

**Walk it Out!**  
**Living Christian in an Everyday World**  
*A Call for Strong Men Who Love*  
Colossians 3:19 (Eph. 5:25-33)

Husbands, you are called to love your wife in a way that shows your wife and the world what Christ's love looks like.

1. What love is NOT...
  - a. It is not \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. It is not *chiefly* a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - c. It is not something you \_\_\_\_\_.
  - d. It is not \_\_\_\_\_.
  - e. It is not \_\_\_\_\_ first
  - f. It is not five \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. It is not a temporary \_\_\_\_\_.
  
2. What love IS...
  - a. It is the fruit of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. It is a \_\_\_\_\_ from the heart.
  - c. It is self-\_\_\_\_\_.
  - d. It is \_\_\_\_\_.

Biblical love is Spirit-generated \_\_\_\_\_ for another that moves you to actively seek for his/her \_\_\_\_\_.

## A Call for Strong Men of Love

### Colossians 3:18

#### READY

Can you think of any relatively recent examples where someone gave his or her life for another? Share.

#### SET & GO

**Primary Text:** Colossians 3:19

**Supporting Texts:** Ephesians 5:25-33

**Set 1** *Read Colossians 3:19 and Ephesians 5:25-33. Answer the following questions:*

How many times are husbands told to love their wives in Ephesians 5:25-33?

In what way are husbands supposed to love their wives (Eph. 5:25)?

How are husbands supposed to love their wives (Eph. 5:28)?

**Set 2** *Briefly discuss: Our understanding of love is influenced by our culture, but our culture is terribly confused about what love is; and this confusion has overflowed into the church. So, it is helpful to first discuss what love is not. Take time to discuss the following corrective thoughts:*

- Love is felt, but it is not **chiefly** a feeling. Because the Bible commands love, it is clear that love can be expressed apart from how you may feel at any moment. So acts of love can be genuine even if feelings are not present.
- Biblical love is not something you “fall into.” This notion implies that you are not in control. Biblical love involves choices of your will. The kind of “love” a person falls into is the kind of “love” a person can fall out of.
- Lust is easily mistaken for love, especially when love is too closely associated with the way we feel. Physical attraction is real (and important), but love is much deeper than what is physical (cf. 2 Tim. 2:22).
- It is popular to believe that you need to love yourself in order to love others based on verses like Matt. 19:19. But love of self is assumed by Jesus, not commanded. Everyone loves themselves (Eph. 5:29). See the following article: <http://www.todayschristianwoman.com/articles/2014/november/myth-of-self-love.html>
- Love cannot be summed up in “five languages.” While this concept may help think about ways to express love, it can also become self-focused: “**This** is how I will love you or how you should love me.” It can even become dangerously restrictive: “If you don’t love me in my language, then you are not really loving me.”
- Love is not a temporary contract that can be voided if the other doesn’t keep up his/her end of the bargain, yet this is how we treat marital love in our culture. In contrast, you’re commanded to love as Christ did and does: “I will never leave you, nor will I ever forsake you” (Heb. 13:5).

**Go 2a** How have these misunderstandings affected the modern church? How have they affected society?

**Go 2b** Which of these misunderstandings have you struggled with most? Are there others that aren’t listed here?

**Go 2c** Discuss how each of these feeds our sinful flesh. Why are we tempted to buy these notions?

**Set 3** *Briefly discuss: Take just a moment and define love (Don’t look now, but I’ve given a definition at the bottom of this guide by the \*). Did you define it, or did you give descriptions of it? It is actually difficult to find a true definition of biblical love; most just give elaborate descriptions. The definition I’ve given can be broken into the following statements about what love is:*

- True biblical love is the fruit of salvation. The life the Spirit generates in us when we are born again is from God, and He is love. Biblical love is not simply something you do or feel; it is the very nature of who you’ve become. The unbeliever can do acts of love but does not have a nature of love. Think and meditate upon 1 John 4:7-8.
- Biblical love is a choice of the heart. It involves your will and your affections (which are more closely related than you might think). God reorients your affections such that you desire to seek for good, but you must still choose to cultivate these affections. Love for another moves you to choose to do good and cultivate good for him or her.
- Love is self-sacrificing. It is most demonstrated by God giving His Son for you when you didn’t love Him (1 John 4:10). The idea of a husband giving his life for his wife (Eph. 5:25) is not so much about physical death as it is about dying to self. The former takes place in a moment; the latter, over a lifetime.
- Love is missional. Jesus loved the church with an end in mind (Eph. 26-27); He died for her good. Love desires good for another, knowing that the greatest good is found in God. Love actively seeks to bring this good about.

**Go 3a** Look at 1 John 2:9 and 11. What does this say about someone who hates another?

**Go 3b** Which concept of love listed above is most convicting to you? Why?

**Go 3c** What are specific ways that you can seek good for your wife? Your husband? Your children? Your friend?

**Set 4** ***Briefly discuss:** A husband's love for his wife is meant to be a living illustration of Christ's love for the church. She will see it, and the world will see it. This is an amazing calling and a weighty responsibility; one that husbands will always fall short of but should strive to uphold for Christ and by Christ. A husband's mistreatment or harshness toward his wife (Col. 3:19) is a distortion of Christ's love; one that is also seen by her, by any children, and by the world. Herein lies much of what it means for a husband to lead his family. He is to lead them to Christ by living in such a way as to make Him visible and lovely.*

**Go 4a** How might it change the way you relate to your wife (or others) if you remembered that you are actively displaying or distorting the character of Christ by your behavior?

**Go 4b** Think about the things your wife (or others) do that tempt you to become "embittered" or to respond harshly. What is it that you are wanting? In what ways are you tempted to sin to get what you're wanting? How can you find fulfillment for these desires in Christ?

### **FINISH**

In what ways are you living out the selfishness of your flesh? Can you see that this is destructive to you? Are you willing to reach out for help?

\* Biblical love is Spirit-generated affection for another that moves you to actively seek for his/her good.