

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Before we open up our bibles – I would like all the moms to please stand up.

We are going to pray for you.

Turn your bibles with me to Ephesians 5

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this powerful letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to the saint in Ephesus and to us here this morning –

About who we are and what we are in Christ

Not because of anything that we have done – it is all His work, out of an agape love, out of His amazing grace and mercy.

We simply receive, we grasp it and then we walk it.

Paul reminds us how God has brought us out the death and given us life – life that is lived in His empowering, to glorify Him in what He has called us to do.

This not only applies to us individually – but to the saint that is sitting next to you and in front of you.

God has called us together – we are living stones – connected to Him, leaning on Him

Living a Spirit filled life –

And I have mentioned that a Spirit filled life is not a one time event – it is something that Paul tells us that we must do everyday.

It is His filling that allows us to walk in love – His love

It is His filling that allows us to walk in Light – His light

It is His filling that allows us to walk in wisdom – understanding His will for our lives.

Having discernment to make the decisions that are in tune to His will.

It is His filling that allows us to have a mind like Jesus, a heart like Jesus and then we begin to walk like Jesus.

We walk carefully – redeeming the time

We begin to bear visible genuine fruit.

We sing the song that He has placed in our heart – being thankful in all things.

We begin to live victorious Christian lives -

But then Paul – in our text last week – brought up another thing that happens to the believer as a result of continuously being filled by the Holy Spirit – and it is probably the one thing many of us find the most difficult to do -

[Eph 5:21 NKJV] 21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.

We submit to one another in the fear of God –

A Christian is to think of others more highly than he does himself.

As a church, God asks us to come under one another

But before we submit to one another among our brothers and sisters – we need to submit to one another in our own home.

In our own marriage.

In the roles that God has made for us

We are to walk out the same reality of who we are in Jesus

Paul is going to address the wives in our text today –

Next week, Paul is going to address the husbands (by the way, the husbands are going to get a lot more instructions than the wives) and then Paul is going to address the children and the family at large.

Let's pray...

Read Text

This portion of scripture – almost immediately – brings a reaction

Like all passages in the bible – we should carefully consider -

what it says

what it means in its context

and understand the instruction and application given to the believer

So – a little background – a little context to our study

The Roman Empire had a marriage problem.

Much like our culture today – where it seems like the younger generations are waiting longer to get married and have a family –

And there are many reasons why –

Careers

Personal interests

Commitment issues

Self independence – want to do what I want when I want mentality -

And there are many more reasons and excuses.

There is nothing new under the sun –

The same thing occurred two thousand years ago in the Roman Empire

Caesar Augustus – passes a law – incentivizing people to get married and have children

–

The result was the opposite of what he intended. Divorce was rampant

Now, in Ephesus – there were people who followed Roman culture, there were people who followed Jewish culture, Hellenist culture and pagan cultures.

And so each culture had their own idea of what marriage should be like and the roles of the husband and wife.

There were different types of marriages, legally speaking.

Most wives stayed under the legal authority of their father, even after marriage.

Some were transferred to the husband, almost like a slave or piece of property.

Everyone had their own definition of marriage was and how it looked – much like today.

Now here comes Christianity.

Remember, Paul has been showing us how we are supposed to walk in Christ

How we are supposed to imitate Him

Therefore, marriage in the Church – is supposed to also imitate God.

How a husband and wife conduct themselves in the marriage is an excellent way for the world to see Christ in His people.

It is in marriage – that God desires to depict His heavenly relationship with His bride – the Church

The Christian marriage should be different than the world's viewpoint – there should be a distinction between a godly marriage and a worldly marriage

Therefore we want to make sure that our marriage is defined – not by what the world says, not by our culture or by what we think– but by what Almighty God has instructed us and defined for us

The question for us to answer this morning will be – do we really believe that the bible is God's inspired word?

And if we do – that means, we don't shy away from it – we embrace it because we want to discover what God's perfect will is for us.

This is what Paul is going to remind us of –

Let's look at our text

[Eph 5:22-24 NKJV] 22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

I had you make a note of the word submit –

Because it is the same word that Paul uses in verse 21.

It is the Greek word – hupotazzo –

It is a military to term – which means to rank in order.

So the idea here is the giving up or voluntary, willful relinquishment of rights.

Again – it is something that is done willingly and not something that is forced.

Submission is by choice –

So for the husband that tells his wife – you have to submit to be – that is not longer submission.

And for many wives – these are fighting words.

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. (No way)

And for good reason – because some men have clubbed their wives over the head with this bible verse and they use it as a weapon in order to get their way, to instill fear, or to generate humiliation –

instead of a tool to promote God's will and God's way.

And what happen when a husband has this overbearing attitude is that causes his wife to shut down – because it crushes her spirit.

And so she is silent and she suffers in silence

Because of the abuse -

Some people make the argument – that these are simply Paul's words, that these are outdated words – that they were only reserved for this point in time - but nothing can be further from the truth.

Again – we read it in context –

As believer, we are to submit to one another.

We submit to Jesus Christ our Lord

Wives submit to your husbands

Husbands love your wives

Children obey your parents

And in all of these – the motive that is given by the bible – “as to the Lord”

We are motivated by our love for, commitment to and willingness to serve our Lord

And God’s arrangement of marriage – despite what the world says or any culture says – is the best way to know and do God’s will.

Turn with me to Genesis 2

[Gen 2:18-24 NKJV] 18 And the LORD God said, “[It is] not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.” 19 Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought [them] to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that [was] its name. 20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. 21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on

Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. 23 And Adam said: “This [is] now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.” 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

In Genesis 2 – we realize this important thing –

That marriage is God’s idea and not mans

Man didn’t wake up one morning and came up with the idea of marriage

God is the One who ordained the institution of marriage

And He is the One who gets to define what marriage is. Amen!!!

He started it

He ordained it

It is in His power to define and tell us, “this is what I want marriage to be”

And as the Creator of marriage – He knows what’s best -

You see, some people mistakenly think that God defined the roles of marriage after the fall.

They see this text and they say it is a generational curse brought on by Eve – they blame Eve – it is her fault – it is because of her disobedience that we have to submit to our husbands.

That is not the case – it was God’s design all along

So Paul’s point in the passage – is that God’s plan for harmony, peace and unity – begin in the home before it can be had in the church.

Wives, submit to your husbands –

Notice – Paul didn’t say – wives, clean the house, wash the dishes, buy the groceries –

Paul simply says, submit.

It is a duty – unto the Lord

Wives are not instructed to submit to husbands in abuse or crime

Paul doesn’t say – submit to your husbands as to the Lord even if they ask you to do something illegal or immoral.

And yet, we see that even in the church today – “My husband is the head of the house and he says it is ok”

That is not what is being asked.

And I think one of the areas that a few of us might even be surprised – women are not told to obey their husbands.

Submission might include obedience – however, when Paul speaks to children – he uses the word obey.

When Paul is speaks to slaves obeying their masters – he will use the word, obey. Not submit.

Here is the point – husbands – you cannot treat your wives like children.

You cannot treat your wives like servants.

They are partners with you in the grace of life

Paul says – wives submit to your husbands – out of respect –

Not for your husbands – but out of respect for Jesus Christ.

As to the Lord –

This does not define the extent of a wife's submission or the limit of a wife's submission – it defines the motive of a wife's submission.

It is an expression of her submission to the Almighty God

Submission is not about the superiority of the male – it is about the functionality of the marriage.

And here is the probably the most important thing that is overlooked –

Submission is not the husband's right

It is the wife's responsibility.

This command is written to the wife, not the husband.

God doesn't command the husbands to order their wives' submission.

23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

Here is the reason that the wife is to submit to her husband

The wife submits to her husband because her marriage to her husband mirrors the relationship between Christ and the church.

And as Jesus leads the church, as Jesus is head of the church – so the husband is the head of the marriage.

God's role for the husband is to have authority.

Question -

Can a head of a corporation abuse their power? Yes

Can the head of the police department abuse their power? Yes

Can the husband abuse their power? Yes

Can parents abuse their power over their children? Yes

You see – the point in all this is that abuse isn't a sufficient argument to ignore and violate God's order.

A wise and Christ honoring husband will not take advantage of his leadership role

A wise and Christ honoring wife will not try to undermine her husband's leadership

Either approach causes disunity and friction in the marriage

Submission is rarely a problem when both wife and husband have a strong and sensitive relationship with Christ

They honor God and obey God and are filled with the Holy Spirit and joy

Turn to 1 Cor 11

[1Co 11:3 NKJV] 3 But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman [is] man, and the head of Christ [is] God.

Did you see that – God the Father is the head of Christ.

God the Father has authority over God the Son

The bible teaches that Jesus is God in every sense of the Word

But in the context of God's kingdom, even Jesus has chosen to submit within the context of God's order and His kingdom.

God the Son does not have any less divinity than God the Father.

We believe tat the Father, the Son and the Spirit are co-eternal, co-equal.

But one relinquishes the right to another

That is why Jesus sad – “I always do the things that please the Father”

He understood the function and the role.

We don't argue the inferiority of Christ to the Father – simply because Jesus is subject to the Father.

Those who belong to cults do

The LDS, Jehovah's witnesses they argue that Jesus is inferior to the Father because Jesus is subject to the Father – but that isn't a biblical concept.

Jesus doesn't seize to be God because He is subject to the Father

The bible tells us that Jesus submitted to Mary and Joseph – Luke 2 tells us that Jesus was subject to them. The same exact word that Paul uses in our text for submit.

Jesus submitted to the judicial ruling of Pontius Pilate –

Jesus goes before Pilate, Pilate finds Jesus - not guilty of the crimes He was charged with and still sends Jesus to die on the cross.

“I find the defendant not guilty – and I am sentencing Him to death”

Jesus submits

Did Jesus stop being God? No

Paul basis the biblical doctrine of submission on the reality of creation and for this reason – it is permanent and universal in its application.

All we have to do is look at Jesus

Jesus Christ is always the context for submission and authority.

As the church, we submit to Him because of who He is and what He has done,

He is the Head

It is from Jesus, that the body derives it's health and wellness

And so Paul is connecting the dots for us –

Jesus' headship expresses care rather than control

Jesus headship expresses irresistibility rather than rule –

If the husband's headship over his wife resembles Christ's headship over the church, the wife's submission should resemble the church's submission.

Wives who fail to submit to their husbands – hide how the church should respond to

Jesus Christ

The purpose of marriage is to reveal God

24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so [let] the wives [be] to their own husbands in everything.

“Submitting to my husband is demeaning it is dehumanizing”

Question -

For the believer, when we submit to Jesus, is it dehumanizing, is it demeaning? No

Why?

Because of who Jesus is

For the Christian woman – submission is not unthinking obedience to His rule.

But grateful acceptance of His care and His love and His provision.

If the husband is walking in Christ - filled with the Holy Spirit, if the husband is expressing the character of Christ – then it should be pretty easy to submit to His authority.

We husbands are to look to Jesus as His model for leadership

What does Jesus model for leadership look like?

It is marked by love

It is marked by selflessness

It is marked by sacrifice

Wives are to look to Jesus as the model for submission

Jesus looks to His Father for guidance, strength, for understanding

Does Jesus know His Father's will?

Does Jesus want to do His Father's will?

Is that going to be difficult?

The perfect sinless Savior is going to give His life for the sin of the world.

Jesus leads

Jesus provides

Jesus cares for His church

Sometimes husbands doesn't lead

Sometimes husbands doesn't provide

Sometimes husbands doesn't care or at least doesn't show it

So what is a wife to do?

Does in everything mean everything?

The answer – yes and no

Yes – with everything that is consistent with the character of God and the Word of God

No – with everything that goes against the character of God and the Word of God.

Can my boss ask at work ask me to do something wicked or sinful?

Can a pastor or church leader ask someone in the congregation to do something wicked or evil?

When Peter and the apostles were commanded by the governing authorities / the religious rulers to stop talking about Jesus,

(Acts 5:29 NKJV) But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men.

Everything can't mean an invitation to sin.

Everything can't mean submitting to abuse or violence – because we are to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another in the fear of the Lord (Eph 4:32)

The husband or any head does not have the absolute authority – when they abuse their God given responsibility – our responsibility is to resist them – because we are to resist evil and hold on to what is good.

[Col 3:18 NKJV] 18 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

The bottom line is that this is God's pattern in the home.

Some may not agree with it -

But - There comes a point where God is going to ask you and me to trust Him that He knows what He's doing.

And so we submit.

AMEN

Men – we are on the hot seat next week. Wives, make sure your husbands come next week

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

The biggest test in our walk is when God asks us to do something and we say – no.

And God allows us to have it our way. And we see the consequences.

We see this over and over again in the scriptures.

I think one of the real tests of whether I'm learning to walk in the Spirit is whether I'm learning submission.

How do I respond when I'm asked to do something I don't want to do?

My response will show me a lot about my relationship with the Holy Spirit.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'