

How To Love Your Husband

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[0:00] We're in Titus 2 and the first five verses for our scripture reading. Titus 2, 1 to 5. To be self-controlled and pure.

To be busy at home. To be kind and to be subject to their husbands. So that no one will malign the word of God. On Mother's Day I preached a sermon to husbands on how to love their wives.

And I thought I would return the favor on this Father's Day and preach tonight to wives on how to love their husbands. So if you are a wife or a young lady who is going to be a wife someday, then tonight is your night.

In some ways this sermon is harder to preach than the sermon to husbands for a couple of reasons. The one is the Bible doesn't actually talk a lot very directly on this matter of wives loving your husbands.

Like it does, like it instructs husbands to love their wives. And so we kind of need to think of this question of wives how to love your husband from a broader biblical perspective.

[1:57] How do the broad biblical themes of love and men and women and marriage show us what it means for a wife to love a husband?

Or how to do that? And so that's our task tonight. But I do really want to say at the beginning that this is in some ways like swimming on the deep end for me.

It's summertime and summertime means swimming. And as a young child there's one very frightening thing about swimming and that's the deep end. You're not sure why it's so frightening but your parents are making sure that you don't go down there.

And so it kind of, at least in my mind, it used to have this sort of dark, scary aspect to it. And that's kind of how I feel tonight. You don't know why it's so scary but it is.

And the reason it's so scary is because it's deep and your toes don't touch. No matter how much you stretch them out. And that's kind of how I feel tonight about preaching to wives about how to love your husbands.

[3:03] Because my toes don't really touch this ground. I am not called to love a husband. And so I found myself reading Titus, this passage that we have here.

And it says, Older women are to teach the younger women to love their husbands, to be subject to their husbands. And I thought, subject to their husbands? And, you know, I understand that.

Men, you understand that up here. But what is it like to be a woman and to hear this and where God says to be subject to these men?

I know what it's like to be subject to an employee or employer. But what is it like to be subject to a marriage partner? What does that mean? I've never had to do that. And so experientially, this is the deep end.

And so I would ask for some grace if I overstep or if, you know, I don't quite have it right. I'm going off the word of God. And so we can be thankful that we do have God's word.

[4:03] It's not just my words. It's God, the creator, speaking to his people. And it's trustworthy. So I have five ways that wives to love their husbands.

Five ways that wives can love their husbands. And the number one first way is learn that love is learned. Learn that love is learned. So we're in Titus chapter 2.

You see that? And look down at verse 3. Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live. Not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.

Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands. So Paul tells Titus to tell the older women, to tell the younger women, to love their husbands.

To train them, to teach them. The word means to make them think soberly, realistically, to put them in the right mind about loving their husbands.

[5:11] And so that means, ladies, that love is learned. Love is something that can be learned in some extent, in some way.

And so the first thing I think that is helpful in getting off on the right foot in loving your husband is to learn that love is learned.

Did you know that the second year of marriage is the most common year for divorce? It's the most common year that a couple will get divorced.

Well, why is that? Well, it's because the feelings of love that swept you into a wedding and into this marriage aren't what they used to be.

They're not what they used to be. The grind of living together has begun. And in the second year, you wake up to the reality that that person that you have married is not going to change in any fantastic, dramatic way.

[6:17] And maybe, ladies, you thought that when you were dating, oh, this man, you know, he's a bit rough around the edges, but I can train him and we can shape him.

And then in the second year, you find out there ain't no training. That puppy, he's not going to do it. And he is what he is for better or for worse.

And the second year, you find that out and the mystery is gone. The mystery of being married and what that's like and the unknown. It gives way to the mundane where day follows day with it's all the same.

And so in the first year, ladies, the man is like a new toy out of the box. He's all sparkly. He's all new. You don't know what he can do, what he could be. And then the second year comes around and you've kind of discovered most of the things that he is.

And now I'm not saying this sounds all really morbid and horrible, but I'm not saying that there's nothing new to discover and those feelings are completely gone. Of course not. But I'm saying we can't kid ourselves that most of the discoveries from here on out are going to be few and far between.

[7:32] Most of the great breakthroughs are behind us now. And so in the second year, the infatuation, the passion, the mystery, the romance gives way to the reality of life, of living.

And so either at that point, either you say, I have fallen out of love. Love is gone. Or you say, I have to learn to love this man.

I have to learn to love this man for who he is. And this is the good news of this passage, that love is actually something that can be learned. It's something that an older woman could train a husband or train a younger woman to love her husband.

And when you learn that, when you learn that love is learned, then that gives a whole new lease on the marriage, a whole new lease on the life of that marriage.

You see, if love is just a place that you fall in and out of, then your relationship is doomed. But when you learn that love is learned, it opens up all kinds of space for this marriage to grow and to flourish.

[8:43] And for you to now really begin working on the nuts and bolts of loving your husband. And so just because you have a bad day, and just because your feelings are withering away today and you're having a rough spot, it doesn't mean that the season is over.

And so when you're playing sports, you do have bad games, you have bad days, and it doesn't mean you're done for. It just means that you have to go back to the practice field and you've got to train harder.

You've got to learn more and you've got to think more. And that's the good news of Paul's words, that love in marriage is something that can be learned. Wives can learn to love their husbands.

And it's almost like that God expects you ladies sometimes to have a problem learning to love your husband. It's going to be something that's hard to do.

And I wonder why that is. Because maybe it's going to be. There's going to be days when it's hard. And so instead of giving in to the lie that says, well, we fell out of love, we need to learn that love is learned.

[9:53] You aren't at the end of the game, you're at the beginning. Wherever you're at in your marriage, you're now at the starting point of learning how to love your husband. And there's more ground to cover. There's more things to know.

And so if you want to love your husband, then begin on the right foot. And the right foot is to learn that love is learned. Here's number two. Submit in respect to him.

Submit in respect to him. Both words are important. Submit in respect. You can, in a certain way, submit without respect.

And it really undermines the submission. But what I'm saying is submit in respect to him. If you want to love your husband, do that. Throughout the Bible, God calls wives to submit in a special way to their husbands.

There's supposed to be mutual submission all over the Christian life. We saw that in the last sermon when I talked about preaching or about how husbands could love their wives.

[10:56] It involves employer, employee, husband, wife. There's all sorts of integrated ways or the ways that we live the Christian life. It's all mutual submission to each other in a certain way.

But in the Christian marriage, in marriage, wives are uniquely called to submit to their husbands. And that's what we see in Titus 2.5. The older women are to train the younger women, you see it there, to be subject to their husbands.

To be subject to their husbands. And that is not a popular idea. And I don't expect that to sound like so fabulous to most of your ears.

Because we have been so brainwashed in our culture to think that every kind of submission is something bad. It's not popular anymore. The news outlets were making a big deal out of how Princess Catherine took the words, love and obey, or honor and obey, out of her wedding vows to Prince William.

You remember that, maybe. And it was always spun in such a way that it made them to seem like, oh, they're this modern couple. They don't go for those old-fashioned ideas about honor and obedience in marriage.

[12:13] There's no old-fashioned ideas about husband and wife here. But whatever the world says, ladies, this is the Lord's will for you. This is how you can love your husband.

But why is the question, why is wifely submission, the submission of the wife, a special act of love for her husband? Do you ever wonder that? In what way is the wife's submission to her husband a particular act of love to him?

Well, for the answer we need, we need to go back to Genesis 1.27. So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created them male and female, he created them.

So God made male and female. But God made them different. He made them different. And so together, they're the image of God.

But they don't image God in the same way. Men and women are essentially different in who they are. And their differences are more than just skin deep.

[13:28] It's more than a skin deep difference. The shape and attitude of your husband's heart, ladies, is different than your heart, than your spirit.

A male was made to initiate, to lead, to act. God did not put him as the head of the wife just as an arbitrary choice.

He made Adam to be a leader. And then he said, now, Adam, be what you are. And this isn't some sort of socially structured reality either.

This is essential to masculinity and femininity. It's part of what we are as creatures. Listen to what one author said.

Creation has one of its fundamental themes, the pattern of rule and submission. Power and passivity, ebb and flow.

[14:29] Even the physical realm is founded on and held together by the positive and negative attraction of atomic particles. Everywhere, the universe displays its division into parts of interlocking opposites.

So they're opposites, but they're interlocking. And we could ask, why is that? Everywhere we look, we see opposites that go together.

Why in humanity is there male, female, masculinity, femininity? The answer is grounded in God himself. It's grounded in God himself.

In the Trinity, you have a beautiful correspondence of rule and submission. The Father is the head of the Son.

He rules over the Son. And the Son submits to the Father. And now the Father loves his Son. But the way he loves his Son is in such a way that he incorporates his rule over him.

[15:40] His love is not in contradiction to his rule. His love is carried out as he rules his Son. And the Son, in turn, loves the Father. But the way he loves him is done in submission and obedience to

his Father's will.

And so, in the very Godhead, in the Trinity, there is this principle of rule and submission. And one is not better than the other.

They both are equally acts of love. And so, God has made male and female. And together they image God. And together they show and reflect the unity of God.

Now, that's really deep. But when we pull it up and apply it to male and female, husband and wife, let me boil it down. Ladies, your man was created by God to lead, to rule.

It's who he is as an image bearer of God. And when you submit to him as a wife, you are affirming who he is at the deepest levels of his humanity.

[17:02] You're letting him be the person God designed him to be. And that's why, in the Bible, there's always these pairs.

Husbands, love your wives. Wives, submit to your husbands. God is saying, this is how you love your partner. This is how you love your partner. This is how you bring unity and oneness to a marriage.

You love in this way and you love in that way. And that's the way this delicate dance of marriage is going to be beautiful. It's not when we dance in lockstep.

It's not when we do the exact same things. It's when the man leads and the woman follows. And then there's a beautiful dance. And so I can tell you firsthand that when a woman humbly submits to her husband, that speaks volumes to his heart about love and about how she feels and thinks about him, about her care for him.

And when you don't submit to him, it's like he's strapped to a gurney and you're standing on his oxygen tube. And instead of marriage being something that's beautiful and wonderful and good for him, it now has become a fight for his life.

[18:16] Because you are strangling him. You're choking him. Instead of a dance, it's now a fight for his very existence. And I know that might seem very strange to you, but every time you war against your husband in an ungodly way, you're not just being disagreeable.

You're striking at the very core of who he is as an image bearer of God. And so if you want to love him, if you want to make this marriage one that he can thrive in and in turn you will thrive in, then submit to him in respect.

You will. And that's the way you can love him. So that's number two. Number three. Consider his personality. Consider his personality.

This kind of goes back to what Peter said about how husbands are supposed to live with their wives in a considerate way.

And I think the same could be said about wives in turn towards their husbands. You want to consider his personality and who he is and how he is made as a man.

[19:31] And so, ladies, when you got married, you got married to a man. And that might sound really a no-brainer, but some people are surprised by that.

You didn't marry someone like you. You didn't marry someone who has all the traits and all the characteristics that you have.

If you want to love your husband, then you can't expect him to be just like you in every way. And so many women get married, and I'm not sure, but they don't realize that they're getting a man out of the deal.

A man. They went in, they wanted a husband. And they wanted children and security and companionship. But lo and behold, what they got was a man. And they have a hard time dealing with it.

And so you've heard the expression caveat emptor. It's a commerce, and some of the older people know what I'm saying. It says, buyer beware. That's what it means.

[20:34] Buyer beware. And so all you young ladies, you need to hear this caveat emptor. When you get married, you get a man, and he's different than you.

He'll be bigger and louder and tougher and hungrier and dirtier than you expect. And he'll drag in more mud with his big feet than you think is reasonable.

And what will make you cry will make him laugh. And he'll eat more than you ever think is necessary. And he won't care about folding up the towels. Most of them won't care about folding up the towels after he takes a shower.

If he hangs them up at all, he's not going to care where the monogram goes. It's just going to be up there. And he's different than you. And it wasn't my idea, and it wasn't your idea.

It was God's idea. And so if you're going to love your husband, you had better learn to live with him in a considerate way. So men and women are different.

[21 : 35] And those differences are wonderful. They're wonderful. They cause all kinds of problems in this fallen world. But nevertheless, the differences are good.

They're real. And they're meant for our good. And so men, aren't you so happy that your wife doesn't look like you? I'm so glad that my wife doesn't look like a man.

That would be terrible. And so differences are good. And those differences go deeper than just how we look. They go about how we process life and how we think about life.

And remember last time we talked about men are like waffles and women are like spaghetti. And I got a lot of people after that saying, oh, that's really good. And so I thought I'd bring it out here again.

If I hit a single, maybe I'll hit a double this time. So women, your husbands process life. They think about life differently than you do. Like I said, his life is made up of boxes that are generally separated from each other.

[22 : 45] They have walls in between. And when he is at work, he has an at-work box. And when he is at work, he's at work. And when he's in a relationship box, when he's working on a relationship, that's what he's doing.

That's where he's at. And he might be able to go from box to box fairly quickly. But all the time, he is only usually in one box. And so what that means is that he's going to argue differently than you do. He's going to argue differently than you do. He isn't thinking about how your particular problem touches all the rest of your life and how you feel about that. He thinks of your argument as a problem.

There's a problem in this box, and I need to resolve this problem. And so as you're talking, he's thinking, okay, I need to boil this problem down and do it.

What's the essential? Where's the hiccup here? And if I can fix that, we'll be good. And I'm telling you, that's how God made him.

[23 : 51] He's an initiator. He's a problem solver. And he thinks of things basically unrelated. And that's precisely why he doesn't get a lot of what you're saying sometimes when you're talking to him about how you, about your feelings and how it makes you feel when your mother says that to you.

Seriously, he's looking at it, and he's thinking, mom is the problem, and so the solution is to get rid of mom somehow. And of course, that isn't what you want to hear.

That isn't what you want to hear. You don't want his simple solution. But can I say in his defense, he does not mean to be that way on purpose, to be insensitive on purpose.

It's the way he is. It's hard for him to hear and understand what you're saying because of the way he's been made.

You see, he has blue hearing aids on, and what he hears gets processed through his male brain. And no matter how much you yell into your pink megaphone, he's not going to hear it.

[25 : 04] It's going to be somewhat lost and garbled in translation. And I'm not saying that communication is impossible. That's not the point.

What I'm saying is that you're going to have to work harder and longer to speak to him in a way that he can understand you. You're going to have to be really specific.

Like, if you don't want him to solve your problem, you should say, honey, I don't want you to solve my problem. I know that's what you want to do. I understand that that is how you think that's the loving thing to do.

But right now I need you to listen to me and to sympathize with me. I'm not asking you to fix me. I'm asking you to be patient and listen and sympathize.

And when you are simple and you are clear and you don't assume that he knows exactly what you're saying, it will do wonders for your marriage.

[26 : 03] And because you'll be speaking in a way that he can hear and that he can understand. And it will be a very loving thing for you to do.

And that's the point. If you want to love your husband, it's important to communicate in a way that he can understand. And so when you reach out to him and you say exactly what you need, you will actually be giving him a wonderful present.

Because most husbands, and most husbands here I'm sure, are generally of goodwill. They want to do right. They want to love you.

But sometimes it's hard to know what to do. And so when you're direct and clear, you don't assume anything, you're giving him a present. You're giving him the key to your heart. This is the way you can love me.

And that's what he wants to do. That's what he wants to do. And that's what God has called him to do. So appreciate. Consider his personality. Here's number four.

[27 : 10] Be his helper. Be his helper. Wives, isn't that exactly what the Lord gave Eve for in the garden? What did the Lord say?

I will make a helper suitable for him. A helper suitable for him. And a lot of people think that denigrates women. But I need my wife like I need heir.

And to say that I need heir is not to denigrate heir. It's to honor it and to show my need of it. And so the Lord is not denigrating women in any way when he says, now you go help that man.

He needs your help. Now you go help him. That's honoring you. And so when you help your man out, you love him. You put him first. And isn't that what love essentially is?

It's submitting our desires for the good of someone else. Love is seeking the joy of others in their good. It's seeking our joy in the joy of another.

[28 : 19] And so when you're a Proverbs 31 woman, when you say, I'm going to help my man and I'm going to be a Proverbs 31 woman, that says to that man, I love you.

You know, I think I can speak for most men when I say, I don't care about flowers. I don't want candy. I don't really want romance even.

I'm sorry. But if I have a home cooked meal and my house is clean and my kids are being raised and taken care of well, that says you love me.

And that might sound harsh, but that's what men view as love. It's not glamorous. It's not romantic. But for a man, it is love. And so help him by being a Proverbs 31 woman. Help him by being a Song of Songs wife.

[29 : 17] And if you don't know what I mean, read Song of Songs. Read it as it is. It's romantic love poetry. And the Song of Songs is all about the bliss and the struggles of marital love and sex.

It's about this passionate relationship between a man and a woman. And if you want to love your husband, be that kind of woman. Because the Bible is, the Song of Songs is there to teach us how to love each other in marriage.

And so in Song of Songs, she speaks first. That woman speaks first. And she speaks most. She tells him what she wants and what she likes.

And she's available. And she's available visually. And your husband's wives are bombarded every day by sexually charged images.

And the eye gate is the exact way that his sexual desire is stirred up for good or for ill. And so give him a lot of images.

[30 : 24] And so give him a lot of redemptive images. Fill his mind up with images of you and being attractive for him.

And when you do that, you will help him. And he will experience that as love. So love him.

Help him. Here's number five. Live in the goodness of the gospel. We could have put this first. We could have put this last.

We could have included. We could have put this for every point. But live in the goodness of the gospel. Wives, when you married, you married a man and you married a sinner.

A sinner. And that sinner that you have married is going to need a lot of room to sin and to be forgiven. It's not amazing that 50% of marriages end in divorce.

[31 : 25] It is amazing that 100% of marriages don't end in divorce. Because we sin against each other so much. And forgiveness and grace are not things that grow on the natural man's heart.

They flow out of the ongoing experience of the goodness of the gospel. So forgiveness flows from knowing that I have been forgiven a \$10 billion debt that I could never have repaid.

So it's easy for me to forgive my husband or my wife when they have a \$100 debt on me. Because I have been forgiven so much.

And so wives, before you try to love your husbands, make it your life goal to live in the goodness of the gospel.

And what I'm saying is strive and labor and work and pray to feel again and again the goodness of the good news.

[32:38] And it's really good news. And we grow callous and we have this cold-hearted, we tend to be cold-hearted and we lose our first love.

And so what your husbands need is for you to be on fire for Jesus, to be living and feeling that I have been forgiven.

And God has totally, unexpectedly, undeservedly rescued me from the kingdom of darkness and He has brought me into the kingdom of the Son He loves.

God has rescued me. And now you have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

So wives, your husbands need you to be in love with Jesus. Your husbands need you to make Jesus first and foremost if you're ever going to love them.

[33:40] You have to know the love of God first. So the joy of the Lord must be your strength. The joy of the Lord.

That means your joy has to be in the Lord. And you have to experience the Lord's joy in you. You have to experience this joyful relationship with the Lord.

And that joyful relationship is the strength that you need to love your husband. To love those dirty, hungry, insensitive, sometimes clueless husbands.

And that's what we are. And if we're anything different, it's because of the grace of God. It's because of God's goodness. And so love us by loving God first.

Don't idolize us. Don't put us on a white horse and expect us to be knights in shining armor because we'll fall off. We're not flawless. We need mercy. And there's only one God.

[34:41] So worship Him. And if you make that your greatest priority, worshiping God, loving Him, having a vibrant, devotional life, joyfully thanking God for everything He's done for you and Jesus, then you'll love us.

You'll love us. You'll love us. Well, let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, I do pray that You would put Your truth in our hearts and make it to bear fruit.

You know the weakness that we have, the pride that we have in our own lives. And I pray that You would humble us and help us to receive the truth from Your Word and to believe it and then to bear fruit.

that's what I would pray for, that You would take this message and that You would bring forth fruit out of our lives, starting tonight and tomorrow and five years from now and 20 years from now, that You would bring fruit from this truth.

And Lord Jesus, we do need you. And Lord Jesus, we do need you. We are sinners and we absolutely need you.

[36:10] We thank You that You are praying for us. Heavenly Father, thank You that You have forgiven us because of Your Son, that the sinless Savior died. And if that is true, my guilty soul is counted free.

So thank You that we have been justified. And I pray that we would live in the goodness of that, reveling in what You have done for us. I ask that You would bless us as we go on our way.

Honor Yourself in our life by making us to bear fruit. And it's in Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Amen.

Well, as we close, let's turn in our hymnals to hymn 343, Day is Dying in the West.

And let's stand as we sing. Hymn 343.