

THE ONE THING

PART SEVEN – OUR HEAVENLY HUSBAND

REVIEW

We've been on this series called "The One Thing" where we have been learning that there is one thing that the LORD desires above all and that is to spend time in His presence. Throughout this series of teachings, we have learned both the benefits and necessity of this fellowship with Him.

We kicked this off with a couple of verses in the Bible where the "One Thing" is referred to, and we learned that this is why we are here. It's God's purpose for creating us – for Him. God wants to know us and wants us to know Him. This is His one desire and the one thing that is needful for us.

So over the past couple of weeks, we have been looking at one of the relationships we have in life that the LORD used to illustrate our covenant with Him – the Father & Son relationship.

You see, when one studies God's Word, one thing becomes very apparent: God is a family-oriented God. He created man in His likeness and image, so therefore, these desires we have for relationships (i.e. the love for our husband or wife and the love for our parents or children) are God-instilled and originated from Him.

So it is clear to see that family and relationships have been God's idea from the beginning. In other words, if God is the Author and Originator of the family, it should be quite obvious that relationships are important to Him.

You see, many of the ways things are in this world are a mirror of the way things are in God's kingdom. The Lord created things the way they are in this world, minus all the curse and sin that is in it. Therefore, when you consider one of the greatest gifts of life – which are the relationships we have – we are looking into a big part of God's heart and into His plan for His creation.

So to use terminology we are familiar with: God is a "family guy!" More accurately, you could say that He is the "family God." This becomes even clearer if you consider the examples He uses to illustrate the covenants he has made with man over the centuries.

So in studying the New Testament, we see two predominant relationships that are meant to exemplify our covenant with God: the relationship between a husband and a wife (us playing the role of the bride of Christ) and the relationship between a father and his children

(God being our Father and we being His children). These two kinds of relationships are the two most often used analogies meant to describe our union with God under this new and better covenant.

Now why do you suppose God used these two examples to illustrate our union with Him? Again, it is because God believes in the family and in relationships! He is a family-oriented Creator and desires the relationship and fellowship of His creation!

Now here is a good question: Since these two kinds of relationships are used to describe our relationship with God, do you suppose we could look at these two kinds of natural relationships and learn something more about what God desires out of us in our relationship with Him? Absolutely! There is no doubt that we can look into what makes a good and healthy relationship between a parent and a child and between a husband and a wife and, therefore, see what would improve the quality of our relationship with God.

So we started looking a few weeks ago at what makes these two kinds of natural relationships healthy and prosperous and, in turn, learn how we can develop our relationship with God. We did so by looking at (on Father's Day) the first relationship we have in life, the father and son relationship. We looked at how the fear of God, faith in God, and love for God show how a good relationship is fostered by a child towards his or her father. We looked at how praise & worship is also a way to bless our Heavenly Father and it tends towards knowing Him. Then we looked at what is commonly known as the Parable of the Prodigal Son, a story that illustrates the heart of the Father and how we as His sons & daughters can approach Him.

THE LOVE OF THE HUSBAND

So today, I want us to move into the next relationship that is used to describe our new & better covenant – the relationship between a husband and his wife.

Now I want us to dig into God's side in this marriage first because it's so important to understand just how good of a Husband that we have in Him! And what better way to learn about the nature of our Divine Husband than to look at the Scriptures that teach us how a husband ought to be, amen?

You see, we have a handful of Scriptures that specifically address the husband's role in this covenant. But what most miss is that while these verses are obviously addressing the role of the human husband, they also teach us about the LORD because why would He tell all of the husbands here on the earth how to be and not be this way Himself? Amen? Yes, God is simply telling all of us husbands out there to "imitate Me!" Yes, "do what I already do, men!"

The one I want us to start with is **Colossians 3:19**, which says, *"Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them."*

Now this verse is basically a summary of what the apostle Paul shares in Ephesians chapter 5 where he goes into much more detail about the roles & responsibilities of the marriage covenant. But here he summarizes it a little differently because He starts by simply saying, “Husbands, love your wives.”

Now let me first say regarding this that Paul’s statement here is in direct contrast to the mentality of the world of their day. You see, it was considered a man’s world then, and women were considered more possessions than people with rights. So, for Paul to even address husbands treating their wives with love was more of a revolutionary concept than we might realize today.

You see, contrary to popular belief, Paul was not a woman hater. He actually brought an equality to the husband & wife relationship through the Gospel that changed the way many people in both the Gentile and Jewish cultures thought. So again, husbands are not to be dictators or lording themselves over their wives. Rather, they are called to be “loving leaders” in the home—loving their wives even as Christ loved His church when He loved her and gave Himself for her.

Now we are not here today to learn about marriage but to learn about our marriage to the LORD, right? So what can we learn from this exhortation to husbands that we can apply to our relationship with our Heavenly Husband.

Well, again, the Holy Spirit is not going to tell us earthly husbands to love our wives if He, our Heavenly Husband, isn’t willing to do the same, right? So, God loves us – not because we always do the things that make us lovely to Him. He loves because that is who He is! Therefore, “agape” always chooses love because that is just who He is and what He does.

With us, it started in how He so loved the world – that even in our sin and ungodliness, He sent His Son to die for us. Again, this was not because we earned it or did anything to deserve it. It was because He practices what He preaches – “Husbands, love your wives!” Period, point blank!

Now let’s look over at Paul’s more detailed statements regarding this in Ephesians chapter 5 and learn more about not just the human husband’s responsibility to love his wife, but our Heavenly Husband’s heart to love us, His bride.

Now in his letter to the Ephesians, the apostle Paul went into a little more detail in how our Divine Husband loves His wife. He said, beginning in **Ephesians 5:25**, *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.”*

So it all began with how our Divine Husband came and gave Himself for His bride. We see this beginning in our beloved verse, **John 3:16**, where we are told that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever would believe on Him would not perish but have everlasting life.

Notice that God didn't just love us when we were lovable. No, it says that He so loved the *world*. That's the ungodly and the sinners, not the godly & righteous. This is when God loved us. And let me remind you – He changes not! Since He is the same yesterday, today, and forevermore, then He loves us today just like He loved us yesterday. Amen!

And I want you to know this wasn't just our Father God who so loved the world and then decided to give us His Son. His Son, Jesus Christ, was on board with this as well. Philippians chapter 2 shows us how Jesus had a part to play in this in that He chose to lay aside His godly privileges and His divine nature and come to the earth in the first place. So Jesus also so loved the world that He was willing to give Himself initially. Then when He came, He didn't change either. No, He continued to "give Himself" through His thirty-three years that He tabernacled with us. He did this as coming to serve and not be served. And this culminated in Him ultimately giving His life for us by going to the Cross and becoming our sin, sickness, and poverty. Worthy is the Lamb!

So anytime I approach my Heavenly Husband now, my understanding of who it is that I'm drawing near to is this – He's a giver! He always is willing to give me the things I ask for! He will give me all the time I need. He will give me the answers that I need. As **Romans 8:32** says, *"He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"* This is our Husband – the Giver!

And then **Ephesians 5:26-27** goes on to tell us what Jesus gave Himself for His bride for – *"that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish."*

Praise the LORD, Jesus made us what we couldn't make ourselves – clean! Yes, through His shed blood, Jesus has sanctified us and made us holy & without blemish. But here, the apostle Paul credits the Lord's Word to what did the sanctifying & cleansing. This reminds me of the Lord's words in **John 17:17** when He prayed, *"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your Word is truth."*

Church, our Husband's loving & giving nature prompted Him to give all things that contributed to our washing & cleansing! He gave us His blood, which washed away our sins! He gave us His Spirit, which renewed us and filled us with life giving waters! And He also gave us His Word, which also has a sanctifying effect on us! What a great husband we have, aye ladies!

So what would a good wife do with all of these things? She would value them by putting them to use, right? Amen! So we, as a good bride to Christ, need to appreciate His blood, value His Holy Spirit, and prize His Word as these are all gifts from our loving Husband that beautify us for our marriage with Him. Amen!

Paul goes on to say in **Ephesians 5:28-30** – *"So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own*

flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.”

What an awesome responsibility that we men have as husbands – to love our wives as we do our own bodies! Well, that is exactly what our Heavenly Husband has done – through sanctifying & cleansing His bride, He made us fit to be His body! And now, He loves, nourishes & cherishes us as His own body because we are the Body of Christ!

Can you see now just how Jesus loves us? We are His body! Therefore, He will never hate His own flesh, but rather will take care of it! Yes, the same way that you and I tend towards giving our body whatever it wants & needs, so Christ cares greatly for all the members of His Body.

Now this all corresponds with how the Lord also made provision for our bodies when He dealt with the sin issue, right?

You see, the Lord doesn’t just care about the spiritual things. He loves His Body so much that He desires to provide for us in every area of life. So, because we are His Body, we can be assured that He cares about our body. Amen?

Finally, Paul goes on to say in **Ephesians 5:31-33** – *“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself ...”*

Verse 31 takes us back to what we mentioned earlier – that our Husband left His Father to be joined to His bride. He didn’t hold on to His godly privileges and everything that He had, but He lowered Himself to become, not one flesh with us, but to be “one spirit” with us (**First Corinthians 6:17**).

So because we are now joined together to the Lord Jesus, our Husband, as one spirit there is a beautiful fellowship that we can share with Him today! Yes, we can leave all else and enjoy our union together with Him! Amen!

THE ATTITUDE OF OUR HUSBAND

Now back to Paul’s admonition in Colossians chapter 3: After simply telling husbands to love their wives, then he says, “... and do not be bitter toward them.” What an interesting choice of exhortation because out of everything he could have said to the husbands out there to make sure they did or didn’t do, this was what the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to say.

The word “bitter” here describes possessing an irritable attitude or to become exasperated with someone. And while this is certainly a warning for any and all relationships, this is specifically given to husbands for a reason. The reason why is because there obviously must be the tendency for husbands to become embittered with their wives. Therefore, this

ought to prepare every husband out there to beware of the temptation to take offense and become bitter.

Men, bitterness in a home can absolutely poison it, and that is why we as the leaders of our home, are not to tolerate it in the least. In **Hebrews 12:15**, we see it called a “root of bitterness” that can spring up and cause trouble, defiling those in the house. In fact, in the Song of Solomon (which is a book primarily dealing with the loving relationship of a man and woman), he warns us to *“catch the little foxes which spoil the vines”* (See **Song of Solomon 2:15**). So, as the leaders of the home, it is the husband’s job to catch the little fox of bitterness before it comes in and consumes the fruit in our household.

But again, this can also be viewed as something our Heavenly Husband does towards His bride: Remember that this word for “bitter” describes possessing an irritable attitude or to become exasperated with someone. Therefore, our Heavenly Husband is no different.

But how many of God’s children don’t see Him this way? Rather, they see Him as a harsh, embittered God who is always down on us, carrying resentment and being critical of our every move.

Now the reason folks think this way is because that’s what they would probably be like if the shoe was on the other foot. Therefore, they bring God down to their level and mold & fashion Him in the likeness of man.

But again, God must not be this way, right? Nope! If He tells us husbands to not be this way, then He is not this way. No, church, God is not bitter or harsh towards us. He’s actually sweet, kind, and nice! And seeing Him in this light certainly makes it easier for us to draw near to Him and fellowship with Him, right? I mean, I don’t want to be around a bitter old prune, do you? No, people who are “better” rather than “bitter” are who I’d like to be around.

HUSBANDS, LIKEWISE

Now the apostle Paul was not the only one to exhort Christian husbands. The apostle Peter did as well.

In **First Peter 3:7**, he said, *“Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”*

Now Peter had just addressed the wives in the previous verses – thus the word “likewise.” Then he says to “dwell” with them. This literally means to “live” with them. How? With “understanding.” This refers to husbands being aware, considerate, and understanding of our wives needs – physical, spiritual, and emotional.

You see, women are different from men (in case you haven’t realized that yet). We are just wired differently. So when two individuals are different like this, understanding each other

is required to peacefully & lovingly cohabitate together. In this case, the husband has to endeavor to understand his wife's needs, and just simply how she is, so that he can effectively love her as Christ loves the church.

And again, this must be how our Heavenly Husband is with us, right? He dwells with us – walking in the midst of these golden lampstands and being present to never leave us or forsake us – which in and of itself is a miracle, right? I mean, how does God Himself choose to come live not only with us, but within us? It's a great mystery indeed, and one that is enveloped in a whole lot of grace & mercy!

And not only does He live with and within us, but He does so with “understanding,” having sought to know and understand the difference between His bride and Himself.

You see, when Jesus chose to come to this earth and become a man, the Bible says in **Hebrews 4:15** – *“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.”* And **verse 14** tells why we have this High Priest who can sympathize with our weaknesses; it's because He has passed through the heavens, becoming a man. And the reason our Husband can sympathize with our weaknesses is because He too was tempted in all points as we are. In other words, because He went through what we as flesh & blood go through, He “understands” what it's like. **Hebrews 5:2** echoes this when it says, *“He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness.”* Therefore, He can now sympathize (i.e. have compassion, empathize, and show mercy) with His creation.

The parallel here would be for us husbands to take on a woman's body for a few years and experience all the hormones, the body changes, the pain of childbirth, etc. I can guarantee you, guys, that if we experienced this, we would be able to sympathize with our wives a little better than we can now. Amen?

And look where this all led: **Hebrews 4:16** goes on to say, *“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*

Church, the foundation for us being able to come boldly to His throne of grace to obtain all the mercy & grace we need, is this – the Lord understanding the weakness of our flesh! Praise God!

You see, like **Psalms 103:13-14** teaches us – *“As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.”*

Here, we go back to the example of a father and his children, but the same point is being made – that God shows great compassion (i.e. pity) on us because He “knows” (i.e. understands) our frame and remembers that we are but dust. In other words, God has come to understand that His creation's frame has come from the dust of the ground – that's flesh! – and because of this carnal, fleshly nature, we have much weakness. This is where compassion & mercy come into play!

So our Heavenly Husband does this with us, church! He dwells with us with understanding! But it gets even better ...

Peter goes on to say that along with dwelling with their wives with understanding, husbands are to also "... giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life."

What an amazing thing that Jesus gives honor to us, His bride! Even though we are the obvious weaker vessel, He still prizes us and places us on pedestal for the world to see! This is honor, in that He gave preference to us – that even though we might be weaker in comparison to His strength, He still honors us! Glory to Jesus!

And one of the greatest ways that our Husband has honored us is making us heirs together with Him!

You see, as a general rule, the way society was back then and is sometimes still today, the husband is the bread winner in the home. So in these cases, there have been many wives who have become heirs together with their husbands even though they might have not worked a job outside of the home. And while that might not be the case in your household today, it is definitely the way it is with our Divine Husband – for His bride has in no way "worked" to add to the wealth of their family, I can assure you! Yet, we are joint heirs with Him of our inheritance (See Romans 8:17)!

Another Scriptural example that I like to use to illustrate this is **Romans 8:37**, which says, *"Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."*

So what does this mean to be more than a conqueror? How can you be more than a conqueror? It is when you partake of the victory without ever having to fight the battle; and you get a glorious bounty to boot. Praise God!

Let me give you a great example of this: There are many athletes who, week-in and week-out, train and practice to become the best at their respective sports. They work extremely hard to defeat each of their fellow competitors. But when these hardworking athletes are victorious, they are not true examples of someone who is "more than a conqueror."

So, who is the one who is "more than a conqueror" in this situation? It is their spouse! Yes, their spouses are the ones that are more than conquerors because they never had to go through the countless hours of training and they never had to compete; yet they partake of the prize money from their spouse's victories. In other words, they get to spend the money their spouses worked so hard to earn. The successful athletes are conquerors, but their spouses are more than conquerors.

Here is how this applies to us: We, the bride of Christ, never had to step into the arena with the devil and earn our salvation. Our Divine Husband fought the battle for us, so that now,

we can partake in the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness and reign in life (Romans 5:17).

Jesus died and rose again to purchase everything that we could never afford. He came to give us life and life more abundantly when we did not deserve it. Therefore, as the bride of Christ, we get to partake in the spoils left behind by our Glorified Husband's victory over death, hell, and the grave. Therefore, we are now today, heirs together with Him as His beloved bride! Amen!

CONCLUSION

Church, I bring these things to our attention today because this is the Husband that we have in Christ Jesus! He isn't a controlling Husband who treats His wife like dirt. No, He is a loving leader who has laid His life down for His bride and given her all things that pertain to life & godliness. This is who we are called to spend time with – a Husband who loves us and honors us! Thank You, Jesus!

But it needs to be understood that this loving Husband that we have doesn't just love & honor us because we are a good wife. No, He does this in spite of our conduct and lack of faithfulness!

One of the most beautiful examples that we have of this is in the Book of Hosea:

In this story, the LORD told the prophet Hosea to wed a woman that He knew would be unfaithful to him. This woman had affair after affair on him, yet he was to continue taking her back, even paying money to redeem her at one point.

While most might tend to focus on – “Oh, we need to be more faithful to the LORD and not prostitute ourselves to the world” – there is another perspective that we can have, and that is just how faithful God is when we are constantly unfaithful to Him!

You see, that is the Husband that we have in our Maker! Even when we don't love Him back like we ought to, His love doesn't quit on us! Amen!

So let's quit being like Gomer – running from His presence. Let's dwell together with Him, understanding who our Heavenly Husband is and live in His house, enjoying intimacy with Him. Amen?