

Series: Marriage
Title: Wives, Husbands and Parents
Text: Ephesians 5: 21-33
Date: July 27, 2017
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Our subject is “The Responsibility of Wives, Husbands and Parents.”

Ephesians 5: 22: Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

That tells us that this is written to believers. Only those given a new spirit by God know the Lord and only those who *know the Lord* can submit themselves, *as unto the Lord*. To obey this word is to submit to Christ, to submit to his word, and only those born of God are made willing by Christ to do so. **THIS IS WHY CONFESSING BELIEVERS ARE TO MARRY CONFESSING BELIEVERS.**

Proposition: This is God’s ordained way to glorify Christ Jesus and God’s way is always the right way.

The only reason anyone would feel anything contrary to this, God’s word is because of the world’s way—the way of sinful man. Still, God’s way is always the right way!

WIVES

Ephesians 5: 22: Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23: For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24: Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

God ordained a wife to be in submission to her own husband as her head because God ordained the church to be in submission to Christ as our Head! How much does the Church submit to the authority of Christ? How authoritative to the church is the word of Christ? His Word is our only rule of faith and practice; not the word of any other! We submit to Christ our own Husband.

So a believing wife submits to her own husband, *as unto the Lord*. This is more than carnal love. It is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by which she is constrained by Christ’s love for her. She trusts Christ to provide for her through her husband. A faithful wife is one who submits to Christ’s rule by submitting to her husband’s rule

There false church not in submission to Christ. The unfaithful, harlot of Babylon says, “Let Christ save you. Let Christ into your heart. Make Christ Lord of your life.” She is the wife who usurps authority which belongs to Christ the Head. It is very ugly and very dishonoring to Christ! That is why it is very ugly for a wife to usurp authority over her husband.

Yet, by the effectual grace of God, the true church is in submission to Christ in everything because we depend upon Christ our Head for everything. Christ must seek us and make us seek him! Christ must give us a new heart and faith before we will submit and believe on him. Christ is Lord and Life of his people and Christ alone makes himself our Lord and Life in the day of his power!

So the heart-motive of a believing wife to submit to her earthly husband is because it glorifies Christ her heavenly Husband—“*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For [for this cause from this motive] the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.*”

This order of a wife submitting to her husband as her head is of God to glorify Christ as our Head and Mediator—“*Christ is the head of the church.*”

1 Timothy 2: 13: For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

That is because in eternity, God the Father first chose Christ to be Head and Mediator of his people. Then he chose his elect in Christ and espoused his church to Christ to save her.

1 Corinthians 11: 7:...[Man] “is the image and glory of God: and the woman is the glory of the man.”

Christ is the express image and glory of God. The church is the glory of Christ who made her!

Also, this order is of God to glorify Christ as our Savior—“*he is the Savior of the body.*”

1 Timothy 2: 14: And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

Christ did not fall, his bride did; Christ does not need saving, we do! So after the fall, God said to the devil:

Genesis 3: 15: I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. 16: Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; thy desire *shall* be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

The church is typified by the woman. The church sorrowed as she conceived and brought forth children because the devil tried to prevent Christ from coming into this world. The devil knew Christ would destroy him. So the devil's seed—his children—were enmity against the church and tried to kill her children on several occasions: Pharaoh through all the male babies in the river, Haman tried to kill all the Jews and Herod ordered all the children in Bethlehem from two years old and under.

Revelation 12: 1: And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: 2: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

The woman is the church, travailing to deliver Christ, the Seed of woman.

Revelation 12: 4...and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

The dragon is the devil trying to prevent Christ from being born. But it did not work.

Revelation 12: 5: And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

So in the garden, by telling the woman she would be saved and bring forth children by submission to her husband, it pictured God's church who are saved and bring forth regenerated children by submitting to Christ our Husband, as we preach only him. That is what Paul is declaring in 1 Timothy 2: 14-15.

1 Tim 2: 14: Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression; 15: Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

The church shall be saved and shall bring forth regenerated children by the Holy Spirit of Christ if we continue believing on Christ our Husband and preaching only Christ.

But will the self-willed, self-righteous person be accepted of God in final judgment? No! Likewise, a domineering, self-willed woman misses out on the joy of love and provision by her husband just as a self-willed sinner misses out on Christ's salvation!

Yet, by submitting to her husband in everything the believing wife experiences the love and provision of her husband just like the believer experiences Christ's love and provision by submitting to him to do all the saving! And scripture says, if unbelievers marry and the Lord later saves the wife, she is to submit to her husband so that he might be moved by her conduct to go with her to hear the gospel preached. (1 Pet 3: 1-6)

Christ receiving all the glory in the salvation of his submissive bride is why the ungodly world hates to hear the wife is to submit to her husband. They might change the earthly order but still, "[Christ] is the head of the body, the church: ...that in all things he might have the preeminence." (Col 1: 18) And believing husbands and wives know it—"Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

HUSBANDS

Ephesians 5: 25: Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26: That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27: That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28: So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29: For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

He does not say, "Husbands, demand your wife submit, treat her mean and run all over her!" Husbands, what melted our hard hearts to submit to Christ? It was the love of Christ, who gave himself for us, when as yet our hearts were enmity against him. So if we want our wives to submit to us, God says, "*Husbands, love your wives.*" How?

"*Even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.*" Christ loved the elect alone. He loved his bride not because of something in us. In fact, he loved us *in spite* of something in us because in ourselves we were enmity against him, unrighteous, unholy, unclean.

Romans 5: 8: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 4: 10: Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

Sometimes, we act as though we require our bride to be a certain way in order to merit our love. But Christ loved us and gave himself to make his bride what he would have her to be—*“That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”* Our Husband gave himself for each of his elect to sanctify his bride by justifying us before God and his law as well as to sanctify his bride by cleansing us in regeneration of the Holy Spirit and belief of the truth.

Now, I realize, we cannot sanctify and cleanse our bride. But I can bring my bride to hear the gospel. I can read scriptures with her and show her Christ’s love for his bride and how I desire to love her as Christ loved the church. I can treat my believing bride as one Christ has made *“glorious, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but holy and without blemish.”*

Remember, Christ said, *“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”* (Mt 25: 40) So to dishonor my bride is to dishonor Christ; to disrespect my bride is to disrespect Christ. But to love and honor her as my queen is to honor and love Christ as my King.

It is because just as my sanctified bride is one with me as my body, she is one with Christ as his body—*So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.*

Christ loves his bride as his own body because he is the head and we are the body. He loves her as his own body by nourishing her in the gospel and cherishing his bride as the Father’s gift to him. If a husband would glorify Christ he is to love his wife as he loves his own body, by nourishing her in the gospel and cherishing her as Christ’s gift to him.

Notice one more important word, Christ also loves his bride unto the end—v27: *“That he might present it to himself a glorious church, [in that last day.]*

Have you noticed that throughout scripture, it is the husband who alone is exhorted not to give his wife a letter of divorce. It could be to glorify Christ our Husband who keeps his bride until the end.

Nothing *“shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Rom 8: 39) Scripture says *“having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.”* (John 13: 1) Speaking of his own inseparable union between himself and his bride when Christ spoke of husband and wife as one flesh, he added, *“What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”* (Mt 19:6)

Husbands, we ought to remember all the time how Christ loves us so that we constantly love our bride the same way letting nothing separate her from our love!

PARENTS

Ephesians 5: 30: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32: This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33: Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

From eternity, God’s elect bride has been members of Christ body. But in the fullness of time, Christ left his heavenly Father and joined himself with our flesh. Then on the cross, he left his earthly father and mother and made his bride one flesh with him by laying down his life, being buried and rising again! In the day of his power, he makes us willing to forsake father and mother and all others and cleave unto him and we two are one flesh!

Now, I pray God give me and Melinda grace one day to heed this word. If my son is to leave father and mother and be joined unto his wife and they two be one flesh—if my daughter is to do the same—it not only means I will have to let him/her depart from under my roof and from under my provision but also from under my counsel.

Imagine if a believer professed to be one with Christ but revered and submitted to another rather than Christ. Do you think it would cause problems? Indeed it would. Likewise, if a mother gives counsel to a son contrary to what his wife is expecting from him, she automatically makes it harder for him to love his wife as his own flesh because now he has to offend mother or offend his wife. If he is a faithful husband, he will

offend father/mother and cleave to his wife. The same is true of a wife. It is of utmost difficulty for a wife to reverence her husband if her father is giving her counsel contrary to her husband.

As a pastor, I have authority from God to give scriptural counsel to those I pastor. But let me tell you a few things I have learned. The same is true of anyone giving scriptural counsel, including parents to married children:

One, we have to remember this is God's word, not mans. This is God's order, not mans. So not only must we obey God's word. We need to make it easy for our children to obey.

Two, we have to remember God is sovereign. He bought his child with his own blood. Christ is the Master teaching his own through their mistakes just as he does us! Experience—mistakes—sanctified by God's grace is a far better teacher than my counsel! So I must not get in God's way!

Romans 14: 4: Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

Three, counsel, no matter how scriptural, will rarely be heeded if we offer it while the problem is fresh. Most of the time we make it worse or create new problems. We have to wait and make certain God has broken the heart and the spirit is contrite. We have to make sure the Holy Spirit is reigning in the inner man. If a person is yet in their flesh they will not heed the counsel no matter how scriptural.

Four, counsel unasked for is rarely heeded. But it does make others look upon as busybodies minding other people's business rather than our own.

Five, if we offer up counsel, we first have to be prepared—not to be offended—when our counsel is trampled underfoot. Always remember that just because you offer it up, it does not mean someone has to heed it. If we will be offended when our counsel is ignored then don't offer it up! When they do as they will then fall, if we will be tempted to say 'I told you so' then don't offer it up!

Six, the very best counsel is, "Seek the Lord." And tell the married couple, "Work it out between yourselves." Then leave them alone. It is one thing for me to preach the gospel to you. It is another for me to meddle in your lives to try to make it effectual by my wisdom and my strength. What takes place between Christ your Husband and you, his bride, is personal between you and your husband. It is not for me to interfere in another Husband's affairs or another bride's life. Christ your Husband will work it out, and you who are his bride will be brought to submit and reverence him. The same is true when the husband and wife is my son or daughter, especially if they are sanctified children of God.

Seven, notice that God's word tells me to mind my own responsibility, not another's—"let every one of you in particular so love HIS wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence HER husband." There was an old song, "Mind your own business and you won't be minding mine!" We all have a full time job minding our own business without trying to mind someone else's.

Help if help is asked for. Otherwise, "let every one of you in particular so love HIS wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence HER husband."

If these three words were obeyed—if wives submitted themselves to their own husbands as unto the Lord, if husbands loved their wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it and if parents who are husbands and wives heeded their own responsibilities to their own spouse rather than meddling in the life of a married son or daughter—it would eliminate all the marriage problems in the world. That is true because this is God's ordained way to glorify Christ and God's way is always right!

Amen!