevance** - When headship is focused primarily on outward behavior it hinders the use of gifts.
- **Illustration** - If a wife is more gifted in managing the finances she should be encouraged to do so while inwardly respecting and supporting her husband's overall responsibility for the family.

12

The nature of HEADSHIP in marriage

- Christ is the model in his relationship to the church (his bride).
- Vs 25 - He "***gave himself up***".
- Vs 26-27 - His intent was to present his bride "***in all her glory***".
- Vs 28-30 - He "***nourishes and cherishes***" her as his own body.
- Vs 31 - In "***becoming one flesh***" he affirms the need for intimacy (not being left alone).
- Vs 32-33 - He sees the gender postures in marriage as a dramatic image of the relationship between "***Christ and the church***".

13

Three key principles

3. MYSTERY - "Christ and the church"

Ephesians 5:32

"This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church."

- **Symbolism** - The inner relational posture is a picture of the Christ / church relationship.
- **Relevance** - The drama (picture) is more important than conformity to changing cultural values.
- **Illustration** - Both wife and husband see their relationship as being about more than themselves and the culture of the world in which they live.

14

The sacrifice the husbands are asked to make for their wives is greater than the sacrifice that wives are asked to make in submitting to their husbands.

- The wife's submission involves trusting God and overcoming fear as she yields to her mate, while her husband is asked to face God as he bears responsibility in giving his life for his family.
- The husband is asked to model his life after Christ in a way the wife is not.
- The husband needs the support of his wife if he is to fulfill his calling and vice versa.

15

The relationship of Christ to the church



Building / Cornerstone
(Ephesians 2:21)



Body / Head
(Ephesians 4:4)



Bride / Groom
(Ephesians 5:32)

Serving and receiving is the function.

16

If God created man and woman as distinct and complementary, to reveal something about his image (Gen.1:27)
we should think twice before we try to disestablish it.

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A word to wives

1. Don't equate submission with **weakness or inferiority**.
2. View your marriage as a drama and a witness - **modeling Christ and the church**.
3. If you want to help your husband be a strong, loving, sensitive leader - **model what it means to be a supportive, responder**.
4. Find your ultimate security **in your relationship with Christ**.
5. Expect to share some of Christ's **suffering**.

"Are you a man or a mouse? Squeak up!"

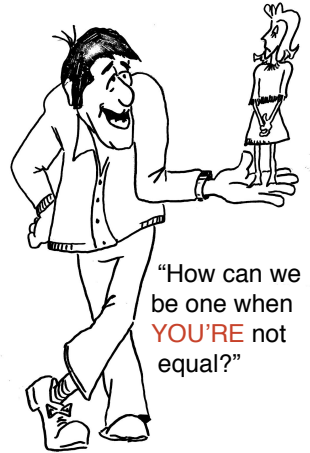


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A word to husbands

1. Don't equate headship with **privilege or superiority**.
2. View your marriage as a drama and a witness - **modeling Christ and the church**.
3. Expect to share some of Christ's **suffering**.
4. Find your ultimate significance **in your relationship with Christ**.
5. If you want to help your wife to be a supportive and submissive helpmate - **model what it means to be a sensitive, strong, self sacrificing encourager**.

"How can we be one when **YOU'RE** not equal?"



19

"Your success as a family, our success as a society, depends not on what happens in the White House, but on what happens inside your house."

Barbara Bush

