

Brown CG Zoom Session 5/3/2020
Ephesians 5:21-33
Marriage – Instruction for Christian Households

Marriage – Ephesians 5:21-33

²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. ²² Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— ³⁰ for we are members of his body. ³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” ³² This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Summary Discussion Points:

After Paul explained the basics of being filled with the Spirit in verses 15-21 last week, he next applies the implication of this to various groups of Christians. The next several paragraphs are provided as examples of Christian living with the emphasis throughout is on submission to Christ.

In this message of submission, Paul addresses various groups:

1. Wives and husbands (5:22-33)
2. Children and parents (6:1-4)
3. Slaves and masters (6:5-9)
4. In each of these groups, while the first partner is responsible to be submissive or obedient; the second partner is also to show a submissive spirit, so that the two relate to each other "as unto the Lord."

Those who obey should do as though they were obeying Christ: those who are obeyed must find the pattern of their conduct in the love and care of Christ and must remember that they themselves owe obedience in their turn to Christ. This is one of several "house-rule" lists in the New Testament (cf. Eph. 5:22—6:9; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 6:1-2; Titus 2:1-10; 1 Pet. 2:18—3:7). The writings of some Apostolic Fathers also contain such lists.

"Too much so-called 'holiness teaching' emphasizes a relationship to Jesus Christ without any attempt to indicate its consequences in terms of relationships with the people we live and work with. In contrast to such holiness-in-a-vacuum, the apostles spelled out Christian duty in the situations of everyday life and work. When God controls us individually, we can experience harmony in the home and in the workplace, despite possible friction, tension, and opposition there.

Group Questions:

1. What is the main idea of these verses in Ephesians?
2. What is the basis for “submission” in our marriages to each other?
3. How does Paul specifically say for husbands and wives to submit to one another, and what model does that follow?
4. What is the husband’s role according to v24? What does it reflect?
5. God instituted marriage in Genesis 2 and consecrated marriage as holy and sacred. From verses 24-27, describe why this is so?
6. In v31, what is Paul emphasizing about the marriage relationship? What do we see in today’s culture?
7. With the description of submission throughout these verses, what action does this kind of love involve?

Spiritual and Relational Homework for the Coming Week:

Pray for your spouse and specifically for their needs today and this upcoming week. Pray for a spirit of submission, through love, for your marriage and household. Pray for strength, insight, protection, wisdom, and love in our relationships. Christ is unchanging yesterday, today, and tomorrow. His anchor is secure and His rest is sure.