

EPHESIANS - Ephesians 5:28-33

Message 90

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Reading: Ephesians 5:28-33

INTRO: We are in Ephesians 5:22-33. The home is addressed. Husbands and wives are instructed. Because the thought that led Paul to this subject was submission, he addressed the wife first. The key instruction to the wife was submission. This biblical instruction has had a huge impact the world over and still does. But more and more, it is changing. If a body of government does not have a number of women in charge of some areas, they are viewed as out of touch. They are not progressive. This will lead farther and farther away from biblical influence in the home.

The home is the oldest institution on earth, older than government. It was also put in place by God Himself. He created the man first, and from the man He made the woman. Therefore she is bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. And she was made for him, he was not made for her.

We believe that the Word of God is inspired by Almighty God. If that is so, and we do not doubt it is, then the Bible is truth from God. Now we put great stress on truth. It is absolutely essential for Christians to do that. That means that what the Bible has to say about marriage and the husband wife relationship is what we go by. And in our passage we see the two greatest essentials for a blessed marriage. I do not say 'happy marriage', I say blessed marriage. Not all marriages are happy. There are many reasons for that, but somewhere down the line it is usually related to sin in one way or another.

We are now on the second message where the husband is instructed. In the last message we covered these verses:

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

This morning we want to look at verses 28 and on.

2. The specifics (5:22

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

1) Husband/Wife cont'd (5:22-33)

So we go now to verse 28. It says:

28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

The Church is viewed as the body of Christ. Christ is the Head of this body. Now we are told that the husband is to love his wife as His own body. So I ask, just how much do we love our own bodies? Well, if love means giving oneself to legitimate needs, our bodies have many legitimate needs. Every minute of every day we breathe. Our bodies have a legitimate need for air. So great is that need we do it automatically. But if we get into an area where the air is not good for our bodies, we do what we can to get out. Now our sense of smell usually warns us when air is dangerous to the well-being of the body. But some gases cannot be smelled and kill one in a short time. So where there is that kind of danger, we seek to use detectors to warn us. All this is because we care for our bodies.

Every day, if at all possible we eat and we drink several times. When we do not have food for some time, we do almost anything to get some. Proverbs 6:30 says: "People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving." Why do we not despise such a thief? We understand how vital food is to each one of us.

We take care of such little things as toenails and fingernails. We brush our teeth. When we cut ourselves and we are losing blood, we immediately seek to stop

the blood loss. When we break a bone, we seek to immediately look after it. I have heard of those who got their foot or hand stuck and when there was no one to help, they ultimately cut off the member that was stuck in order to save the rest of the body.

We dress our bodies. We bathe them. We take care of them. Oh, how we love our bodies. And Paul says, "So ought men to love their own wives as their own bodies." I wonder what the divorce rate would be if every man loved his wife like he loves his own body? And then, what if every wife submitted to her husband? Without doubt divorce numbers would go way down.

Now note the verb "ought" in our verse. It means to owe. When we borrow money, we are in debt. We owe. When we pick something up at the store, we owe the store for it and before we leave, we *ought* to pay. It is an obligation. Men are in debt to their wives to love them. They owe love to their wives. They should do everything in their power to supply their legitimate needs.

Every person, whether man or woman, should understand that when you marry you become indebted to your marriage partner for various things. And the one great thing men owe their wives is to love them. It is a sin for a husband not to love his wife. And since agapee love is not emotion based, but truth based, every man can obey this command.

Now I understand, there are women who want more than their legitimate needs, maybe even more than their husbands are willing to pay. There are also women who are not submissive. If a wife requires more than is just or she is not submissive, it is a problem of the wife's failure to obey God. But such a wife will make the husband's obligation very hard to fulfill.

Yet, in our passage Paul says that men are under obligation to love their wives. We owe it to them. If we were able to get the idea of romance out of the word used for the love a husband is to have for his wife and got into our minds that it means to give oneself for the wife's legitimate needs, it would go a long way to saving marriages.

Now note further that our verse says that he who loves his wife loves himself. How so? Do you know where, in a person, agapee love takes place? "Oh yes," we say, "it takes place in our hearts." So we have pictures of hearts when we think of love. Go to where they sell cards for special days. Go to the husband wife section around Valentine's Day. What do you see on most cards? Hearts! And when we see hearts, without thinking about it, we already have romantic love or the emotions in our mind.

Why do we associate romantic, emotional, love with the heart? I do not know. Where did we get the modern picture of the heart that speaks of emotional love? The heart we see on Valentine's cards resembles the shape of a heart at least a little. But where does this all come from? Well, if you have more interest in researching this than I have, you might find some enlightening things. From the little research I did it seems the idea comes from the Greeks. As I briefly looked into this I found that it may even be that the finger the wedding ring is placed on comes from the Greeks as well. The Greeks associated romantic love with the heart.

I think we get our ideas of the relationship of the heart with the emotions and love from the Greeks. We did not get it from the Bible. We do not associate logical, rational, thinking with either the heart or with love. But the Bible

associates the heart with thinking, not with the emotions. When the Bible speaks of the heart it speaks of the mind. Listen to Proverbs 23:7: "As a man thinks in his heart so is he." Where does a man think according to that verse? In his heart.

Here is the difference between our modern thinking of love between husband and wife, and what the Bible presents. We associate the heart with the emotions. The Bible associates the heart with rational, logical, thinking. It associates the emotions with the bowels, and there is a very good reason for that.

Now here is the question: Why does the Bible associate the heart with thinking? When you study the immaterial makeup of the soul in the Bible, various functions of the soul are ascribed to the physical anatomy of the body so that we can understand some of the immaterial parts of man.

So when the Bible talks about the heart, it associates that with thinking. It connects the kidneys with the heart and there is a very good reason for that. Then it connects the bowels with the emotions, and there is much more ground to do that than to connect the heart with the emotions. Now I don't have time to show all of that, but let me just share why I believe the Bible associates thinking with the heart.

The heart is the vital center of the body. The life of the flesh is in the blood. The heart distributes this life-giving blood throughout the whole body. Just as the heart is the vital center of the body, so the mind is the vital center of the soul. All thinking takes place in the mind and that thinking directs the whole person; body, soul and spirit.

So when you put a person under huge mental stress it will affect the heart. But when

you put a person under huge emotional stress, it will affect the bowels. So we get things like ulcers.

When we have commands like the husband is to love his wife, the influence of Greek thought in literature and history has infiltrated our society and we have emotions in mind. We can't help it. We see it everywhere.

But biblically speaking, if we love from the heart, it is to love with the mind. It is rational. So the love chapter says that love rejoices in the truth. Agapee love is rational, not emotional. Emotional love often does not rejoice in the truth. The heart is to be associated with logical thinking, not ever changing emotions.

Many married people, because they associate love with the emotions, when certain feelings they once had for the woman they married disappear, they think they have fallen out of love. They fell in, and now they fall out. That is because they associated love with feelings, it was all emotional. When the feelings are gone they think they have fallen out of love and they begin to consider another woman they think might provide that need for love. So they divorce and remarry.

But if one understands that love is rational, one can obey the instruction to love one's wife regardless of what emotions may or may not be there. So our verse says that the husband who loves his wife loves himself. This is rational love, love that rejoices in the truth.

The explanation for the last part of this verse, "...he who loves his wife loves himself" is in the first part which says, "So husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies." The husband is the head of the wife, as the head is the head of the

body. All the decisions made to care for the body are made in the head, or the mind. And so we care for our bodies rationally. When we cut our body anywhere, and we are losing blood, the head rationalizes what needs to be done. It says that the blood flow has to be stopped. And when one stops the blood flow, one is loving one's body. When the body is hungry it sends signals to the head. The head says my body needs some food. So when one goes to eat, one is loving one's body. So it is in marriage. The man who loves his wife loves himself.

Let me take us back to verse 23 once more. As Christ is the head of the Church and thus the savior of the body, so the head is the place where one makes the decision to eat or to bandage a cut or whatever else one does to the body. I said the word *savior* could mean the one who cares for, or preserves. The head preserves the body. Thus, when one is unconscious, the head no longer cares for the body. It is out of commission. That is precisely the picture of a husband who does not love his wife.

So our verse says he that loves his wife loves himself. He that takes care of his body loves himself. And I make this proposition once more. When a husband loves his wife with agapee love, that is a rational love, the other loves like the one we place so much emphasis on, romantic love will find its rightful place. When one fails to meet the legitimate needs of one's wife, one will pay the price in the other loves. So agapee love, the most unromantic love, will bring about that which we treasure so much. To fail to love with agapee love will kill the other loves. He who loves his wife loves himself. He cares for his own legitimate needs by loving his wife.

Our passage then goes on like this in verse 29:

29 *For no one ever hated his own flesh,
but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the
Lord does the church.*

The flesh refers to the body. We don't hate our own body. If we did, we wouldn't see to it that it gets food or water or all the necessary things and even pleasures beyond necessary things. Now the word *to nourish* means to supply the body with food. When anyone does not nourish the body, something is wrong somewhere. It is not normal or natural not to feed the body. When our body calls for food or water, we seek to supply it. When we get hungry enough we will do almost anything to nourish the body.

Everyone sees to his or her body. We feed it, and our verse says, "Just as the Lord does the Church." The Lord sees to it that we are nourished. When we were in chapter 4 we found that when Christ ascended on high He gave gifts to men. And we found that among those gifts were pastors. A pastor is a shepherd and one of the chief concerns of shepherds is to feed the sheep.

You will remember Christ's command to the Apostle Peter. Turn to John 21. This is after Christ was resurrected from the dead. He had told His disciples to go to the Galilee area. Well, while they were waiting for Jesus, one day Peter said, "I'm going fishing." I can identify with him. Well, the disciples said, "We're coming with you.

Well, they fish at night. It must be the best time to fish there. But they didn't catch anything. And in the morning when they got close to shore there was somebody waiting and He called, "Did you catch any fish?" And they said they hadn't. And this Man said, "Cast your net on the right side." Now that is a really strange command. But they did it and now they caught a bunch of fish and Peter said, "It

is the Lord!"

Well, he jumped into the water and headed for shore. It took too long for him to get everything ready to go to shore. And when they got to shore Jesus already had fish frying.

Well, they had fish for breakfast with Jesus and so look now at verses 15-17:

15 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs."

16 He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep."

17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep."

"Peter, do you agapee love me?" "Yes, Lord; You know I agapee love you." "Ok, then feed my lambs." "Peter, do you agapee love me?" "Yes, Lord, You know I agapee love You." "Then tend My sheep." "Peter, do you phileo love Me?" "Yes, Lord, You know everything and You know I phileo love You." And on the last one we might read, "Peter, do you like me?" And the answer, "Yes, Lord, You know I like You." And Jesus said, "Feed My sheep."

I guess we get the message too. There is one overriding important thing and that is nourishing the Church.

Not only do we nourish our bodies, but we cherish our bodies. The word translated to

cherish comes from the idea of to *keep warm*. Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary gives the first meaning for *cherish* as, "To treat with tenderness and affection; to give warmth, ease or comfort to." We might translate this verse as, "For no one ever hated his own flesh, but feeds and clothes it."

Not only does the Lord nourish His Church, but He cherishes the Church. He cares for the Church. I think this is what is included when it says in verse 23 of Ephesians 5 when it says that He is the Savior of the body, or the Church. He preserves the body.

So we ask now, why is it that the Lord nourishes and cherishes the Church? Well, we might ask, why do we take care of our bodies? Is it not our own well-being that is at stake? When I have a physical problem that seems out of the ordinary to me, I usually do not wait long before I go to the doctor. But some time ago I had a sore on my face, and about the time I got concerned it went away. When you get my age that begins to happen more and more. But eventually when I was at the doctor's for other reasons I had him look at it and he said he would refer me to another doctor. I didn't hear from this other doctor. Then the sore came back, and finally when it came back again one of my family members got concerned. So I went back to the doctor and told him I had not heard back from anyone. Then he got right on it, and in a few days I had the sore removed. It was checked out and it was a kind of skin cancer that was not too serious. But by the time they operated, I took over 30 stitches to sew the cut back up.

Why does the Lord nourish and cherish the Church? It is for His own benefit to do so. If he does not, it affects Himself. So verse 30 says:

30 *For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.*

Turn to 1 Corinthians 12. In this chapter Paul uses the analogy of the Church being the body of Christ. We'll begin in verse 12:

12 *For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.*

13 *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.*

14 *For in fact the body is not one member but many.*

15 *If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?*

16 *And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?*

17 *If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling?*

18 *But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.*

19 *And if they were all one member, where would the body be?*

20 *But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.*

21 *And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."*

22 *No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.*

23 *And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unrepresentable parts have greater modesty,*

24 *but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it,*

25 *that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.*

26 *And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.*

27 *Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.*

There is too much to comment on with regard to the body, but think of the less honorable parts. Say, for instance, the hair. How much effort is put into hair. Look at one hair. Observe it. We spend millions of dollars in our country every year on hair.

Then think of the concerns it causes when a man loses his hair. It is even more concerning for a woman. They also spend a lot more time on their hair. The woman's hair is her glory, and she spends much time into it. But what do hair do? They don't help me out like my hands or eyes or feet. Yet they take up a lot of time and are quite precious to us.

But then think of now having to get along without one arm or one leg, or without eyes etc... The body has many members but they all play a part. So the Lord nourishes and cherishes the Church, because she is like

the body of a person is to that person.

So in our passage in Ephesians Paul then quotes Genesis 2:24. Turn to Genesis 2. Verse 24 says:

31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

Now note the words, "For this reason..." Why does a man leave father and mother and is joined to his wife? Well, let me read from Genesis 2:21 and on:

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.

22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

23 And Adam said: "This is now 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 mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Verse 24, "Therefore..." Paul says in Ephesians 5:31, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." For what reason? Because God took the woman from Adam's body. He did not take a part of his head, but a part of his body. Was the rib representative of the whole body? I may have mentioned this elsewhere, but someone has said God did not take her from the head so that she would lead him or with him, and He did not take her from the feet so that he might walk over her. He took her from Adam's side so

that they would walk side by side. However that may be, she was taken from him and she was literally bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh.

Because the woman was made from Adam, and not from the dust of the ground, as he was; therefore a man shall leave father and mother and be joined to his wife.

Paul then says in Ephesians 5:32:

32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

The relationship of Christ and the Church is not only a mystery, but it is a great mystery. You may not remember, but we had a mystery in Ephesians chapter 3. We'll go there. We'll read verses 1-6:

1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—

2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,

4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

6 that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,

The mystery revealed here was that the Gentiles would make up one body with the

Jews. This one body is the Church and the Church is called a great mystery here. Now in chapter 3 I gave you this regarding a mystery and I quote:

"So we go now to his words, *how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery...* Now note that God made something known to Paul. It is something Paul did not know before. Then note that God made it known by revelation. What is that? It is the word *apokalupsis*. We get our word *apocalypse* from this word. It is to reveal something; to uncover something so that one might understand it. The book of Revelation is an *apokalupsis*. It is an unveiling or a revealing of things that will happen in the end times.

"So God has uncovered something for Paul to see, and he was to make this known to believers. Now note yet one more thing. What God made known to him was a mystery. What is a mystery?

"The word for mystery is *musterion*. The root word, according to Strong's comes from *muo*, meaning to shut the mouth. A *musterion* is something which Vine says comes from *mustees*, which is the same root word. *Mustees* means the *initiated ones*. The initiated ones are those who have been let into any particular mystery to which the mouth is shut to others."

What we understand from this great mystery is that Christ and the Church are related like the head of the body is related to the rest of the body. There is no connection of anything in the entire body like the connection between the head and the rest of the body. In the head, the mind, every complaint of the body is filed. And there every decision is made as to what to do about the complaint.

I told you about my cigarette smoking habit

of years ago. After I had quit, for quite a long time my body complained. It desired a cigarette and put in request after request. But from a certain time on, the answer was always no. And finally my body quit complaining.

Now in the last while my knees have been complaining. And I tell them to be patient but they keep complaining. They have good reason to. And I try all I can to satisfy them. And recently I promised them I would get some pieces of bone cut off and artificial joints to be put in. Why would I do that? I love myself! You see, my body is part of me, and according to our passage that is the picture of husband and wife and Christ and the Church.

Today doctors can do amazing things. They can transplant many members of the body from another body. I do not know what all cannot be transplanted, but the brain cannot be transplanted as far as I know. If it could, it would be a body transplant. When I was young and heard about the possibility of doing a heart transplant. I think it was from the little I understood of the Bible, that I thought a person thinks in his heart. And so I reasoned that if they could do a heart transplant, the body with the new heart would now think like the person who donated the heart. Later I learned that when a heart transplant is done, the personality does not change. But if a brain could be put into another body I think it would not be a brain transplant; it would be a body transplant.

You see, you cannot sever the head from the body, nor can you sever the body from the head. You cannot sever Christ from the Church, nor can you sever the Church from Christ. And the net result of that? You cannot sever a husband from the wife, nor the wife from the husband and remarry. No

divorce! Divorce severs the body from the head or vice versa.

And that brings us back to Genesis 2:24 and Ephesians 5:31:

24 Therefore I (or as Ephesians 5 has it) for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

You cannot sever the head from the body, nor Christ from the Church, nor the husband from the wife. And when you do so, you bring about the death of both. I think there are parts of the mystery of husband and wife becoming one and Christ and the Church we will not understand. What we must understand is they cannot be severed without destroying both. However, there is no danger that Christ and the Church will ever be severed, and there ought to be no danger that a marriage should be severed other than by death.

And what is the point of all this? It is that the husband ought to love his wife. She is a permanent part of him. And if they are severed, it is the death of the union, unless they do not marry another person. There cannot be another union without the deepest of sin.

Now today it is very common among Evangelicals to say that the only thing that can break the marriage bond is physical unfaithfulness. But physical unfaithfulness cannot break a marriage. The only thing that can end a marriage is death. Divorce and remarriage, in my view, does not bring about a new union, it brings about the death of a marriage. What is entered thereafter, is eternal death.

So Paul concludes this section like this and it sums up the marriage relationship with regard to both the husband and the

wife.

33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Let me reread that when it is translated literally:

33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she fears her husband.

I ask you, does that translation sound too harsh to you? The word translated "reverence" in the KJV and "respects" NKJV is the word *phobeo*. It is the word used to speak of the fear of the Lord. This word *phobeo* is used 93 times in the NT. The KJV has translated it as fear 62 times; be afraid 23 times, and be afraid of 5 times. It has two miscellaneous uses. And it is translated as reverence just one time, and that is in this passage.

Listen to 1 Peter 3:5-6:

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.

The word translated "terror" here by the NKJV is translated as "amazement" in the KJV. I think "terror" is correct. It is used only once but the verb form is used twice in the NT and is translated to terrify.

A woman should never be terrified by her husband. But on the other hand we might

ask, why should a woman fear her husband, if that is what it means? The passage has to do with submission. Wives are to submit to their husbands. Children are to obey their parents. Workers are to be obedient to their masters. Why these positions of submission? Because the husband, the parents and bosses have both the responsibility and authority to require what is right. They have the responsibility and the authority to be in charge.

When a wife has a loving husband, she need fear one thing only; the failure to be submissive. Children have only one thing to fear from loving parents; disobedience. Workers have only one thing to fear from bosses; failure to obey. Submission is the place of the wife. Love is the responsibility of the husband.

CONCL: So we conclude. In 5:18 Paul instructed believers to not be drunk with wine, but to be filled with the Spirit. When we are under the control of the Holy Spirit, we will be rational, logical, objective people. Verse 17 had instructed us not to be non-thinking. In today's society, more and more we see irrational people. They are non-thinking, non-reasoning. When you leave God, when one is not controlled by the Spirit of God, one becomes irrational. One cannot treat the ills of a society, unless they are brought back to God.

As I see it, drunkenness is likened to being non-thinking, in verses 17-18. And this led Paul to four participles: Speaking in Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in the heart to the Lord, giving thanks to God and submitting one to another.

The idea of submission then led Paul to dealing with wives then husbands; then with children and parents, and then with workers and bosses. We have now looked at the instruction to wives, to be in submission to their husbands. And we have looked at the instruction to husbands, which is to love their wives.

Love takes place in the heart and it seeks to meet the legitimate needs of the wife. And although the Greeks placed agapee love on the bottom rung as the least important love, I think it is the love that is the doorway to the other loves

which are emotional. And when wives submit and husbands love with agapee love, the home will run in harmony and the home is the most important institution in order for church and country to function right.