

Cleaving To Your Wife

INTRODUCTION

Today, we are going to look at cleaving to our wives. There are four passages in the Bible that talk about cleaving to our wives. Two of the passages are parallel accounts, Mark 10 and Matthew 19. We are going to look at Mark 10. Then we are going to look at the other two passages, Genesis 2 and Ephesians 5.

Mark 10 deals with the cure for divorce. Genesis 2 gives the foundation of marriage and why we need to cleave. Ephesians 5 tells us how we are to cleave. We are going to start with Mark 10 where Jesus is discussing divorce with some Pharisees.

We live in a culture now where divorce is rampant. Over half of all marriages end in divorce. Nearly 75% of all marriages are between people who have been married previously.

Divorce is not just rampant in the United States. The divorce rate in many places in Eastern Europe is nearly 70% of all marriages. The rest of Europe and in many other western nations is around 50%.

It has long been said that a family that prays together stays together. Many religious leaders have quoted very low statistics for Christian families. However, George Barna is a very noted statistician. A few years ago he came under great fire for publishing his findings on divorce in the church. He found that the divorce rate among born-again Christians is at 35%. The divorce rate among Jews was 30%. Today the divorce rate among Christians has actually surpassed the divorce rate of non-Christians.

“Although many Christian churches attempt to dissuade congregants from getting a divorce, the research confirmed a finding identified by Barna a decade ago (and further confirmed through tracking studies conducted each year since): born again Christians have the same likelihood of divorce as do non-Christians. Among married born again Christians, 35% have experienced a divorce. That figure is identical to the outcome among married adults who are not born again: 35%.” (Barna, September 2004)

It is estimated that 70% of all children today grow up in a broken home. The divorce rate has significantly impacted and hurt lots of children in America.

The effects of divorce are also very revealing. I served as a chaplain for three years at a maximum security prison in Atlanta. We had on average nearly 2,000 men and women in the prison and we had seven chaplains on staff of various religious backgrounds. I learned a lot about the legal system, the prison system and statistics about people who are incarcerated. For example, 86% of the people incarcerated in America grew up in a home without a father. The divorce rate is a contributing factor to our overcrowded prisons.

What are the causes of divorce? Why is it that the queen that we marry doesn't appear to be the same queen after we get married? What are the wedges that drive us apart? What are the things that keep us from cleaving together?

Here are some of the reasons given by experts. They include: poor communication, financial problems, lack of commitment to the marriage, dramatic change in priorities, infidelity, failed

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expectations or unmet needs, addictions and substance abuse, physical, sexual or emotional abuse, unresolved conflicts, and lack of understanding and training.

As most of you know I just returned from Saudi Arabia where my father and I spent a month training Saudi Aramco personnel. I only had two English speaking channels on the TV in my apartment so the selection was limited. One night they showed Love Story. One of the recurring lines in the movie is that "Love means never having to say you're sorry." That is a lot of bunk. Unresolved conflict turns to bitterness and bitter people are almost irreconcilable. Proverbs says that he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends. When things don't get resolved properly, they often get repeated. Real love means that you know how to properly cover an offense, which includes forgiveness.

(Proverbs 17:9) "He who covers a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends."

(James 5:20) "let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins."

Divorce has been around for a long time. It was around in Moses' day. It was around in Jesus' day. Divorce has been an issue for a long time. In Mark 10:1-9 we find that Jesus was in Judea, just beyond the Jordan river and crowds had gathered to listen to Him. The religious leaders took an opportunity to discuss divorce with Jesus. Actually, they were trying to test or trap Jesus. They wanted to find fault in Him. Let's look at Mark 10:1-9 for just a few minutes to see what Jesus had to say.

(Mark 10:1-9) "And rising up, He went from there to the region of Judea, and beyond the Jordan; and crowds gathered around Him again, and, according to His custom, He once more began to teach them. {2} And some Pharisees came up to Him, testing Him, and began to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife. {3} And He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command you?" {4} And they said, "Moses permitted a man TO WRITE A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND her AWAY." {5} But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. {6} "But from the beginning of creation, God MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE. {7} "FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, {8} AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. {9} "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.""

Jesus taught about divorce in Matthew 5. He may well have been teaching about marriage on this occasion. Scripture does not tell us what he had begun to teach. But, based on the question that He got, it seems He might have been teaching on marriage. The church desperately needs instruction on marriage and family. God wants our marriages to prosper and to be strong.

Jesus responds to the Pharisees by correcting their misunderstanding about Moses doctrine on divorce. Jesus explained the difference between **commanding** divorce and **allowing** divorce because of the hardness of heart. Today, I don't want to talk to you about divorce. I want to talk to you about something that will prevent divorces. I want to talk to you about Jesus' answer to divorce, that a man

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should cleave to his wife. Jesus responds to their questions on divorce by going back to God's original intent for marriage and quotes Genesis 2:24.

(Genesis 2:24) "For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."

Jesus is not just giving the cause of divorce, hardness of heart, but He is giving a solution to the problem. A man should cleave to his wife and become one flesh with her. Men should not try to separate what God has joined together. A marriage is designed for unity, to be one.

The man is commanded to cleave to his wife. Why does the Scripture tell the man to cleave to his wife? Why doesn't it command both to cleave? I believe that both should cleave. However, the man is the head of the house. He is held responsible for the marriage.

When a man leaves his mother and father to be married, he is no longer under their household and their authority. The parents become a point of counsel, but the couple is no longer under their authority. The new husband is now the head of his new household. He is now responsible for what goes on in his household. He is commanded to cleave to his wife and to become one with her.

Today, I would like to go back to Genesis 2 and look at what God says about cleaving. This passage answers the question, why should I cleave to my wife? Let's read it starting in verse 18.

II. WHY CLEAVE?

(Genesis 2:18-25) "Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." {19} And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. {20} And the man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. {21} So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh at that place. {22} And the LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. {23} And the man said, "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." {24} For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. {25} And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed."

This passage begins with a phrase that it is not good for the man to be alone. Verse 24 gives the question that this passage answers. It says "for this cause a man..." What cause is that. Because it is not good for man to live alone.

God said that He would make a helper suitable for him because it is not good for man to be alone. Being alone implies many things. It implies being without help or aid. It implies seclusion. It implies without friends or companions. It often represents selfishness. And it implies loneliness. There is no one to share your victories or struggles with. There is no one to pick you up when you are down.

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There is no one encourage you. Being alone implies many things. The value of companionship is extremely important.

(Proverbs 18:1) "He who separates himself seeks his own desire, He quarrels against all sound wisdom."

(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12) "Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. {10} For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. {11} Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? {12} And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart."

(Romans 12:15) "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep."

(1 Thessalonians 5:11) "Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing."

But there is more to being alone that is implied here. God said that He would make him a helper suitable for him. The word for helper in Hebrew is ezer. Ezer comes from the root word azar, which means to surround, protect or aid. God said that He would make Adam someone to surround, protect, aid or help him.

H5828. 'ezer, ay'-zer; from H5826; aid:--help.

H5826. 'azar, aw-zar'; a prim. root; to surround, i.e. protect or aid:--help, succour.

We have this thing that we are to protect our wives. Yes, that is true. We need to protect our wives. However, the funny thing is that our wives protect us all the time. God made them to protect their husbands, not physically, but in many other ways.

There are going to be situations in your life and my life where we need the defense mechanisms that our wives have. We will need their discernment and woman's intuition. There are going to be times when we need their wisdom and counsel. It is not good for you and I to be left to our own judgments and ways. There is much safety in taking the precautions of our wives.

I find it very interesting that God brought all the animals to Adam after He had just told him that He would make him a helper suitable for him. It says that a helper was not found that was suitable for him. God had brought the animals to Adam so that he could name them, not to find a helper suitable for him. Often times, even though God has said something, we try to find our own answers. We look for ways to meet our needs and desires outside the way that God has promised to meet them.

As Adam named the animals, he did not find a helper that was suitable. Animals are not suitable to be our helpers. I love animals, but they cannot fulfill the plans and purposes that my suitable helper can.

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Work cannot satisfy the need that men have in their life. In verses 15-17, the Lord had put Adam in the garden and commanded him to cultivate it. That was his work. But in verse 18, God says that it is not good for the man to be alone. There was a need that God placed in Adam that went beyond work. He needed a suitable helper. Very often men spend their lives chasing their work dream and losing their family in the process. We have to understand that work was never meant to fill that need and void in our lives. God intended it to be met through a suitable helpmate.

(Genesis 2:15-18) "Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. {16} And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; {17} but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die." {18} Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."

Another way that the need cannot be met is through our parents. There is a bond that a man and a woman have that parents can never have with their children. There is a need in us that only the suitable helpmate that God has fashioned for us can meet.

Sometimes we must leave what seems comfortable, safe and secure to fulfill our destiny, to fulfill the plans that God has for our lives. We have to leave Momma and Daddy in order to cleave to our wives.

This passage basically tells us why we need to cleave to our wives. What we don't always see is the practical application of the verse. Some of the application is hidden in the language. I would like to take a look at the word cleave in the Hebrew and see what we can learn.

The Hebrew word for cleave is Dabaq. **Dabaq means to impinge, cling, adhere, catch by pursuit, follow close or hard after, overtake, pursue hard, stick or take.**

H1692. dabaq, daw-bak'; a prim. root; prop. to impinge, i.e. cling or adhere; fig. to catch by pursuit:--abide, fast, cleave (fast together), follow close (hard, after), be joined (together), keep (fast), overtake, pursue hard, stick, take.

The word dabaq is used 60 times in the Bible, many of those translated cleave. We are to cleave to God. We are to cleave to God's word. But there are many times it is translated in ways that give some understanding of what cleave means. For example, in Genesis 31 when Jacob leaves Laban, Laban pursues him and overtakes him. The word overtook is the word dabaq.

(Genesis 31:22-23) "When it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled, {23} then he took his kinsmen with him, and pursued him a distance of seven days' journey; and he **overtook** him in the hill country of Gilead."

(1 Chronicles 10:2) "And the Philistines closely **pursued** Saul and his sons, and the Philistines struck down Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul."

(Deuteronomy 10:20) ""You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him and **cling** to

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Him, and you shall swear by His name.“

(Deuteronomy 13:4) ""You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and **cling** to Him."

(Judges 18:22) "When they had gone some distance from the house of Micah, the men who were in the houses near Micah's house assembled and **overtook** the sons of Dan.“

(Job 19:20) ""My bone **clings** to my skin and my flesh, And I have escaped only by the skin of my teeth.“

(Psalms 101:3) "I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not **fasten** its grip on me.“

(Psalms 119:31-32) "I **cleave** to Thy testimonies; O LORD, do not put me to shame! {32} I shall run the way of Thy commandments, For Thou wilt enlarge my heart.“

(Ezekiel 3:26) ""Moreover, I will make your tongue **stick** to the roof of your mouth so that you will be dumb, and cannot be a man who rebukes them, for they are a rebellious house."

When you pursue someone to overtake them, you are very focused on that task. You lay other priorities down and follow hard to accomplish that task. Laban did not just add this task to his normal routine. Laban stopped what he was doing and laid it aside. He changed his schedule. He changed his priorities and made the pursuit of Jacob and his daughters his priority. Then, he pursued them until he overtook or dabaq them.

The problem in many marriages is that once we get married, we stop pursuing one another. Our culture encourages pursuing a woman before marriage. However, after marriage there is an unwritten notion that we have found our mate and now it is on to the next thing. The pursuit of your marriage partner is abandoned. This is backwards of what it should be. Our primary pursuit of our mate should come after marriage.

Pursuit is not a one time event. We need to keep pursuing our wives. As we go through life, we change. Sometimes our interests change. Our circumstances change. We must continually pursue our wives so that as we go through changes in life we continue to cleave to our wives and are one with our wives. I believe this is why Jesus took the Pharisees back to Genesis 2.

For a marriage to work, the man must pursue his wife. Period. The buck stops here. The man must set the pace. He must be the leader in pursuing the other person. If you ask Karen who works harder at our marriage, she will quickly tell you that I have worked harder. I have pursued her. It is yours and my responsibility to pursue, follow hard after, overtake and be joined to our wives.

Lets take a practical look at how we can pursue our wives. Here are just a few ways to pursue and cleave to our wives.

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1. Look for opportunities to spend time with the person, to be around them. Plan activities to take advantage of being with the person. Think of when you first met your wife. You went out of your way to spend time with the person. You went out on dates. You went to movies. You went out to eat. You took walks in the park. You went shopping together. You did all kinds of things together, even if it wasn't at the top of your favorite activity list. When Karen and I had just met I saw her at the Student Center on a Friday evening. I wasn't that hungry, but I asked her to go to Quick Draw, a sandwich place on Camp Bowie Boulevard in Fort Worth. We stayed there for many hours just talking. Going to Quick Draw was just an opportunity to spend time together. It was a way of pursuing Karen.
2. Look for ways to initiate conversation and dialogue. Ask lots of questions. Listen with great interest and enthusiasm. It helps to go to a place where there is a nice atmosphere, a quiet place where you can talk. We both like Macaroni Grill, but the atmosphere in Olive Garden is far more conducive to talking, so we always opt for Olive Garden. It also helps to get your wife out of the house and away from her responsibilities at home. That will help her open up and share more. Give some thought about how you can initiate and improve conversation.

As we get children, it is not as easy to find time to talk. Karen and I have found taking walks at night works. We used to put the children down, lock up the house and go for a walk. It gave us the opportunity to talk to one another in an undistracted environment. It gave us time to stay on the same page. It gave us time to cleave together.

3. Live unselfishly with your wife. Go out of your way to do things with the person, giving up your own agenda/schedule to go to their arena and do what they want to do. The Bible calls this being unselfish. We consider the other person as more important than ourselves. We do the things that they want to do. Fortunately, my wife doesn't enjoy the malls. She likes to spend time watching some adventure TV shows like Prison Break or 24. We have been watching these two shows together for a long time. It is great if you find something that you both enjoy. But, don't let that stop you. Go out of your way to spend time doing the things that she likes to do. Help her do them.
4. Give gifts to the person. When we want to pursue someone, we often give them gifts. We want to win the person and we know that giving a gift is a step in the right direction. We want to impress them. We want to put our best foot forward. We want to please them. We want to honor them.

Proverbs says that a man's gift makes room for him. I believe this is true in many different arenas, not just in relationships. I believe that our spiritual gifts make room for us as well.

(Proverbs 18:16) "A man's gift makes room for him, And brings him before great men."

5. Honor the person. If we dishonor or show disrespect for a person, we will not win them. For us to pursue, overtake and win our wives, we must show honor and respect to them. We can honor them by using good manners. We can honor them through the way we talk to them and about them. We can honor them by opening doors for them. I open Karen's car door for her. There are

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a great many ways that we can demonstrate honor to our wives.

We also must make our children honor our wives. I am a very calm individual and rarely get riled up. However, there is nothing that will light my fuse faster than hear one of my children bad mouthing or mocking my wife. I take that very seriously. They are not allowed to dishonor or show disrespect for my wife. 1 Peter 3:7 tells us to grant our wives honor as a fellow heir. Why? So that our prayers are not hindered. We can pursue our wives by honoring them.

(1 Peter 3:7) "You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered."

These are just some of the ways that we can pursue our wives. Let the Lord lead you. Be creative and give some thought about it. Everyone of us have different wives. They have different personalities, likes, dislikes, etc. We need to pursue them differently.

Think of game hunting for a minute. You pursue a deer differently than a turkey. You pursue quail differently than deer. Different animals require different hunting methods. Our wives are not animals, but they are all different and need to be pursued differently. Let me give you an example.

For Karen's birthday a few years ago, I bought her three prize goats. Two were purebred boer goats and one was a fullblood. I spent \$500.00 on her three doelings. I would be willing to bet you that if you brought home three goats for your wife, your wife is going to hit you upside the head and knock some sense into you. They would rather have had a \$500.00 diamond necklace or a fancy restaurant and bed and breakfast. But Karen was ecstatic. It was a wonderful gift to her. It helped her reach her herd goals. She wanted to have 25 does to breed with. Each of you must find a way to pursue your wife and keep pursuing her. Keep overtaking her. Keep catching her. Keep joining yourself to her.

Let's go back to hunting for just a minute. Some of your wives are like a deer that has been wounded. It is losing blood and leaving a trail. You must pursue your wife until you find her. You may have to go through some marital thickets. You may run in circles for a while feeling like you are not going anywhere. Let me encourage you, if you are gaining on your wife, you are going somewhere. You may have to pursue your wife in the dark. You may have some times where you don't see clearly. Ask God to illuminate your path. His word is a lamp unto your feet and a light to your path. Ask God to give you wisdom in how to pursue and win back your wife. If your wife is wounded, follow her even harder. You must overtake her while there is still time.

(Psalms 119:105) "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path."

III. WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO CLEAVE TO YOUR WIFE?

Now, let's take a look at the fourth and final passage that deals with cleaving, Ephesians 5:25-33. This passage answers the question, what is the best way to cleave to my wife? Let's read it.

(Ephesians 5:25-33) "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave

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Himself up for her; {26} that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, {27} that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. {28} So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; {29} for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, {30} because we are members of His body. {31} FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. {32} This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. {33} Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband."

In the context of the book, Paul is telling the church how to walk in the light. He tells them to walk in good works (Eph 2:10); that we walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called (Eph 4:1); that we no longer walk just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their minds (Eph 4:17); that we walk in love (Eph 5:2); and that we walk in the light (Eph 5:8); and that we walk not as unwise men, but as wise men (Eph 5:15). Paul gives some practical instructions for husbands, wives, and children. Our marriages and family life are a very big part of what it means to walk in love, light, good works, or wisdom. And part of the instructions to men that want to walk in the light is to cleave to their wives.

(Ephesians 2:10) "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

(Ephesians 4:1) "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,"

(Ephesians 4:17) "This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,"

(Ephesians 5:2) "and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma."

(Ephesians 5:8) "for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light"

(Ephesians 5:15) "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise,"

The Greek word for cleave is **Proskollao**. Proskollao means to glue. Pros means in a direction or towards and kollao means to glue, join, cleave or keep company. Proskollao is used five times (Matthew 19:5, Mark 10:7, Acts 5:36, Acts 11:23, Ephesians 5:31) and the root word kollao is used eleven times in the New Testament.

G4347. proskollao, pros-kol-lah'-o; from G4314 and G2853; to glue to, i.e. (fig.) to adhere:--cleave, join (self).

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G4314. pros, pros; a strengthened form of G4253; a prep. of direction; forward to, i.e. toward (with the genit. the side of, i.e. pertaining to; with the dat. by the side of, i.e. near to; usually with the accus. the place, time, occasion, or respect, which is the destination of the relation, i.e. whither or for which it is predicated):--about, according to, against, among, at, because of, before, between, ([where-]) by, for, X at thy house, in, for intent, nigh unto, of, which pertain to, that, to (the end that), + together, to ([you]) -ward, unto, with (-in). In comp. it denotes essentially the same applications, namely, motion towards, accession to, or nearness at.

G2853. kollao, kol-lah'-o; from kolla ("glue"); to glue, i.e. (pass. or reflex.) to stick (fig.):--cleave, join (self), keep company.

Let's take a deeper look at what glueing yourself to another person can entail. I want to look at some characteristics of glue in the natural and how it applies to our relationships.

1. Glueing Requirements. Here are some various requirements for glueing two objects together.

A. Glue requires clean surfaces.

I used to work for a design firm that specialized in signs. Once we were installing some signs at the WW ORR building on the Crawford Long Hospital campus. We were instructed to put in the core signs (code required signs: elevators, fire exit, rest rooms, etc.), even though the construction crew was still not done finishing the drywall. There was dust from their sanding everywhere. Some of the signs came down within a few days.

Why? Drywall dust prevented the sign from adhering to the wall with two way tape and silicon.) Clean surfaces means that offenses are cleared up between you and your spouse. Clean surfaces means that there is no sin separating or keeping you from bonding together. Clean surfaces are a perpetual thing, not a one time event. We must keep bonding; therefore we must maintain clean surfaces.

In Gary Smalley's book "If Only He Knew", he gives 122 ways that men offend their wives. These offenses cause dirty surfaces that make it difficult to adhere to one another. Karen and I went through this list many years ago and I repented for the ways that I had offended her, one item at a time. I would encourage you to do this with your wife.

B. Glue requires a rough surface to adhere to.

A porous surface allows the glue to adhere better than a slick, non-porous surface. Therefore, surfaces are roughed up with sandpaper to help with the adhesion. How does this relate to our relationships? When we go through rough circumstances together, there is a bonding that takes place.

Going through rough times does not automatically bond you together. How you go through these circumstances will determine whether you bond or separate. Use the rough times in your lives to draw close together. Pray together. Talk about these matters. Work together. Encourage one

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another. Help one another. Work through these rough times together and you will bond to one another.

C. Proper glueing requires the right glue.

When you are glueing wood together, you use wood glue. When you are glueing your mirror back on the windshield, you wouldn't think of using wood glue. It simply won't hold. You buy a special glue for mirrors. It is a super-glue developed just for this type of application. When you glue things to concrete, you use another type of glue. There are numerous types of glue that can be used on different types of surfaces. The same is true with relationships. Everyone of us has a different temperament and personality. We are all uniquely created and we all respond differently to things.

Scripture teaches us that love is the perfect bond of unity. There is nothing that is going to bond us together like love.

(Colossians 3:14) "And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity."

However, all of us like to be loved different ways. In Gary Chapman's book, "The Five Love Languages," Gary addresses some of these different ways people like to be loved.

1. Love Language # 1: Words of Affirmation
2. Love Language # 2: Quality Time
3. Love Language # 3: Receiving Gifts
4. Love Language # 4: Acts of Service
5. Love Language # 5: Physical Touch

For example, the way that my wife feels loved is through Acts of Service and by Quality time. She really appreciates me making the bed and serving her in other ways. However, when she serves me, I am grateful but it doesn't make me feel really loved because my love language is not Acts of Service. I like Physical Touch and Words of Affirmation. Each of us have different love languages and we need to love our wife in a way that she feels loved.

D. Glueing often infers sexual intercourse.

When the Lord speaks about cleaving to your wife, it is in the context of the two becoming one flesh. In 1 Corinthians 6 Paul speaks of someone joining himself to a harlot and is one body with her. He is speaking of someone who has an immoral relationship, a sexual relationship outside the confines of marriage. The point is that one of the glues that God has created in our marriages is sex.

(Matthew 19:4-6) "And He answered and said, "Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, {5} and said, 'FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'? {6} "Consequently they are no

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longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.""

(Mark 10:7-9) ""FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, {8} AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. {9} "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.""

(1 Corinthians 6:16-18) "Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, "THE TWO WILL BECOME ONE FLESH." {17} But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. {18} Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body."

(Ephesians 5:31) "FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH."

2. Love is the perfect glue. Our passage in Ephesians 5:25-33 answers the question of how a man can cleave to his wife. What is the answer? The answer is that love is how a man can best glue himself or join or cleave to his wife. Colossians 3:14 says the love is the perfect bond.

(Colossians 3:14) "And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity."

Paul gives four specific ways that a man can love his wife. He uses Christ as the example of perfect love.

A. Love your wife by giving yourself up for her.

We need to make sacrifices for our wives. We must lay our lives down for our wives. This means that we need to do nothing from selfishness. Look what Paul says in Philippians 2:3-5.

(Philippians 2:3-5) "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; {4} do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. {5} Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,"

Look what John says about laying your life down for another person.

(John 15:13) ""Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."

B. Love your wife by sanctifying her.

The Greek word that is used is *hagiazō*, which means to to make holy, to purify or consecrate.

G37. *hagiazō*, hag-ee-ad'-zo; from G40; to make holy, i.e. (cer.) purify or consecrate; (mentally) to venerate:--hallow, be holy, sanctify.

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How do we do that? Jesus gives us some instructions about how to sanctify our wives.

(Ephesians 5:26-27) "that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, {27} that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless."

He says to cleanse her by the washing of water with the word. We need to speak the word of God to our wives. We need to encourage our wives with the word. We need to encourage our wives in the word. We need to correct our wives with the word of God. We need to pray the word of God over our wives. We need to live the word of God before our wives. We need to wash our wives with the word. Let me encourage you to regularly share the word of God with one another. Love your wife by washing her with the water of the word.

C. Love your wife by nourishing her.

The word for nourish is *ektrepho*, which means to feed or nourish to maturity. This is different than washing. Washing with the word implies cleaning and removing of things that should not be there. Nourishing implies providing nutrients and things that will help your wife grow to maturity.

G1625. *ektrepho*, *ek-tref'-o*; from G1537 and G5142; to rear up to maturity, i.e. (gen.) to cherish or train:--bring up, nourish.

For example, you might see that your wife is getting stressed out. Take a look at what is stressing out your wife. You might see that she has too many things going on in her life and she needs to simplify her life. Therefore, you nourish your wife with Psalm 131. You share the Scripture with her and the application you see for her life.

(Psalms 131) "(A Song of Ascents, of David.) O LORD, my heart is not proud, nor my eyes haughty; Nor do I involve myself in great matters, Or in things too difficult for me. {2} Surely I have composed and quieted my soul; Like a weaned child rests against his mother, My soul is like a weaned child within me. {3} O Israel, hope in the LORD From this time forth and forever."

Karen, I see that you are stressed out. I want to share a passage that the Lord has laid on my heart for you. It is Psalm 131. I see that you are involved in great matters right now, too many matters in your life. We need to cut back in the number of activities. Some of these are difficult things that I can help you with.

By sharing this passage with Karen, I am nourishing her. I am giving her an area of the word that she needs to grow in. This will help her. It could be any Scripture. We know that we need the Scriptures to grow. It could be that you read the Bible together. You can nourish your wife by reading together. The key is that we nourish our wives with the word of God.

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D. Love your wife by cherishing her.

The Greek word for cherish is *thalpo*, which means to brood, foster or cherish. The idea is that your wife is very dear and precious to you. She is cared for and protected by you. She is of high value and regard by you.

G2282. *thalpo*, *thal'-po*; prob. akin to *thallo* (to warm); to brood, i.e. (fig.) to foster:--cherish.

I asked Sheila Meadows, the happily married wife of a Senior Pastor in Atlanta, what her husband did to make her feel glued or bonded to him. Listen to what she said.

1. Dave made me a priority in his life. He made it known at work that he was not to be interrupted if he was with a customer unless it was Sheila. She had complete access to him at any time. Dave made her a priority and this caused a bonding in their marriage. She felt glued, bonded or one with Dave because of the priority that she was in Dave's life.
2. Dave verbally expressed his love to Sheila on a regular and constant basis. This expressing of his love made her feel bonded to Dave. We also know from James that the tongue is a rudder that steers the ship. Verbally expressing our loves not only affirms our love to the other person, the rudder of our life gets set towards loving our wife even more.
3. Dave continually praises Sheila. This encouragement and affirmation to her has been a bonding agent in their relationship.

I also asked the same question to my wife. This is what Karen had to say about what made her feel bonded to me.

1. You (Bill) verbally express your love for me continually. Guys, I cannot say enough about the importance of expressing your love verbally to your wives. Scriptures says that open rebuke is better than love that is concealed. We cannot conceal our love. We must express it and demonstrate to them constantly.

(Proverbs 27:5) "Better is open rebuke Than love that is concealed."

2. We spend lots of quality time together. We run errands together. We do chores together. We go over to the goats together. We watch movies together. Right now, we are watching the show 24 together. We have been getting the past couple of years episodes on DVD and watching them. It is a relaxing time for Karen and it is something that we do together that makes her feel bonded to me.
3. You pray for me and over me every morning.
4. We go to bed at the same time. This may not seem like a big deal, but in many of the troubled marriages that I have seen, the husband and wives keep very different schedules. This affects communication. This affects sex. This affects everything. I was surprised that Karen mentioned

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the fact that we go to bed together at the same time as something that made her feel bonded to me. I would have thought it was serving her or some big thing. Instead, she gave me this as one of her top answers.

Isn't this what Sheila said about Dave? Dave made her the priority. That made her feel precious and of high value to Dave. Also, Dave praises her regularly. He shares how valuable and precious she is. That is cherishing his wife. That is the kind of love that will bond you to your wife.

CONCLUSION:

We have looked at two concepts for cleaving to our wives. We have looked at how we need to pursue our wives. It is not a one time pursuit before we are married. It is an ongoing pursuit of our wives.

We have looked at how we need to glue ourselves to our wives. We have looked at a lot of different applications and practical ways to be properly glued to our wives.

Whether it is pursuing or glueing, Scripture is clear that we need to cleave to our wives. We want to walk in the light. We want our marriages to reflect the light of the Lord. We don't want to be part of the statistics, but part of the solution. We want great marriages and we want to help give answers and solutions to a world that is desperately in need of them.

I would like for each of us to take a few minutes this morning and write down two or three specific things that the Lord has impressed upon your heart and mind this morning. Write them down and commit yourself to doing them.

I would like to close by asking you to get in groups of two or three and share one thing with the group that you can work on and one thing that they can pray for you about. In a few minutes I will close in prayer.

East Mountain Vineyard Church
Cleaving To Your Wife

- I. INTRODUCTION Mark 10:1-9, Genesis 2:24
- II. WHY CLEAVE? Genesis 2:18-25, Proverbs 18:1, Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Romans 12:15, 1 Thessalonians 5:11
- A. Things that cannot meet your needs.
1. _____ cannot meet my needs as a man.
 2. _____ cannot meet my needs as a man. Genesis 2:15-18
 3. _____ cannot meet my needs as a man.
- B. The Hebrew word dabaq means to _____ or _____. Gen 31:22-23
- C. Practical ways to pursue your wife.
1. _____ with her.
 2. Initiate _____ and dialogue with her.
 3. _____ with her.
 4. _____ to her. Proverbs 18:16
 5. _____ her. 1 Peter 3:7

III. WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO CLEAVE TO YOUR WIFE? Ephesians 5:25-33

Ephesians 5:25-33 "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; {26} that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, {27} that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. {28} So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; {29} for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, {30} because we are members of His body. {31} FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. {32} This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. {33} Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband."

- A. The Greek word for cleave is proskollao, which means to _____.
- B. Glueing Requirements
1. Glue requires _____.
 2. Glue requires a _____.
 3. Proper glueing requires the _____. Colossians 3:14
 4. Glueing infers _____. Matt 19:4-6, Mark 10:7-9, 1 Cor 6:16-18, Eph 5:31
- C. _____ is the perfect glue. Eph 5:25-33, Col 3:14
1. Love your wife by _____ yourself up for her. Phil 2:3-5, John 15:13
 2. Love your wife by _____ her. Eph 5:26-27
 3. Love your wife by _____ her.
 4. Love your wife by _____ her.

CONCLUSION: Applications for my life and marriage are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.