

Happy Father's Day!

There is an old saying that says, "A boy never grows up until his father dies." I believe there is a lot of truth in that statement. The father is considered the patriarch of the home. The word patriarch comes to us from two words in the ancient language: *patcr*, father + *-archcs* or *archein*, to rule. The consignment given to men is directly from God Himself. The Bible says, "*For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body*" (Ephesians 5:22). A boy is to emulate his father. We teach our sons to be faithful and loyal to our God, to our country, and to their wives. It seems we do fairly well in the category of teaching our sons to be good Christians and good citizens, but we often fail at conveying the message to be good husbands. As Christ is the Savior of the Church, even so should the husband be to the wife what Christ is to the Church. I have said for years, and may I take Father's Day to say it again, "The greatest thing a dad can do for his children is to love their mother." So be the patriarch and rule in the category of loving your wife! We can show the relationship of Christ to the Church through loving our wife. Therefore:

1. Love your wife unconditionally.

As we attempt to be like Christ who loves His bride with an everlasting love, we also covenant to do the same: "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*" (John 6:37). "*For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*" (Hebrews 13:4). Anytime divorce is considered as an option that marriage is never safe. No one twisted your arm when you said, "I do" at the altar. So, keep your word as God who considers marriage a covenant, not a contract that can be broken. "*My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips*" (Psalm 89:34). "*Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay*" (Ecclesiastes 5:5).

3. Love your wife by your words.

"*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word*" (Ephesians 5:25,26). Christ sets His bride apart and makes her special (sanctifies) by the Word which cleanses and consecrates. A husband woos and wins his wife by his words, even as Christ won His bride by His words, "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" (Romans 10:17). Furthermore, even as Christ holds everything together by His Word, the husband maintains and holds the home together by his reassuring words: "*...and upholding all things by the word of his power...*" (Hebrews 1:3). This is why when a marriage begins to suffer, the last thing that needs to take place is the silent treatment. Communicate, communicate, communicate! "*O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely*" (Song of Solomon 2:14). How sweet the voice of the one we love!

4. Love your wife with your life!

"*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it*" (Ephesians 5:25). "*And I lay down my life for the sheep*" (John 10:15). "*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends*" (John 15:13). Even though we may not have a moment of time that we physically lay down our life to save our wife, we are still under the obligation to love our wife like Christ loves the Church, which means we lay down our life for our wife. No way was more proving of Christ's love than when He allowed mortal man to nail Him to an old rugged cross for our sins in our place. Let us therefore strive to lay down our life for our wife. How? Since life is made of time, let us give a great amount of our time to our wife. If you will enquire into the life of most any wife who feels estranged from her husband, she will most likely tell you all she basically wants is time with him. Time to talk, time to show you care, time to heal those wounds, quality time that encourages not discourages. Years ago there was a play depicting the eroding of a marriage union. The wife named atrocities that the husband may have inflicted upon her. In her concluding remarks she said, "Let me

endure these things and I shall, but please do not let me die of benign neglect." Oh the sad, sad death of a marriage, not because of some dramatic events, but from the lack of caring and sharing your life with her.

Happy Father's Day, Dad! And how about giving the gift of your presence to your family.

- Pastor Pope -

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