

Cherish:

Lovingly protecting and caring for someone



“To love and cherish” have been a part of traditional wedding vows for centuries. But have any of us thought about what it means to “cherish” our spouse? I certainly didn’t understand what *cherish* meant when I promised to cherish Carmen 35 years ago. And, I must confess, I haven’t done the best job of cherishing her. Certainly, there have been times when I lovingly cared for her, but on a day to day basis? That is why I am glad we serve a forgiving and loving God—a God who *cherishes* us! This is an area where I think most of us can grow in and if we do grow in this area, it *will* improve our marriages.

Paul wrote, “In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.” (Ephesians 5:28-31 - ESV) We all protect and care for our own bodies, Jesus protects and cares for His body—the church—us, and we are to love and protect our spouses. It is easily said, difficult to do on a daily basis. It means that we, first, must *know* our spouse—perhaps, not totally understanding them, but knowing their strengths, weaknesses, and needs. Then we must be purposeful about helping our spouse in those strengths and weaknesses, and seeking to meet their needs. It requires time, but more than time, it requires an attitude of loving our spouse as Christ loves us.

Folks, I will venture to say that most of you, like me, need an attitude adjustment here. Getting annoyed at our spouse is not *cherishing* them. Criticizing our spouse is not *cherishing* them. We *cherish* our spouse when we seek their best no matter what and seek to help them grow more into the image of Christ. We are to cherish them as the most treasured thing in our lives—our spouse should know they are more important than anything else in the world. Would you commit to being purposeful about cherishing your spouse?

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Book to check out: *Cherish* by Gary Thomas

Article to check out: *A Tale of Two Wives* by Gary Thomas

www.garythomas.com/tale-two-wives

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