

# **What Wives Wish Husbands Knew**

## **Session 10—It's Not About Me**

### **“I Wish You Knew What You Could Become”**

Most of the wives, counselors, female vocational ministers I wrote to when I was beginning my preparation for this study have this in common when they talk about the state of manhood in America, as well as the state of manhood in the workplace and in the home—men could be so much more, and they really wish we would.

We've got a lot of potential. The only thing is, potential unrealized, is like an inheritance you never knew about, a waste.

#### **I. A Review**

1. We learned about leadership.

##### **1 Peter 3:7a**

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives *in an understanding way*...

- It is our responsibility as the servant-leader in our homes to develop the unnatural/supernatural skills necessary to:
- Understand her, respect her, & to honor her.

2. We learned about the definition & character of love.

We compared Clint Eastwood's total ignorance about what it means for a man to love a woman in "Heartbreak Ridge," to 1 Corinthians 13...

##### **1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

<sup>13:1</sup> If I speak in tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give all I possess to feed the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing."

- And we learned the three primary words the Bible uses to describe how a husband can learn to love his wife:
- Eros, phileo, agape.

3. We learned about submission in the home.

From Ephesians chapter 5, we learned that:

- The model that we're to follow as husbands that love our wives, is Christ and the love he demonstrated for his church.

- Husbands have the responsibility of learning how Jesus loved the church, and then emulating that loveliness toward our wives.
- Submission means loving and loving means serving.
- As husbands we are required, by biblical injunction and precept, to provide leadership for our family through a submissive demeanor, particularly toward our wives.
- We are challenged and charged to be spiritually controlled and empowered in all that we do...

### **Ephesians 5:18-25**

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation (*asotia*, excess, squander), but be filled (*pleroo*, constantly filled and controlled) with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; <sup>20</sup> always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; <sup>21</sup> and be subject (*hupotasso*, to line up under as in military rank) **TO ONE ANOTHER** in the fear of Christ. (emphasis added)

<sup>22</sup> Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head (*kephale*, authority, direction) of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, he himself being the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> But as the church is subject (*hupotasso*) to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love (agape) your wives, just as Christ also loved (*agape*) the church and gave himself up for her.

4. We learned about romance.

### **Song of Solomon 4:1-2**

How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes behind your veil are doves. Your *hair* is like a flock of goats descending from Mount Gilead.

<sup>2</sup> Your *teeth* are like a flock of sheep just shorn, coming up from the washing. Each has its twin; not one of them is alone.

- When it comes to romance men and women are on different planets.
- And we may be the captain of the spaceship, but our wives are the navigators—either we go where they direct us or we don't get to land, other than to crash-land.

5. We learned about the art of the pursuit.

- A woman hates to be taken for granted.
- Our wives want to know, need to know, that they're still the most important person in our lives.
- We learned from the Song of Solomon how to perfect the art of pursuing our wife, long after the honeymoon is over.

6. We learned about finances.

**Deuteronomy 8:17-18**

You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.”<sup>18</sup> But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.

- The Bible has a lot to say about money.
  - Money can mean way too much to us.
  - It's way too easy to misuse it.
  - And it takes a lot of discipline and wisdom to use it correctly.
- Sixteen of the thirty-eight parables that Jesus used to teach about godliness talk about money.
- There are more than 2300 references to money or materialism in the Bible.

7. We learned about fatherhood.

**Colossians 3:21**

Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

**Luke 1:17**

And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, *to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children...*

- Most dads check out pretty early in the lives of their kids, and leave the raising of the children to the mothers, babysitters, nannies, teachers, coaches, or children & student pastors.
- It's our privilege and responsibility as dads to teach our kids the values and convictions they're going to need to make it through.
- And if we do it even reasonably well, we also give them a lifetime of healthy, wholesome fun memories as well.
- If you choose to be there for your kids you can do for them what no other person alive can do for them—without which they'll search their entire lifetime trying to find...

8. We learned about communication.

- First, it's a skill that none of us has naturally.
- There are ineffective non-verbal and verbal listening/communicating habits and there are effective non-verbal and verbal listening/communicating skills.
- It's our job to avoid the non-effective habits, and it's our job to learn and model the effective skills for others in our family to emulate.

9. We learned about time.

### **Malachi 2:13-15**

Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. <sup>14</sup> You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

<sup>15</sup> Has not the LORD made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

- First, the myth of quality time—it only happens as an outgrowing of quantity time.
- By dedicating huge chunks of our discretionary time to our wives we prove to them all the things we've told them.
- It's the only way to flesh out our marriage vows...TIME and lots of it.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Which of the first nine wishes was most meaningful, and/or challenging, to you?
- Can you explain why?
- Have you made any plans or commitments as a result?
- Have you talked with your wife about any plans or changes you might want to make? To a friend? Why or why not?

## **II. Number 10...You Can Be That Man.**

It's the "hard to put into words" dream and wish of wives across the world about the men they married...

- They really do want a knight in shining armor. You can be that knight.
- They want to be married to a man they can look up to. That can be you.
- They want you to live such a life of integrity and nobility that to follow your leadership would be a privilege. You can be that leader.
- They want to see such strength of character and conviction that they never have to wonder about your honesty or motives or actions. That can be you.
- They want a father for their children that is such a loving, caring, involved, and understanding man that they want the kids to grow up to be just like you. You can be that father...
- They want to be married to a man that is spiritually passionate, emotionally healthy, and physically aware of her needs throughout the seasons of life. That's the man we can become...if we want to.
- How?
- By learning of, leaning on, and living out the divine truth about life:

## LIFE'S DIVINE TRUTH

\*It's not about you—it's about God, your family, friends, neighbors, & you.

\*It's not about what you want—it's about what God demands.

\*It's not about what you think—it's about what God knows.

\*It's not about your inability—it's about God's ability.

\*It's not about now—it's about tomorrow, next year, the next generation, & eternity.

1. It's not about you—it's about God, your family, friends, neighbors, & you.<sup>2</sup>

### **Ephesians 2:10**

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

### **Philippians 2:1-4**

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,<sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.<sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.<sup>4</sup> Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

2. It's not about what you want—it's about what God demands.

### **Jeremiah 45:5**

Should you then seek great things for yourself? Seek them not.

### **Matthew 6:33**

Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

### **John 4:34**

"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

### **John 5:30**

By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

### **John 6:38**

For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

3. It's not about what you think—it's about what God knows.

**Proverbs 14:12**

There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.

**Jeremiah 29:11**

"I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

**Hebrews 4:13**

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight.

4. It's not about your inability—it's about God's ability.

**Philippians 4:12-13**

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. <sup>13</sup> I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

5. It's not about now—it's about tomorrow, next year, the next generation, & eternity.

**Mark 10:28-31**

Peter said to him, "We have left everything to follow you!"

<sup>29</sup> "I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel <sup>30</sup> will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. <sup>31</sup> But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

**Romans 14:10-13**

You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. <sup>11</sup> It is written:

" 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.' " <sup>12</sup> So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

<sup>13</sup> Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- It really isn't about you—how would believing that change the way you intend to behave when you get to work today?
- How would seeking "his" ways first change the way you feel about other people?
- Does knowing that everything we *think, say or do* is known fully by God alarm you?

- If you really bought in to the fact that you could be a different sort of man by plugging into God's power and presence in your life, would you *go for it*?
- If you don't *go for it* now, what line of defense do you think you'll use to explain to him why you didn't?

## John Wooden

On the 21st of the month, the best man I know will do what he always does on the 21st of the month. He'll sit down and pen a love letter to his best girl. He'll say how much he misses her and loves her and can't wait to see her again. Then he'll fold it once, slide it in a little envelope and walk into his bedroom. He'll go to the stack of love letters sitting there on her pillow, untie the yellow ribbon, place the new one on top and tie the ribbon again. The stack will be 180 letters high then, because the 21st will be 15 years to the day since Nellie, his beloved wife of 53 years, died.

In her memory, he sleeps only on his half of the bed, only on his pillow, only on top of the sheets, ever between; with just the old bedspread they shared to keep him warm. There's never been a finer man in American sports than John Wooden, or a finer coach. He won 10 NCAA basketball championships at UCLA, the last in 1975. Nobody has ever come within six of him. He won 88 straight games between January 30, 1971, and January 17, 1974. Nobody has come within 42 since.

So, sometimes, when the Basketball Madness gets to be too much—too many players trying to make Sports Center, too few players trying to make assists, too few coaches willing to be mentors, too many freshmen with out-of-wedlock kids, too few freshmen who will stay in school long enough to become men—I like to go see Coach Wooden.

I visit him in his little condo in Encino, 20 minutes northwest of Los Angeles, and hear him say things like "Gracious sakes alive!" and tell stories about teaching "Lewis" the hook shot. Lewis Alcindor, that is...who became Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

There has never been another coach like Wooden, quiet as an April snow and square as a game of checkers; loyal to one woman, one school, one way; walking around campus in his sensible shoes and Jimmy Stewart morals. He'd spend a half hour the first day of practice teaching his men how to put on a sock. "Wrinkles can lead to blisters," he'd warn. These huge players would sneak looks at one another and roll their eyes. Eventually, they'd do it right. "Good," he'd say. "And now for the other foot."

Of the 180 players who played for him, Wooden knows the whereabouts of 172. Of course, it's not hard when most of them call, checking on his health, secretly hoping to hear some of his simple life lessons so that they can write them on the lunch bags of their kids, who will roll their eyes.

- "Discipline yourself, and others won't need to," Coach would say.

- “Never lie, never cheat, never steal,” and “Earn the right to be proud and confident.”

If you played for him, you played by his rules:

- Never score without acknowledging a teammate.
- One word of profanity and you’re done for the day.
- Treat your opponent with respect.

He believed in hopelessly out-of-date stuff that never did anything but win championships. No dribbling behind the back or through the legs. “There’s no need,” he’d say. No UCLA basketball number was retired under his watch. “What about the fellows who wore that number before? Didn’t they contribute to the team?” he’d say.

No long hair, no facial hair. “They take too long to dry, and you could catch cold leaving the gym,” he’d say. That one drove his players bonkers. One day, All-America center Bill Walton showed up with a full beard. “It’s my right,” he insisted. Wooden asked if he believed that strongly. Walton said he did. “That’s good, Bill,” Coach said. “I admire people who have strong beliefs and stick by them, I really do. We’re going to miss you.” Walton shaved it right then and there. Now Walton calls once a week to tell Coach he loves him.

It’s always too soon when you have to leave the condo and go back out into the real world, where the rules are so much grayer and the teams so much worse. As Wooden shows you to the door, you take one last look around. The framed report cards of his great-grandkids, the boxes of jellybeans peeking out from under the favorite wooden chair, the dozens of pictures of Nellie. He’s almost 90 now. You think a little more hunched over than last time. Steps a little smaller. You hope it’s not the last time you see him. He smiles. “I’m not afraid to die,” he says. “Death is my only chance to be with her again.” Problem is we still need him here.

“There is only one kind of a life that truly wins, and that is the one that places faith in the hands of the Savior. Until that is done, we are on an aimless course that runs in circles and goes nowhere. Material possessions, winning scores, and great reputations are meaningless in the eyes of the Lord, because He knows what we really are and that is all that matters.” (John Wooden)