

Series: Ephesians
Title: Wives Submit Unto Your Husbands
Text: Ephesians 5: 22-24
Date: November 23, 2014
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Today, we begin hearing about the true order of things. This is not the order of popular opinion. This is the true order God ordained. We begin this week with the wife.

Ephesians 5: 22: Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24: Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

Scripture says, “thy Maker *is* thine husband.” Christ and his bride came first in eternity. Therefore, in the garden, when Christ made husband and wife he made them after the pattern of Christ and his bride, the church. (Is 54: 5) Note: We learn everything godly and true by looking to Christ. So a wife only has to look to Christ and how he brings his bride into submission, to learn how to submit to her own husband. So this will not only be for those who are wives but for members of Christ’s bride as well.

AS UNTO THE LORD

First, a few words about the general exhortation, “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.” (Eph 5:22) The wife may have an unbelieving husband or even the believing husband may at times act like an unbeliever, but this is what helps the wife--“as unto the Lord.” This is not simply a matter of human love; it is not merely for your husband; it is not mere morality. As believers, we are to do all things as unto the Lord Jesus. Constrained by Christ’s love, trusting Christ’s care, submitting to Christ’s government, knowing the Lord is ruling all things

Faith finds strength, not in our strength, but in the Lord’s strength. Wisdom is found, not in our own, but in the Lord’s wisdom. The more submissive we are to Christ the more we find him to be a faithful, loving, wise Husband at all times. Christ reminds the believing wife, to behold him first, before your earthly husband. Christ says, “Submit unto your earthly husband as unto your heavenly husband.”

YOUR OWN HUSBANDS

Notice, he says “submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.” Christ continually reminds his people that we are his own, chosen, particular, everlastingly loved bride. We are Christ’s own bride and Christ is our own husband. As Hosea said of Gomer, “Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for *another* man: so *will* I also *be* for thee.” (Hos 3: 3) Imagine your husband saying, “Honey, you are my bride but I love all other women in the world, too.” That kind of love means nothing. God’s love is true, particular, distinguishing love, to his people alone. So he says “submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as you do unto your own husband, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

THE HUSBAND’S PATTERN

Here is the reason why the wife is to submit to her own husband. The earthly husband is patterned after the church’s heavenly husband, “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.” (Eph 5: 23)

God made man first because Christ was first before his bride. Our Husband is eternal God, the Son of God. Then secondly, our Maker, our Husband, created a bride for Adam because Christ’s bride was chosen after Christ, “And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” (Gen 2:

18) This was patterned after Christ and his bride. In eternity, God chose Christ. Then in eternity God chose each of his elect, his people, his church and God espoused his church to Christ to be Christ's bride.

Therefore, scripture says man, "is the image and glory of God: and the woman is the glory of the man." (1 Cor 11: 7) The GodMan, Christ Jesus is the express image and glory of God. The woman, the church, each believer in particular, is the glory of the GodMan, Christ our Husband.

Therefore, scriptures says, "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." (1 Cor 11: 8-9) Christ was before the church. He came into this earth through the church. But the church is of Christ. Neither was Christ ordained for the church but the church was created for Christ.

Everything God does in the salvation of his people is to glorify his Son. So God's order of man and woman in this earth is patterned after Christ our Husband and his bride, the church. God's order of the husband and wife gives all preeminence to Christ with his church in subjection to him. Whether the unregenerate world knows it or not, that is the chief reason the carnal mind hates God's order for the husband to be head over the wife, for the wife to be in subjection to her husband.

Nevertheless, "he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." (Col 1: 18) "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph 1: 22-23)

THE IMPORTANCE FOR SUBMISSION

Why is it so important that the church be in subjection to Christ our Husband? The bride of Christ is the weaker vessel even as the woman. Therefore, Satan's method in the garden was to turn this order upside down by tricking the weaker vessel. Satan came to Eve first, not to Adam, because Eve was the weaker vessel. He beguiled, tricked Eve. Eve ate the fruit and gave to her husband, Adam, who was our first representative.

Now, we know Adam was not deceived. There is a beautiful picture in the fact that Adam, seeing his bride defiled, was willing to lay down his life to die for his bride. That is what Christ did in obedience to God to justify his people from all our sins. But Adam's wife must have usurped authority over Adam, telling her husband to eat, because after Adam ate, listen to what God said, "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life;" (Ge 3:17) Adam's head was Christ. The bride is supposed to be in submission to her own husband. Instead, when Eve usurped authority over Adam, she usurped authority over Christ. When Adam obeyed her, the whole order turned upside down. Sin entered. Death entered. The whole world became dead in sin under the curse of God.

But even in God's sentence to Eve he showed the pattern of how Christ's bride would be saved by Christ her Husband. Remember, our text says, Christ is the Savior of the body. So God said to the devil, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; [Christ] it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen 3: 15) The "Seed of woman" is Christ our Husband.

Remember, Christ was before the woman, the church, but he would be born through the woman, through the church. So God said to the woman, to the church, "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children." (Gen 3: 16) The spiritual lesson is this, Satan would cause the woman, the church, much sorrow in child birth, as Satan attempted to prevent Christ from coming into this world. Throughout the ages we see it. Pharaoh ordered all the male Israelite children to be killed. Haman sought to destroy all the Jews (Es 3: 6.) Herod "slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under..." (Mt 2: 16)

Revelation 12: 1: And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: 2: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

The woman is the church, travailing to bring forth the Seed of woman.

Revelation 12: 3: And...behold a great red dragon,...and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. 5: And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

Satan is the red dragon. The child which Satan tried to prevent being born, but which was born and ascended to the throne of God is Christ the GodMan, the Seed of Woman. It is because of that enmity between Satan and Christ, that Satan tried to destroy every elect child of God, born of the church, to prevent Christ coming into this earth.

So in the garden, what was the gospel that God preached to the woman, telling the woman how she would be saved? God told the wife, “and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” (Gen 3: 16) From Eve on down the line of all God’s elect, all the way to Mary, the only way the church has ever been saved is by her desire being toward Christ her Husband, who is, “*the desire of all nations.*” (Hag 2: 7)

So Christ came into the world—the Seed of woman—and saved his bride. And it is only by our subjection to Christ our Husband that we continue to be saved to bring forth his elect children. Let’s hear the Holy Spirit give us the commentary on Gen 3: 16. God told Eve, “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.” (1 Tim 2: 11-12) That is what God told Eve. Here is why? “For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.” (1 Tim 2: 12-14) Eve’s transgression was that she usurped authority over Adam telling her husband to eat. Now, here is Genesis 3: 16 which the Lord told Eve, “Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing.” God told Eve that throughout the ages the church shall be saved in bearing Christ, the Seed of woman. (1 Tim 2: 15) Here is how, “if they”, the church from Eve to Mary, “if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.” (1Ti 2:11-15) Or as Genesis 3: 16 put it, if her desire continue to be toward Christ her Husband, being in subjection, learning from and trusting Christ to rule over her and protect her. That is what God told Eve and that is why Satan was not able to prevent Christ coming into the earth. Only by Christ ruling over her and by her being in subjection to his rule, through faith, was she saved. So this is why Christ the Husband is the Head of the bride. This is why, we, as the bride of Christ, must be in subjection to Christ our Husband. Submission to Christ is the only way we shall continue to bear God’s elect through the gospel.

CHRIST IS THE SAVIOR OF THE BODY

So Christ is the Savior of the body. He came forth and bruised Satan’s head on the cross and Christ saved his bride, his church, every elect child of God, by the work he finished in the earth. The work is done. The church is, “the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” (Acts 20: 28) Now, we, “wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.” (1 Thess 1: 10) God’s elect, Christ’s redeemed, called out of every nation are the bride of Christ. We sing, “a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” (Rev 5: 9)

When Christ regenerates and calls us to faith, we enter a marriage covenant with Christ. That is why a husband and bride enter a marriage covenant. But toward Christ, all we are to do is submit to his rule over us. Christ makes an everlasting covenant that he has saved us and shall continue to save us, bringing us to him.

When he calls us to faith, Christ gives his bride, a new name—his name. Notice, Adam and Eve were not given two names, but one name, “Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.” (Gen 5: 2) Our name is “the Lord our Righteousness” because Christ’s name is

“the LORD our Righteousness.” (Jer 23: 6; 33: 16) Each of God’s elect are “joined to the Lord”; “married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” (Zec 2: 11; Rom 7: 4); our Maker is our Husband. (Is 54: 5)

THE FALSE BRIDE

The true church is in subjection to Christ, “Therefore...the church is subject unto Christ.” (Eph 5: 24) But there is a false bride, a false church in our day, an imitation bride, with whom this order is upside down. Her husband can only save her if she gives him permission; her husband can only exercise his will if she lets him have his way. They say things like, “Christ wants to save you, if you will let him. He has done all he can do, now it is up to you. He has a wonderful plan for your life, if you will let him have his way.” That bride usurps authority over her husband. Likewise, the women in that church usurp authority over the men, preaching and teaching and running their churches; and the men do what the women say. Their heavenly husband and their earthly husbands are henpecked—only doing what they allow. Furthermore, that bride is not a keeper of her husbands house because they arrange their house around the children; catering to the people’s every whim and wish; preaching what they want to hear—rather than arranging the house around their husband.

THE TRUE BRIDE

Yet, it is not so with the true church. Wives read this closely. Here is how you learn how to submit to your earthly husbands. It is by looking at the church’s submission to our heavenly husband. “Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.” (Eph 5: 24)

The true bride, the true church, submits to Christ our Husband, depending upon him in every thing. But for sake of time, we will divide this into a few headings.

One, we submit to him to save us by redemption. Christ has already redeemed us from the curse of the law. And in the end, Christ shall also redeem us into final glory completely, in body, as well as spirit, “ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.” (Rom 8: 23) So wives submit to your husband to take all your debts and pay them all. Husbands, that is our responsibility, even as Christ did the church.

Two, we submit to Christ our Husband to save us by protecting us in this world. Christ hedges us about and keeps us; we are kept by the Power of God and Christ is that Power of God. (1 Pet 1: 5; 1 Cor 1: 24) We are kept through faith which is submission to Christ our Husband and Savior. So, ladies, submit to your own husbands to protect you, even as you submit to the Lord to protect you.

Three, the church submits to Christ to save us by providing for us. Christ provides us all spiritual blessings, as well as all temporal blessings. He is the Vine; we are the branches, without Christ our Head and Savior we can do nothing. (Jn 15: 5) So, wives submit yourselves to your husbands to provide.

Four, the church submits to Christ to save us by giving us direction. Christ guides us through the Holy Spirit through the gospel through his all wise-providence. In the gospel Christ exhorts, reproveth, rebukes, and comforts us. So, wives, submit to your own husbands to direct you with exhortation, reproof, rebuke and comfort. Obey and reverence him as unto the Lord. The Lord will rule everything. Remember, Christ strength is made perfect in our weakness. A domineering, self-willed woman never learns the strength of her husband and his direction, even as a self-willed sinner misses out on Christ’s saving strength.

Lastly, five, this is so important, the church submits to our Husband by being keepers of his house. We build our lives and the house of the Lord around our heavenly Husband, Christ Jesus. The true bride of Christ does not arrange the house around the children; but around the Lord. We teach Christ’s children the gospel of Christ, we teach them to bow to him. Christ our Husband is the focus; His is the glory and honor. Likewise, wives, do the same unto your husbands as unto the Lord. One day the children will be gone and it will be just you and your

husband. Build your house around your husbands and do so to build your house around your heavenly husband, Christ Jesus. “Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.” (Eph 5:24)

A WORD TO WIVES WITH UNBELIEVING HUSBANDS

What if you were unbelievers but after marriage the Lord saves the wife but not the husband? Or what if a believing wife makes the mistake of marrying a man who turns out to be an unbeliever? So long as he does not attempt to separate her from Christ or the gospel, she is to submit to her husband.

1 Peter 3: 1: Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; 2: While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear. 3: Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; 4: But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

In your submission show him your reverence and obedience to Christ your Husband. The Lord may use your actions to win him. Not to save him without the word, but so that your husband comes to listen to the gospel, that the Lord may save him through the word.

You unbelieving husbands and you husbands who love the message of law and works, will you let me tell you what your believing wife wants more than anything: for you to come hear the preaching of the gospel that glorifies Christ alone, for you to search the scriptures with her, for you to have the comfort of knowing the warfare is accomplished, for your marriage to be made sweeter by you both having an interest in Christ.

Next time, Lord willing, we will see Christ the Husband and hear a word to us husbands.

Amen!