

## “LOVE YOUR WIVES”

There have been times over the years as I was planning different messages to share in church, my wife would jokingly quip, “I think you need to speak on Ephesians 5:25.” If you are unfamiliar with that passage, Paul is speaking to the church at Ephesus when he says, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...”. In verse 28 he says it again, “In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies.” Soon thereafter, he reiterates this directive in verse 33, “...each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself...”. You can see that although my wife was humoring me in one sense, there was a hint of seriousness behind what she was persuading me to do. She, as all wives, desires to be loved, cherished, and nurtured in a way that reflects Christ’s love.

This can be a monumental task to say the least. In and of myself I fall short, but this is the standard Christ is calling me to. Yes, it can be extremely challenging due to my own natural inclination that bends toward selfishness. Yes, there is a cost to laying down our lives, husbands; however, our marriages should in some way emulate and reflect the love of Christ that we ourselves have received. My commitment to love my wife should only come second to loving God; she is my priority, before ministry, career, or anyone/anything else. The awesome thing about this is that as we lead in this way and serve our wives with a heart that desires to please God, we place her in a position of adoration. In dying to ourselves and placing her as ‘priority’, she is motivated to respond with heartfelt respect and admiration. Paul’s words should urge us to get out of ourselves and pour into the “gift” the Lord has given us.

It is true that Dunklin Memorial Church is a “man’s program.” Men walk through our doors broken and dismayed. In certain instances, their wives drop them off, calculating to never see them again. There is little hope in their marriage ever being restored and in some cases it remains that way. The damage that has been caused is just too deep; however, in other scenarios, these relationships that were once devastated and hanging by a thread are now more beautiful than ever before. God has worked not only in the man’s heart, but in the wife’s soul as well, and a beautiful reconciliation has taken place between them by His grace.

We have over 20 staff members whose lives have been miraculously transformed, and it is clearly evident through their marriages that God has done something unique and special with each one. What once appeared dead has been put back together and given new life. On the reverse side of this page you can see for yourselves some of these marriages I mentioned as a witness to what God can do with something that appears hopeless. Some of these couples have gone through an arduous journey, navigating through pain and forgiveness, but trusting the Lord each step of the way. Other men came to the program ‘single’, and the Lord brought a chosen wife to him in the time that He deemed appropriate and fitting, according to His plan. No matter the case, each is a remarkable story of grace, mercy, and love, depicting the love Christ has for His beloved, radiant church.

Husbands, love your wives.



Nick

P.S.

Homecoming weekend is March 5<sup>th</sup> - March 7<sup>th</sup>. We would love to see you. Register at <https://www.dunklin.org/events>



