

EPHESIANS - Ephesians 5:22-24

Message 88

Date:

Words: 6047

Reading: Ephesians

INTRO: By now you are familiar with the two large sections of Ephesians. So let me test you. We have called the first section, what? (Doctrinal) Which chapters deal with that? (1-3) The second section outlines the what of Christians? (Duties) And chapters are involved? (4-6) I have outlined this second section around the word 'to walk.' In 4:1-16 we have the worthy walk. In 4:17-32 the Christian is instructed to not walk like other Gentiles walk. In 5:1-14 the Christian is told to walk in love, and in 5:15-6:9 we have the circumspect walk.

In the circumspect walk we have the general matters related to the Christian life. We have completed those. Now in 5:22-6:9 we now have the specifics of walking circumspectly. In 5:22-6:4 we have family related matters such as husband/wife relationships and instructions to children and then to fathers. In 6:5-9 we have work related matters regarding workers and bosses.

So we begin with family related matters and that of the relationship between husbands and wives. This is the longest section in dealing with the specifics of the circumspect walk. Let me remind us that the circumspect walk is walking carefully; accurately; precisely; or perfectly. With that in view Paul will now speak to husbands and wives.

The husband wife area of life involves marriage. Marriage, according to the Bible, is the oldest institution in the world. Turn to Genesis 2. I searched for an account of creation in other religions. I cannot find any account by any religion that compares to the creation account of Genesis 1-2.

The European Space Agency gives a time-line of evolution, how everything came into existence. Here is what it was like from 0 time to one billionth of a second after the big bang:

"During this period, a very quick 'inflation' process takes place, and in an infinitesimal fraction of a second the cosmos becomes extremely large. All the matter and energy, concentrated in a region smaller than a coin, begins to expand at a very rapid rate. Once inflation is over, the Universe continues the expansion at a much slower pace. As it expands, it also cools.

"When it is at a temperature of 1000 GeV (about 10 million million degrees), the forces of nature assume their present properties (such as gravity, electromagnetism, and the strong and weak forces) and the 'quarks', the elementary particles that are the building blocks of matter, wander freely.

"This is the most accepted theory. For many scientists, this period is 'speculative'. There are no observations to confirm or disprove the theories."

[http://www.esa.int/Science\\_Exploration/Space\\_Science/So\\_how\\_did\\_everything\\_start](http://www.esa.int/Science_Exploration/Space_Science/So_how_did_everything_start)

Search the internet, and unless you find more than I found, there is nothing that compares to Genesis 1-2. And if you study the whole Bible and then the first 3 chapters, you will find the seeds of most, if not all of the most important doctrines of the Bible. And marriage, a universal concept, finds its explanation there.

So in Genesis 1 we have the creation account of the universe. And we are told how marriage came about. We begin in verse 18:

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."

19 *So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.*

20 *The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.*

21 *So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.*

22 *And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.*

23 *Then the man said,  
"This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called Woman,  
because she was taken out of Man."*

24 *Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

\*\*Marriage and family is the foundational building block for Church and country. Some years ago I did some messages on divorce and remarriage. That led me to a view proposed by a British writer who wrote about the fall of Rome. Rome, the longest ruling world power so far, began just before the time of Christ and fell about 500 years later. In the 1700's a man by name of Edward Gibbon, a British historian wrote 6 volumes on the fall of Rome. In 1776 the first volume was published, and the last in 1789. After 13 years of study he concluded that reason number one, why Rome fell was divorce, and Gibbons was no friend of Christianity.

We have now progressed beyond the sin of divorce and remarriage. I read that around 30 countries in the world now allow for same gender marriages. Today we see our world crumbling around us. And one of the reasons for that is the ever growing disrespect for the oldest institution in the world, marriage.

In the passage before us, Paul will deal with husband wife relationship, and give some key principles to keeping marriages godly and strong. This is a message for our young people because of what they will have to face in the future.

## 2. The specifics (5:22)

### a. Family related (5:22-6:4)

#### 1) Husband/Wife (5:22-33)

Paul has given four participles, which it seems to me, give the results of being filled with the Spirit. These were:

1. speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
2. singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,
3. giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
4. submitting to one another in the fear

of God.

The last one, submitting to one another in the fear of God, seems to lead Paul to relationships that require submission. I did not deal much with the point on submitting to one another, with regard to the last phrase, which says we are to submit to one another in the fear of God.

By the way, let me mention that modern versions, because of the manuscripts they use, say this verse speaks of the fear of Christ, not the fear of God. I do not hold to the manuscripts used by modern versions. One of my major reasons for that is that if the manuscripts used by modern versions are right, that would mean that for most of the Church age, the Church was not in possession of the best manuscripts. This seems impossible to me. I believe that just as God divinely gave Scripture, so He divinely protected Scripture.

So back to our subject. In my understanding, the key reason for fearing God is the fact that He has the authority to deal with all wrong. And not only does He have the authority, He is just and will also deal with all wrong. Every Christian should live in light of the fact that he or she must stand before this God Almighty and give account. This will happen for the believer, at the judgment seat of Christ. I believe this happens in heaven when a believer enters there at death.

Turn to 2 Corinthians 5. Paul will speak here of the judgment seat of Christ. We begin in verse 9:

*9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.*

*10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may*

*receive the things done in the body,  
according to what he has done, whether good  
or bad.*

*11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the  
Lord, we persuade men; but we are well  
known to God, and I also trust are well  
known in your consciences.*

Here we are clearly told that we must ALL appear before the judgment seat of Christ. So we make it our aim to be well-pleasing to Him. And what happens at this judgment seat? Well, everyone will receive according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Now note verse 11. "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord..." The word translated *terror* is the same word translated in our text as fear. We get our word 'phobia' from this word. The ESV, which is becoming popular around here wrongly translates it as *reverence*. At the judgment seat of Christ we will receive according as we have done, whether good or bad. Well, the good does not cause us to fear God, the bad does. It will be justly dealt with. Beyond all question, none of us wants to stand in that place, having jealousy or envy or bitterness or fleshliness or any other such thing that was undealt with in our lives. Any actions and thoughts resulting from such things will be brought up and be dealt with at this judgment seat.

So we ask, why does Paul begin with wives, instead of husbands in this text? He begins like this:

*22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as  
to the Lord.*

I do not think it is because this is more important than husbands loving their wives. It is because the last thought he had was being submissive one to another. That leads him to the instruction that wives are to be

submissive to their own husbands.

Now note that it is this idea of submission that runs throughout the rest of the section. Paul put wives first here, because of the theme submission in the entire passage. In 6:1, he put children before parents, because of the idea of submission. Then in verses 5-9 he put servants before masters, again because of the central idea of submission.

Every wife will give account at the judgment seat of Christ for how submissive she was to her husband. Now I need hardly mention to you the word for *submission* as I have mentioned at other times. It is a military term. It is a translation of the word *hupotasso*. The word *hypo* means under. Like a hypodermic needle that goes under the skin. The word *tasso*, is to station oneself under. It has to do with order or rank.

Now let me give a word to both husbands and wives. Our verse says, "Wives, submit to your own husbands..." Here is a word to every husband, it does not say, "Husbands, make sure your wives submit to you..." It is not a husband's job to make his wife submissive. The verb to submit is an imperative. It is a command. But it is not a command to the husband.

Then to the wives, I have mentioned in other messages that in the language of the NT a verb may have one of three voices. In English we have only two. These are the active, the passive, and in the Greek, the middle. When something is in the middle voice, the subject does an action to itself. So here, the translation could go like this, "Wives, submit yourselves..." You see, it is not the husband's job to keep you submissive. This is a command to the wife. It is her responsibility to submit, and it is a sin if she fails to do so.

So a wife is not to station herself over or even on the same level as her husband, when it comes to role. This stationing has to do with role, not importance or value. A president's role is over the people in his domain. A citizen's station is under the leader. It has to do with role, not value or importance. That is the error of the Women's Liberation Movement.

Consider in light of this that there is an order of role in the Godhead. It is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God the Father sent the Son, so His role is over the Son. God the Son sent the Holy Spirit, so His role is over the Holy Spirit. But no one of the Triune God is of more value or importance than the other.

Today, all over our world, citizens are breaking rank and if it is allowed to continue, it will reap anarchy. The word anarchy comes from the Greek word for ruler. A ruler is an Archwn. Anarchy is without rule. When wives do not maintain their place, it tends to bring anarchy in the home.

Now the hard part of this command is that a wife is to submit to her husband as to the Lord. What does this mean? I was surprised to read this from Lloyd Jones. He says, "We must be clear about this phrase because it can be, and has been, misunderstood. It does not mean, 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands in exactly the same way as you submit yourselves to the Lord.' It does not mean that because that is going too far."

Later he says that as Christians we are bond slaves to Jesus Christ, but a wife is not a bond slave of her husband. He then asks, "What, then, does it mean?" Here is his answer: "It means: 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands because

it is part of your duty to the Lord, because it is an expression of your submission to the Lord'" end quote. So what he is saying is a wife submits to her husband because it is her duty to God.

If a husband demands things of his wife that are not right, he has overstepped what he has a right to expect. When he does that, her submission to God exceeds her submission to her husband.

So to further give support for this view go to 6:5-8. It says:

*5 Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ;*

*6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,*

*7 with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men,*

*8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.*

Bond servants, that is slaves, are to obey their masters. We will say more about slavery when we get there. But slaves who belonged to Christians were to render service to their masters, according to verse 7, as to the Lord. They were to do their service as to the Lord, and then Paul adds, "and not to men." They were to serve their masters well because they were serving the Lord, not men. In the same way wives are to submit to their own husbands as to the Lord.

So in our passage Paul is saying that wives should be subject to their husbands, not simply for the husband's sake, but because



they are Christians. Submission is what the Lord expects from Christian wives. This is part of the role the Lord has set out for wives.

Sarah called Abraham, lord. That means she recognized Abraham as her head. He was in charge. It was her role to submit to his leadership. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:31 that whether we eat or drink, we are to do it all to the glory of God. A wife that submits to her husband should do it for the glory of God because that is the role He assigned her.

The idea of submission comes as a dagger to many a wife. It is often because it has been held over her head like a hammer. But if she realizes she is doing this because Jesus Christ is her Lord, this puts it in a different light. She now says, "I do this because I belong to the Lord. It is His wish that I submit to my husband."

And why does the Lord wish her to submit? It is only in this way that He can accomplish in Christians that for which He has made them. When the wife fails to submit, God can no longer accomplish in His people that for which He created them. It will affect their children and possibly generations to come if the wife fails in this.

So Paul now gives reason for this command in verse 23. He says:

*23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.*

The creation account in Genesis 1-2 gives many very important principles. Every word in this chapters is of great significance. That God made one man and one woman is very instructive for our age. He could have made one man and two or three or more women. He

could have made two men and one woman and so on. And He certainly did not, as someone has said, make Adam and Steve.

Furthermore, that God created the man first is also significant. He could have made the woman first, but He didn't. There is a reason why God created the man first. Turn to 1 Timothy 2. If you are the firstborn in a family, most likely you will have experienced the difference between the firstborn and the rest. We begin in verse 11:

*11 Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.*

*12 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.*

Paul was an aged man by this time. He said that he did not permit a woman to teach a man or to be in authority over a man. Paul then gives reasons for giving these instructions. The first one is in verse 13:

*13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve.*

God created in the order He did and the way He did it for specific reasons. When a home is not ordered right, it will have consequences all the way around. He created Adam first because He had a specific role in mind for him in the family. So in our passage Paul instructs the woman to be submissive to her husband for the Lord's sake. It is because God designed it this way.

The first reason Paul gave that a woman should be in submission is that the man was made first. Paul then gives another reason why woman should be in submission:

*14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into*

*transgression.*

Eve was deceived, and it could be said the first sin was due to the fact that she was not submissive. Look at it in Genesis 3. It is interesting that Satan, when he seduced man, began with the woman. We begin in verse 1 of this most familiar passage:

*1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"*

*2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden,*

*3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"*

God told Adam they should not eat from this tree. Adam must have told her not to eat from the tree because she knew about it. Verse 4:

*4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.*

*5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

*6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.*

Eve disobeyed her husband, and then led him into the same disobedience. There is no excuse for Adam and God never makes one for him. God blames sin on Adam, not Eve.

Romans 5 is clear on that. But through Eve's disobedience, Adam also fell into transgression.

Turn to 1 Peter 3. That Satan went to Eve, not Adam, is because he knew she was the weaker gender. If the wife submits to her husband, Satan does not gain access to her as readily as otherwise.

Let read from 1 Peter 3, beginning at verse 1:

*1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,*

*2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.*

*3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—*

*4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*

*5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,*

*6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.*

*7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.*

Peter speaks of the woman as the weaker vessel. It always amazes me that women are

so much easier to interest in spiritual things than men, but it is so. But they are also more susceptible to being misled. That is in general. That is not true of all. And Peter calls her the weaker vessel. That is true physically and it is also true as far as being susceptible to being misled spiritually.

However, when she maintains her place God can use her to fulfill His will in mankind. It serves for her protection and for the wellbeing of society. When the order in the home is not kept, it will have negative consequences. Some might say: I don't understand. Is it not plain that wives are often wiser or smarter than the man? Go to a class that has both men and women. Are women not quite often smarter? Teach a class, and you will find the same thing. Watch many women now in government leadership positions, are not some of them more capable than many men?

But let me propose that from God's perspective, this is exactly the reason why she is to submit. I have heard that behind every successful man stand a shocked woman! But I propose that more often the woman who stands behind a successful man is a wise woman. Do you know why God had to instruct women to submit? Exactly for the reason that in many things she is more capable or wiser than her husband.

Let me also point out that God did not make the man for the woman? Listen to Genesis 2:18:

*18 And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."*

Listen to what God said, "I will make a helper for him!" She was made for him. Turn to 1 Corinthians 11. Listen to what Paul said about the order of creation here. We

begin in verse 1:

2 Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you.

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.

4 Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head,

5 but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as if her head were shaven.

6 For if a wife will not cover her head, then she should cut her hair short. But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head.

7 For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man.

8 For man was not made from woman, but woman from man.

9 Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

You see, the man was made from the dust of the ground. But the woman was made from the man. Why the difference? He does not belong to her, she belongs to him. He was not made from her, she was made from him. And second, the man was not created for her. She was made for him.

Now Genesis 2:18 said, "I will make for him a helper..." You see, she would be a helper for him. He was not made to help her. She was made to help him. The word translated

as a helper comparable, or a help meet as the KJV has it is *etzer*. It means a helper.

Now let me ask you a question I have asked many a young couple wanting to get married: If the woman was half as smart as the man; if she could cook half as well as he; if she could drive half as well as he; if she could do everything only half as well as he would God have to tell her to submit to him?

Well, the answer is no. But now let me ask this: if she could do everything only half as well as he, would she be a helper comparable or suitable for him? The answer is still no. But now, if she is sometimes smarter than he, if she can do numerous things better than he, if she is sometimes wiser than he, if she can cook better and sometimes figure things out better than he, would she not now have the potential of wanting to be in charge?

Furthermore, if she was not as good as he in anything, would there be any danger that she might not be submissive? There would be no danger of it. But now, since she is truly a helper, and she is quite often more capable than he is, therefore God has to instruct her to submit herself to him. You see, God made her to use what He has made her capable of to use for the benefit of her husband.

Now listen to 1 Corinthians 11:7 carefully:

*7 For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man.*

The man is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man. A good woman, who can possibly do many things better than her husband, has every potential of being a great glory to him. But she has the added danger of wanting to

run the home and maybe even the business or the church or the country.

My good friend, who was also once my boss in Bible school, says that the number of women pastor's is growing exponentially and that many women are now the president of many Bible schools. Oh yes, it is not that women are quite often more capable than men in some things. In order for her to be a helper to the man, it had to be so. But it was not God's design that she lead. It is His design that she use the capacities He endowed her with for the glory of her husband.

Why should the wife be submissive to her husband as to the Lord? First, because the husband is the head of the wife. Then in Ephesians 5, Paul then goes on like this:

*23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.*

Paul now introduces the subject of the Church. The husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church. This speaks of the universal Church. Who decided how the Church should be run? Christ did. Who instructs the Church? Christ does. Turn back in Ephesians to the last part of chapter 1. Paul has just spoken of Christ having ascended into heaven and being seated at the right hand of God in the most holy place in existence in the heavens. He then says this in verses 22-23:

*22 And he (God) put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,*

*23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

Now if you remember when we covered these verses I said I would translate these



verses along with 2:1 like this:

*22 And he put all things under his feet  
and gave him as head over all things to the  
church,*

*23 which is his body, the fullness of him  
who fills all in all,*

*3:1 even you were dead in the trespasses  
and sins...*

If the husband is head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, and Christ fills the woman as well as the man, would she not want to take her place in submission as He has instructed? Of course she would.

So the wife is to submit, first because of the order of creation, and second, because of the teaching of the Church as the body of Christ. So verse 24 says:

*24 Therefore, just as the church is  
subject to Christ, so let the wives be to  
their own husbands in everything.*

This is the second time we meet the word "Church" in this passage. So let me say a word about the Church. And doing that, let me first say, how the Lord's people got to be called the "church" in English I do not know. Our English word "church" comes from the NT word *kuriakon*. This word is found twice in the NT and neither refers to that entity we call the Church. In 1 Corinthians 11:20 it is used with reference to the Lord's supper, the *kuriakos* supper. Then Revelation 1:10 speaks of the Lord's day, or the *kuriakos* day. This word is never used for the Lord's people as the Church. I think the thought must come from the idea of believers being the Lord's people, that is, the *kuriakos* people.

The NT word for the Church is, does anyone remember? It is *ekklesia*. Turn to Matthew 16. This word is used 118 times in the NT. Of those, 115 times it refers to that which we call the Church. It is used three other times and is translated an "assembly" in those instances. This was its common use in the Greek language.

The first occurrence of this word as used in reference to the Lord's people is in Matthew 16:18 which says:

*18 "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*

Here Jesus speaks prophetically of that which we know as the Church. I think the makeup of this word is most important to its meaning. The word is *ekklesia*. In theology we speak of ecclesiology, which means the doctrine of the Church. The *ek*, of *ekklesia* means "out." The *klesia* part comes from the word *kaleo*, meaning to call.

I believe that Jesus called that which He would form after He ascended to heaven the *ekklesia*, because it would be made up of those God would call out of the world into the kingdom of His dear Son. The Church is made up of all the "called out ones."

All these *called out ones* become His assembly. And Jesus Christ is the head of this assembly. And Paul likens the woman's submission to her husband to the submission of the Church to Christ. Now here is the point. The true Church does not submit because it has to submit to Christ. The true Church submits to Christ because she wants to submit to Christ. It is her desire to submit.

So let me remind us that not all who call themselves Christians are truly part of the

Church. Many who profess to be Christians are not Christians at all. I think without fear of contradiction, only a small part of those who profess to be Christians truly are. And those who truly are love the Lord and gladly submit to Him. And as the true Church submits to Christ, so the wife is to submit to her husband.

Now verse 24 says further that just as the Church is subject, *hupotasso*, to Christ, so the wife is to be subject to her husband in everything. This verse, like a previous one, can make things difficult for some women if it is understood to mean that no matter what the husband requires, she must submit to it. And if she does not, she will be considered to be insubmissive.

Earlier we saw that she is to submit to her husband as to the Lord. I think it is correct to say it means that her submission to her husband is to be as to the Lord. Whatever the Lord would require of her in the matter of submission, she is to do. Every wife becomes responsible to her Lord to submit as the Lord would have her to submit. If he requires that which is not right, she must seek the Lord as to what she should and should not do.

If she makes a wrong judgment call as to what her Lord would have her to submit to, she will bear the consequences of such failure. God is the highest authority there is, and when what a husband requires is against God, submission to such things is not what is meant here. However, there are many other things she may not agree with, but she will need to submit to because that is what the Lord Jesus Christ, her Lord would have of her. It is not her decision as to what she should and should not submit to, it is her Lord's decision.

Then let me say one other thing. When president Obama was president of the United

States, someone described his leadership as leading from behind. It is possible for a woman to do this. She may appear to be very submissive but she is very much in control. There can be a very fine line between being a wise woman that is a true helper to him, and one that is the neck that turns the head. This is not how the true Church is to be to Christ, and that is now how a woman is to submit.

CONCL: Well, to conclude, it would be hard to overestimate the importance of the home and marriage to both the Church and one's country. When marriage falls apart, so will church and country. On the other hand, the home is not an entity in itself and for itself. It plays an important role in the bigger picture. It should complement Church and country. One of the biggest things any family can do for both the Church and the country is to have a godly home.

The message this morning has centered on the role of the wife. The subject matter from which it became the topic here is that of submission. It is submission as to the Lord. A godly wife will seek to please her Lord by taking that place in the home that He wants her to take. She will seek to find what He would have her to do in all those things that affect this area of life.