

THE KING'S DESIGN FOR MARRIAGE, PART 2

EPHESIANS 5

Love is not merely a feeling. It is a deep unity, maintained by the will and deliberately strengthened by habit; reinforced by the grace which both partners ask, and receive, from God.

-C.S. Lewis

I. The Husband's Love

- A love that shepherds

- A love that sacrifices

- A love that sanctifies

II. The Wife's Love

- A love that helps
- A love that is humble
- A love that is holy

Small Group Study Questions

Into the Bible:

1. The picture of a healthy marriage is the picture of Christ and his church. Christ's role as the head and chief shepherd of the church helps layout for men the parameters of what it means to love our wives as Christ loves the church. How do the following passages describe what some have labeled the need to "provide, protect, and perfect" our wives as Christ does these things for his church? (Ephesians 5:28-30, John 10:11-15, Ephesians 4:11-13)

Application:

2. In love do "opposites attract"? Probably not, but the desire to find someone who fills and completes the gaps and holes in one's own life is often what draws partners together. The complementarity of gifts and attributes that make for a strong marriage is part of God's good design. What do I Peter 4:10-11 and Philipians 2:3-5 tell us about the use of our particular gifts within this relationship?

3. Although Paul's admonishment in II Corinthians 6:14-15 to not be "unequally yoked" with unbelievers is not specifically aimed at selection of marriage partners, it does provide a strong caution in this regard. The need to have a common purpose and direction in life mirrors the need for yoked animals to pull together for best effect. For those who are not in a marriage where Christ is head over both Paul does offer advice in I Corinthians 7:13-14. How does Christ's request in Matthew 11:29-30 also offer help in this situation?

For Families:

4. Talk with your children about the proper connection between love and obedience.