

'WALK WORTHY (IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY)'

2/9/25 (# 14) *** PASTOR LEE

- PASTOR LEE: Within our whole WALK WORTHY/Ephesians Series....we are now focused on marriages....and WALKING WORTHY will substantially and positively effect your marriage as you walk in the Spirit Who powers you, by grace, to do that.
- Last week, we focused on the women/wives....this week, we focus on our men/husbands (many of whom are currently meeting on Wednesday evenings to discuss their role in marriage). Our verses today reflect that:

Eph 5:25-27- - Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her, (26) that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, (27) So that He might present the Church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

- Recall Genesis in which God creates man and then his 'helper'....someone who, in strength, will come along side of him and just provide so much blessing/support. And together, equally, they will *both* have dominion over all life around them (animals, etc). Adam must have joyously celebrated as Eve was created from his rib and came into being his life-long companion/mate.
- And Adam realized, in that moment, that he was the recipient of this wonderful God-given gift.....(just as husbands are, like-wise, blessed today!).
- Intrinsically and notwithstanding different interests, needs, desires, strengths, etc. , God made this man and woman to be 'one'.....See V. 31-32: ".....and the two shall become one flesh." Such a spiritual Godly phenomenon/mystery!
- Back to V-25.....how should husband love their wives??....with 'agape' love...that is a 'God kind of love'.....to love in such a way requires God's presence (being filled with the Spirit!) in our lives!
- We should love our wives like Christ loved the Church (all of us believers- -'Bride of Christ')....self sacrificing even to the point of death!
- Furthering the point, Pastor Lee cites a famous Napoleon quote: *Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and I, myself, have founded great empires; but upon what did these creations of our genius depend? Upon force! Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this day, millions will die for Him.*
- Men: As matter of loving your wives, seek out her hopes, dreams, expectations and make whatever sacrifice to pursue....no matter how large.....so that your wife would, reciprocally, be so thankful for their husband's love (ie. 'splashing back'). This all sounds almost unreal but it should be the vision/goal of every husband.
- Two broken sinners- - Adam and Eve- - who elicited 'universal sin'- - come together- but paid the price which 'splashed forward' all the way to present times.see Gen 3:15-16.
- As a result of this Fall, then, things will never be perfect...with now-inherent inclinations by each to dominate the other....searching, in a large part, unrequitedly , for the original (before-the-Fall) pure love shared by Adam and Eve.

- Against all this we need to follow God's Plan as Paul lays out for us.
- Beyond treating women in a Godly 'agape' kind of way, men must teach their sons how to treat and protect women, holding sons to high standards and modeling loving behavior to them.....teaching them a calling to love, protect and sacrifice....and not to sit back and/or to selfishly rule. **MEN ARE CALLED TO LEAD BY LOVING (Agape) AND SACRIFICING. NO WOMAN IS ASKED TO SUBMIT TO A RULER.**
- Avoid treating marriage as a 'contract' that embraces, at its core, a bi-lateral legal agreement- -with conditions- -with performance records and penalties- -with severability and liability.
- Rather, as we all knew at the start of our marriages, it is a life-long '**COVENANT**' between **THREE PERSONS** (including the Holy Spirit).....an unconditional, sacrificial, strong, loving and loyal commitment established by God's righteous design . So, we depend on God to make this happen- -where wrongs are NOT recorded (but placed on the Cross)- -indeed, He has provided us the perfect model in Jesus Christ and His unconditional, sacrificial love for all of us.
- Have any of us....in our marriages and through whatever series of challenges, disappointments, miscommunications, etc....built an emotional wall? Have any subconsciously inoculated themselves in this process? Rather, let your spouse in!...none of us are perfectbut we can forgive!
- In our imperfection....we can not hold each other to such an unachievable standard....but we do need to strive toward Jesus' standard of forgiveness! (As Christ forgave us, we forgive each other).

Mal 2:14- - "But you say, "Why does He not?" Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

- Referring to V-25/26, for those of us who put our faith and trust in Jesus, **WE ARE THE CHURCH**.....comprised of people who, in our sinfulness, do not always lovingly live their faith. But His kindness leads us to repentance.
- Remember, Jesus loves without reciprocity.....we need to model that as well and recognize the life-long, holy covenant that we made.
- Instigate a positive cycle....Husbands: love your wives in an agape way.....she receives that....thats 'the switch that flips' (through the Holy Spirit)....and the wife shines in brightness. So, bless our wives and our marriages by loving them in this way.
- Valentines Day.....***A box of chocolates will not overcome a lifetime of pain!*** Instead, live your love steadfastly, persevere in agape love.
- Pastor Lee's challenge: Let's all of us...especially husbands.....be as intentional as we can in our relationships this week!

WALK WORTHY IN MARRIAGE: AGAPE LOVE

