

Marriage and the Church
Ephesians 5:22-33
May 27, 2007

I. What is submission?

A. Mutual submission – characteristic of the church (v. 21)

1. **be imitators of God – walk in love (v. 1)**
2. **Christ’s example (v. 2)**
3. **therefore, submit to one another (v. 21)**

1 Peter 5:5 Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another,

“The scriptural doctrine on this subject is that men are not isolated individuals, each one independent of all others. No man liveth for himself and no man dieth for himself.”¹

4. **Motivation: fear of Christ, who gave himself for us**

B. Whose interests do you serve?

Philippians 2:3-4 ³ *Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.* ⁴ *Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

II. Christ and His Church

A. What is this passage about? (v. 32)

B. Christ’s love for His church

1. **Savior (v. 23)**
2. **Sacrifice (v. 25)**

“One peculiar consequence, indeed, which resulted from his death – that by it he redeemed his church – is altogether beyond the power of men to imitate.”²

3. **Sanctify (v. 26-27)**

“As the beauty of the wife produces love in the husband, so Christ adorns the Church his bride with holiness as a proof of his regard. This metaphor contains an allusion to marriage; but he afterwards lays aside the figure, and says plainly, that Christ has reconciled the church, that it might be holy and without blemish.”³

4. **Secure (v. 27)**

C. Our union with Christ

¹ Charles Hodge, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1994), 309-10.

² John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), 319.

³ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, 321.

1. **one flesh (v. 29-32)**
Galatians 2:20 ²⁰ *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*
2. **nourish and cherish (v. 29)**
3. **profound mystery (v. 32)**
“The great mystery is, that Christ breathes into the church his own life and power.”⁴

III. Husband and Wife

A. The Role of the Wife

1. **Submission, as to the Lord (vv. 22-24)**
2. **respect her husband (v. 33)**

B. The Role of the Husband

1. **Is the husband a Federal head or Savior of the wife? (v. 23)**
“There is however a relation which Christ bears to his church, which finds no analogy in that of the husband to the wife. Christ is not only the head of the church, but he is its Savior.”⁵
“Christ has, no doubt, this peculiar claim, that he is the Saviour of the Church.”⁶
2. **Love your wives *as Christ* loved the church (v. 25)**
3. **Nourish and cherish because *you are* one flesh (v. 28-29, 31)**
Gen. 2:18 *Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”*
“Every man, by his very nature, loves himself. But no man can love himself without loving his wife. Therefore, the man who does not love his wife is a monster.”⁷
4. **New priority (v. 31)**

IV. Implications

- A. **Challenge to husbands: Do you love your wife as Christ loves you?**
- B. **Comfort to husbands and wives: Christ is a better husband**
- C. **Marriage and the gospel (divorce and the gospel?)**
- D. **Weddings and the gospel (Rev. 21:9-27; 22:17, 20-21)**

⁴ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, 326.

⁵ Charles Hodge, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians*, 314.

⁶ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, 318.

⁷ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, 322.