

Relationships: “Reversing the Curse – Part 2”

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Scripture

Ephesians 5:25-28

“Husbands, **love your wives**, just as Christ also loved the church and **gave Himself up for her**, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. So, husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies.”

Last Week

We discussed the First Relationship from Genesis 1-3

We discussed how the curses from the Fall impacted the first relationship and every marriage since

We discussed how the wife can help the husband reverse the curse on Adam

This Week

How do we reverse the curse?

For both partners:

- 1) We need to remember the curse that God gave them
- 2) We need to understand the primary needs
- 3) We need to know how our spouse helps us reverse the curse

What the Wife Needs

The Curse

What is the cause of the Curse?

Eve listened to the Serpent’s words and held them in higher regards than God’s words

Genesis 3:16

“To the woman He said, ‘I will **greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth**, in pain you will bring forth children; Yet **your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.**’”

God commanded that Adam and Eve populate and govern the earth

Genesis 1:27-28

“God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; **male and female He created them.** God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘**Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth**, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

Curse #1: Greater Pain Tolerance Required

“**greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth**”

We presume that God's plan was for some pain in childbirth – understanding basic biology

The word “multiply” is used to describe the increase of the children of Israel in Egypt, however

It means a huge magnification in the amount of sorrow and pain from giving birth

The second curse might be more painful

Curse #2: The Deep Need to and yet the Inability to Control Your Surroundings

“your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you”

The Hebrew word for “desire” is “a mastering control over something”

We see it in what God says to Cain about sin:

Genesis 4:7

“If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.”

Sin wants and does lead to the control of the flesh -> we see that in many of Paul's letters -> **Romans 7**

Eve will desire and attempt to control Adam, but Adam will be the God appointed “ruler” in their relationship

Several women will now say, “Well, we'll just see about that!” -> “Oh My!”

What are a woman's primary needs?

- 1) Security
- 2) Emotional Intimacy
- 3) A Nurturing Love

Helping the Wife Reverse the Curse

- 1) Security

The desire to control surroundings leads to a high need for security

The wife's need for security is found in various places in the Bible

There are multiple aspects to security: physical security and safety as well as emotional security

- a) Physical Security

1 Peter 3:7

“You husbands in the same way, **live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman.**”

Berean Standard Bible:

“Husbands, in the same way, treat your wives with consideration as a delicate vessel, and with honor as fellow heirs of the gracious gift of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.”

The husbands are to “live with your wives in an understanding way” – “**treat your wives with consideration**”

What does that mean -> “an understanding way”?

The Greek word is *ginōskō* meaning "to know" or "to understand"

Simply put, Peter says that you should have intimate, experiential knowledge of your wife -> who she is

For every case in which your wife says, “that’s my man” you should respond “that’s my woman”

Anyone ever said, “I just cannot understand that woman!”

That means you have to work a little harder on your relationship

Then Peter adds:

“as with someone weaker, since she is a woman,” or “as a delicate vessel”

I have heard this phrase explained as saying that women are inherently weak

That is not the case at all – many women are a lot stronger than the men in a relationship

That could be physically stronger, spiritually stronger, having a higher pain tolerance, etc.

What is Peter saying?

I like the BSB’s description “as a delicate vessel”

It doesn’t say that she IS a delicate vessel -> it says that the husband should treat her AS a delicate vessel

How does the husband respond to something that is precious to him? -> He protects it from harm

The husband should be willing to sacrifice himself for his bride

Ephesians 5:25

“Husbands, **love your wives**, just as Christ also loved the church and **gave Himself up for her.**”

Your bride should be precious and treasured in your life, you should know her well, understand her moods

You should be understanding toward her, treat her delicately as a woman, not like you would do another man

It should be your lifelong “project” to know her, care for her, spiritually guide her

b) Emotional Security

She has a different emotional make up than you do -> she’s constructed differently

The curse of needing to be in control is an emotional one

Needing to be in control and not being able to physically take control is a fear of many women

How does the husband reassure his bride of her place in his life and that she can be secure?

Egalitarianism vs. Complementarianism

Egalitarian -> she is an equal in all things

Complementarianism -> she is a treasured addition in some areas

The feminist movement brought us “You can have it all, baby”

The woman was not meant to “have it all” – complement not equality in both gender directions

Can a man give birth to a child?

Ephesians 5:23

“For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, **He Himself being the Savior of the body.**”

That does not mean that she is a complete subordinate in all things

Complement vs. Subordinate

1 Peter 3:7

“and **show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life**, so that your prayers will not be hindered.”

The Honored Sister

“**show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life**”

Not only is she your wife, but she is a “fellow heir” -> a beloved sister in Christ, also

Because of that relationship with God, you better treat her with honor -> honor means “precious value”

She is a recipient of “the grace of life” just like you are -> She’s going to make mistakes just like you will

The husband should treat his bride as a beloved sister in Christ, not like a slave in the house

When the wife knows that she is precious in the sight of her husband, her need to fight for control is reduced

2) Emotional Intimacy

Ephesians 5:25

“Husbands, **love your wives**”

Paul uses the Greek word *agape* in this verse, not the Greek word *eros*

Eros is a physical and sexual love while *agape* is an all-encompassing, holistic, emotional love

A husband’s love for his wife needs to create an emotional binding before it unleashes a physical connection

This binding was mentioned last week in Part 1:

Genesis 2:23-24

“The man said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and his mother and **be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.**”

What does that mean, “they shall become one flesh”?

It means a complete unity of the two making a whole -> seen as a sexual union bringing forth a child

Permanent monogamy was God’s intent in the two becoming one flesh

We see this in Paul's writing to the Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 7:2-5

"Each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband. The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise, also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

"Stop depriving one another" -> neither spouse should fight for control in the bedroom -> sex as a weapon

Ephesians 5:28

"Husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies"

How does the husband reverse the need for control?

He must build and continue to build that emotional intimacy throughout the relationship

In most couples, when emotional intimacy dies, the physical intimacy falls apart

3) A Nurturing Love

A nurturing love is one that invests in another's life

It is often used to describe a parent's influence on a child, but it is especially important between spouses

Paul wrote about this kind of love from the husband as critical in the life of his bride

Ephesians 5:26-27

"so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless."

A husband's love has a purpose in sanctifying his wife

"having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word" -> leading her to a deeper relationship with God

Ensuring that she is building time into her day for prayer, reflection, and Bible study is key

The husband may need to pick up some responsibility around the house to ensure she has time with God

Remember the Mary and Martha story with Jesus?

Luke 10:38-42

"Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word. But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, 'Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.' But the Lord answered and said to her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.'"

When the husband gets home, his first thought shouldn't be "What are we having for dinner?"

It should be "Did you spend time with the Lord today?"

"that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory" -> the husband's greatest work is in her glory

When your bride is nurtured in her relationship with God, you give a present to the Lord

having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless

The goal of the husband is that his bride is holy and blameless, set apart to God -> perfect in His eyes

Jealousy is death to a nurturing love

Proverbs 31:10-11

"An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels. **The heart of her husband trusts in her,** and he will have no lack of gain."

A husband needs to believe in his wife's love for him and trust her to be faithful

Nothing kills a nurturing love quicker than distrust

Valuing your bride for who she is inside builds the nurturing love:

Proverbs 31:30-31

"Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her the product of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates."

Your bride knows what she looks like -> she looks in the mirror a lot more frequently than you do, men

Every bride wants to be seen as beautiful by her husband

It is internal beauty that should be the husband's focus

Gaze deeper into your bride's eyes often -> look past the face into her soul and tell her how much you love her

"let her works praise her in the gates" -> her works of faith are to be treasured, for sure

Proverbs 31:20

"She extends her hand to the poor, and she stretches out her hands to the needy."

Her faith should be treasured even more

Proverbs 18:22

"He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD."

Reprogramming

Having the opposite gender traits

Prayer

Benediction