



Sunday, April 22, 2018

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Intro to Ephesians 5:21-33

Marriage is one of the most challenging aspects of our lives. For some who never marry, the unfulfilled desire for it is a great challenge and sense of loss. For those who do marry, challenges abound. Husbands can be cruel and fail to love their wives. Wives can be deceitful and manipulate their husbands. It is a delicate institution, truly sustained by the grace of God.

And yet, marriage is also one of the most unique gifts. Aside from the intrinsic value of love and security that comes with marriage, it is a gift from God that is meant to point us to the greatest reality: Christ's relationship to the Church.

For the reasons mentioned above, we can be apprehensive in approaching biblical teaching on marriage. Yet because it is in the Bible, we know that it is there for our good, it is the way things are supposed to be. In fact, biblical teaching on marriage should be quasi-evangelistic—a tangible demonstration to the world of the love of God and the grace of the gospel.

Context

The command to be filled with the Spirit is a command that dominates much of what remains of the book of Ephesians. This section focuses on the implications of the Spirit-filled life for marriage, but he continues on with instructions for family life (6:1-4) and vocational life (6:5-9). He concludes with the exhortation to stand firm in the armor of God (6:11, 13-14). In effect, what he is saying is that no aspect of life is free from our need to be Spirit-filled. We will fail as spouses, parents, and employers/employees if we do not submit ourselves to the control of the Holy Spirit.

Read and Reflect (Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)

“The Mystery of Marriage”

Read Ephesians 5:21-33

General Principle 5.21

- Gal. 3.28 *equality in Christ*
- Gen. 1.26 *equality with a difference*
- Phil. 2.3 *equality as we treat others as better*

Responsibility of wives to husbands 5.22

What it is NOT:

- Unlimited authority of husbands
- Requiring unconditional obedience

What it IS:

- Equality of worth
- Diversity of roles
- Submission to Christ
- Based on created order (1 Cor. 11)
- Picture of Christ and His Church

Responsibility of husbands to wives 5.25

- Head – order and responsibility
- Love – two metaphors
 1. Christ’s love for His Church
 2. Man’s love for himself

A word to the wives

- Submission is for all believers
- Person submit to: not a tyrant, but a lover

Final analysis: words are similar

- Submit: Give yourself to someone
- Love: Give yourself up for someone

Dying to self and giving yourself to your spouse is the secret of a happy and enduring marriage

Discuss

- 1) Besides the Bible, what do you think most influences your view of marriage?
- 2) Whether married or single, we are all members of Christ's Church. As members of the Church, we all participate in the greater reality to which marriage is supposed to point. How are you doing in your role of submitting to Christ? How do you think we are doing as a local church?

One challenge in discussing Ephesians 5 is that we begin to evaluate our spouses on how well they are fulfilling these commands. However, the emphasis of the passage is for us to evaluate ourselves and grow in obedience in our own God-given roles. In light of that...

- 3) Wives, how do you think you are doing in submitting to your husbands? What have been the greatest joys and challenges?
- 4) Husbands, how do you think you are doing in loving your wives as Christ loved the Church? What have been the greatest joys and challenges?
- 5) How can we glorify God in our marriages?