



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Embracing Love and Respect in Marriage – Part 2

**Guest(s):** Dr. Emerson Eggerichs

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Announcer: Today, on Family Talk:

Dr. Dobson: Welcome, everyone, to Family Talk, a division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm your host, James Dobson, and I want to thank you as always for joining us today. We would never be heard again if it weren't for people like you. Thanks for faithfully supporting our ministry. Today you're going to hear the second part of a presentation delivered by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs at an event here in Colorado Springs last fall. On yesterday's program, Dr. Eggerichs explained the role of love and respect in every marriage and the ways that relationship honors God when you get it right.

In a moment he will continue to address those concepts and the problems that can arise between a husband and wife. But before we hear that presentation, let me tell you a little more about Dr. Eggerichs. He is a great friend of mine, as I indicated earlier. He's a gifted speaker, a New York Times bestselling author, the pastor and founder of Love & Respect Ministries. He's an excellent communicator and he's spoken to pro athletes, to Navy SEALs and even to members of Congress. Dr. Eggerichs is also highly educated with a PhD, two master's degrees, and a bachelor's degree. He and his wife, Sarah, have been married for 45 years, so they should have learned some things and obviously they did, and they also have three adult children.

To begin, we're going to roll back to the closing moments of yesterday's program so that you have an idea of where we're going today. Here is Dr. Emerson Eggerichs on this edition of Family Talk.

Dr. Eggerichs: As a pastor, I had the privilege of studying the Bible 30 hours a week. So I came across Ephesians 5:33. Why that's important is that's a summary statement to the greatest chapter or treatise on marriage in the New Testament, most would conclude. Verses and chapters were added later. There was this parchment and there are these sections. But at the end of the section, Paul says this and it kind of blew me away. "Husbands, love your wives, and wives, respect your husbands." And then as I got in the Greek, I realized did you know no wife is

commanded to agape love her husband in the domestic portions of scripture?  
No wife is commanded to agape love.

In Titus 2, the older women are to encourage the younger women to love their husbands, love their children, that's phileo. It is a friendly type of love. I said to the Lord, "Why have you not commanded a wife to agape love?" The Lord, in an inaudible voice, not audibly said, "I put it within the nature of women to nurture. Women love to love at the level of intimacy. You have to wound a woman at the level of intimacy, like your dad wounded your mom, to get them to shut down." Women love to love. I mean think how many times you've said this week, "Love you. Love you. Bye. I love. Xs. I love you, love you, love you, love you, love you. Love, love, love. Love you, love you, love you. Love." It just doesn't stop, because God made you that way. He created you.

The world would not be a very pleasant place without you. In fact, some say the only safe haven now if a child gets lost in an amusement park, don't go to a policemen, necessarily. But look for a mom who has three children hanging on her and go to her and say you've lost your mommy and daddy. It's the only safe haven. But why would not God command the wife to do that? Because of the reasons I've stated. It's within her nature to do that, so He's not into redundancy. He commands the husband, though, to agape love. Apparently in this verse I don't do by nature what Sarah does by nature.

Why does God command a wife to respect? Well, most women don't know what respect even looks like, but they do know that they're disrespectful. They understand that. They know that, but they're not trying to be disrespectful. They're trying to awaken him to their need to be loved. But they have that look, what's called the gestures of contempt, hand on hips, scolding finger, rolling the eyes, the sigh, the head goes back. When estrogen kicks in, the word choice of contempt is incredible. This has been documented by the University of Washington. They studied 2000 couples for 20 years and they call it the gestures of contempt.

But she's not trying to be disrespectful but she appears that way and that's the way he reads it. He when he feels disrespected, he ends up reacting in a way that feels unloving to her. 85% of those who stonewall and withdraw is the husband. Why? Because his heartbeats are 99 beats per minute. They monitored this. So he's trying to do the honorable thing when he feels disrespected which feels unloving to her. She's trying to do the loving thing. Most women will criticize and complain. They move toward to confront because they want to connect. But that ends up being, feels disrespectful to him when she's trying to do the loving thing on the heels of feeling unloved.

You talk about two good-willed people who completely misunderstand each other. You follow what I'm saying? What I then discovered is that this leads to the crazy cycle. Doc didn't like the word crazy cycle early on and so I tried to figure out how can I please him on this. But the crazy cycle says without love, she reacts without respect. Without respect, he reacts without love. Without

love, she reacts without respect. Without respect, he reacts without love. I saw a correlation and began to realize if a wife doesn't feel loved she reacts in a way that feels disrespectful to awaken him to the need to be loved. But it doesn't get there. He doesn't decode that. He doesn't understand the meaning of her actions and words.

She's saying it as clearly as she can. All her women friends who think pink, they know. They know exactly what that sweet thing means by what she says. So she ends up reacting in a way though that feels disrespectful. And then he, feeling disrespected, reacts even more in ways that feel unloving to her. You have these two good-willed people who are on this crazy cycle. Same thing from his standpoint. She reacts in a disrespectful way, comes out of left field, particularly if he does, "Where's this coming from? What just happened here?" And then he shuts down because his heartbeats are 99 beats per minute. He's got to calm himself down. That's what an honorable man does.

He even exits because the relationship is more important than the topic, so I kind of want to just exit either physically or emotionally because this doesn't need to get out of control. You're more important to me than this issue. Can we just drop it and move on please? So then he's trying to do the honorable thing only to be interpreted as unloving. All the men watching this think, "Look at her. She's just chasing him through the house." Talk to me. How many of you have sons? Most of you, and you have grandsons. That's going to be the attitude of your sweet daughter-in-law or your grandchild son's wife. She's going to say every one of those things to him, probably the first several months of the marriage because he's going to say, "You're disrespecting me."

It comes out because it's in us. It's who we are. We filter the world through honor. I mean when we go to the *Gladiator* or *Saving Private Ryan*, there is just, we cry. We go to *Sleepless in Seattle*, we sleep. There are these differences, but men serve and die for honor. Pat Riley had me come speak to the Miami Heat and he and I spent four hours in private talking about issues of honor and justice and how men respond and how men perform in response to that. When they feel unjustly treated and dishonored, they shut down. Your performance just goes out. And then he had me speak to the Miami Heat and he told me afterward, "You're the only person I've ever had speak to my team in an inspirational, motivational way."

So this is a huge issue to men and across the country. Tom Coughlin had me come speak to the New York Giants. Again, this is a huge issue across the culture, not even just in the church. People respond to this message. It's important. Men serve and die for honor. In fact, one husband said to his wife, "I love you so much I would die for you." She said, "Here, you keep saying that but you never do." But what's interesting is that as we got into this, this message started taking off. I won't continue to talk to you about how to get off the crazy cycle, though one of the things we have to do is decode that your wife is not trying to diss you. She's crying out for reassurance that you love her.

If you can filter it through that way, many women feel like they're three conversations away from being rejected, that you're going to trade them in for a new model. It's an insecurity that's not rooted in rationality, according to us, but that's where she processes, just as you wonder if you're good enough. Some of you have already succeeded and feel great. Well, you're here because you have. But many men are wondering, am I good enough? Am I man enough? He's always wondering if that's the perception she has of him. Is he really man enough? That's why men said, "I can never be good enough for you." That's a deep issue. It's not an excuse. That's what men feel.

We both filter these things through a particular grid, but we've got to come to a point where we decode. Do we decode that she's not trying to be disrespectful? She's seeking reassurance. It's not a complaint. It's a compliment. When he shuts down that way, he's trying to do the honorable thing. He's not trying to be unloving. He just doesn't have the same need that you have. So he's actually trying to do the honorable thing. Can you appeal to him? Say, "I know you're calming down because I probably shouldn't have said it that way. You're an honorable man. You'd die for me if I don't kill you first. You're an honorable, honorable man. I know you need a break for 15 minutes. Can you come back together in 15 and talk about this for 15 minutes, not for 15 hours?"

The rules of engagement. We talk in our *Love & Respect* book about how to do that but, again, believing the goodwill of the person. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7:32 and 33 that the husband is concerned about how to please the wife and the wife is concerned about how to please her husband. He penned Romans, the great treatise on total depravity. You would think he would say, "The reason you got problems is you're sinful, selfish people. Case closed." No. You're created in the image of God. The residual remains there. Your husband is concerned about how to please you. Your wife is concerned about how to please you. But we choose ways that don't always feel comfortable to us.

When a man withdraws, he's actually trying to keep this relationship good, healthy. He's concerned. But it ends up feeling like he's not concerned and he doesn't want to please you. When you come at him to connect, you're trying to resolve this to say, "I'm sorry, will you forgive me? We can be connected." Your whole motivation's in the right place. You're trying to do what is pleasing to God, to the relationship. You're concerned. But in his world, it feels very disrespectful. That it's just another opportunity to send him a message that you despise who he is as a human being.

Talk about two good-willed people, and Paul is saying you've got good will. So we have to give the benefit of the doubt that we're allies. We're not enemies. That we're friends, we're not foes. My daughter, Joy, just married several years ago and her husband would say, "Remember, Joy, we're on the same team." We've got to continue to remind ourselves of that. What was interesting by way of another little comment though, wives began to write me who had gone to the Love & Respect conference and they said, "Hey, my boy's male," and began to respond to this. They began to apply it, I should say, to their sons, using what

I call respect talk. "You're an honorable young man. You're an honorable young man. I know when you get to be 16, 17, you'd die for me because you're an honorable man. But for the world of me, I can't figure out why in the world you're not doing what I'm asking. Now, will you please get up there and clean your room?"

You see if you use those words, watch what happens in the spirit of the boy. Well, these women began to do this and write me. So we wrote the mother/son book, how mothers were applying what I call the respect effect to their boys and what these boys were doing in response. That whole book is testimony after testimony of mothers who began to realize this just blew them out of the saddle. I mean they just couldn't believe what was happening because women want to connect. So they ask the 100 questions of their boys. Boys are not going to always respond to that. They just shut down. How do you then energize them? How do you have that sense of connection?

We had a whole new phase that I didn't even anticipate open up to us on this whole mother/son dynamic and it applies to a four-year-old when he starts to be something other than the precious little baby. His mother's saying, "He used to be such a sweet baby. Now he's all boy." It kicks in at age four, meaning that the all boy's not sweet. They don't figure that out. But it works to the 40-year-old son as well. It's healed adult relationships right and left, just amazing. Because boys are shutting down not because Mom doesn't love them, but because they feel that Mom doesn't like them. Daughters don't feel the same way. She can talk the same way to her daughter. They'll end up on the bed saying, "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that, sweetie." "Well, I shouldn't have said that, Mom. I was horrible."

They will then talk for a half hour. The boy will just shut down in that first confrontation. So how do you bring him out? Well, we talk about that. But where I want to transition now is back to what was said about Dr. Dobson in terms of his ultimate goal and Shirley's is to hear well-done, to hear well-done. That's true of this group. Paul goes on in that Ephesians 5 passage in chapter 6 verse 7 and 8 which in the parchment all this is together. He says, "With goodwill, render service as to the Lord, not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does this he'll receive back from the Lord, whether free or slave." It's a principle. You see it.

He was tempted to say this in each verse, but it was too much. But he would say, "As to the Lord, as to the Lord, as to the Lord. Wives [inaudible 00:13:21] to your husbands, as to the Lord." Husband's not the Lord. The Lord is the Lord. Husbands love your wives as Christ. He continues to go from the horizontal to the vertical. As to the Lord, as to the Lord. It was based on what Jesus said, "As you've done it to the least of these, you've done it to me." They meditated on the words of Jesus, the gospels and the sayings of Jesus. They meditated, meditated. So they took these certain motifs and they would develop. Romans is based on the word justification that Jesus said, "Which one of these went home justified?"

Paul meditated on that and Romans exploded from that. It's rich when you begin to realize the extent to which I think Paul memorized every saying of Jesus, meditated on it, apart from the unique revelations that were given to him. But this whole idea, as to the Lord, as to the Lord, as to the Lord. What's the significance of this? At the end of the day, each of us here needs to realize that He's going to say well done to us. But what's the priority? When you look at Colossians or Ephesians, these texts like Ephesians 1, 2, and 3 is doctrine, 4, 5, and 6 is application. They always swing from doctrine to application on the husband and wife relationship first, then father, child, then master, slave, and in some of these epistles, authority, citizen. Those are the four areas.

Why? Because that's where the Lord's watching. It has nothing to do with our gifts, symmetry, ability to perform, our spiritual giftedness, our ability to sing. Those are talents and gifts that He's given to us. In symmetry, we celebrate people who have symmetry. It had nothing to do with it. It's odd, but the world's upside down. But nonetheless, the Lord watches those areas where it's based on our trust and our obedience toward Him, our love and our reverence toward Him. Ultimately, the whole Christ church, husbands are to love their wives. Why? Because they are loving Christ. Women are to respect their husbands. Why? Because beyond their husband is Christ who they reverence.

My love for Christ and reverence for Christ must spill over onto my spouse. As I say, I'm called to love Christ. Sarah walks in between Jesus and me and my love for Christ should spill over onto her as love for her. If I'm not loving Sarah, it means I'm not loving Christ. There's just no debate about that. None of us are going to do it perfectly. Proverbs 24:16 says, "A righteous man falls seven times but rises again." So we're all going to fail, but we have to have a big yes to this that ultimately this command has nothing to do with my spouse. To love Sarah, it's Christ commanding me. "Emerson, did you love Sarah?" "Do you know her family?" "Emerson, was this my command to you? Did you do this out of trust and obedience toward me? Did you do this out of love and reverence toward me? Sarah's irrelevant.

"So if you are not a loving man, Sarah had nothing to do with that. You didn't love me, Emerson." "Sarah, did you respect Emerson? Sarah, was this my command to you?" "Yes, sir." "Did you do this out of love and reverence toward me, out of trust and obedience toward me?" "but Lord, since I've died he's made a poster of himself down there as the Love & Respect poster child." "Sarah, Emerson's irrelevant in more ways than one. Unbelievable. Archangel Michael, deal with him." Humor aside, this is the way it's going down. Dr. Dobson and Shirley understand that. This is what's been driving them. What I want to do is use their example to appeal to you that ultimately we get off the crazy cycle because we get on what we call the rewarded cycle that his love, a husband's love unto Jesus Christ, regardless of her respect.

Her respect unto Jesus Christ regardless of his love. There comes a moment when we make a decision, this is who I'm going to be. Many people don't have any clue about what unconditional means. We know unconditional love but

unconditional respect seems like an oxymoron. Unconditional means there's no condition, no situation or circumstance that can get me to hate you. This isn't about who you failed to be. This is about who God calls me to be and you can't stop me from loving. That's what unconditional means. There's no circumstance. Doesn't mean you deserve it. It doesn't mean that I have a right to hate you because you haven't performed to my standard.

At the end of the day, you don't cause me to be the way I am. You reveal the way I am. Sarah and I subscribe to this idea that's an axiom. My response is my responsibility. You hate that at first, but at the end of the day it's liberating because you can't get me to hate you. You can't get me to show you contempt. That doesn't mean I'm not going to fail. I'm a sinner. But I am free. This is what truth means, freedom. Freedom means free, free to be who God calls me to be, independent of my circumstances. I'm not necessarily free in a prison. But even there, Paul said, "I'm a prisoner of Christ, I'm not a prisoner of Rome." He was free. The word of God cannot be chained.

There was this recognition that I'm going to be this type of person. There was a young boy being sold on a block of wood as a slave. He's about nine or 10 years of age. A slave owner came up to him and said, "If I buy you, will you be honest?" This young boy looked at him and said, "Sir, whether you buy me or not I'll be honest." I wept when I heard that because he's made a decision. This is who I'm going to be. A speck of sand in the human eye first causes irritation and then if not cared for, infection, still not cared for, it can lead to loss of vision. That same speck of sand in an oyster causes irritation and then infection and then a pearl. Now, the question is, did the sand cause the result in the human eye, then it caused the results in the oyster?

No. The sand is an irritant that reveals the inner properties of the human eye. The sand is an irritant that reveals the inner properties of the oyster. Otherwise, the next time you get sand in your eye a pearl may pop out. But that's not going to happen. Not going to happen. Well, here's a little secret. You ready for a secret? You're married to an irritant. That's an ugly way of saying it, but it's a truthful way because at the end of the day they reveal who you are. They reveal. Sarah reveals who I am. As much as I want to justify myself, which Adam ... He only knew two beings, God and the woman. "The woman you gave me made me eat." In one sentence he blamed both of them to justify himself. She blames the serpent.

Every time we get in the crazy cycle I want to blame Sarah. "I'm unloving because you're disrespectful." "Well, I'm disrespectful because you're unloving." We can go that way or we can say, "My response is my responsibility. You're not causing me to be this way and furthermore, you afford me the opportunity to go deeper again in doing this unto Jesus Christ." With good will render service as to the Lord. It isn't about your spouse. Some of you have said no one can love that woman. It's not about her. It's your decision not to be a loving man. No one can respect him. It isn't about him. You have within your nature a disrespectful tendency when you feel unloved.

Jesus Christ does not want that for you. So this is between you and Him. I believe as with Doc, there's coming a moment then we're going to die and we're going to ascend. We're going to be standing before the Lord and the Lord is going to say to Dr. Dobson, He's going to say to Shirley, to Danae, and to all of us here, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful in a few things. I'm going to put you in charge of many things. Enter the joy of your master." "Really, Lord?" "Yes." I call it the unending first moment. That pales in comparison to what's coming because eye has not seen, ear has not heard. It has not entered the heart of man what God has prepared for those who love Him.

He intentionally prevents us from knowing. Paul was told, "Do not tell the church what you saw in heaven." When he was caught up into the third heavens. He heard inexpressible things which a man is not permitted to speak and he was given the messenger of Satan, the thorn in the flesh to prevent him from boasting about the revelations. What revelation? Of what's coming. He was told never to tell the church. Did you know that? That unending first moment is going to happen but what I just did doesn't even begin to come a billion light years close to what's coming. Where is it that we're rewarded? Where the doctrine swings to application and it begins, first and foremost, with the husband/wife relationship. Jim and Shirley, thank you for being such an example to us. Let's pray together.

Would you just take a moment of quietness and renew your commitment to the word of God on this and with a sense of excitement, even? It's a new day. Would you just offer your heart up. Lord, I want to do this unto you, unto you, to hear well done. Lord, you know our hearts. You know our frailties. You know our inadequacies. But we're so grateful that you've sent the Holy Spirit, the helper. I love that. You help us. You want to help us. You command us and yet you help us. So we just offer ourselves up again. Help us to do what will touch your heart. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Jim Veldhuis:

What an enlightening end to this two-part presentation from Dr. Emerson Eggerichs on this edition of Family Talk. I'm Jim Veldhuis sitting in for Roger Marsh today. Go to [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org) to discover more about Dr. Eggerichs, his ministry, or his popular book, *Love & Respect*. There you'll also see the "order a CD" button where you can request a physical copy of his entire speech. All of this can be found on today's broadcast page when you go to [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org).

This was a very important topic that truly impacts the dynamic of every family. Let us know what you learned or appreciated about this message by connecting with us on Facebook. Find our profile by searching for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Once there, comment on either yesterday or today's broadcast post. We enjoy hearing how all of our radio programs are impacting you and your faith walk. Again, search for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk on Facebook. Then leave your thoughts on the broadcast post. We can't wait to hear from you.



Listen in tomorrow to hear Dr. Tim Clinton's recent conversation with renowned neuroscientist and psychiatrist, Dr. Daniel Amen. They'll discuss what it means to properly care for our wonderfully complex brains. It's a fascinating interview you won't want to miss on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Jim Veldhuis. I hope you'll join us then.

Announcer: This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hi, everyone. This is Dr. Tim Clinton, executive director at the Dobson Family Institute, wanting to remind you that our ministry is listener supported. Your contributions allow us to continue to fight for families everywhere. You can partner with us by going to [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org). That's [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org) or call us toll-free at 877-732-6825. That number again, 877-732-6825. This world, you know this, needs a serious transformation of the heart. Your gift can help make a difference. I hope you'll stand with us and thank you for being a friend of the family.