

Love Your Woman, Respect Your Man (Part 2)

by Bayless Conley

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Hello, friend. Welcome to the broadcast today. I have got something that is so important to share with you. We've been talking about what women want and need most and what men want and need most. Get a pad, get a pencil, get your Bible, and we're going to dive into this. Listen, this is life-changing. I wish I had heard this stuff 50 years ago, but nobody told me, but I'm going to tell you.

Well, I am so glad that you have joined me. And listen, just park yourself on your couch or the foot of your bed or whatever, and let's spend the next few minutes together. I guarantee there's going to be something in here that you need to hear. We're talking about what men and what women want and need most. And in particular, we're talking about in the context of marriage. But whether you're married or not, happily married, unhappily married, whatever your current situation is in life, you're going to get something from this that will help you.

In Ephesians 5, the apostle Paul talks to the church at Ephesus a lot about marriage. He says the husbands need to love their wives like Christ loved the Church. And he went on and on. And then it all funnels down to verse 33. And it says this (Ephesians 5:33),

³³ Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

All right. Husbands, love your wives. Wives, respect your husbands. Respect comes naturally to a man, and loving comes naturally to a woman.

Now, what every woman wants most, she wants to be loved, and she wants to know that she's loved. She wants that expressed through words, through actions, through attitudes. And more than anything else—ladies, are you listening? More than anything else, a man wants to be respected, and he wants to know he is respected through words, through actions, and through attitudes.

Now, last time we talked quite a bit about the man's role, loving the wife. But we've been centering in, or we ended last time, centering in on wives, respect your husbands. That is a command to be obeyed.

And some of you may need to look hard to find some areas that you genuinely respect. But do it. Think about it. I mean, if it's the way that he spends time with the kids or that he works hard or maybe he's a good cook or just whatever, find some things, even if they're small, and begin to vocalize to him respect for those things. He will unconsciously respond by loving you more.

And there are three areas where a man wants to know that he's honored and respected. And that is with his work, his wisdom, and his warmth, in those three areas. And I'll explain them.

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The first one: Work. And again, we talked about it last time, but I just sort of want to recap. As guys, our identity is tied up in our work. That's something that God has put in every man, we identify with that.

In the Garden of Eden, God put the man in the garden to work in it and to guard it, to provide and to protect. And those things are ingrained in every male.

Now, society will try and emasculate men and heap all sorts of other ideas and poisoned philosophies. But listen, that is the way that God has created us. And deep down, every man is created with this desire to provide and to protect. And it's important to us to know that we're respected, that we're admired, that we're appreciated for the work that we do.

In fact, ladies, you might find this interesting. When guys get together, we bond by hanging out. And I'll talk about that a little bit later. But, one of the first questions that guys will ask, we may not know one another. We've just met some guys. It might be on a golf course. It might be out at a dinner with some friends, whatever. One of the first questions we ask is, "What do you do?" Because our identity is tied up in our work, it's the way God made us.

And the ladies, I know from watching my wife get together with gals, one of the first things they ask is, "Do you have kids?" They talk about their kids. They talk about their grandkids. They talk about relationships. It's the way that God has wired women up.

In the garden of Eden, all the way back to the beginning, we got to go back and examine the seed if we want to understand the tree and the fruit that's supposed to be there. God gave man a job. Go work in the garden and protect it. The first thing God did when He made the woman, He gave her a relationship. He brought her to the man.

The most important thing to women is relationships. The most important thing to men is their work. Especially when we talk about it, and as I was saying. So, ladies, understand that your man wants to be respected in this area of work. So tell him that you appreciate him. Thank him for getting out there and trying. And if he's between jobs right now, if he's looking for one, don't put him down. Encourage him in that area. Oh, how he needs it.

And listen, if you're single and watching me right now, just a little tidbit, we go back to the beginning in Genesis. God gave the man a job before He gave him a wife. So, hey, if you want to marry that guy, let him get a job first.

The second thing that Adam was told by God—the second job he was given was to protect the garden, to tend it, and to keep it. The word "keep" means to protect, to guard, to watch over. And obviously, Adam didn't do a great job when it came to that. The serpent got in there and deceived Eve. And Adam had the authority to step in and stop that. And he did not do it. But listen, it is ingrained in us to protect you. That's something that God put in here, not to control you, but God put it in us to protect you.

I married a farm girl from the Midwest. And she's a go-getter. She put herself through university, graduated number one in her university, went to nursing school. She's a hard worker. She's a brilliant gal. And we got married. I was working then as an assistant pastor in a church, and I had a second job as a glass man. I would install glass in bank buildings and commercial buildings. And we're living in a small apartment. We've been married just a few weeks.

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And one night, she's all ready to go out somewhere. I go, "Where are you going?" She said, "I'm going to the mall." We lived in a small town, but there was a large town about maybe 15 miles away that had a big mall. And she said, "I'm going to the mall." And I stood in front of the door. She said, "What are you doing?" I said, "You're not going to the mall." She said, "What do you mean I'm not going to the mall?" I said, "You're not going to the mall?" She said, "Yes, I am. Get out of my way." I said, "No, I'm not letting you go to the mall." Reason being, and I explained to her that it was a large mall. It happened to be in a pretty seedy place in the city. There wasn't good lighting in the parking lot. And in the last month, there had been two rapes that had occurred in the mall parking lot.

I said, "You are not going to the mall. It's not that I want to control you. I don't want to be a big boss, but I am going to protect you. And I can't go right now; otherwise, I'd go with you. You are not going to the mall by yourself." And she bristled. She wasn't used to some guy telling her what she could do and what she couldn't do. But then she realized I was just endeavoring to protect her. I didn't want to control her. I don't want to be the boss of her life. I don't want her to lose her personality and her ability to choose. But it's something that God put in me. And I'm still the protector of her life to this day.

Janet and I walk together a lot. And you know what, when we walk, I always walk on the street side near the cars. I keep her on the inside. Why? Well, I'm protecting her. That's the way God has wired me up. And if somebody comes out of the lane with their car and starts coming our way, well, she's going to be behind me. And I'm the one that's going to be in between her and the car. I'm her protector. That's just something that God has put in me, and God has put it in every man.

And it's important, ladies, it's important that you recognize that and that you vocalize respect for that. If you will do that, your husband will begin to unconsciously, maybe not right away, but I predict that sooner or later, he will unconsciously respond by loving you more.

And the second area where men desire to be respected is what I'm calling "with wisdom," the man's God-given nature to lead or to fix things. We could say it this way "to guide and to solve."

I read one time about a married couple. And this married couple had decided early on in their marriage that he would make all the big decisions, and she would make all the smaller decisions, all the minor decisions in life. And after 20 years of marriage, he realized that the wife had not viewed a single decision that they had ever made as being major. She viewed every one as being minor.

Now listen, ladies, this does not diminish your ability to make decisions and to be wise. And I realize my wife Janet, there are some things she does better than I do. And I let her do those things. We've worked that stuff out in our relationship, and so there are some things she does better than I do. She has more insight. She has more of an innate ability to do certain things, and there are certain things that I do as well.

But listen to this. It's Ephesians 5:22–24. Ephesians 5:22–24. It says,

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands,

(submit to your own husband, not someone else's husband)

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. . . submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Now, the word “submit” is a military term. It means to get in rank under. And prior to this, it talks about husbands and wives both being submitted to God. I’m going to talk about that in a moment.

But wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church.

I think sometimes when husbands and wives get married, a man and a woman get married, and the two become one, then they spend the rest of their life fighting over which one. Which one is going to dominate? Which one is going to get their way? Which one is going to have their desires and their demands met? Which one is going to give in?

Now, this says that for the purpose of unity, wives submit to your own husband as unto the Lord. Now, husbands, let me just say this. The husband is likened unto Christ. The wife is likened unto the Church.

All right. Jesus is perfect in His dealings with the Church. If you’ll love your wife the way Jesus loves you, she won’t have a problem submitting to you.

Man, I readily submit to Jesus. I want to hear His next instruction. “Lord, guide me. What do You want me to do?” But you know what? He always has time for me. He never throws my past failures up in my face. He always has my best interest at heart. He loves me. He gave Himself for me. And if I love my wife the way Jesus loved me, well, submission is not a problem then. And listen, this is a submission among equals. This doesn’t have to do with superiority and inferiority.

In fact, let me just read another verse to you. This is 1 Corinthians 11:3. It says,

³ But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man . . .

Now, “woman and man,” they’re the same words translated “wife and husband” in the New Testament. You just have to determine via context if it’s talking about males and females or husbands and wives. Here it is most definitely talking about husbands and wives.

So I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ (the head of every husband is Christ), and the head of the wife is the husband, and the head of Christ is God.

All right. The head of Christ is God the Father. Well, my friend, God the Father and Jesus the Son, they are equals. It is a submission among equals. It is a voluntary submission among equals. And with husbands and wives for the sake of unity, it’s a voluntary submission among equals.

So, let’s say you’ve got a decision regarding whatever it might be, and you don’t see eye-to-eye concerning things. The wife has her opinion; the husband has his opinion. All right. Talk about it. If you are not open for your wife’s opinions and for her input, there, you got a long way to go,

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brother. You need to be open. You need to listen because there are going to be a lot of times that she's got some insight that you desperately need. And so, you listen, and you talk about it. And after discussing it and thinking about it, if you still don't see eye-to-eye, then pray about it. Both of you pray about it. Husband, pray, "God, this is what I'm thinking about doing. This is the decision that I've landed on, but my wife sees it this way. God, guide me by Your Spirit." And then if after praying about it, earnestly praying, if you still don't see eye-to-eye, then the Scripture says the wife should submit to the husband. I'm just telling you what the Bible says for the sake of unity.

And I know someone will say, "Well, my husband is so passive. If I don't make the decision, nothing will get done." Well, could it be that when he has come forward to suggest something, you've always had a better idea? With some, every time their husband tried to make a decision, they trumped their husband. They just had a better idea, and they pushed their idea and their opinion to where finally the husband just, "Look, I don't want World War III. Just have your way," and that he's come to realize that you're going to put up such a fuss. He's not willing to die on that hill, so he just gives you your way.

And some women say, "Well, I want him to take the lead as long as he does what I want." Well, that is the problem. It's not just about what you think is best. Do you fight him? Let's say okay, you submit and say, "Okay, we're going to do what you want," but then you throw out this anchor of anger or moodiness and just make life miserable for him. No. That doesn't work. You just submit and say, "Okay, baby, we prayed about it. I'm just trusting God is going to use you, and He's going to move through you." And if it turns out to be the wrong decision, sir, be a big enough man to admit that you are wrong. She'll respect you even more for that.

It's interesting that when the angel visited Mary, and she became pregnant with Jesus, God is directly dealing with Mary, the angel is directly dealing with Mary. But after she and Joseph got married, the guidance from God always came through Joseph. It was the angel that spoke to Joseph. It was Joseph that had the dream. Just something worth considering.

All this business about "I got to stand up for my rights" that usually means being disrespectful. No. You can stand up for your rights. You can do it in a respectful and an honoring way, and you don't have to be angry, and you don't have to be moody. That's just manipulation, and that will erode and ruin any marriage or any relationship.

Now again, we're talking, and the context here in Ephesians and the verses we've been reading they're written to Christians. They're written to believers. We're assuming that your husband loves the Lord and he's trying. He's not perfect, and you are not perfect. So, that's the context that this fits into.

Ma'am, let me tell you, you will actually get your way more than you think if you will recognize and respect his God-ordained desire to lead. It will take faith on your part certainly, but if you will show a quiet spirit and demonstrate respect for his opinions and his decisions, you'll not only find out that God will use him, but your husband will respond by showing affection and love to you.

I know my wife wouldn't mind me sharing this because we've talked about it before, so I don't share private stories without her okay on it. But we were going to be doing something one time, and we needed an attorney to do it. It was something about getting some things ready for our future, and this was a long time ago. And we went to meet with this guy that had been recommended.

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And sometime later, we just went to meet with him actually about some other things for my parents when they were still living. And then when it came to us, sorting out some stuff for our future, for our children, I said, "I'd like to use that guy." And she crossed her arms. I'll never forget it. She crossed her arms and said, "No. No. No," and just began to shake her head. She thought he was rude. I liked him because I thought he was direct. His directness and decisiveness appealed to me, but she read it as rudeness. And she just dug her heels in, and we ended up not doing it. But the effect it had on me, I shut down. I just went quiet.

I felt completely disrespected. She didn't really listen to me at all. And we ended up talking about it. And she apologized for it. And we got it sorted out.

Now, if I was to tell stories where I messed up and I was the one that needed to apologize, we'd be here for the next six months. I'm just saying I got a great wife, and she has a work-in-progress, which is me.

But you need to respect your man when it comes to his desire to lead and to make decisions.

And along that line, it's in us, this desire to solve and fix things. Believe it or not, we have intuition, just like you have intuition.

In the garden (again, we go back to the beginning), the first thing God did with man is He gave him a job, put him in the garden to tend it and to keep it. The woman wasn't on the scene. And so, if the man had a challenge, well, there's no one there to talk to except in the cool today when God came. So either he talked to God, or the man would internalize and come up with a solution and work out the challenge. And so, that's what we do.

If there's a challenge presented to us, all right, it needs solving. It's a problem that needs to be solved. And we listen long enough to get enough information, and then we internalize. We're thinking, your lips may still be moving, but we're thinking about, "Okay, here's what you need to do."

Now, if you just keep talking and say, "Okay," and you just keep talking, we think, "Well, there's something wrong with the solution," and so we internalize again. And listen, it's okay. I'm talking to the ladies now. If you just want us, as men, if the wife just wants the husband to listen and to be emotionally invested, that's okay. If you want us to empathize and listen, and that's all you want, let us know. We're okay with that. But it's not fair if you don't let us know upfront because if you start talking about a problem, God's created us to fix it, to solve it, to work on it. And if you don't want a solution, let us know. If it's just empathy you're wanting, let us know that. Otherwise, we're going to try and fix things.

So respect your husband's desire to lead and to fix. And he will respond by loving you more.

And then, finally, I just have a few minutes with this, and I'm going to call it warmth. It's the man's God-given desire for companionship and, of course, for sex. Now, for companionship, Titus 2:4. It's speaking to the older women. The church says this,

⁴ that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children.

Now, the husbands are told to love their wives. Agape; a self-sacrificial love that absolutely puts them first. The same kind of love that Jesus poured out on the cross.

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But here, when the older women are taught to admonish the younger women to love their husbands, it's not the word "agape." It's the Greek word "phileo," and it means friendship, companionship, to be friends. Most husbands know their wives love them. They're just not so sure that their wives like them. Men communicate by sharing experiences, and talking is optional. Your husband just wants you to do things with him. That's very important to us.

One of my favorite days ever, Janet and I, I used to have this little boat, and we went out in a harbor near us in Long Beach Harbor. I was fishing for halibut. It was a sunny day. I've just got a pair of shorts on, my shirt's off. And I've got my rod, and I'm casting out. She's sitting in the boat reading a book. And we're just drifting along. And I've caught several halibut, nice eating fish. We're out there for probably three hours. We said a few things, but not much. And I'm just casting out and reeling in. And every once in a while, I'd look at her, smile, and she'd smile at me. And we got back in, and it was the best day ever. We didn't hardly say ten words, but that's the way that guys bond.

So hey, if he's watching the game, if he's watching the soccer match, go sit down next to him on the couch and just spend time with him. And maybe you used to do that before you were married, and he's thinking, "Man, I got to get this girl before she gets away. She'll sit down on the couch with me, and she'll watch a football match." And so, you stop doing that and say, "Well, I don't want to do that now. I'm married to him." No. We want you to do those things. That's an area of warmth that we want you to share with us.

And as well when it comes to the sexual relationship, that is incredibly important to a man as well. Let me read to you. This is from The Message Bible, and it's 1 Corinthians chapter 7. And it says this beginning in verse 1.

¹ Now, getting down to the questions you asked in your letter to me. First, is it a good thing to have sexual relations?

²⁻⁶ Certainly—but only within a certain context. It's good for a man to have a wife, and for a woman to have a husband. Sexual drives are strong, but marriage is strong enough to contain them and provide for a balanced and fulfilling sexual life in a world of sexual disorder.

Sex is God's idea, and it's to be experienced and enjoyed within the context of marriage. Sex is important to men. Sex is important to women.

I remember reading about a guy. He went to apply for a job, and he has this whole questionnaire. You have to check the box, sex, and it's the little check marks, male or female sex, but instead, he just wrote out on the side, "Not enough."

And women, they want to feel emotionally connected before sex can be fulfilling to them. It's kind of the opposite with the guys. The act of making love, of sexual fulfillment, actually makes us feel emotionally close. And so, it's something that needs to be discussed. I think it's important to have sex often so that you be not tempted. The Bible talks about that as well. It is a good thing. It is a great thing in marriage, and it's something we should not shy away from talking about.

And so, listen, if I had more time, I would talk more about it. But husbands, wives, I just want to encourage you. Take time and talk about your sexual relationship with one another and realize

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you're wired up differently. Most men, they're stimulated by sight. All it takes is just a glimpse of you in the shower, and he's ready. But guys, listen, for the women, it usually starts around the breakfast table by you speaking words of kindness and love to her. And showing affection to her early in the morning because most women are stimulated by love and those kinds of expressions, and then they're ready for sexual fulfillment.

As I end, let me just say this. Wives, respect your husband. Husbands, love your wife, and you can have a great marriage.

Well, I trust that you've got something out of the message today. And listen, if you are in a hard place in your marriage right now, maybe your marriage partner has been unfaithful. Maybe there's just been neglect over a long time, and your heart is so wounded you don't feel that you could ever recover. God has wisdom for you.

God has a pathway for you to walk in. If you will ask Him for wisdom, God will give it to you. When you don't know what to do, ask God for wisdom. He gives it liberally without finding fault. The book of James tells us in the very first chapter. God will help you. He loves you. He sent His Son to die for you. He will not leave you. He will not forsake you. There is wisdom for you. There is a pathway for you to walk. There is an answer for you. And if you will seek God with all of your heart, you will find Him.

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