

## **Rejoicing in Restraints, part 6: The Family**

Assorted

(preached Pine Grove 9/13/20 Sun PM)

### **Introduction**

For the past 5 Sunday nights, we have been talking about restraints on sin that God has placed in the world.

We began with the conscience, which is the most personal of restraints that God has designed to keep people from sin.

And now we are looking at the family, which also acts a restraint on sin in the world.

A few weeks back we noted that family came about in the second chapter of the Bible with the creation of Eve from Adam's side.

And though Eve was created to complement and help Adam, she would also be a restraining influence on Adam's sin.

In fact, the order of events in Genesis 2 is this.

God made Adam, put him in the garden, gave him a command to keep, and then said it is not good for Adam to be alone and then made Eve.

And though Eve's role will be great, there is a clear connection between Adam's sin and the creation of family.

Simply put, families restrain sin in the world.

And last week, we reminded ourselves of the role of wives in the family, and though God commands them to submit to their husband's leadership, that submission even restrains sin..

Look back at *1 Peter 3:1*..

***In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,***

Notice that a wife's submission will bring a husband into obedience to the word.

In other words, a wife's submission as a restraining influence in the life of her husband.

From a human perspective, we would think that submission would allow for more sin, but the opposite is actually true.

You won't keep a husband from sin by yelling at him but by submitting to him without words.

So the submission of a wife to her husband actually restrains the sin of her husband.

This is why we must resist doing family our way and submit to doing family God's way.

And this is why obedience to God's roles in the family is so central to a stable society.

When family breaks down, sin rises.

Therefore, we are spending some time looking at God's design for family on Sunday nights.

Not only will it bless our families to follow God's plan, it will serve to restrain sin in our lives and in our communities.

Tonight, we turn our attention to husbands.

Looks with me at Ephesians 5:25-33..

Let's read it..

***25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26 so 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 [q]in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.***

***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. 31 For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. 32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she [r]espects her husband.***

As I said last week, the wives go first in Ephesians 5, but the Lord speaks longer to the husbands.

And his instruction to husbands is as clear and simple sounding as it is to the wives.

The simple instruction is for husbands to love their wives.

And take note.

Though it should be obvious for husbands to love their wives, the Lord issues a command to do it.

The wife has no such command given to her.

I think God created women as more loving creatures in many ways.

Husbands however need to be reminded to love their wives.

Now, much of this instruction was necessary in this day because women were looked down upon in many cultures.

And they still are in many ways.

The spread of the gospel has done much to elevate women to their proper place...

Which is their equality with men before the Lord.

Jesus did much to bring the image of women up in the world.

So, when Paul writes to men that they are to love their wives.

This is actually counter to the culture of his day, where women were used and discarded regularly.

In the Roman Empire, unfaithful wives were killed while unfaithful men were the norm.

But the Lord says, husbands love your wives.

And remember, the Greek language has 3 words for love.

First, there is phileo love.

It is a brotherly love, a love for your neighbor.

Philadelphia is the city of brotherly love.

Phileo love is the love you have for your family.

It is an emotional love felt for people close to you.

It is used about 30 times in the NT, but that is not the word that the Lord inspired Paul to use here.

Then, eros is another word for love in Greek.

This was used in a sense of romantic or sexual love.

Interestingly, eros is never used in the NT, so that is definitely not the word used in Ephesians 5.

The word used for love in Ephesians 5 is agape.

Agape love is much more than emotional love.

It is much more than romantic love.

Though agape love may touch your emotions, it is not an emotional love.

It is the love of action.

It is the love of selflessness that seeks the welfare of others over your own welfare.

Agape love is the love that Jesus spoke of in John 15 when he said, ***“greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”***

This is the kind of love that husbands are commanded to have for their wives.

So how is that kind of love expressed in the marriage relationship.

Well, let’s go to 1 Peter 3 for a moment.

Now last week, we went to 1 Peter to get some more instruction to wives, but there is also instruction for husbands there as well.

So, take your bibles and turn to 1 Peter 3:7...

Where Peter writes to husbands and simply says what Paul is saying here...

*1 Peter 3:7....*

***7 You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with [c]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.***

I think this passage helps us men know more about how to love our wives.

The first way to love here is to live in subjection to her as well.

Peter says “in the same way” goes all the way back to chapter 2 where Peter writes that Jesus is our example.

He submitted to death even though he didn’t deserve it.

And as husbands we set our rights aside for our wives at times.

We don’t seek only the things that make us happy; we seek to love our wife by putting her needs before ours.

Jesus was an innocent man but submitted to evil men.



So, that means you even set aside your rights in the face of an overbearing wife.

Any man can love a wife who loves him back, but try to love a wife who makes your life difficult.

That is the kind of love that is commanded here.

A submissive love that put her needs ahead of yours even when she is treating you unfairly in your eyes.

So, the first way to love your wife is to with a submissive love.

That is not saying that you love her so much that you give up your role of the head of the home.

No, God has made you the head of the wife.

But in that role, you show a submissive love without taking on a submissive role.

You give up your rights but you don't give up your role.

This is where so many people especially men mess up.

When we think leadership, we think domination and being vocal and macho.

Let me remind you that all leadership in the Bible is servant leadership.

This is a good lesson for us all.

Jesus wrapped himself in a cloth and washed the feet of his disciples.

And did he then get up and let the disciples lead him to the Mount of Olives?

No, he washed their feet; then, he got up and led them to the Mount of Olives.

And did they follow?

Yes, they did.

They followed so much that they eventually gave up their lives for Jesus.

That, my friends, is servant leadership.

That is servant love.

Setting your comfort aside for the good of others, carrying their burdens, meeting their needs...

Men that lead and love like that are easy to follow.

I'm sure there is not a wife in here tonight who would not gladly follow a man like that.

So, # 1, Love your wives Submissively. Put her needs before yours.

#2, Love your wives sensibly.

Look at 1 Peter again...

Live with her in an understanding way.

Here is what that means.

Love her in a way that she wants to be loved.

You need to know what makes your wife tick.

Which requires understanding her.

For some women, if you help with the household duties, she feels loved.

For other wives, she needs a regular date night with no kids.

For others, she just needs your undivided attention for 30 minutes.

For others, she wants surprises.

For others, she wants her honey do list done.

Every wife is different, but you husbands need to know your wives.

You need to understand them.

Figure out what makes her happy and do it, regardless of the inconvenience to you.

If she needs a few hours alone without screaming kids....

Load them up and head out.

If she needs her nails done, spend the money on that rather than something for you.

That is loving her Sensibly by knowing what she likes.

#3 Love your wife strongly.

1 Peter 3 again...

As with someone weaker since she is a woman....

God has designed you as the stronger partner of your marriage.

That doesn't mean you are more special to God.

It means that you are the one who protects her and your family.

She is physically weaker.

Carry the groceries.

Open the door.

Fix the car or pay to have someone fix the car.

Change the light bulb.

Cut the grass.

Paint the house.

I know some ladies like to do these things and that's ok, but men don't lay on the couch while she physically wears herself out.

And this also includes providing for your wife as well.

Be the bread winner of the family.

Loving her strongly just simply means what folks use to call "being a man."

That is loving your wife strongly.

Finally #4, love your wife sacrificially...

Look back at 1 Peter...

Show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life...

The grace of life is marriage.

God gave man marriage as a great mercy...

It was intended to give both men and women close fellowship with one another...

God said "it is not good for man to be alone."

And that is why he created woman.

But it is also equally true that it is not good for woman to be alone, so she was given to the man.

That makes her a fellow heir to the grace of life.

She is equally blessed to be a part of this marriage relationship.

Therefore, men don't think that marriage was just designed to bless you.

It was also designed to bless the woman equally.

Which is just the opposite of how most people view marriage..

People get married for how it benefits them.

Women marry to have financial stability.

Men marry for physical pleasure.

However, God is teaching husbands in 1 Peter that marriage is not just about them.

It is an opportunity to honor their wives who also have been blessed with marriage.

Husbands, loving your wife doesn't mean that she sacrifices for you, but rather you sacrifice for her.

Marriage should be a rush to self-sacrifice for both the husband and the wife.

And let me say this again very clearly...

These ways to love your wife are not dependent upon her actions at all....

Even if she is an overbearing or quarrelsome wife...

You love her in these ways.

And why do I say this?

Well, that's the love that Jesus displayed.

He loved those that wanted to kill him.

“Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.”

Jesus is always our model of what true love looks like.

The love chapter in the Bible in 1 Cor 13.

This is read at most weddings, and nearly everyone who reads it thinks of the husband or wife's shortcomings when they read it.

I want to read a section of it now.

But I want your mind to focus on the person of Jesus when I read it.

Not yourself and certainly not your spouse's failures as you hear it.

***4 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness,***



*but rejoices with the truth; 7 [b]bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

**8 Love never fails**

That is the love of Jesus that we see in the gospels, and this is the love that husbands are to show to their wives.

Now, flip back to Ephesians 5:25...

Well, men that covers at least the first four words of Ephesians 5:25...

But those are some ways to love your wife according to the word of God....

But we need to finish this up...

So, let's look at the second half of verse 25...

*just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26 so 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 [q]in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.*

And just like the wives model for submission was Christ, husbands, your model of love is also Christ.

I want to add way number 5 to love your wife...

And that is...

#5 Love her Spiritually....

Jesus loved the church so much that he gave up his life for her...

And the point of laying down his life was so that he could clean up our lives...

He died so that we could be made right with God.

Verse 26 is Jesus cleaning up the church...

Verse 27 is Jesus presenting a pure church to God.

You want to know love husbands?

Love your wife by helping her grow in the Lord.

Read the Bible with her.

Pray with her.

Weep over her sin with her.

Lead her away from sin.

Make sure she is being exposed to the preaching and teaching of God's Word.

Sit with her in church.

Take notes.

Talk with her after you leave about what she learned.

Help her with her Sunday school lesson.

And this is a great imagine to keep in your mind....

See yourself taking your wife to the Lord and saying...

Lord, here she is...

Lord, I can't take credit for the godly woman she is..

But I tried to do all I can to make her like your Son.

That is how Jesus loves the church.

He chips away at our rough edges knowing that he will one day present us to His father.

Husbands, it should pain us to see our wives struggle with sin.

We should not rejoice in their failures.

We should be happy when they show impatience or bitterness or anger.

It should break our hearts.

You need to love your wife by helping her in her walk with the Lord.

Saying “that’s your problem” is not an example of love.

As we desire ourselves to become more like Christ, we should also desire our wives to become more like Christ.

And we do it with love.

We walk with her through her battles with sin and we hold her hand, rather than telling her what to do.

That is love because that is the love that Jesus has for us.

And then see what Paul says...

When you love your wife spiritually, look at verses 28 – 33...

***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. 31 For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. 32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she [r]espects her husband.***

Here is the cherry on top of the sundae.

Except Paul put the cherry on the bottom of the sundae by mentioning this last.

Husbands, when you love your wives this way....

It is of great benefit to you.

When you love your wife biblically, the love comes back to you.

And it comes back to you from two sources.

Your wife will love you and your heavenly Father will be pleased with this kind of love.

And man and woman are designed to be joined as one.

Marriage is not a tug of war.

It is a one-legged race.

Marriage is the coming together of two people.

Not the constant struggle to break away.

In a lot of ways, it is like the pregnant mom.

She loves her baby by eating well.

Even if that means that at times, she has to deny herself what she wants.

She eats well because she knows that her baby will benefit.

That way when the baby is born, the baby is healthy.

And the mom enjoys the blessings of a healthy baby.

Husbands, we need to show sacrificial love to our wives.

Even when that means denying our desires.

And when our marriage grows in this way, it produces a healthy God-fearing woman.

That saves you a lot of pain.

That is a joy to be with.

That loves you like you love her.

## **Conclusion**

Husbands, love your wives.

Love them submissively by laying aside your rights.

Love them sensibly by knowing what makes them feel loved.

Love them strongly by protecting and providing for them.

Love them sacrificially by honoring her equal part in marriage.

And love them spiritually by helping her to become more like Christ.

And when you love your wife that way, the world sees Christ's love for his church.

Ultimately, when you love your wife as God has commanded, you will restrain sin in your life, in her life, in your family, and in the world.

Let us pray.