

## Husbands, Love Your Wives

The Spirit said, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Eph. 5:25). This is a command, not a suggestion. Therefore, the husband who does not love his wife is in violation of God's will and will be called into account for it (cf. 2 Cor. 5:10). No doubt, there are husbands who do love their wives as God has commanded, but there are others who do not. Why?

First, some husbands are caught up in their jobs. They work so many hours, they barely have time to see their wife (and family) through the week. Others work out of town so much that they may see their family only once a week or less. Now, God does command a man to work to provide for his family, but this cannot be used as an excuse to neglect the family (1 Thes. 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 5:8). When man pits one command of God against another, using one to neglect the other, his religion is vain (cf. Matt. 15:3-9).

Second, some husbands are busy with hobbies, whether organized sports (football, softball, soccer, basketball), fishing, or hunting. It is that time of year again when men go hunting, some obsessively. [Some are thinking at this point: "He has left teaching and gone to meddling"] Well, the fact is that men should not immerse themselves so deeply in a hobby that they neglect their wives, or children. To get caught up in the affairs of life and, as a result, fail to keep God's command, is sinful (cf. Matt. 13:22).

Third, some men simply do not give due attention and affection to their wives. They would rather watch TV, work in the yard, or sleep on the couch than spend time with their wives. Again, we submit that this is a violation of the command to love our wives. A man needs to love his wife. Peter wrote, "Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered" (1 Pet. 3:7). First, and foremost, the primary thing a man should do to show that he loves his wife is to submit to the will of God, that is, he should be a faithful Christian--an heir of the grace of life. The man who is not a Christian, or a faithful one, is doing untold damage to his wife, and children. He should make it his priority to set the example and give encouragement to his wife, and children, in spiritual matters. No matter how "good" a man may be, if he is not a faithful child of God, he hinders his wife's growth in the Lord. A woman married to an infidel can be strong

and a good influence upon her husband (1 Pet. 3:1). But, imagine how much stronger should could be if he himself is a faithful Christian encouraging her in truth and righteousness. So, husbands, make sure you are taking the lead in serving the Lord. When you do this, you will do untold good for your wife, and children. Read the Bible with them. Pray with them. Go to meetings and set up Bible studies. "Husbands, love your wives!"

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