

Ephesians 5:25–33
The Chief End of Marriage

Thursday, June 1, 2023 ▫ Read Ephesians 5:25–33

Questions from the Scripture text: Whom does the apostle address in v25? What does he tell them to do? To whom? Like Whom? To whom? In doing what? Unto what purpose did Christ give Himself for the church (v26)? By what does He sanctify and “cleanse her with the washing of water”? For what does she need this cleansing (v27a)? From what does she need this cleansing (v27b)? Which wives should husbands love (v28)? As what to him is she to be loved? What does a man do who loves his wife? What does v29 say “no one ever hated”? What does a man ordinarily do with his own flesh? Who else does this with whom? What does v30 call believers? What specifics does v30 add to “His body” (cf. Gen 2:23)? What does v31 quote in this context of talking about Christ and the church (cf. Mark 10:1–12; 1Cor 6:12–20)? What does v32 call it? What does the apostle say the mystery is about? To what does he now return to applying this mystery (v33a)? Whom does v33b say the wife should reverence?

How should husbands love their wife? Ephesians 5:25–33 looks forward to part of the sermon in morning public worship on the coming Lord’s Day. In these nine verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **husbands must love their wives by seeking above all that their wife would have Christ**

How did Christ love the church? That’s a vital question to see answered, if we are going to understand what husbands are being commanded to do in v25.

Christ loved the church by giving Himself. He did many things for the church. He gave many things to the church. But the greatest thing He gave for her is Himself. Let husbands remember this. They ought to be willing to do anything for their wives and give anything good to their wives. But let them be sure to give their own self for them.

Christ loved the church with a view toward her eternal good. He wants her to be glorified. He wants her to be presented to Him perfectly enabled to enjoy Him. Therefore, His love drives her sanctification. The Word is pictured in v26 as cleansing water, and He patiently, persistently cleanses His bride unto her eternal, perfect enjoyment of Him.

There is not, here, a perfect parallel. The earthly husband is not the greatest good for his wife. Christ is that greatest good. A husband is tempted to aim at being his wife’s great pleasure, and a wife may mistakenly desire the same. But the godly husband will aim at her finding Christ as her pleasure and aim.

Such a husband will devote himself to his wife’s being enabled to attend upon the means of grace in private, family, and public worship. He will be careful of her doctrine, speak to her heart in instruction or correction, directing her always to her Lord Jesus Christ. Their life together will be one that is saturated with that Word by which Jesus bathes His wife as He prepares her for glory.

Is Jesus giving His bride the continual beauty treatments of the Word of God? Let a Christian husband lovingly apply the beauty treatment of the Word to his own wife in all their comings and goings—and especially in the God-given rhythm of when they lie down in the evening, and when they rise in the morning.

Christ loved the church as being His own flesh and bones. The mystery of why the woman was created from the man’s rib is finally solved in v28–30: in order to look forward to the incarnation and to vital union with Christ. “Of His flesh and of His bones” is an amazing thing for v30 to say, just as “the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” is an amazing thing for Acts 20:28 to say. God has blood? The Lord has flesh and bones? Yes, in order that He might marry the church to Himself as His cherished, nourished bride.

How sharply a man ought to sting from his wife’s pain, enjoy her pleasure, ache with her hunger, be laid low by her illness. How opposite this is to the unfeelingness at some times, and even rivalry at others, that men have toward their wives! Such is not reflective of Christ’s treasuring the church as His own flesh and bone.

Yes, the wife ought to reverence (the word “respect” in v33 is the word for “fear”) her husband. And, we dealt with this submission and obedience in vv22–24. But, it will be that much easier for her to do so if each particular husband (no exceptions! v32) loves his own wife as himself.

How can a boy discipline himself in selflessness and eternal-mindedness, to prepare to be the kind of husband described here? What are some obvious applications of this passage that are too rare in how husbands love their wives these days?

Sample prayer: Father, we thank You for glorifying Yourself in the Son by redeeming a church by Him to be His bride. And we thank You for the dignity that this brings to our marriages. Forgive us for how little we value Christ’s bathing us for glory by His Word. And forgive us for how poorly we imitate this in our marriages, when the days are not begun and ended in prayer and the Word together. So, for the sake of Christ’s shed blood, forgive us our sins, and grant that Your Spirit would cleanse us from all unrighteousness, we ask in Christ’s Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP128 “How Blessed Are All Who Fear the Lord” or TPH548 “Oh, Blest the House”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Ephesians 5 versus 25-33. These are God’s words. Husbands, love your wives. Just as Christ. Also loved the church and gave himself for her. That he might sanctify and cleanse her. With the washing of water by the word. That he might present her to himself. A glorious church. Not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

But that he she should be holy and without blemish. So, husbands ought to love their own wives. As their own bodies. He who loves his wife, loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh. But nourishes and cherishes it just as the lord does the church. For, we are members of his body.

Of his flesh. And of his bones. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother. And be joined to his wife. On the two shall become one. Flash. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ. And the church. 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,

So far the reading of God’s inspired and inherent word. The great mystery, the Great truth, reality plan. That is in God from all eternity. Is that he intends? By union with his son. To adopt for himself sons. Him, he redeems from their sin. And conforms to the image of his son.

So that we are as effusions. One says, predestined to the adoption of sons and is Rowland’s. Eight says Predestined. To be conformed to the image of his son. And when it comes to, The way that we are saved. It is not so much through faith. Um, as the substance of our salvation faith is the instrument.

But Jesus is the substance of our salvation. And, And the main way that faith works, is by uniting us to Christ. Even as well here in The midweek sermon this evening. We died as far as the law is concerned. Through the body. Of Christ. Because we are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.

So very much. Are we united to him? By faith. And so, the apostle Paul. Him, the spirit taught much. And is, especially the one through whom the spirit teaches us. Much About union with Christ. He understands, why? God designed human marriage. Uh, to be such a great union. Bone of bone, and Uh, flesh of flesh.

So that Adam himself would recognize this. About his wife, when the Lord brought her to him, Or sorry. When the Lord brought her to him. And the Lord would say. For this reason to manage to leave his father and mother. And be joined to his wife. And the two shall become one flesh.

Here the spirit. Saying the two just as the Lord Jesus does, and Matthew 19 and the parallel and Mark. Showing that the two. Not the many, but the two becoming one flesh. Was God's original design and intent, and should be inferred from The end of Genesis 2. And since marriage, then is first and foremost.

In order to anticipate and display. The union between the Lord Jesus and his bride. The duty of the husband is like that of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus, of course, loving all as God and the way that God is good to all his creatures And yet he has a unique saving redeeming.

Uniting. Himself to them, love. For his church. He loves her because she is the one who has been brought to him as it were by the father, the one who has been chosen in him by the father Just as Adam loves Eve above all other creatures. Because the Lord puts him through the exercise.

Of having each of the other best candidates. Brought to him. And making him to know. That none of these were the one. That the Lord had chosen for his own, his very own life. And then when he wakes up from his deep sleep, And the Lord brings him the woman.

Who is not yet named Eve? But he brings him the woman. He says this at last or wow. One of my bone flesh of my flesh. And he recognizes. That this alone of all the other creatures, Is the one that God has brought to him, to be united to him as his very own self.

And so, a husband, each husband is to love his own wife. Verse 33. Nevertheless, let each one of you in particular. So love is own wife. As himself in verse 28. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. This is how God defines. The beauty or attractiveness of one's wife.

It is not that he likes women of her hair color or women of her eye color, or women of her body shape or women of her personality. No. He loves her. As the one whom God has brought to him. The way God brought the woman to Adam. The way God has chosen in Christ.

The one who would be his bride from all eternity. And so, that is the most beautiful thing about a wife. And the sooner and the and the more completely. A man comes to have his view of the beauty of his wife brought into line with scripture. That she is the one that God has set apart to be joined to him.

Born of his bone, flesh of his flesh. Perfect choice. Of the heavenly father. And her beauty then is a function of and derived from his delight in his father. Who does all things? Well, who does all things perfectly. And so, he delights not only In her as she is to him.

At the time that the Lord joins her to him, But he delights, especially And what she shall be. When father's work is done in her. This is Jesus's delight in the church. As he not only. Gives himself for her to be made, right? With God to be justified. But also gives himself for her on a continual and ongoing basis.

Bathing her with his word, giving her beauty treatment after beauty treatment today by day. Until it lasts the treatments have had they're full effect. And she is perfected in holiness as she is presented to him in the last day, conformed. To him. As Romans 8 describes. This is also the love.

Of Adam. Unto his wife. You remember when Adam fell into sin, one of the worst parts of that sin. Was that immediately? He became a despiser and hater. Not only of his wife, but we must remember, That a man who despises or looks down upon or blames or hates his wife, he has really attacking and accusing, God, isn't he?

For, he said, this woman whom you gave me. But one of the first indications. Of his faith, in the promised Christ, the promised seed, who would crush the serpent's head. Was when? He gave his wife, a new name. Eve mother of the living. And he recognized not only now, That she was Mrs.

Adam or Mrs. Dirt, the woman But that she and that not only that she was the one whom the Lord had made for him and brought to him. But that the Lord wasn't done working in her. And working through her. He was going to make her. A mother. Among his redeemed people.

And for her in particular, one from whom, the redeemer himself would come Uh, but his love for his wife, then became Hat. Then had, as Part central part of his love for his wife, then became. The work of grace that God was doing in her. And so a husband must love his wife as Christ loved the church.

And he must have a view. To her, not only Being brought to faith. In Jesus Christ. But being brought to perfection in Jesus Christ. Now, the Lord Jesus. Not only brings his bride to perfection. But he does so by his own power. And by his own method, This is where the comparison must break down.

Because an earthly husband does not have power to make his wife. Holy And he does not have wisdom. To come up with any substitute for or addition to The method of the Lord Jesus Christ for making his wife. Holy And so, the earthly husband, Who desires? And loves his wife with a view towards the work that God is doing in her.

And here, God has given him, not just one who exactly corresponds to him and not just one who will be a blessing to him for the rest of his earthly life, but a treasured one who will be perfectly conformed to the sun on the last day. And he realizes the greatness of his privilege.

And risk and in participating. With this particular member. Of Christ's whole bride. Participating in Christ's work. On this member of his church and this member of his bride, this member of Christ's body And so, he has one. Whom he is particularly assigned. To bathe with the word every day.

When they? Um, Sit in the house. And when they walk, by the way, when they go out, when they do things together, or when they're just sitting having conversation, And then those special times, That God has given us for family worship. When we lie down. The end of the day and when we rise up at the beginning of the day, That he keeps applying these beauty treatments to his wife.

And the more she grows in grace, the more beautiful she becomes because the more, the more he is able to see The work that God is doing in her. And so, the The divine reasons for him to love his own specific life. Increase. Let's see, becomes more and more.

Like what she will be. On the last day, not having spoked or wrinkle. Already such thing. And so he nourishes her. And he cherishes her especially spiritually. First and foremost, But yes, also In earthly terms and everything she needs. And the design is not only that, He would so love her like this.

But that she is verse. 33 says, would reverence her husband It uses the word for fear, the word for. For all. And she references. Her husband, not only because of her office over her. But because of the Unique plan of God to use this man. For her sanctification. And the great gift that.

Um, he is to her. Even if he is not a worthy man, Yet he is in a worthy position being used for a worthy reason. By her infinitely worthy got And yet, the more, the lord does. Help her through him. Whether his willing participation bathing or with the word or Other less pleasant.

Ways of sanctifying her through him. Yet in all of these. Oh, the lord does bless and help her. And this should make the family worship time. The best time. For a wife to remember as they are before the face of god together. And it is god, who is using the means That she would remember the god who created marriage the god, who designed these things.

For her sanctification that she might be presented as a perfect, member of a perfect bride. On the last day to the lord Jesus himself. It is a beautiful design for marriage. That is a design that we do not live up to And yet Christ has died down to. Atoning for our failures.

And he lives up to compensating for them. And accomplishing perfectly. His own. Husband husbandly purposes and husbandly duty. Even through our imperfections. And yet, it is one that then by his grace. We are just strive to imitate more and more. For certainly, as we've described it and thought about it just now.

You can see the joy, the delight. That corresponds to a husband and wife. Who think like this about one another? And who live like this with one another? More and more. The world has nothing like this, the world is darkness. And you have to questions as the broader context.

In Ephesians 5 and 6, describe are to be liked in the midst of darkness. Demonstration. Of the glorious Christ. And the, if the glorious effects that his glorious grace has Even on daily life. Between the husband and the wife and the parents and the children. In the workplace. Weekly.

And And also during the week among the congregation of believers. That Christ would be glorified in all of our life and that we would enjoy him. And all of our life. Is not surprising to you, I'm sure. That the chief end of man is also The chief end of marriage.

So, let's pray and ask the board to Bless us like this.

Our father in heaven. We thank you and praise you. For giving us such Helpful instruction in your word for our daily life. That we who, By our original nature. Did not have eyes or heart for you in anything. Would come to have. Eyes and heart for you in everything.

In the lord, Jesus Christ.

Then we pray. Lord especially My marriage with mommy that we would. See each other and think about each other and act towards each other. More and more, according to this design. That you have given us in this part of your word. Grant the power and activity of your spirit.

To write its truth on our hearts. And then you pray that you would convince each of my children. Of these things. From the heart. And Making the The design. And the reasoning strong in their mind. So that long before they Begin to enter. Entertain any idea. Of marriage to a specific one.

They would. Have a heart to commitment. To the things that will make marriage to that specific one. A participation in. What Christ is doing in and for his own bride. Lord, we pray that you would make us to Walk in his light, to walk in your light as you are in the light.

And that you would make us and our marriages and everything else in our life. As light and as salt, That we would be your children of God, blameless, and pure Then the midst of a twisted and perverse generation. Rent it. Then we ask by the working of your spirit.

In Jesus name. Amen.