

SERMON:

**Walking in Submission:  
How Wives Teach the Church**

Ephesians 5:22-24

## **EPHESIANS: SUMMARY STATEMENT**

**The reconciling wisdom of God has been gloriously displayed in Christ, calling us to walk by grace in the peace He has given us.**

# OUTLINE – FIRST HALF

1. **To the Praise of His Glory (Ephesians 1)** *The Wonder of Salvation*
  - Praising His Glory: The Wonder of Sovereign Redemption
  - Praising His Glory: The Wonder of Unmerited Riches
  - Let Us See Glory! A Prayer of Wonder
  
2. **You Were... But Now ... (Ephesians 2)** *The Unity of Salvation*
  - Dead Men Walking: Who You Were
  - Dead Men Walking: Who God Is
  - The Outcast Comes Home: Peace by the Blood
  - The Outcast Comes Home: A New Family and Temple
  
3. **The Manifold Wisdom of God (Ephesians 3)** *The Wisdom of Salvation*
  - A Wondrous Mystery: The Unity of the Gospel
  - A Wondrous Wisdom: The Gospel and the Church
  - Wondering at Wisdom: A Prayer of Wonder

# OUTLINE – SECOND HALF

## 4. Walking with God According to Our Calling (*Ephesians 4:1-5:21*)

- Walking in Wonder: Living in Light of Our Calling
- Walking in Unison: Living Our Calling in Community
- Walking in Distinction: Living in Contradiction to the World
- Walking in Love: Imitators of God
- Walking in Light: Hating Deeds of Darkness
- Walking in Wisdom: Rejoicing in Christ

## 5. Submitting to Each Other in Honor of Christ (*Ephesians 5:22-6:9*)

- Walking in Submission: Testifying to the Worth of Christ
- Walking in Love: Displaying the Glory of Christ
- Walking in Obedience: Being a Child of God

## 6. Resisting the Devil by the Power of God (*Ephesians 6:10-20*)

- Walking in Strength: Taking Battle to the Enemy
- Walking in Armor: Using What God has Provided
- Walking in Prayer: Calling on God to Provide

## **EPHESIANS 5:21-24**

*<sup>21</sup>submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ:*

*<sup>22</sup>Wives, to your own husbands as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup>For the husband is head of the wife as Christ is head of the church, Him being the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup>Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives to their own husbands in everything.*

## **EPHESIANS 5:25-33**

*<sup>25</sup>Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her <sup>26</sup>to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, <sup>27</sup>in order to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. <sup>28</sup>In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.*

## **EPHESIANS 5:25-33**

*<sup>29</sup>After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—<sup>30</sup>for we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup>“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” <sup>32</sup>This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup>However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.*

**Proposition:** Wives are called to submit to their own husbands as an example, a picture, and a testimony that their treasure is Christ and the church is called to value and imitate wives in their relationships to each other and to Christ.

- A. A Command
- B. An Example (A Proximal Command)
- C. A Picture (A Purposeful Command)
- D. A Treasure (A Possible Command)



**A COMMAND: SUBMISSION**

## EPHESIANS 5:22

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

to be under-set, to subordinate oneself

## EPHESIANS 5:33

*However, each one of you also must love his wife as himself, and the wife must respect her husband.*

literally "fear": to reverence, be deferential toward

Wives are called to follow their husbands lead, to respect their husbands leadership similar to the way they follow Christ

## **A COMMAND: SUBMISSION**

- Submission means:
  - Respecting your husband as leader and following His lead
  - Ordering yourself and your house in ways that you know will please your husband
  - Speaking to and about your husband in honoring ways
  - Primarily a character quality, not merely individual actions  
(I Peter 3:4 – *the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit*)

## **A COMMAND: SUBMISSION**

- Submission does not mean:
  - Being forced into subjugation (submission is voluntary)
  - Submitting to men in general
  - Following your husband in sinful patterns
  - Never giving input or advice (Proverbs 31:11 – *the heart of her husband trusts in her*)
  - Being less valuable (I Peter 3:7 – *since they are heirs with you of the grace of life*)

**AN EXAMPLE (A *PROXIMAL COMMAND*): SUBMISSION**

## EPHESIANS 5:21-22

*submitting to one another out of reverence for*

*Christ:*


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

Wives are called to show the church what submission means – the church learns how to submit to each other as to Christ by looking at how wives submit to husbands as to Christ

A wife's submission is a teaching role – through her actions she is teaching the church about submission and calling them to it

## **I PETER 3:1**

*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*

A purple arrow starts from the phrase "by the conduct of their" and points to the word "wives" in the final box, indicating that the conduct of the wives is the means by which they are won.

## **AN EXAMPLE (A PROXIMAL COMMAND): SUBMISSION**

- Wives are the proximal recipients of this command
- But the church is the ultimate recipient of this command
  - Wives are called to submit *precisely because* the church is called to submit, they submit as an example to the church
- So:
  1. This passage isn't just for women and wives – this passage is for the whole church
  2. Ladies, your role is honorable and important – it's not just about you and your husband, it affects the whole church



## **AN EXAMPLE (A PROXIMAL COMMAND): SUBMISSION**

- Wives are called to: **Because**
  - Be submissive (Eph. 5:22)
  - Be respectful (Eph. 5:33)
  - Be quiet (I Pet. 3:4)
  - Be gentle (I Pet. 3:4)
- The church is called to:
  - Be submissive (Eph. 5:21, 24)
  - Be respectful (Eph. 5:21)
  - Be quiet (I Thess. 4:11, I Tim. 2:2)
  - Be gentle (Gal. 5:23, Eph. 4:2)

The qualities of a wife are the qualities of the church; wives are an example of what the church ought to be.

## **AN EXAMPLE (A *PROXIMAL COMMAND*): SUBMISSION**

- A wife's submission means:
  - Respecting your husband as leader and following His lead
  - Ordering yourself and your house in ways that you know will please your husband
  - Speaking to and about your husband in honoring ways
  - Primarily a character quality, not merely individual actions
- The church's submission means:
  - Respecting Christ as our leader and following His lead
  - Ordering ourselves and our houses in ways we know will please Christ
  - Speaking to and about Christ in honoring ways
  - Primarily a character quality, not merely individual actions

KIDS' QUESTION:

**WHAT IS A WIFE CALLED TO DO?**

To show the church  
what submission means.

**A PICTURE (A *PURPOSEFUL COMMAND*): SUBMISSION**

## EPHESIANS 5:23-24

*For the husband is head of the wife as Christ is head of the church, Him being the Savior of the body. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives to their own husbands in everything.*

The text is segmented into five boxes with arrows indicating relationships:

- Box 1: *For the husband is head of the wife* (red border)
- Box 2: *as Christ is head of the church,* (purple border)
- Box 3: *Him being the Savior of the body.* (blue border)
- Box 4: *Now as the church submits to Christ,* (green border)
- Box 5: *so also wives to their own husbands in everything.* (teal border)

Annotations:

- A green arrow labeled "rooted in" points from Box 1 to Box 2.
- A red arrow labeled "picture" points from Box 2 to Box 3.
- A purple arrow labeled "rooted in" points from Box 3 to Box 4.
- An orange arrow labeled "example" points from Box 4 to Box 5.

Marriage is a profound picture of the gospel and a wife is integral to that picture

## **EPHESIANS 1:17-23**

*I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is **the hope to which he has called you**, what are **the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints**, and **what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe,***

## **EPHESIANS 1:17-23**

*according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

## **EPHESIANS 1:3-10**

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as **he chose us** in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In **love he predestined us** for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.*



## **EPHESIANS 1:3-10**

*In him **we have redemption through his blood,** the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, **which he lavished upon us,** in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, **to unite all things in him,** things in heaven and things on earth.*

## **A PICTURE (A *PURPOSEFUL* COMMAND): SUBMISSION**

- The Gospel is:
  - The story of Jesus choosing a bride
  - The story of Jesus setting His love on His choice
  - The story of Jesus winning His bride
  - The story of Jesus lavishing gifts on His bride
  - The story of Jesus and His bride made one
- The Ideal of Marriage is:
  - A story of a husband choosing a bride
  - A story of a husband setting his love on his choice
  - A story of a husband winning his bride
  - A story of a husband lavishing gifts on his bride
  - A story of a husband and his bride made one

## EPHESIANS 5:31-32

*“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”* This is a <sup>mega</sup>profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

something revealed in the Old Testament but not understood until the New  
something that causes us to wonder at the wisdom of God

The purpose of marriage from the very first week of creation was to be a pattern and picture that revealed Christ's relationship with the church to us

## **A PICTURE (A *PURPOSEFUL* COMMAND): SUBMISSION**

1. Marriage isn't about us – the purpose of marriage isn't to fulfill us or make us happy or serve our needs – marriage is about Jesus
2. Men and women are given certain roles in marriage, not because of differing value or even (specifically) because of innate gifting, but to play a part in revealing a glorious picture of the gospel
3. Therefore, both roles in marriage are infinitely valuable and infinitely necessary because both parts need to be played
4. So, rejecting the roles of wives is rejecting the picture of the gospel and devaluing the role of wives is devaluing the gospel – we ought to honor the role of wives
5. **We ought to look at marriage and wonder – it is a profound mystery**

KIDS' QUESTION:

**WHAT IS A WIFE CALLED TO BE?**

A picture of the church  
in relationship with Christ.

**A TREASURE (A POSSIBLE COMMAND): JESUS**

## **EPHESIANS 5:22-24**

*Wives, [submit] to your own husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife as Christ is head of the church, Him being the Savior of the body. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives to their own husbands in everything.*

In Paul's command to wives, nowhere does he reference the character of the husband (*wives, submit to your own husbands if...*)

## **I PETER 3:1**

*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*



## **EPHESIANS 5:22-24**

*Wives, [submit] to your own husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife as Christ is head of the church, Him being the Savior of the body. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives to their own husbands in everything.*

Paul can command wives to be submissive to husbands in the absence of any qualifications because a wife's treasure is neither herself or her husband – a wife's treasure is Christ

## **A PICTURE (A *PURPOSEFUL* COMMAND): SUBMISSION**

1. Marriage is a picture of the gospel
  - A wife's role and a husband's role (next week) are meant to display the glories of the gospel here on earth
2. And the gospel is what fuels the picture of marriage
  - Neither husbands nor wives are perfect
  - So our passion for living out our role in marriage cannot come from our spouse, but must come from the gospel
  - Jesus must be our treasure if we are to live in marriage well
  - Jesus must be a wife's treasure if she is to submit well

KIDS' QUESTION:

**WHAT IS A WIFE CALLED  
TO VALUE?**

A wife can only be a picture of the church in relationship to Christ if her treasure is Christ.

**Proposition:** Wives are called to submit to their own husbands as an example, a picture, and a testimony that their treasure is Christ and the church is called to value and imitate wives in their relationships to each other and to Christ.

- A. A Command
- B. An Example (A Proximal Command)
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- D. A Treasure (A Possible Command)