

Here Is Perhaps the Greatest Failing of Godly Husbands

Many a preacher who loves the Lord, enjoys his ministry and seems to be doing well wishes he had married differently. His wife does not appreciate him sufficiently.

Give me a break.

Here is what this looks like ...

Pastor Chuck is sold out to the Lord and completely committed to the ministry to which he was called. The church he serves is doing well. Everything is fine, except for one small thing ...

His wife irritates him sometimes.

Marjorie is a Christian; don't misunderstand. She supports her man in his work for the Lord, and she teaches a Bible class herself. It's just that ... well, Marge finds fault with Chuck sometime. She tells him the sermon last Sunday could have benefited from more prayer and study, that the striped tie does not go with that shirt, and that he's getting a little heavy around the middle.

Pastor Chuck knows that Marge prays for him, but she embarrasses him when she is too brutally honest with people. Like the other day when Deacon Everhardt came over to check on the fuse box at the pastorium and she unloaded on him, saying the wiring in the house was 30 years old and dangerous and the committee should hire an electrician to go over it. The last time Everhardt visited about a plumbing problem, Marge told him the toilet wasn't flushing well and if they loved the Lord the way they say they do and send over a professional plumber to give the whole system a going over.

That sort of thing.

The pastor knows she's right. It's just that there are gentler ways and more convenient times to say these things.

There have been a few occasions when Chuck has apologized to members for the bluntness of his wife's comments to them.

If he were honest, Chuck would admit that sometimes he wonders what it would be like to be married to someone who was totally on his team.

He sees Pastor Tom, from the Assembly across town, making his rounds in hospitals and nursing homes, always accompanied by his pretty, young wife. Marge never goes with Chuck on his rounds. Of course, she has the three children to look after and she sometimes sells specialty cakes she bakes at home. Even so, Chuck is dissatisfied.

He wishes he'd not been in such a hurry to get married after college. What was the rush? It's not, he tells himself, that Marjorie isn't a good person. But he could have chosen a wife more suitable to him.

This kind of thinking shows up in their relationship.

Chuck never compliments Marge on those beautiful brown eyes that drew him in the first time they met. They're still beautiful and she works hard to look attractive, but being a godly man and a pastor, Chuck thinks he would be hypocritical complimenting his wife when he is unhappy with her.

So he says nothing.

He forgets to pass along the compliment he heard last week on her Bible teaching, and he made a joke about the raves from the men's supper concerning the chocolate layer cake she had served them.

Chuck feels guilty for the negativity he feels toward

Marge. Guilt and resentment—what a combination.

At home, Chuck makes himself pray with Marge. He wishes he enjoyed their times together talking to the Lord. But her honesty shows up in her prayers too, as she talks directly to the Lord about their marriage and asks God to show them what to do. Pastor Chuck prays about it in private, but he's uncomfortable doing so with his wife. It's a man thing, he says.

Chuck is the problem with his marriage.

There is nothing major wrong with Marjorie. She is the same woman he fell in love with 20 years ago, only a little more so. Like everyone else, Marge needs to grow spiritually. And it wouldn't hurt if her man provided a more loving and nurturing atmosphere for that to occur.

Marge is the woman God chose for Chuck, and He did that knowing full well that He had called this man into the pastoral ministry. So, there's that to deal with. God did this.

The last thing on the planet Chuck needs is a wife who worships the ground he walks on. He has the woman God thought he needed. The fact that he doesn't appreciate her is not only his problem, but hers too. His dissatisfaction with her undermines everything they do together. It's like a steady leak in their emotional tank.

Chuck needs a wife who knows him for what he is and loves him that way. He needs a wife who will tell him the truth whether it irritates him or leaves him frustrated.

Chuck needs Marge.

The problem is he does not appreciate what God has done in his life. And that is undermining God's work in Chuck's life.

Chuck and Marjorie are "heirs together of the grace of life"

(1 Peter 3:7). They share the blessings of God. And when they are close emotionally, mentally and every other way, the amazing thing is they are closer to God. But when one pulls away from the other, by some strange transaction, they are also pulling away from God.

Chuck has been instructed in Scripture to love his wife “as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her” (Eph. 5:25). And, not content to say that, the great apostle added, “So husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies.” He uses verbs like “nourishing” and “cherishing.”

Question for the preacher-husbands in the audience: How did Jesus “love the church” when He died on the cross when the church did not actually exist yet? (Most people say the church was birthed at Pentecost.)

Answer: He gave Himself on the cross for the church that was yet to be.

So, let no husband excuse himself from nourishing and cherishing his bride because she doesn’t deserve it or “she is not all she should be.” Those are alibis and they do not stand up before Scripture. Had the Lord Jesus wanted, He could have excused Himself from the cross for the same reasons but multiplied by 10,000.

Just love her. Thank God for the wife God gave you, no matter how many rough edges she may have or the numerous ways you would like to improve her. God obviously thought you needed what she brings to your relationship and it is high time you recognized that and gave Him the glory due to His Name.

After all, when we reject what God has done, we reject Him.

Men, when you pray for yourself—or wives, when you pray for your husbands—consider that there is a lot of Pastor Chuck in almost every one of us men. So, ask the Lord to help him properly appreciate what God has done in sending him his life

mate.

The Lord knows full well what He is doing. Trust Him.

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