

***D GROUP – Discipleship: relationships for the purpose of becoming like Christ**

OUTLINE

Titus 2 for Women: How to Like Your Spouse part 2

THE ROLE OF WOMEN - OPENING DISCUSSION:

#1 What kind of things would the world say makes a great marriage?

#2 Why does God through Paul call women to **LIKE** phileo instead of to **LOVE** agape?

#3 What kind of behavior really demonstrates that a Christian wife really **LIKES** her husband?

The **ROLE OF WOMEN**, focusing on *How to Like Your Spouse* **The CONTEXT of Titus 2... The Curriculum for older women to train the younger** 4 that they may encourage the young women to love their husband, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.

The most crucial **TRUTH**: 1 Corinthians 11:3 *I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ. Functioning in our roles is the only way men and women can glorify the Trinity.*

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP A SOLID MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP THAT WILL LAST A LIFETIME?

Last time we learned that lasting marriages are those in which the partners have learned how to live with the unique kind of love that Paul describes for Titus. "Philandros" the love of friendship, the loving that is liking, the love of relationship. **How can a wife learn to truly LIKE her husband?**

FOUR KEYS TO LIKING YOUR SPOUSE AND BECOMING A LIKABLE PERSON:

Last time #1 – UNDERSTAND GOD'S PURPOSE FOR MARRIAGE

1st – God made male and female uniquely different

2nd – Marriage was designed by God to meet the first problem of the human race: loneliness

3rd – Marriage was planned to bring happiness not misery

4th – Marriage must begin with leaving other relationships

5th – Marriage requires an inseparable joining of a husband and wife throughout their lifetime

6th – Marriage means oneness in the fullest possible sense, including intimate physical union without shame

#2 – ACCEPT GOD'S PRIORITY AS A SPOUSE – Remember, in Titus 2:4 there are some fundamental truths behind the exhortation for women to love their husbands. When Paul says young women are to love their husbands, he is assuming you have a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ, evidenced by:

- 1) God's grace is at work in your heart;
- 2) You're motivated by the example of Christ;
- 3) You want to obey God's Word from your heart;
- 4) You desire to be an effective witness for Christ; and
- 5) You have God's glory as your highest goal.

As a Christian woman, the very first duty, after following Jesus Christ, is to love your husband (Titus 2:4).

Loving her husband is listed first in essential qualities, and it must be first in the heart, mind and priorities of a wife (or wife-to-be).

God is giving us two key truths when He lists loving husbands first in the list of essential qualities:

1st – Loving your spouse is a mutual responsibility. As Christians we tend to focus on men loving their wives and women responding. But never forget that men respond to love too! Here God tells women, "Love your husband". You have just as much responsibility to love him as he does to love you. Loving your spouse is a mutual responsibility.

2nd – Loving your spouse is essential.

1 John 4:20 is forceful when it says... *"If someone says, 'I love God', and hates his brother [or husband or wife], he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother [spouse] whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen".*

Jesus reminds us to maintain a right relationship with our spouses, or we will not be right with God (Matthew 5:23).

And Peter reminds us husbands, if we don't maintain a loving relationship with our wives, our prayers will be hindered (1 Peter 3:7).

In the mind of God, loving your spouse is critical to living spiritually healthy and having prayers answered.

To make this more practical, ask yourselves these three questions:

- 1) Does your spouse get your best or the leftovers?
- 2) Do you make life special for your spouse or are your actions towards your spouse routine?; and
- 3) Do you work at trying to please your spouse?

You'll never grow to love your spouse the way God desires you to unless you accept that loving him is your top priority.

#3 – FEEL GOD'S PASSION FOR YOUR SPOUSE – The godly woman recognizes her love is more than obedience, more than dutiful sacrifice. The actual Greek word for "love your husband" has *phileo* as its root, meaning a tender caring concern for human relationship, which is used throughout the New Testament (Matthew 11:19, John 15:14, James 2:23). The love a wife is to have for her husband, biblically, is more than external obedience, more than actions that are "required" of her. A wife is to like, cherish, share and be friends with her husband. This is harder than it sounds! Why do so many Christians miss this responsibility and its blessings? How can Christians who know the love of God fail to love their spouses? **Because you and I can drift from an internally motivated love to an external, empty, routine love.** We can let our schedules drive our obedience, and not our heart commitment. As with the Ephesians that "lost their first love", God calls us to return back to our first love, repent of our drift away, and repeat what we used to do to show our love (Revelation 2:4). God calls us in Titus 2:4 to like our spouse. And we know it is something you can learn, because it is the older woman who trains the younger to like her husband. You must learn how to do it! **God is saying that you can learn to like, enjoy, treasure, cherish and desire your husband from your heart. God never commands us to do anything He does not also enable us to accomplish.** God says learning this kind of love will probably require some mentoring from a godly older person. You can learn it. God says *"you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you"*. Still struggling? Try the supernatural alternative – allow Jesus Christ to love him through you. Jesus will, if you choose to respond to the Holy Spirit living in you.

#4 – PURSUE GOD’S PLAN TO BE LIKEABLE – What are the keys to growing in love with your spouse? What are the keys to becoming a likable person? The answer is found in reviewing how the New Testament instructs spouses to behave toward one another. By looking at these principles, we can discover what it means to be likable and to love your spouse. To truly love her husband, the godly woman will demonstrate these five qualities (there is much to say on each of these and other qualities!!!):

1st – Have a passionate desire to be like Jesus. The true Christian wants to be godly, God-like, just like Jesus. Paul instructs us: 1) “*Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ*” (1 Cor 11:1); 2) “*walk in love, just as Christ also loved you...*” (Ephesians 5:2); 3) “*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her*” (Ephesians 5:25). **How can you tell someone is truly godly, has a passionate desire to be like Jesus?** 1) check your **reputation** (Ecclesiastes 7:1); 2) check your **appearance** (1 Timothy 2:9) – the way a woman dresses tells you something about her heart; 3) check the **focus of your life** – do you have a singular priority at work, home, play, with friends, at school (1 Cor 10:31); 4) check your **treasures** (money, time, talents) – Matthew 6:21; 5) **check your tongue** (James 1:26, 1 Timothy 5:13). True godliness will demonstrate itself in a tongue that is controlled, guarded, quiet and careful.

2nd – Live a disciplined and dependent lifestyle. A godly woman knows she can’t live the Christian life on her own strength – Jesus must live the Christian life through her, so her life is dependent upon His supernatural power (Galatians 5:16). An empowered walk comes from learning the disciplines of keeping your eyes focused on Jesus, praying without ceasing, meditating on God’s Word, and daily dependence upon the Spirit. When someone develops the disciplines of a Christ-like lifestyle, then their life, personality, words, attitudes, and actions will produce a special kind of fruit – the “fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22).

3rd – Develop a tender submissiveness to authority. Since God appoints all authorities in our lives, He is calling us to submit and honor those He has placed in authority. God says that an angry, strife-filled, non-submissive, rebellious woman is not likable (Ephesians 5:22, 1 Peter 3:1, Proverbs 21:9, Proverbs 21:19, Proverbs 25:24, Proverbs 27:15), but God calls a submissive wife a treasure (Proverbs 31:10).

4th – Demonstrate a heart to please and serve. A truly godly woman is likable because she has a heart to serve, to meet the needs and help others (Proverbs 31:20, Proverbs 31:27). God calls a woman to be enamored of her husband, to be his one and only lover (Song of Solomon, 1 Corinthians 7:3-5).

5th – Desire to disciple. God calls women to love their children, to mentor younger women, as an essential role in being an effective witness and building the family and the church for His glory.

QUESTIONS for Discipleship Groups

#1 What does it mean to LIKE your husband?

#2 How can a Christian woman show her LIKE to her husband?

#3 What aspect of LIKING your husband is most challenging?

#4 How can you pursue God’s call for you to LIKE your husband?

#5 As a group, come up with 7 assignments, one for each day, to pursue LIKING YOUR HUSBAND...