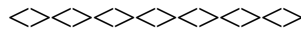


A Relative?

By Larry Pasley

A husband and his wife were riding along together in a car. They had been quarreling and hadn't spoken for a long time. Finally, they passed a mule in a pasture. The man pointed to the mule and asked his wife, "A relative of yours?" Without a moment's hesitation, she responded, "Yes, by marriage."



It is inevitable in relationships that we have conflict. If we are not careful, we allow our negative feelings to cause that conflict to escalate into a downward spiral and we say things which are very harmful to the person we should love most in this world.

Can you imagine Christ and His church carrying on a conversation like that above?

The apostle Paul tells husbands in Ephesians 5:25-28, "*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ 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. ²⁸ So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.*"

He then concluded the section by admonishing the wives to respect their husbands. - Ephesians 5:33 *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.*

Paul told the Roman Christians in Romans 13:10, "*Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.*"

Guess what your husband or your wife is your neighbor. Every command that we have on how to treat our fellow man or fellow Christian, also applies to how we treat our mate also.

Sometimes we find ourselves treating our mate in ways that we would never treat a stranger on the street. How sad that is.

We are one flesh. We have a relationship in marriage like no other on earth. That's why Paul said, "*He who loves his wife, loves himself.*" Eph. 5:28. He implies that, "She who respects her husband respects herself." We are one flesh. When we harm (physically or emotionally) our mate, we are harming our self.

The husband/wife relationship should be a place of peace and comfort, a place where we can come together and renew and recharge from the ravages of life.

Living joyfully with our wife is God's gift to us, but it's up to us to keep it joyful. Ecclesiastes 9:9 *Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain*

life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that is your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun.

Someone said marriages may be made in heaven but the maintenance work is done here on earth.

May we strive to make our marriage what God intended for it to be.

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