

Is There A Husband Who Does Not Love His Wife? Is There A Wife Who Does Not Love Her Husband?

by Bill Crews

In an old publication I read these words: "One of the greatest things a man can do for his children is to truly love their mother." I believe this to be true. And that mother should be his wife; and that love will promote her joy and happiness, her personality and contentment; and that love will be returned by her ten-fold; and that love will be imitated by his children and cause them to know their mother is special and that they live in a stable and secure home; and that love will gain for their father their admiration and respect. (Of course, a woman is also to love the father of her children.)

But when a man does not love his wife, his children will see it and know it and be adversely affected by it for time and eternity. Their affections will become divided as they are made to feel that they must take sides — drawn toward and defensive of one, bitter toward and blaming the other. They will become fearful and insecure; they will not know what stability in a home is; and all of this will carry over into their own marriages in which they will find it difficult to love or be loved.

When a Christian does not love his mate, he or she is without excuse. Christians of all people are to love others *unconditionally*, whether they love us or not — just as our Savior has done (Matthew 23:37; Romans 5:8, 10; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Luke 23:34; 1 Peter 2:21-25). We are even to love our enemies, and love can sometimes make friends out of enemies (Romans 12:19-21). When two people marry, they are under obligation, and they usually vow, to "love, honor and cherish" one another "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in prosperity, in adversity, in sickness, in health," and to "keep" themselves unto one another "until death do" them "part." And even when the words are not spoken, the duties are still there because they belong to the relationship. A wife is to be taught to love her husband and to love her children (Titus 2:3-5).

Husbands are commanded, "*Love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it*" (Ephesians 5 :25). And "*Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them*" (Col. 3:20). After Peter called upon wives to be in subjection to their own husbands and to emphasize the adorning of the inward man over the adorning of the physical body, he then said, "*Ye husbands, in like manner, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, as being joint-heirs of the grace of life; to the end that **your prayers be not hindered***" (1 Peter 3:7, emphasis mine, BC). Sometimes God will not hear our prayers.

Love is completely unselfish. It promotes the welfare of the one who is loved (Romans 15:2). Love leads one to be "*tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another*" (Romans 12:10). "*Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things*" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). Can a parent, with God's approval, stop loving his or her children? Can a husband or a wife, with God's approval, stop loving his or her mate? If either one does, it will be in rebellion to God, in defiance of God, and in violation of the solemn vows taken at the time of the marriage. If you are married, please consider these things.

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