

THE AUSTRALIAN ANABAPTIST
Supplement #7

*Husbands and Wives
Meeting Emotional Needs of Each Other*

*From a series of pre-sermon messages by Brother Dale Horst
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There is beauty all around when there is love at home.

*“Nevertheless let every one of you in particular
So love his wife even as himself;
And the wife see that she reverence her husband.”
Ephesians 5:33*

Introduction

Traditionally in these meetings there is one message that is given towards the thought of home life however often in my experiences those messages are given on a Sunday morning, but as I am unable to be with the congregation next Sunday morning I thought we would spend a few minutes each evening before we enter into the main part of the message giving some thoughts concerning home life.

Beginning this evening we would like to talk to the husbands that are gathered with us and we would like to talk about meeting the emotional needs of your wife and then as the Lord directs we would like to talk to the wives a little later in the week about meeting the emotional needs of your husband.

Perhaps it is right to understand that there are some other subjects that ought to be considered right along with that for example; It would be worthy of our thoughts to discuss meeting the emotional needs of our children and then I also thought there would be value in some thought being given to meeting the emotional needs of our single brothers and sisters in our congregations but I suppose time will not allow us to address all of those and so we will let the local brethren pick up on those two subjects some other time.



Part 1.

Husbands Meeting the Emotional Needs of Their Wives.

Tonight we would like to begin with husbands meeting the emotional needs of your wife.

I invite you to turn for a Scripture to first Peter three.

Now just looking at a few verses ahead of first Peter three we notice that chapter 2 ends with thoughts on Christ, in verse 21 he talks of Christ's suffering for us and leaving us an example, in verse 24 it says that He in His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. ([1 Peter 2:21-24.](#))

The background thought of chapter 2 is that Jesus came, He gave his life, He surrendered Himself in order to reach out and meet the needs of people, our needs, and then chapter 3 begins: Likewise ye wives, and we would like to pick up at verse seven: Likewise ye husbands. This is the thought that challenges me from this passage and that is that just as Christ gave Himself to reach out to meet the needs of mankind, the basic needs, to bring them to rest, husbands that is where we need to relate to our wives, Likewise ye husbands verse seven says, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel and as being heirs together of the grace of life that your prayers be not hindered. ([1 Peter 3:7.](#))

It is interesting that the phrase *dwell with them according to knowledge* suggests to us that the husband must be one who studies his wife; he should observe and seek to understand her and then live with her according to his understanding of what she needs.

We would like to begin this evening by looking at some things that I believe must be in place for us to be the kind of husbands that we ought to be.

The first thing that must be in place is that as husbands we must desire to make our marriage what God intends it to be.

I believe that the motivating force behind everything that we do should be love and desire for our marriage relationship to deepen and to strengthen

and if we ever lose that desire we will soon cease to be the kinds of husbands that we ought to be and the needs of our wives will not be met.

I believe we as husbands need especially to be encouraged in this matter. It often seems that it is the wife that reaches out to try and bring in poems or articles or stories or things that she heard from someone or points that stood out to her in a message that mean something for home life, but husbands we need to put forth that kind of interest and effort too to deepen our relationship and dwell with them, study them, have the desire for our home relationships to grow and to deepen.

A second thing that must be in place for us to meet the emotional needs of our wives is that we must know and accept the uniqueness of a woman's emotional make up.

That's not easy for us; any of us to really enter into the feelings of another person and it becomes an added difficulty whenever a man attempts to enter into the emotional thoughts and feelings of a woman because God made men and women very different. God made them that way because He has different roles for them to fill.

For example the husband is to be the father, the leader, the provider and God has equipped him with a stronger disposition in order to accomplish that task, he has the strength, he has the deep voice, he has the command, God gave him that.

On the other hand the wives are to be the mothers, the homemakers and the nurse and so God has given her a more tender disposition and so now brethren, husbands study your wives and seek to enter into their feelings.

Men and women not only have differences in their disposition and strength and other areas, but men and women have a different emotional make up as well. Men tend to be more factual and analytical, they can analyze facts with little feeling, they can face life's experiences with little feeling. What happens this morning is accepted as the fact of what took place this morning and this afternoon what happened this afternoon and this evening what happened this evening and there is often not as much feeling wrapped into what has taken place.

But women are different. Women tend to face life with a bit more of feeling where what happened in the morning has a direct bearing on how she feels in the evening.

Men tend to relate to others more businesslike, women are more emotional, they can sit more easily with others and feel how they feel.

Then there is another difference.

Men and women are vulnerable to criticism on different points and that may affect our communication. For example brethren you may come home from work some evening and your wife says to you: “What have you been doing all day?”” And so you very factually say where you were, whom you talked to and what they said and you lay out the day's activities and you don't put a lot of feeling into it, it is just the way things took place.

But if you would come home in the evening and you would open the door and one of the first things you would say to your wife is: “Well what have you been doing today?” She would likely feel that you are wondering if she did anything that day. And that difference in the way she feels about the same kind of a comment that is something husbands that we need to study about our wives and so understand their sensitivity to our comments and to adjust our expressions in such a way that helps to meet their needs.

Well we are vulnerable to criticism on different fronts and to meet the emotional needs of your wife we need to understand something about a woman's emotional make up and dwell with them according to knowledge.

And at least a third thing we would add is that to meet the emotional needs of our wife we must accept that our wife is a unique individual.

Some people tend to put all women in the same category and they say that's just the way women are born, that is just a woman, they are all the same. But that is a wrong assumption.

Not only is your wife different from you but your wife is also different from all other women because there are a number of factors that figure into what makes a person and what goes into making your wife a unique individual. It could be some biological factors, some environmental factors, some volitional factors such as some of your own choices, they all blend together to make a person's emotional make up what it is.

The uniqueness of your wife is what makes the marriage fascinating as you learn to know the one that God has given you, she is strictly yours and she is different from all others and thus verse seven says: Husbands dwell

with your wife according to knowledge, study her and then relate to her according to that knowledge. Your wife is unique.

Fourthly to meet the emotional needs of your wife it is necessary for you to be a spirit controlled and spirit filled person.

Earlier we talked about that God made man with a strength and a determination, made them more factual and analytical, and those things have a way of coming through a bit cold, cold like steel, but whenever the Spirit of God is warming a man's heart he may have the strength of steel but he also has the touch of velvet and so when a person is full of the Holy Ghost he has the control, the discernment, the touch, the Christ-like qualities that enables him to meet the needs of his wife, in a way that the worldly man is not able to meet the needs of a wife, the Spirit filled man has God's Spirit within him.

So be a spiritual person and draw nigh unto God and then dwell with your wife in Christ-likeness.

There is one more pre-requisite for meeting the emotional needs of your wife and that is experience.

We need to learn to relate to our wives, I need to learn to relate to my wife. We need to work at it.

Marriage is somewhat of a process and like with many other processes it doesn't follow a straight line course from where we begin to where we want to end up. So often the processes of life, the growing processes sort of move forward in a somewhat circular way. We move forward, we realise that we need to make some changes, we make some changes and move further forward, we just keep moving ahead and whenever we realise that we haven't quite done what we should have done we need to acknowledge failure and rise up and go forward by the grace of God to continue to be what we ought to be.

Marriage is a process; it is something we need to grow in.

So husbands dwell with your wives according to knowledge.

Now we would like to look at a number of practices that will help to meet the emotional needs of your wife.

The first is the need to share with your wife on a spiritual level.

It seems that some couples do not have a strong spiritual bond between them. Oh they talk together, they talk about things, they talk about places,

they talk about people, maybe they even share some ideas but spiritually there seems to be a wall between them.

Your wife has an inbuilt desire to talk to you and have you talk to her on spiritual things, she wants you to be curious about her ideals, her inspirations, her goals, her insights and so talk to her about them, communicate with her on that level.

Your wife likes to feel that you value her as a spiritual equal. And it is true you may have the Sunday School lesson to prepare for, you may have the message to prepare for or the opening to prepare for, the topic to prepare for and she may be the one who comes to the meeting and she sits and she listens to what is being said, but she has the desire to relate to you as her husband as a spiritual equal, she has her inspirations too, and so hear what she has to say, talk to her about it and share your inspirations, your wife longs to hear that. And that kind of an exchange establishes a bond in married life that really lays the foundation for anything else that we might say.

Pray together, sing together, discuss the Scriptures together, read devotional books together, share meditations and inspirations, share insights that you receive from the message.

I have been impressed already to hear different things that stood out to different people so when you go home you listen to what your wife was inspired about in a message.

Practice a spiritual partnership.

Also in the second place another practice is to stand by your wife with strength and with tenderness.

Again the thought here is dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel and as being heirs together of the grace of life.

Another way to say it is that your wife being the weaker vessel is the one who needs to lean on you and so you as the husband need to be reaching out and being that support, giving honour to the wife as unto the weaker vessel, it means that that she needs the reassurance that you have chosen her and that you are going to take care of her and she can lean on you. She needs the security that you are in charge.

Sometimes husbands think that if they tell their wives: “Well whatever you want, take it your way, whatever you decide is fine with me.”

Sometimes husbands think that by giving their wives liberty to sort of make their own decisions they are giving what is good for them, however the heart cry of your companion is that she needs the security of knowing that you are taking care of her, that you are looking out for her. You are someone that she can lean on.

It is like one woman who not too long ago she said: "I like a man who has an opinion and says what he thinks."

Well that can go too far but it does somewhat express a desire that a woman has that there would be someone that would look out for her, that is the practice of strength. But then the other side is also the practice of tenderness. Being in charge doesn't mean being bossy or domineering, it is an insecure man who starts throwing his weight around and issues orders, that is weakness that is not strength.

But the man who leads out and as he makes some decisions and communicates his thoughts about the matter he leads his family always considering the interests of his wife, he is a man who relates to his wife with strength and with tenderness to help put her at rest.

A third practice we would like to look at is somewhat based on a text in [first Peter 3:7](#) where it says:

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

Giving honour unto the wife.

I think that as husbands we need to give to our wives praise, expressions of appreciation, expressions of reassurance or simply recognising a job that has been done. For example; You come in at night and the sheets are freshly washed and they smell fresh, notice it for your wife, notice that she has done something to make it pleasant for you. Or if you come in and you smell soup cooking on the stove you tell her that you have noticed it. Let the little things of life impress, you can express your notice of it and also express that it means something to you.

You know that it is a shame whenever your wife knows that you may be facing some time of special stress, maybe in the business or maybe some other place, and so she in a special way prepares a special soup or meal for you and you come in and you sit down and you eat it and you never think

about it until one of the children says: “Mother made this especially for you.”

Husbands we ought to notice our wives special efforts and give them that recognition and words of appreciation for what they have done.

One woman said: “My husband never praises me for anything.”

And the husband responded and said: “Why should I? No one ever praises me at the workplace.”

But that husband was missing several things, one thing he was missing was the fact that at the end of the week his pay cheque is a token of appreciation or a satisfied customer is also a token of appreciation, whereas your wife she takes the dirty washing and she puts it in the washing machine, she puts clean clothes in the drawer just to see them come back dirty again. Or she washes up the kitchen floor just to see the children coming from their play and walk all over it and so she deserves the special efforts for you to notice that she has done a job well and to express your appreciation for it.

And also to show your appreciation in other ways. Some men go about their work and their hobbies as though that is the most important thing to them in life, well your wife needs the assurance that not only is she the only woman in your life but she is the most important thing in your life except for the Lord Jesus. Your wife needs to be appreciated for what she is and for who she is, she is your wife and save express your appreciation to her.

Remember what your marriage vow was?

Your marriage vow said this: “Will you love and cherish her?”

And you said: “I will.”

And now you take the rest of your life your time with your companion and you show that, you do not leave that out, you cherish your wife. Talk to her, be sociable, cultivating warmth of exchange, let her know that she has a valuable place in your life.

It is possible for a marriage to settle into a monotonous routine for a wife and mother, husbands you can do a lot to show that you appreciate her and value her so that her routine has value and meaning for you.

Also show your appreciation for her by remembering the little things.

Little ways of showing that she is on your thoughts.

You know you're going to be home late some evening you think about what it might seem like to your wife if she has supper ready and your late, so call ahead if you can and let her know that you are going to be late.

And then it is good sometimes to plan just that little bit extra for your wife.

One woman said: "I just wish my husband would plan something for me some time without me knowing about it."

We can show appreciation for our wife by giving her that kind of attention sometimes, not big things but little things, do something or say something, provide something to show that you care. Maybe you noticed how the shelves, the food shelves maybe you don't get to the food shelves often enough to notice, but maybe you notice that the food shelves are totally inadequate and a few things have to be set on the floor, surprise her some day by having another shelf in place without her asking for it. Those little things where you notice some things that your wife is sort of working around has a way of showing that I care and that you are on my thoughts and I love you.

Also practise togetherness.

This verse says dwell with them according to knowledge.

It seems that some husbands are the happiest away from home, that should not be for a Christian husband. The Christian husband should be one that when the work is done he heads for home and your wife should know that that is the way you think of her that's what you do.

But then it is possible for your wife to be lonely even though you are at home and so talk to your wife, sing with her, do dishes with her, take walks together. As husband and wife you need a few times to be alone, just the two of you. And I am not talking about leaving the children with the sitters and going and doing something on your own some night, but look out for the occasions when you could be together just the two of you.

For example after the children are in bed would be one occasion for that or maybe in the morning before the children get up take some time together, look out for those occasions. Maybe your work involves you and your wife travelling sometimes together and you know look out for your opportunities to give her special attention. Practice together.

Then there is also the matter of respecting your wife's broader social needs.

As husbands we need to be sensitive to this, we have our jobs, we work with other people, we have our committees and our wives are confined at home and we want them to be keepers at home, the Bible says that is what they should be, they should be homemakers but there is a place for our sisters to meet each other and need times when they should work together, maybe a morning of sewing or baking or of quilting or something like that.

Our wives should not feel embarrassed to call up another sister and say: "I just need to be with someone this morning could I come over and help you with something?"

If that becomes the norm and that is the only way she has her social needs met that represents a problem on our part but even with our efforts there are times that our wives need to be with another sister and we need to respect that and recognise that and maybe even at times encourage our wives that she is getting rather bogged down with life's responsibilities and say: "Why don't you go and spend a morning with your mother, sister or with an aged sister or some sister in the congregation. They need that. I believe that we can do a lot for our wives in that area.

And then another thought is that the husband needs to learn to recognise his wife's moods.

You see, men tend to be more solution conscious, women tend to be a bit more feeling and they have their ups and downs and the cycles of life seem to contribute some to this and so there may be times when your wife is down, there may be even times that you see some tears and you may say: "What's the problem?" Only to discover that she doesn't know what is wrong and at those times because we tend to be so solution conscious we think there has to be a reason and if we knew the reason we could give the answer, and here we are up against it, we don't know the reason, she doesn't know the reason.

At such a time husbands be careful that you don't take that personally because when we take that personally then we tend to put up our defences and defend ourselves against what we think is a personal affront. The best thing that we can do at a time like that is to let her know that we love her, we are reassuring, we are there, we are ready to listen we are ready to just be quiet, we are ready to show kindness even if we can't express it in our words, we are there and just to wait it out in a supportive way until she is able to talk about it again.

In that way you help her, you can do those things without any explanation for the tears, that is our responsibility regardless if we know what the problem is, show your love, show your care.

Another practice that is important for husbands is to make sure that they exercise themselves in the practice of fairness.

There are some men that just aren't fair. They make demands of their wives and expect their wives to do some things for them and some husbands may become upset whenever their wife expects them to return the favour. It seems that some men think that the wife is the one that should run up the road for the parts but then when he comes in for supper he expects that after supper is over he can go and sit down while his wife does the dishes.

Be sure to do to others as you would have them do to you. And that principle applies not just in a very broad way to the broader world but that principle applies in a very specific way to husbands and wives, and so if you expect your wife to do things for you throughout the day it is only reasonable that you do some things for her in the evening.

Another practice that I think we need to encourage in our brethren and amongst us, is the practice of encouraging creativity.

Again the wife's work can fall into a routine everything just kind of happens from one day to the next or from one week to the next and I think it is good if we can encourage our wives to be creative. And there has to be a balance to this, a wife who is always thinking of new ways to fix the potatoes sometimes that represents a restlessness that we need to think about and yet I do think it is to be appreciated when our wife does try something that is a little new and I don't think we ought to become disturbed. We should not become disturbed when we come into the house some day after she has done a housecleaning and we notice that the furniture has been rearranged a little bit in the living room. Now it seems that men like to have everything in its place and my wife knows that if I don't have my den my way it is something that is lacking, my den is my den, but women like to have things with some variety and so some day when you come in and she has the things rearranged a little bit to freshen things up a little bit you respect that, you commend her for it, you allow her to do that, accept when she rearranges things to give the house a fresh look, accept when she chooses some times instead of having the potatoes

one way she serves them another. Encourage that. Sometimes our wives need help and some encouragement to do that. Well give her that encouragement.

Another practice that is necessary for us is that we practice the announcement of recognition.

And on this point on thinking of the way the writer of the Song of Solomon, the virgin in the Song of Solomon expressed that kind of attention that she was receiving, she said: He brought me into the banqueting house and his banner over me was love.(Song 2:4) and I would challenge you husbands that that is the way your wife ought think of you, that when you take her along to places there ought to be a banner of love that just shows like a halo between you and her, and I am not talking at all about the physical expressions of love or the physical terms that are the loving terms that people like to use, that is not what I'm referring to it all. In fact whenever a relationship falls to that level only it represents that something is lacking.

But whenever you and your wife go someplace it ought to be evident that you think a lot of the sister, the woman who is by your side. And whenever you are visiting and your wife is sitting by your side there ought to be times when you look over to her and you say: "Now isn't that the way it was? and maybe occasionally you let her insert some words and don't be like the man who said when his wife began to say something: "Just be quiet, I'm telling the story."

Well that is not the "banner over me as love." So he brought me into the banqueting house and his banner over me was love.

A woman desires that her husband would relate to her in a way that lets the entire world know that you think a lot of your wife. In simple ways, certainly a husband should never belittle his wife or simply ignore her, but rather relate to her in a way that the world knows that she fills a vital place your life.

Another practice is the practice of recognising her womanliness, recognising her as the weaker vessel.

A man who expects his wife to work like he does is not being fair. Our wives do enjoy helping us but we must understand that there are some jobs that she cannot do and we want to look out for that and think ahead, she

deserves the respect that we owe her whenever we look out for her, and we don't tell her to take a hold of something and then after while say: "Oh that's too heavy for you let me do it." Watch out for her, don't ask her to do it in the first place, do be careful in that matter.

Recognise her womanliness.

And in the matter of decision-making don't expect her to carry equal responsibility with you. You must always respect her input but when the decision is made if something goes wrong you take responsibility and don't require her to handle her share of the responsibility. Recognise her womanliness.

We need to relate to our wives in a way that shows them that we want them to be a woman and we respect the fact that they are.

Another practice is the practice of labouring to improve the marriage.

We mentioned previously that marriage is a growing experience and if there is anything in your home life that you became aware of through these various things that we are talking about, where you realise that things haven't happened the way they should, well you labour to improve.

We mentioned that often growth is somewhat circular and we have to identify where we went wrong so we can rise above that and keep growing and growing and growing. So practise and labour to improve your marriage.

Again it is often the sisters that bring the poems and the sayings and sometimes men might respond: "What are you trying to tell me, am I not doing it right?"

Well appreciate that she brings in the poems, appreciate when she brings in the sayings and be open to discuss how to improve things.

Well somewhat summarising meeting the emotional needs of your wife we could ask: What is going to be the result of all this?

Well coming to our text in first Peter three verse seven: Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. (1 Peter 3:7). It is given there somewhat in the negative.

It is this way, if we are not meeting the emotional needs of our companion it is going to hinder spiritual life but if we, in the fear of God, by the grace of God and by the aid of His Holy Spirit are committed to meeting the needs of our wives we will have plenty of opportunities to express our Christianity and plenty of opportunity to strengthen our prayer life.

If it is the other way our prayer a life will be hindered.

Home life provides an excellent setting were either the old man can be put down or the old man can be expressed and what we were looking at so far this week is ways in which we must keep the old man down so that the new man can shine forth and that we can grow in Christ-likeness and grow in our prayer life.

Well may God help us to live to the glory of God and to the well-being of our fellow men.



Part 2.

Wives Meeting the Emotional Needs of Their Husbands.

We have been looking to husbands and thinking of ways in which the husband can meet the emotional needs of his wife and now we are going to look at the other side and begin to think about ways in which the wife can reach out to her husband and meet his emotional needs.

I would like to begin by looking at three scriptures.

The first is in Titus 2, verse 3:

"The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; ⁴That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children." [Titus 2:3-4](#).

The first thing a wife must do to meet the needs of her husband, she needs to love her husband. However the instruction of this verse is to the mothers of the young women who are to love their husbands. Perhaps we ought to just think of it that way, mothers or grandmothers whatever you consider your position to be, whenever your daughter is married to a young man you must teach your daughter to love her husband.

And you would say: "Yes I would tell my daughter to love her husband."

But you know there are subtle ways in which mothers can interfere with their daughters loving their husbands.

For example suppose mothers' some day you call your daughter on the phone and you say to your daughter: "Didn't he plough the garden for you yet?"

Or you say to your daughter: "Didn't your husband fix that leaky faucet in the lavatory? Or you say to your daughter: Didn't your husband put corn in the corn crib this year?"

And all of those on the surface have the tone of interest in your daughter's home but can you also hear another tone coming through? The tone that just suggests that: "Daughter your husband isn't quite living up to what I think he ought to be."

And that puts your daughter in a very difficult place and so we can take this verse as a reminder to you older sisters to talk to the young women to teach them to love their husbands. Now there may be ways in which you can express interest in your daughter's husband and what happens in their home but think carefully about what you say and how you say it because it

has a subtle way of coming through, teaching her to question her husband rather than teaching her to love her husband.

Well the wife must love her husband.

Let's turn to another Scripture, [Ephesians 5:33](#) says:

"Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

That means that you must give you husband high respect, you must stand in awe of him. Even Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him Lord. ([1 Peter 3:6](#)) Reverence your husband show him high respect.

And then a third Scripture is first Peter three verses three and four: talking about the women:

"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; ⁴But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." ([1 Peter 3:3-4](#))

Certainly a meek and quiet spirit sisters, will do a lot to help to meet the needs of your husband.

Now again we would like to list a number of practices that will help you to meet the emotional needs of your husband but before we get into that we will wait until tomorrow night to start listing the practices.

I would like to consider just several hindrances that will hinder or interfere with you meeting the needs of your husband.

What are some of the things that tend to knock the props from under your husband rather than helping him and being a support?

Well the first thing that will hinder you from meeting the emotional needs of your husband is when you as a wife take the role of a sister in the life of your husband.

Now brothers and sisters (siblings) live in the same house but they are rather independent of each other, they go their separate ways, each has his likes, each has his dislikes, but that doesn't mean much to each other, he likes it this way, I like it this way.

But as a wife you are not your husband's sister, you are his wife and your husband's likes and his dislikes must be very important to you and his interest must be very important to you as well. As a wife you share with your husband in a one flesh relationship and as such you are not independent but you are interdependent, you are a one flesh union and you promised when you were married that you would share with him the joys and sorrows of life, you are one flesh with him. You are bound to him in a covenantal companionship, I have promised to take him as my husband, I have committed myself to love, to be patient, to be kind, to be forbearing to him. You are his wife not his sister, you should relate to him that way.

Another hindrance is when the wife takes the role of a mother, giving direction, managing the husband. You know mothers train sons, wives don't train husbands, the wife is not in a training role and so the wife doesn't say to the husband: "Hurry up you're going to be late!" Or she doesn't say: "You should go to bed early tonight."

Now certainly it is not wrong for a wife to make suggestions to her husband and to tell him some things, perhaps she does need to say sometimes: "Let me find another shirt for you to wear this evening" rather than saying: "Don't wear that shirt."

Rather than always managing for him she needs to be his companion by his side, his help meet. When a wife takes the role of a mother and always manages for her husband that leads to the breakdown of and will destroy relationships and so you don't talk to your husband like you do to your son, you are not his mother, you are your husband's wife.

So when you need to say something to him say yes to him as his companion, don't say it talking down to him like you perhaps would when you talk to your son.

Another hindrance is when the wife takes the role of a reformer where she tries to change her husband's table manners, the airs in his speech, the weakness in his personality.

Some women approach marriage with the thought: "I know some things are not quite what they ought to be but I will work on that after we are married!" But you know on the wedding day whenever you stand before God and the witnesses you are asked:

"Will you in the presence of God in these witnesses take the brother by your side to be your wedded husband? Will you love and cherish him?"

And whenever you say: “I will.” what you are saying is; I will take the man who is by my side, not a dream man, not what you hope some day he will be, not what you expect you might make him some time. You are getting what he is. I will take the brother by my side to be my wedded husband.

Now we are thankful that God's grace works in everyone's life and there is always a place for growth and a place for improvement and a place for full nurture, thank God that we do not need to stay where I was yesterday or a year ago, we can grow in Christ.

But sisters as a wife you must take the brother by your side and be his wife and not try to reform him. Now it is true that our wives can say some things to us at times that other people cannot.

There was an older brother, an older minister, that told my wife at each of my three ordinations that he came and I think each time he said: "Now you can say some things to your husband that no one else will be able to say."

And my wife does that. There are times when she will point out something that I didn't quite explain correctly and there is a place for that but when you do that don't do it as someone who is putting your husband in his place but as his wife who loves and reverences her husband. So you can charitably address some things but the goal to change our husbands is destructive.

One more hindrance is when a wife has too many outside interests from home.

Now this may not be a problem among us but it is a problem in broader society and it has its way of creeping in. In broader society there are the committee meetings, there are the Tupperware parties, there is the craft, there are the weight loss clinics, there are the shopping sprees, there are the evening classes and the list goes on and on.

The wife's first commitment is to her husband and to her children and she is to be a keeper at home, to love her children and to love her husband and when a wife begins to have too many interests outside of her home it will tend to destroy her home.

I am thankful for the conviction among us on this matter but it is something that we need to keep alive. Mothers your responsibility is at your home so that when your husband comes home in the evening he can

see that you have cared for the home during the day and it is a place that he can come to, come to in a restful way.

The first thing that a wife needs to do to relate tenderly to her husband in a way that meets his needs is that she needs to give up the thought of a perfect marriage and relate to her husband in a way that expresses mature love.

There is no such thing as a perfect marriage because there is no such thing as perfect people. There is never a time when a couple is together that there is just no need for the practice of long-suffering. Teenage dreams tend to be a little bit unrealistic, especially on the women's side. A good marriage is not the result of a perfect match nor it is not the result of a perfect wedding, good marriages are grown and so there will be times that there must be the exercise of patience and kindness and forbearance.

There are scriptural solutions whenever there are some bumps that occur and whenever mature love is practiced at those times it does have a way of meeting the needs of everyone involved and especially thinking this evening of meeting the needs of the husband.

Mature love is not just a sentimental warm feeling that a person might have.

Perhaps the sisters face the challenge of thinking of love in a immature way more than what a man does because we remember that we were talking about how women tend to have a more emotional tender feeling toward life and so she may be a little more inclined to think that if the warm and soft feelings are not there then something is missing, but love is not just an emotional feeling nor it is just a warm affection that you feel, rather love is always a choice of the will.

Whenever we have our wedding ceremonies the third question addresses the husband first, the man first and then it addresses the bride and that question says:

"Will you take the brother by your side to be your wedded husband? Will you love and cherish him? Will you exercise patience, kindness, forbearance toward him? Will you to live with him in peace as becomes a faithful Christian wife?"

You see the question is not: Do you?

The question is not: Are you?

The question is not: Can you?

The question is: Will you?

And so whenever you face life then it is not a matter that something is wrong because I just can't have warm feelings there, there is something wrong if you don't have warm feelings. You see it is an act of the will. Mature love is the act of choosing to love, mature love expresses itself in practical ways. When the husband is late for dinner and you've had the peas cooking for entirely too long and you are hoping to have a delicious meal for him and when he comes in late you choose to exercise, to choose, to decide to be forbearing with him when he comes in late.

Or to exercise kindness whenever he says that favours lima beans over green beans and you like it the other way, to exercise kindness and to choose to exercise kindness.

Remember to practice mature love, that is necessary to meet the emotional needs of your husband.

Secondly to meet the emotional needs of your husband you must take your place with joy.

Husbands want wives who are happy with where they are.

A survey one time revealed that many women have a negative attitude toward themselves.

The question was asked:

Are you a good housekeeper?

And the majority of women said: No.

Are you an adequate wife?

And the majority of women said: No.

Are you a good mother?

And the majority of women said: No.

Well some of those negative thoughts come and go, I suppose all of us have times when we feel very inadequate at the work that we are called to do but when those thoughts are harboured and pondered on, in fact when they become such a burden to us that we just carry them wherever we go, I'm just no good, that has a way of affecting the way you relate to your husband.

Your husband desires to have a wife who is able to rejoice in her duties.

Not long ago I was teaching a group of applicants and we were talking about the subject of headship.

Maybe I worded my question wrong but I asked the class:

"Now where are women in God's order of headship?"

And one of the girls said: "They are clear at the bottom."

Well it is true in God's order of headship there is God, and Christ, and man, and woman.

But let's think of it this way, although that is God's order of headship where the woman is, it is still a lofty and a high calling and we need to think of it that way. So although you do take your place as one being subject to your husband it is a high calling and rejoice in your high calling.

Negative attitudes toward motherhood and homemaking are quite prevalent in our society.

People should not scoff at the idea of staying at home and taking care of children but realise that it is a high calling and whenever a sister is in that place in God's plan she is in God's will and that should put joy and dignity into your labours, you are where God wants you to be and your husband is encouraged by that too.

And then thirdly another practice that needs to be in place to help to meet the emotional needs of your husband is that the wife must seek to please her husband.

Your husband's likes and dislikes, his tastes, his preferences, must be recognised, must be respected. The kind of dress material that he prefers, whether he likes potato salad over macaroni salad, the way he likes his handkerchief folded. The wife takes her husband's tastes in mind as she dresses, as she cooks, as she provides for him and some of those preferences may seem to be so small but emotional support comes to your husband when he knows that you think so much of him that you are ready to honour him even in small details.

Now I would say to the husbands don't be demanding, make it easy for your wife to show that kind of care and interest in you. There is the other side to this subject to and hopefully from what we said earlier in the week you will see that.

Wives though may find their husbands less demanding if they are on their toes, always somewhat a step ahead of them and knowing them well enough, learning to know them well enough that you know what their preferences are. Your husband has preferences and your husband has strengths and weaknesses and all of those go together to make your husband a unique person.

We talked about how the brethren have unique wives well wives you have unique husbands too.

And some make it your joy and your challenge through life to search out the qualities of your husband and to let his likes and dislikes be very important to you.

Abandon any preconceived ideas that you might have that all men are alike, your husband is unique, he's different, he is special, he is yours and you're privileged to be his wife.

Husbands though don't use your wife as your household slave to jump to everything that you want, that is not what we're talking about but as you respect your wife, wives see that you reverence your husband.

Also to meet the emotional needs of your husband the wife needs to be an island of tranquillity and peace.

Let's turn to first Peter three verse four: perhaps I'll begin at verse one and read through to verse four:

“Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; ²While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. ³Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; ⁴But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” [1 Peter 3:1-4](#).

A woman to meet the emotional needs of her husband needs to be ornamented with that meek and quiet spirit which God values.

A meek and quiet spirit is a spirit that is non-turbulent, it is one that is non-disturbing, a wife needs to be one looks forward to her husband

coming back to, she needs to be that peaceful and restful island that the husband comes to.

You see your husband is one who goes out and faces the world and he needs to come home to a companion who can feel with him and God has given sisters that special ability to be able to say: "I know how you feel" and to actually know how he feels.

So when your husband comes home discouraged by some of the cares that are part of his work he needs a wife at home who is peaceful and restful that can give him encouragement and when he is up she can rejoice with him and when he is down she can sympathise with him.

Another part of the vows that are made by a bride on her wedding day is a vow that she commits herself, it is not included in what the brethren or the groom says.

"Will you in the presence of God in these witnesses take the brother by your side to be your wedded husband? Will you love and cherish him in health and sickness, in prosperity and in adversity, share with him the joys and sorrows of life?"

And in order to do that you need to be that island of tranquillity and peace.

Now where a woman is a nagging wife or a complaining, belittling, criticising wife there is a terrible potential, in fact Proverbs picks up on that theme numerous times.

[Proverbs 21:9](#) says:

"It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house."

[Proverbs 21:19](#) says:

"It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman."

[Proverbs 27:15](#) says:

"A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike."

Not very pleasant to be with!

So part of your calling as a wife is to have that tranquil peaceful atmosphere in the home to make it a place where the husband really likes

to come to, so that when he comes in the door he is met by your affection and not by complaint.

Now it is true that there are some days that he is away and you are home alone with the children all day and perhaps the children were not as cooperative as they should have been, maybe there was a tyre that went flat, maybe the stove quit working, and you are tempted when he comes in the door to just tell him all your problems.

Well as that island of tranquillity it is good when he comes in that first of all there is the restful exchange, your expression of interest in his day, your expression of thanks for what has happened that day that you can be thankful for and then after that come around to the realities of some of the troubles that you faced.

First have that communication that is restful then come to those things.

Your husband should look forward to coming in the door and meeting a peaceful and tranquil wife rather than opening the door and hearing all of today's problems suddenly poured upon him.

In the fifth place the wife must be responsive and communicative.

Communication is the tie that keeps people connected but that communication must be more than who is supposed to do what. That communication should express thoughts and feelings and ideals and burdens and concerns.

And then there are times when you need to share with your husband something that is bothering you, maybe he is beginning to put his boots at an inconvenient place on the porch and you have moved them for him a few times but there is really no reason why he couldn't kick them off in a different spot so that they are not inconvenient to you.

Those things do need to be talked about and it is better for you to talk about it with your husband than to just keep biting your tongue and every time it happens you bite a little harder, sooner or later if it is not taken care of it is going to come out in a un-sanctified way and so it is best if you talk about it in a sanctified way, sometime during one of those times when the children are off in bed and you are sitting there talking to your husband like you should and things are restful and you can say: "You know there is something I would like to mention. Did you ever think about.....?" And then go on with what you have to say.

When you need to discuss something that needs to be changed try to give it in a way in which your spirit is in control and at a time when spirits are connecting with spirits. Whenever there is a bit of tension sometimes that is when people start saying: "Well you always....." and they go down over the list of grievances. No. To meet the needs of your husband you address those things that are on your mind at that time when things are restful.

So speak the truth, as Ephesians says, speak the truth in love, and that is the way to relate. (Eph.4:15)

Never use silence as a punishment.

Now we mentioned the other day sisters that you sometimes do have those times that you do feel down, you don't feel like talking about some things, you don't know what's wrong, it is even hard for you to understand your own feelings, don't just go silent and if at all possible tell your husband: "I rather not talk about it now." Be open with him.

And husbands when your wife does that accept that from her and don't take it as a personal affront; we've addressed that matter as well.

But to be honest enough to say I'd rather not talk about it now and then when you are ready to talk about that then bring it up so that he knows that you are ready to talk about it too.

Never use silence as a punishment where you just go silent because there is something about that that is an emotional torture to the person that you live with.

Also never be short and unresponsive.

One who finds himself like this should know his obligation to go back to his companion and make it right.

In the sixth place the wife should give praise sincerely.

Your husband needs to hear you say sometimes how much you appreciated his Sunday school class or how much you appreciated the new shelf that he put in the basement even though it may have gone several months before he got it done. He must hear you express appreciation for the fact that he got the garden tilled.

It is true that the wife needs the commendations the most but wives your husband needs it too, in fact you will find them likely coming your way

more if you sincerely give it to him. He needs to sense that you admire him, you value him, you respect him in spite of the faults that he might have, he needs to know that you value him and he needs to hear you say that.

And then finally to meet the emotional needs of your husband you must give him a sense of his manliness, a sense of being the man in charge.

The Bible tells us in first six, [1 Peter 3:6](#): "Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord" now Sarah would have had some reasons in life when she could have looked down on Abraham, he didn't make the best choices every time but Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him lord.

Some women are so demanding of their husbands that the husband tends to stand in the shadows while she sort of leads out. That tends to bring out the worst in your husband and if you find yourself in a setting where your husband is not seeming to lead quite like they ought to, then maybe there are some reasons for that, but I think it is good for a wife to think about maybe if she is in the way of him leading.

And that requires a lot of faith especially when you find yourself in a setting that maybe your husband is a bit more laid back and you think: Well someone here has to take steps forward! but you know when you take your place in subjection to your husband, calling him lord, recognising him as the head, as you take your place, it will give him a firm foundation on which he can press forth and lead out. So as you take your place in subjection and allow him to lead in that he gets that sense of manliness. Some of those things need to be worked through.

Men tend to be rather sensitive and your husband is probably like that too, but he wants to be the leader he knows he should be, he wants to be the leader and yet he worries that maybe he is not doing it well enough and whenever his wife reassures him that she values his leading that gives him encouragement to keep on being the leader that he ought to be.

In conclusion I would say to you wives that your husband needs to know that apart from the Lord Jesus Christ that your husband is number one in your life and if you are giving that kind of love and loyalty you will find your relationship with him meaningful and growing.

We are going to conclude with those points here this evening and conclude our study of meeting the emotional needs of husbands and wives.

I would say that if your mind goes on to some other things that could have been said or should have been said thank God for the work of the Spirit in bringing that to your mind.

My prayer would be that every husband and wife in each home could know the reality of the beauty of home life.

There is beauty all around when there is love at home.



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