

God's Design for the Family: Transcendent Marriage

Grant Castleberry

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Ephesians 5:22-33

EPHESIANS 5 reminds us about CHRISTIANITY:

1) *Christianity impacts all of LIFE.*

- Christianity begins with SALVATION (GRACE by FAITH) – but we soon find out is that *the GOSPEL is the GATE on a LONG PATH of the CHRISTIAN LIFE.*
- On that path Nothing goes UNTOUCHED by our CHRISTIANITY!

2) *Christianity also teaches us that there is TRANSCENDENT meaning to things we thought we understood.* PAUL reveals that marriage is so much DEEPER and TRANSCENDENT than we EVER thought. That's what CHRISTIANITY does.

- Everything you thought was simple, ordinary, or commonplace has a much deeper meaning.
- Marriage is that WAY. It is a PICTURE. A MYSTERY.
- Ephesians 5:32 – [32] *This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the Church.*

Context of Ephesians

Chapters 1-3 are the DOCTRINE of the GOSPEL. That salvation is of GRACE.

Chapters 4-6 are the APPLICATION of the GOSPEL

And in Ephesians 5:22 – 33 Paul is going to deal with MARRIAGE.

- V. 22-24 – The Wife's Role
- V. 25-30 – The Husband's Role
- V. 31-33 – The Final Application

The Wife's Role

Ephesians 5:22 – [22] *Wives submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*

- Wives, God gives this COMMAND to SUBMIT....
- The VERB is *hupotasso*
 - *Compound word – hupo means UNDER. Tasso means SET. To set under.*
 - *It means to cause to be in a submissive relationship; to submit; to subject; to subordinate*
- The VERB is actually FOUND in verse 21... and NOT even STATED in verse 22.
- If you LOOK at VERSE 21 – [21] *submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.*
 - There are MANY who have tried to redefine verse 22 to argue that PAUL is NOT really talking about the specific submission of the WIFE.
 - That's called the "EGALITARIAN" position.

The CONTEXT won't allow for that position.

- PAUL is going to LINE up the DIFFERENT relationships within the CHURCH where SUBMISSION is going to play a PART.
 - First he comes to HUSBANDS and WIVES.
 - 5:22 – [22] *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*
 - Then he addresses HUSBANDS... but they are given a DIFFERENT TASK.
 - Next, in Ephesians 6 he comes to the relationship of parents and children. But who does he address FIRST?
 - Children! *"Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this right."*

- Only in Ephesians 6:4 does he come to fathers.
- Then in Ephesians 6:5 – He addresses Bondservants and Masters.
 - He says 6:5 – [5] *Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ.*

What is to MOTIVATE WIFE to do this? It is SUBMISSION as to the LORD!

- This is part of her OBEDIENCE UNTO CHRIST.
 - Your work is KINGDOM WORK... it is FIRST about YOUR LORD not about your HUSBAND.
 - The HUSBAND might not deserve SUBMISSION. Or you MIGHT not desire to SUBMIT.
 - But these ROLES are GIVEN by GOD – and we are to serve HIM.
 - Paul says in Colossians 3:23 – [23] *Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.*
 - 1 Peter 3:1, 2 – [1] *Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, [2] when they see your respectful and pure conduct.*
 - This SUBMISSION by no means entails that the WIFE is inferior.
 - In terms of REDEMPTION – Paul says in Galatians 3:28 – [28] *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*
 - 1 Corinthians 11:3 – [3] *But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.*
 - Even Christ in HIS humanity... submitted to the FATHER’S WILL.

Ephesians 5:23 – [23] *For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.*

- Paul INTRODUCES this glorious TRUTH. This MYSTERIOUS TRUTH.
- That CHRIST is the HEAD of the BODY and its CHURCH – and is its SAVIOR.
 - There is an ORGANIC UNITY to this PICTURE. This PICTURE of oneness.
 - A body cannot function without a HEAD.
 - Nor a HEAD without a BODY. They are joined together.
 - So CHRIST is FOREVER joined to the CHURCH.
- Paul SAYS that the MARRIAGE relationship is like this - The HUSBAND is the HEAD of the WIFE in a similar way that CHRIST is the HEAD of the CHURCH.
- The WORD HEAD – GREEK word *Kephele*.
 - There has been massive debate on this WORD.
 - There are TWO PRIMARY meanings.
 - 1) *The part of the body that contains the brain, head.*
 - Matthew 5:36 – [36] *And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.*
 - Matthew 6:17 – [17] *But when you fast, anoint your head...*
 - Matthew 8:20 – [20] *And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”*
 - 2) *Being of high status, the ‘head’ –*
 - Paul uses this type of meaning when reference to a SINGULAR PERSON.
 - When someone (singular) is called “the head” – it ALWAYS means AUTHORITY.
 - For example Ephesians 1:22 – [22] *And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church.*

- Colossians 2:10 – [10] *and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.*
- Clearly what PAUL is saying – is that the WIFE, though equal with her husband in REDEMPTION holds a RANK of SUBMISSION to her HUSBAND.

The APPLICATION - Ephesians 5:24 – [24] *Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their own husbands.*

- Here's the METAPHOR – as the CHURCH submits to CHRIST so the WIFE is to SUBMIT to her HUSBAND. Paul says in EVERYTHING.
- 1) SUBMISSION is *the WIFE's* Responsibility
- 2) The SUBMISSION is only to your own HUSBAND
 - This is NOT a SUBMISSION to all MEN.
 - Anglican Matt Kennedy – “You should no more submit to another man besides your husband than the church should submit to some other Lord besides Jesus.”
 - This is SUBMISSION is to PROTECT the Woman from the DOMINEERING HEADSHIP of other men.
 - The HUSBAND's HEADSHIP is a PROTECTIVE headship.
- 3) This SUBMISSION is not a DOORMAT
 - Remember the WIFE is the HUSBAND's EZER.
 - She is to be HIS HELP.

The Husband's Role

The HUSBAND's ROLE is even more difficult. Ephesians 5:25 – [25] *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,*

- The HUSBAND's RESPONSIBILITY is to LOVE HIS WIFE.
- And the PICTURE is as CHRIST LOVED the CHURCH and gave HIMSELF for her.

What TYPE Of LOVE is this? We are GIVEN two HINTS.

- 1) *First we are GIVEN a HINT in the WORD itself.*
 - In the GREEK Language there are 3 WORDS for LOVE.
 - *Eros* – Sensual Love. Romantic Love.
 - *Philia* – Brotherly Love. Affection. Joy of Companionship.
 - *Agape* – UNCONDITIONAL LOVE. LOVE that GOD has for HUMANS.
 - Same LOVE mentioned in John 3:16 – [16] *For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son...*
 - This is the TYPE Of LOVE... The HUSBAND is to HAVE for the WIFE. This unconditional LOVE. This AFFECTION. “To Will the GOOD of another.”
- 2) *We are given a hint of this LOVE by SEEING what the LOVE DOES.*
 - The text says that “*He gave himself up for her.*”
 - This is a servant-hearted LOVE. A SACRIFICIAL LOVE that serves the CHURCH to the extent that *HE LAID down HIS life for her.*
 - Jesus gave HIS life... SACRIFICIALLY in LOVE.

Ephesians 5:26 – [26] *that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,*

- PAUL essentially waxes eloquent on one of the HIGHEST VIEWS of the CROSS found in all of SCRIPTURE.
- POSITIVE ACTION. Christ's MAKE's us HOLY.
- NEGATIVE ACTION. He cleanses us of our SINS.
- *Having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word...*

- Water in the OLD covenant was an expression regarding the NEW BIRTH.
- The SOUL CLEANSING that happens... the WASHING AWAY of the SINS of the HEART.
- Ezekiel 36:25, 26 – [25] *I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from fall your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.*
- 1 Corinthians 6:11 – [11] *But you were washed, you were sanctified...*
- This is a PICTRUE of what happens when you are born AGAIN.
- John 3:5 – [5] *Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*
- Why the WORD? The NEW BIRTH is brought about in our LIVES through the WORD of GOD – 1 Peter 1:23 – [23] *since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God*
- The New BIRTH... this soul WASHING is brought about through the WORD of GOD... but it was all brought about by Christ's DEATH on the CROSS.

Ultimate Purpose Ephesians 5:27 – [27] *so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.*

- Christ DIED to purify for HIMSELF a BRIDE.

Ephesians 5:28 – [28] *In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.*

- Paul goes back to the HEAD/BODY METAPHOR that HE USED earlier.
- Husbands are to LOVE their WIVES in this WAY. This SACRIFICIAL WAY.
 - NOT that a husband CLEANSSES his WIFE.
 - But there is this sense where the HUSBAND is RESPONSIBLE for HIS WIFE.

Ephesians 5:29 – [29] *For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church,* Ephesians 5:30 – [30] *because we are members of his body.*

- This is WHAT distinguishes CHRISTIAN marriages... THIS agape LOVE.

The Final Application

Paul Quotes Genesis 2... This is the BEGINNING of the FAMILY.

Ephesians 5:31 – [31] *“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”*

- Headship and Submission is the ULTIMATE MEANING of MARRIAGE.
- The WIFE's SUBMISSION to HER HUSBAND.
- The HUSBAND's LOVE for HIS WIFE.

Ephesians 5:32 – [32] *This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.*

- CHRISTIANS can TAKE marriage to the deepest LEVEL.
- MARRIAGE is DESIGNED from the BEGINNING to point to Christ and the CHURCH.

Ephesians 5:33 – [33] *However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.*

- This is ONE of the GREAT secrets or MARRIAGE... that PAUL reveals.
- MEN and WOMEN are to give different ACTS to one another.
- But PAUL gives to each DIFFERING RESPONSIBILITIES.
- The MAN is to Love (*agapao*)
- The Woman is to RESPECT (*phobeo*)