

by ***Mac Adaimi***

It is a very bitter thing for a husband to hear his wife speaking harshly to him. We can feel angry and resentful when we feel we are being dishonoured and underappreciated. You may begin to wonder, 'How much of this can I take?' How should we act in these fall outs and in some cases extreme confrontations?

While presenting on the role of the husband in our recent Marriage Enrichment course it dawned on me how much abuse Christ had to endure on the cross. He endured insults, slander, false accusation and massive verbal and physical abuse. Think about how much he had to forgive while enduring this massive abuse and then think about who he was! The man above all men, the only true God, the father above all fathers, the husband above all husbands. Well, God tells us, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." (Eph 5:25)

How much did He have to love, how much did He have to forgive while enduring this severe disrespect? We represent Jesus in our marriages. We are asked to be like Him to our wives. Of course this is a human impossibility! I would suggest that we have not put up with half as much as Christ had to put up with. Or should we say we have not had to endure anything like Christ had to endure with His 'bride in the making' while being crucified by her. Christ loved his bride while she hated and insulted Him. For those of you who are Afrikaans speaking, "hy het verskriklik deurgeloop", (he suffered terribly).

Sorry guys I think we have to up our game. If Christ tells us to love our enemies (Matt 5:44) how much more should we not only put up with our wives verbal assault etc. but love them in it and through it to bring them to the wholeness that God intends for them to have. They are our covenant partners. In a covenant we don't only give 50 percent but are supposed to give 100 percent.

I dare to say that when we have said "enough is enough!" it is by no means enough when compared to Christ's 'enough'. He never reaches His 'enough', he even let His bride kill Him because of her sinfulness.

So we are challenged to massively re-adjust our heart muscles of love, re-align our attitudes and increase our forgiveness and patience. We are challenged to keep on keeping on and loving our wives to the wholeness God has intended for them to reach. This is what Christ did when he was hanging on

the cross for our restoration and our wholeness. (Eph 5:26-27)

In Ephesians 5:26 it says that Christ “cleansed her by the washing of water with the word”. For us men, the largest part of this washing is living the word spoken of in 1 Cor 13 and Gal 5:22. This would far better wash our wives than only teaching her the word of God. I dare say that we say too much and do too little. Sorry, but I do stand with you in missing the mark in this sometimes. So we’re in this together; one brother helping another brother.

As already mentioned the human impossibility of what God expects of us husbands. How are we to do this human impossibility; loving and turning the other cheek and forgiving as Christ forgives? The part in Ephesians 5 where it speaks of wives and husbands is preceded by verses discussing our ability to live by the Spirit’s power (Eph 5:15-20).

Paul gave us the answer in the how to do the impossible before He challenges us as husbands and wives to be the humanly impossible. The measure to which we draw near to Jesus in a loving relationship as our saviour and older brother and Lord and master is the measure to which the impossibilities of being a really Christ-like husband becomes more probable and possible.

When I draw near to Christ in this way, suddenly my heart starts to soften; suddenly I see, more clearly, my selfishness and self-justification. Suddenly I am convicted of my stubbornness and see more clearly my role as leader of my family. When I rub shoulders with the Lord of Lords and King of Kings I become more like Him.



### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

*Mac and Naudine were missionaries for 8 years, prior to becoming pastors. During their pastoring services they became involved with various family ministries. They love to serve the people of God,*

*especially with regards to restoring wholeness.*

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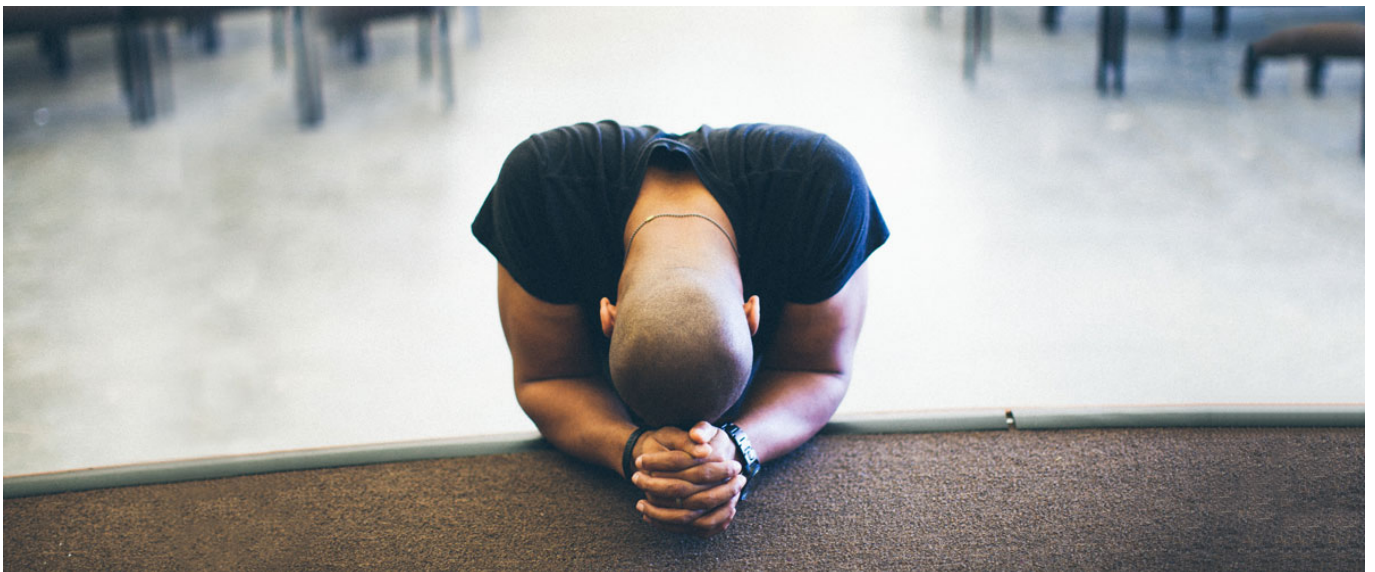
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