

The Marriage Covenant Seminar

I. Overview

II. The Covenant of Marriage

III. The “Fine Print” of the Marriage Covenant

a. The Husband

i. Overview

1. If he, as Ephesians 5:25 commands, is to love his wife as “Christ loved the Church,” then those verses which define Christ’s undying love for us also define the husband’s undying love for his wife.
2. Remember that
 - a. Legitimate needs do not indicate imperfection or fault (Adam & Eve);
 - b. Covenant needs are not grown out of but instead increase with spiritual growth;
 - c. Warning against defrauding your spouse;
 - d. Warning against cruel expectations;
 - e. You cannot understand but rather must accept these needs; and
 - f. If not you, then who?

ii. Spiritual Leader of the family (Ephesians 5:26)

1. Wife (Ephesians 5:23, 26; 1 Corinthians 14:35)
2. Children (Ephesians 6:4)
3. Ministry (Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15; Philemon 1:2)
4. Questions to consider
 - a. If you do not meet these needs, who do you want to meet them?
 - b. What are your spouse’s moral alternatives?
 - c. Will you trap your wife in the prison of a Christian marriage?
 - d. Are you willing for these same alternatives when it comes to your needs?
5. Reminder: You don’t have to get married, but if you do, then fulfill your vows to God.

iii. Love wife by sacrificially meeting her emotional needs (Ephesians 5:25)

iv. Trusting and truthful relationship (Proverbs 31:11)

v. Material needs (Ephesians 5:28)

vi. Home and family a priority (Ephesians 5:31)

b. The Wife

i. Overview

1. If she, as Ephesians 5:24 commands, is to be subject to her husband “as the Church is subject to Christ,” then those verses which define the Church’s undying love for Christ also define the wife’s undying love for her husband.
2. Remember that
 - a. Legitimate needs do not indicate imperfection or fault (Adam & Eve);
 - b. Covenant needs are not grown out of but instead increase with spiritual growth;
 - c. Warning against defrauding your spouse;

- d. Warning against cruel expectations;
 - e. You cannot understand but rather must accept these needs; and
 - f. If not you, then who?
- ii. Submission to his leadership (Ephesians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:18)
 - 1. If you define “submission” in Ephesians 5:22 as being virtually neutralized by Ephesians 5:21 (i.e. that they are equal in terms of authority), then the wife must be consistent with this application in all of her relationships, not just with her husband
 - a. She must be consistent with her application of submission and her children.
 - b. She must be consistent with her application of submission and domestic help.
 - c. Both use the same Greek word, and both are found in the exact same context of this passage (Ephesians 5:22-6:9)
 - 2. Submission and obedience (1 Peter 3:1-2, 5-6)
 - a. Stripped of obedience, submission has virtually no meaning.
 - i. Again, be consistent in the use of this same Greek word with respect to government, employees, domestic help, children, etc. – keeping in mind that submission by or to these groups without obedience is virtually meaningless.
 - ii. You cannot say that “I will be submissive to the tax laws of my government, but I retain the right to ultimately make my own choices when there is a dispute.”
 - b. Special note
 - i. This verse does not cut both ways.
 - ii. The wife wins the reluctant husband by submission; it does not say this will work for the husband’s relationship with the wife.
 - iii. The husband wins the reluctant wife by decisive leadership.
 - 3. Questions to consider
 - a. If you do not meet these needs, who do you want to meet them?
 - b. What are your spouse’s moral alternatives?
 - c. Will you trap your wife in the prison of a Christian marriage?
 - d. Are you willing for these same alternatives when it comes to your needs?
 - 4. Reminder: You don’t have to get married, but if you do, then fulfill your vows to God.
 - iii. Love your husband by giving him a sexually exciting marriage (Proverbs 5:15-19)
 - iv. Helpmate and companion in his life pursuits (Ecclesiastes 9:7-9)
 - v. The home as a refuge (Proverbs 31:12)
 - vi. Respect (Ephesians 5:33)

IV. Closing