

Lesson 11:
Ministry Begins at Home

- I. The Church in America today is a dysfunctional family.
- A. We, in the Church, are obsessed with “fixing” others, yet oblivious to the strongholds and dysfunction of our own lives and families.

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

- B. The Body of Christ has placed a higher priority on church growth than on family stability. Yet, without family stability, there will be no true growth.
- II. The Holy Spirit is calling each of us to get our house in order.
- A. God cares very much about what goes on behind closed doors because that is where our true character is revealed. If we are not ministering to our own families and walking in mutual submission to our God-given responsibilities in our home, then anything we do outside the home is for the praise of man.
- B. **Note to divorced/single women and moms:** Embrace the truth of God’s Word concerning marriage, repent of any rebellion against authority, and Christ Himself will be your head and covering; your Provider, Protector and Lover of your soul.

III. Let's begin this week's lesson with a review of "*The Marriage Roles Based on Ephesians 5:22-33*," studied in Lesson 10.

A. The husband's role is to be modeled after Christ. He is to relate to his wife in the same way that Christ relates to His Bride, the Church.

1. Head of the wife; authority and source (v.23)
2. Servant-Leader: lay down his life for his wife (v.25)
3. Spiritual Leader: Committed to his wife's spiritual growth (vv.26-27)
4. Provider and Protector: "Feeds and cares for" his wife (vv.28-29)

B. The wife's role is to be modeled after the Church. She is to relate to her husband in the same way that the Church relates to Christ, her Bridegroom.

1. Looks to her husband as her first-love (v.23; Rev.2:4)
2. Submits to (lines up under) his authority/leadership (v.24)
3. Receives his provision (v.29) - a picture of grace (Eph.2:8-9)
4. Trusts in the Lord as her Savior (v. 23; Proverbs 3:5-6)

IV. Based on the above roles, the following are basic biblical principles of marriage:

- Just as Christ is to be the "first love" of the Church, the husband is to be the "first love" of his wife.

- The wife is to submit to her husband in the same way that the Church submits to Christ (Wesley: "... in everything that is not contrary to any command of God."¹)
- I Peter 3:7 God commands the husband to treat his wife with gentleness and respect. Abuse is NEVER to be tolerated. God has instituted Church and civil authority for the wife and children's protection.
- I Peter 3:1-2 "If any (husbands) do not obey the Word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of their lives."
- 2 Peter 1:3 Based on the model of Christ and the Church, the husband is responsible to provide for the wife and family.

What should be done if our marriage is not a picture of Christ and the Church?

Deep Theological View: Only God can unscramble our eggs! Seek Him in prayer for guidance and direction in making adjustments.

- Do not take matters into your own hands - that's what got each of us into trouble in the first place. Rely on the leading of the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of God never contradicts the Word of God). All sin is meeting our own needs in our own way, independently of God.²

¹ Wesley, *Ephesians* 5.

² Anderson, *Victory*, 28.

- Instead, begin by embracing the truth of Scripture, repent of rebellion against your God-ordained role. Wives, devote yourself to your husband out of reverence for Christ (Eph. 5:21), while trusting God to move on your behalf to bring healing to your family for generations (Psalm 81:13-14).

This Week's Memorization Verse: Psalm 81:13-14

*“If my people would but listen to me, if [they] would follow my ways,
how quickly would I subdue their enemies
and turn my hand against their foes.”*

