

## What Example Did JESUS Set for Us in Marriage?

Ephesians 5:22-33

In February of this year, Oprah had the Cosby Television kids on her show, and they were talking about the kind of loving relationship that the show represented for black people. Things shown that people of color had never seen on television, about a black doctor loving not only his wife a professional woman who is an attorney, but his children too. It was not the kind of woman we have seen on television, the aunt Jemima types loud and controlling, with the lazy husband, who cannot keep a job and the butt of everyone's joke.

Later we saw on CBS news, Michelle Obama talking about her loving husband Barack and the relationship that they have built together, talking about their children, about their Christian beliefs, about their education and about their life attitudes. The things that our future generations should be geared into for any kind of future at all and which is very important to every married couple, because it helps to cement a solid marriage.

My brothers and sisters

Every night, my wife has a snack just before going to bed usually an apple, orange or cheese and crackers. Every night I face the same internal battle, should I get it for her or should I just remain on the sofa, as a result I just remain on the sofa. Because you see, no two apples are the exact same size when they are sliced and placed on the plate, the question of which is hers and which is mine becomes an issue, and that is when the battle starts.

It is not one of those life-altering battles that define the destiny of nations.

However, it is, one of the daily battles defining the character of a man, his relationship with his wife and through her his family.

I like to think that I would take a bullet to save my wife's life and I like to think that I would gladly trade my own freedom if hers were in doubt. However when it comes to apples, oranges, cheese and crackers, somehow I have a selfishness erupting out of my heart. This is a part of the battle for being a godly husband. It is the fight that does not often occur on the battlefield of major issues, but it is on the battlefield of thousands of minor ones. There is a word from the Lord and as we look let us see how the question that the Bible is posing to us today is answered." **What example did JESUS set for us in marriage?"**

It is right here in the text of our message for today, because **"The standard is set high," Paul is the standard bearer and he nudges all husbands in the direction of the cross. In the book of Ephesians, he gives this amazingly heavy command: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loves you" (v.25) what did Jesus do? He loves us all! This command goes out to all husbands, everywhere and for all times.**

Therefore, as we wrestle with the wording of such a command, we need not wonder or pause, all we have to do is observe scripture for the answer to what Jesus Christ set in motion.

My brothers and sisters, Paul tells us in Ephesians that, "GOD the Father is the one whose eternal plan for the church has now been revealed, Jesus the Son is the exalted Head of the

Body, the church, and for whose glory the church exists. The church is a house or temple in which God's Spirit lives, and yet the Spirit fills each individual believer and throughout the pages of scripture, Jesus actively loves His church. So let us proceed in answering the bigger question by asking three smaller questions, first about Jesus and then three questions about us. My brothers and sisters

What example did Jesus set for the church? What example should I set for my wife?  
What did Jesus think of the church? What should I think of my wife?  
What did Jesus become for the church? What should I become for my wife?

My brothers and sisters

AS we answer these questions, we will understand more fully, what He would do, but more importantly of what He did do. In that, we have a living role model for how we are to love our mates, but to love with such intensity, passion and commitment, that we have to start a journey of self-development to get to the place where we can love like Jesus Christ loves us all.

What example did Jesus set for the church?

It has been widely taught and accepted by our Christian faith as well as the Bible that Jesus Christ's activity on behalf of the church can be summarized in these three functional titles: that of Prophet, Priest and King. A brief look at each of these will give us a deeper insight into our role as husbands.

Christ as Prophet: A prophet is someone who brings forth the word of GOD to mankind.

He is responsible for accurately discerning what GOD is saying and communicating that to others. Jesus Christ performed this prophetic role perfectly in two ways. First, He accurately spoke and taught the WORD and work of GOD to others. Secondly, He was the actual expression of GOD and the Word made flesh.

The husband as Prophet:

We have the amazing privilege of bringing forth the Word of GOD to our wives. While this might involve some actual Bible teaching time, we need to see the various other forms that this might and should take. These take the form of counseling, making family decisions, and planning for the family's future. The common thread in all of this is the Word of GOD, and without the Word of GOD a prophet has nothing to say, his words are empty and meaningless. In addition to bringing forth the Word in our actions, we must personify the word of GOD.

Christ as Priest:

A priest is an intercessor, that is someone who seeks GOD on behalf of someone else. As priest, Jesus is constantly seeking GOD on our behalf. Through Him, we are made holy, righteous and acceptable to GOD. This priest is different from the others in that He did not sacrifice a lamb, dove or bull. This priest sacrificed Himself on our behalf.

The Husband as Priest:

As we love our wives, we must serve as priest. Our wives and marriages need prayer. We have the privilege and duty of petitioning GOD on their behalf. We should pray for their purity,

protection, joy, faith, and finally their burden. We should pray for their success as a wife, a mother and as a woman of GOD.

Hebrews tells us that Jesus looked past His own sacrifice to the joy that would come on the other side. With that in mind, look at all that your wife could become. Consider what GOD might want to do with her, through her, and in so doing you will love your wife as Christ loves the church. In addition, for that joy set before you, endure to be able to sacrifice yourself. You must sacrifice yourself for her, if you want to walk like Jesus.

#### Christ as King:

A king is someone who is supreme or preeminent. As king, Christ deserves our honor, our praise, our obedience and our service. He is in charge, the undisputed leader of the Church. Moreover, while this king rules and reigns, he also serves and ministers to his people. His rule is peculiar in that He models a leadership of service to us and says that the greatest among us is those who serve. He is also an accessible king. In many courts throughout history the subjects were not allowed to be in the presence of the king, but King Jesus invites us into his court as he leaves open the doors to his throne room.

#### The Husband as King

Ephesians 5:23 make it very clear, that the husband is the head of the wife, and in essence, kingship undeniably belongs to the man. As we embrace that, we as husbands must lead, we must lead clearly and boldly. We must be out there on the edge looking to the provisions and the protection of our kingdom, because to do less is to fall short of our calling to leadership, the privilege is ours to rule our home.

#### My brothers and sisters

We as husbands are not simply to take our crowns and dominate our wives, but we are to rule as Jesus Christ ruled, with humility. Jesus modeled how he wants us to love our wives, and as our king, Christ knelt and washed the feet of his disciples. We must follow His example and serve. Lead boldly, yet serve and never let the load of our leadership outweigh the sacrifice of that leadership, because Jesus kept them in perfect balance and that is our duty as well today, to lead in humility, love, mercy and grace.

#### My brothers and sisters

What did Jesus think of the church?

What is happening to us today, are we doing what Jesus asked us to do as we look at all of the embarrassment the church is involved in today, you might think that Jesus would rather disassociate with the church. That surely, He would hesitate to admit His affiliation. If that is what you think, you would be wrong, through this selected verse take a look at what He thinks about the church.

**“I will build my church upon this rock and the gates of Hades will not overpower it (Matt.16; 18b).”**

**What the church’s pastors are doing today has nothing to do with Jesus Christ’s example or those things set forth in scripture by Him. They are the deeds of dishonest and unrighteous men, deposed from Jesus Christ and His church. The examples that they set will get them sent**

to hell. Some examples are Jimmy Jones and the cool-aide kids, the branch, and the San Francisco group.

What do I do when arguments come and anger flows?

What should I think of my wife?

My brothers many times we fall into the trap of allowing our wife's actions to determine what we think of her. We allow her to become less lovely to us when her actions are not loving, we allow our love to wane when the romance fades and the honeymoon feelings disappear and we allow our attitudes to be shaped in ways that reflect our displeasure with these changing situations. However, this is not how Jesus Christ loves the church. "But you (the church) are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for GOD'S own possession, so that you may proclaim the Excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter: 2-9)."

We must think of her as Christ does the Church, because regardless of the quality of our relationship, she is my beautiful bride. She is the one that I say to and called "bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh" like Adam, she has my DNA, all over her body, she is my helpmate, and she is my lover. (Gen. 2:23)

Jesus goes on to proclaim that the church is His bride, His body and His people, even in His anger, we are still called His sheep, and His flock. He readily refers to Himself as our Lord, the Shepard of the sheep and try as we may to lose His devotion; He refuses to turn away from us. What a might awesome God we serve. Praise GOD!

When you begin to look into her that way, I am sure that you will begin to see many of the wonderful traits that brought you together.

However, my brothers reach further and higher than that; think of your wife from a higher position. Think of her as Christ does the Church. Think of her as made perfect. Think of her as made complete. Think of her as chosen by GOD and as you look at these traits, you will begin to see her as Jesus sees the Church, you will then begin to think of her as Christ thinks of the church.

What example did Jesus set for the church? My brothers and sisters:

Each of us is known by our names and roles. I am known both as Albert and as daddy; I am a husband, a father, a grandfather, a friend, and a teacher. Jesus Christ has names and roles too, each of which reflects a different role of his existence. All of these roles reflect what he is for the church, let us consider some of the names and roles he has.

- He is known as a strong tower (Proverbs 18:10)
- He is a wonderful counselor (Isaiah 9:6)
- He is a present help in time of trouble (Psalms 46:1)
- He is the God who sees all (Genesis 16:13)
- He is faithful and true (Revelation 19:11)

- He is a gracious and merciful God (Nehemiah 9:31)

My brothers and sisters

Because of who he is and what he has done on our behalf, Christ has become all of these and much more for the church. These are not just functions that Jesus performs, they are his character his very makeup. I can go to him because he is my Shepard, my Savior, and my redeemer.

I can run to Jesus because he provides a strong tower, and because he is one, I can trust him to give me wonderful counsel, because being a wonderful counselor is his very character, it is who he is?

What should I become for my wife? My brothers and sisters

It is better to be faithful than it is simply to refrain from extra-marital activities. It is far better to be gracious than to keep your mouth shut. Being is far better than just doing. Jesus does not simply remain committed to His church. He personifies faithfulness. He does not just show mercy, but He becomes mercy. He does not just show grace, but He becomes grace. He does not just show love, but He becomes love.

In order to love our wives well, we must allow GOD to work on our character at its deepest levels. Then, responding to this renewing work to change us and to build us into the men that He desires us in commitment to remain faithful, He desires us in love to become love, He desires us in mercy to become mercy, He desires us in grace to become grace.

In the warfare that we face as husbands, we must remember that the victory is not necessarily in the major issues of life and liberty. It is in the minor issues of sliced apples oranges, cheese and crackers. It is not when you are fulfilling your wife's wishes, it is when you are completely alone. It is not in the size of your bank account, it is in the wiliness to lay yourself down to be sacrificed for her. I believe that is what ADAM did. GOD, I did not obey your commands, and I failed you thus, my family failed you.

My brother, loving your wife as Christ loves the Church is a very high calling, one that could stop a train or move a mountain. You have to remember that GOD is the one who has called you out to do His will, because marriage is a sacrament. Are you with me on that? He is the one who has brought you together. He is the one who has given his spirit to help you win at your calling as a husband, call upon Him. He will see you through.

Do not be crushed by the weight of it, but do not settle for anything less than all of it. As you embrace your calling, your wife will feel the difference. You will feel the smiles of your Savior. You do want GOD to smile upon you and your family don't you?