**A Holy Matrimony – Christ and the church**

*Ephesians 5:22-33*

**Introduction**

1. **Ephesians 5:32** – Paul’s words show that not only was this section of writing mainly concerning the relationship of Christ and the church, but that the marriage relationship from the beginning was a foreshadow and representation of the relationship of Christ and the church.
2. The wonderful figure was before a mystery but is now a revelation which brings great insight into our relationship with Christ as the church.
3. Much of our understanding of Christ and the church is strengthened with our understanding of the marriage relationship. For that relationship was intended by God to be a figure for instruction concerning Christ and the church.
4. The Marriage Relationship
5. Woman Was Made for Man
   1. **1 Corinthians 11:8-9** – Man came first, and woman second for the purpose of man.
      1. **Genesis 2:18-24** – God would make woman for man, but to impress Adam with his void, showed him there weren’t any comparable to him.
      2. There was something missing with man, but woman was not an afterthought – she was always part of the plan, but man needed to see her importance.
   2. The understanding man sees the importance of woman in God’s wisdom, and values her greatly.
6. Man Treasures Woman
   1. **Proverbs 12:4a; 18:22** – His wife is his crown, and he considers finding her a good thing.
   2. A good husband honors his wife – **1 Peter 3:7**
   3. A good husband provides for his wife – **1 Timothy 5:8**
   4. **Ephesians 5:28-29** – loves wife as himself. (NOTE: comparison to Christ’s love for the church – willing to give himself for her.)
   5. This care that a husband is to have for his wife is seen in Paul’s words concerning marriage during the “present distress:”
      1. **1 Corinthians 7:32-33** – There is great care and concern for the things of the wife.
      2. The husband treasures his wife above even himself, but is supposed to treasure the Lord above even her.
      3. Hence the potential for temptation during the “present distress” to neglect the things of the Lord for the matters pertaining to the wife.
   6. Because woman was made for man he is by design the authority figure. However, the value the woman is for the man necessitates this headship to be one which operates in such a way that reflects the estimation of the wife – i.e. out of love, and for her good.
7. Man is the Head of Woman
   1. **Ephesians 5:22-23a, 24** – There is headship.
   2. **1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:12-14** – Man and woman’s positions are a matter of the order of creation, and the woman’s transgression.
   3. The man has the role of leadership/headship/authority in the home.
   4. **Ephesians 5:25a, 28-29a, 33a** – Such headship is intertwined with love for the wife.
   5. The decisions and rule of the husband is with the wife’s best interest at heart. It is not domineering and oppressive, but gentle and loving – **Colossians 3:19** (Not bitter)
8. Woman Respects Man
   1. **Ephesians 5:22-24, 33b** – Wives are to be submissive to their husbands in EVERYTHING.
      1. NOTE: Does not infer inferiority – **1 Peter 3:7** – fellow heirs. (**cf. Matthew 22:29-30** – marriage relationship is physical. Not so in the resurrection.)
      2. However, such love shown from the husband breeds respect from the wife. She understands his decisions to be out of love, and for her and the family’s good, so she submits.
9. There are parallels the Holy Spirit draws between the marriage relationship, and that of Christ and the church.
10. Christ’s Love
11. Sacrifice
    1. **Ephesians 5:23b, 25-27** – Christ is the savior of the body (church).
       1. The payment for the church’s purity, and sanctification to the purposes of God was Christ’s life.
       2. The sheep were in spiritual danger, so the Shepherd gave His life – **John 10:11, 15, 17-18** – Jesus’ life was not taken, but given.
       3. **John 15:13** – no greater love.
    2. Sanctify – to set apart, namely to the purposes of God:
       1. **1 Peter 1:18-19** – Redeemed with blood of Christ. (**cf. Colossians 1:13-14** – out of darkness into kingdom)
       2. **1 Peter 2:5** – Priesthood for the purposes of God.
       3. **Revelation 5:9-10** – “redeemed us TO God,” “priests TO our God”
       4. **Hebrews 9:14** – cleanse conscience for the purpose of serving God.
       5. AND CLEANSE – With washing of water by word – **cf. John 3:3, 5; 1 Peter 1:22-23** – baptism in response to the Spirit’s teaching/command. (Blood of Christ reached in baptism)
    3. Purchased church – **cf. Acts 20:28** – FOR Himself – the church belongs to Christ.
       1. We are His possession – **Titus 2:14** – for Himself, HIS OWN.
       2. Not our own, but BOUGHT – **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**
    4. Not our own, but under subjection to another – **cf. Titus 1:1** – bondservant. 🡪
12. Headship
    1. **Revelation 5:12-13** – The Lamb was not simply worthy as the sin sacrifice, but is worthy of power and strength, and a place on the throne of God. (Authority – headship)
    2. This headship is one of love (Like the husband’s role as head should be – in the best interest of his wife.):
       1. **Ephesians 5:27** – to present the church to Himself as glorious.
       2. His teaching is out of compassion – **Mark 6:34 (cf. Jeremiah 10:23** – we aren’t capable of directing our own paths.)
       3. His yoke is to make our lives easier, and grant us rest – **Matthew 11:28-30** (rest from sin)
       4. He is able to present us faultless in the end, and does so by His commandments – **Jude 24-25; 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2**
       5. His headship prepares us in a beautiful wedding gown to wear for the marriage – **Revelation 19:6-8** (Righteous acts of the saints – **cf. Ephesians 2:10** – prepared by God beforehand to walk in)
13. The Church’s Subjection
14. A Reverential Submission
    1. **Ephesians 5:22-24, 33** – The church submits to Christ, the head, in reverential fear. (Respect)
       1. NOTE: “in everything” is the parallel Paul draws between the church to Christ and wife to husband submission.
       2. **Cf. Colossians 3:17** – WHATEVER we do.
    2. The sanctification and cleansing of the church by Christ for the glorious presentation of her to Himself implies her submission – **Ephesians 5:27**
       1. A willing and eager submission to His direction – **Psalm 119:33-40**
       2. Do not be conformed, but transformed – **Romans 12:2; 1 Peter 4:3-41**
    3. A holy church – **1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 7:1** (something we do)
    4. A glorious church – **Ephesians 3:20-21** (bringing glory to God by submitting to the head – **Ephesians 1:22-23**)
    5. Preparation as the bride of Christ in submission to His word/gospel – **Revelation 21:2; 2 Corinthians 11:1-4**
15. A Reciprocity of Love
    1. This submission, like that of the wife to her husband, is that which comes from a love for her husband.
       1. She sees the love he has expressed, and understands his leadership to be from love for her.
       2. She then willingly, and cheerfully submits to him.
    2. When submission is lacking – **cf. Hebrews 13:17 (cf. Proverbs 21:9** – contentious woman) – Grieves them, and is unprofitable for you. (Same with Jesus.) **(cf. Matthew 23:37** – Jesus weeping over rebellious Jerusalem – destruction prophesied – A.D. 70)
    3. Jesus does not feel loved when He is disobeyed – **Luke 6:46; John 14:15; 1 John 5:3**
    4. **1 Timothy 3:15** – the church is the pillar and ground of the truth. We show our trust in Jesus, and fidelity to Him by upholding His word in doctrine and practice.

**Conclusion**

1. **Ephesians 5:22** – Indeed this revealed truth is great and wonderful.
2. The marriage relationship is a miniature of Christ and the church.
3. Christ as Husband and head has done so much for us out of love. The church as bride should willingly submit in reverential fear, and great love.