

RELEASE DATE: 11th February 2025

## **“Wives and Husbands” - Ephesians Chapter 5 v 22-33**

*<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.*

*<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<sup>[b]</sup> her by the washing with water through the word, <sup>27</sup> and 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, husband's ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, 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>[c]</sup> <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.*

At our last Home Group meeting we looked at “walking in love” and out of that we considered “Mutual Submission based upon the shared reverence for Christ as Lord.”

Now from verse 22 onwards Paul is looking at applying the same “Mutual Submission” to Family Relationships. In particular those in a Christian family between husband and wife, also between parents and children. In each case self-giving of one to the other is described. For the wife it is voluntary yielding in love to her husband's headship in the home. The husband is to yield himself to his wife in the same spirit that Christ yielded Himself to the cross to establish the church.

Children are to submit themselves to their parents in obedience, and fathers are to give themselves to the task of guidance and discipline for their children. (See Colossians 3 v 18-21) Mutual submission does not define how individual families will determine role responsibilities in the home. It affirms a new attitude of voluntary submission in love from each family member based upon Christian faith.

Submission as a Christian attitude is basic to social life in the gospel (See Romans 13 v 1-7; Titus 3 v 1; Hebrews 13 v7; 1 Peter 2 v 13 > 3 v 7). It refuses to use other people as objects, and it understands authority as servant (Matthew 20 v 25-28; Luke 22 v 24-27).

Christ is the loving, sacrificing Head of the Church. The church is the obedient, grateful body which serves its Saviour. The object of Jesus' love is His bride, the church. He showed his love in His death, which purified His people. He continues to show His love through constant care for us.

Although individual members stand justified before God, the church as a body looks towards a consummation in which imperfection gives way to perfection. As a bride in beauty and human perfections joins her beloved for marriage, the church in radiant spotlessness will be presented to the heavenly Bridegroom. Complete salvation has a corporate element as well as an individual one.

The church responds to Christ as a loving wife responds to a loving and kind husband. Christ gave Himself on the cross for His church to set the church apart as His unique people living in service to Him. He is now cleansing the church that it might be presented to Him as a purified body. Because we are members of His body, we live in ways pleasing to him.

Just as husbands took a public vow to be faithful to their wives, setting them apart from their relation to all others ("setting apart" is the root meaning of the word "holy"), so Christians are "set apart" by Christ through the public act of baptism to be his faithful bride. The metaphor of marriage is used as a powerful illustration of the covenant relationship of God to His people from the time of the Old Testament prophets right on through the New Testament. "Washing with water through the word" is clearly a reference to baptism, but it is not the literal washing with water that cleanses and sets apart the Christian.

It is "through the word", the convicting, cleansing power of the word of God (made flesh in Jesus Christ and written in the Bible), that we are saved and sanctified (made holy) as the bride of Christ. Please read John 3 v 3-to 5 and Titus 3 v5 to see just how much importance is placed on this in God's word.

In Chapter 14 of his excellent book "Fly through the Bible", Colin S Smith picks out this portion of Scripture as one of his "touch-down stops" to open up for us just how much our Saviour cared about His people. His great concern was for the lasting good of the people He loved.

In case you didn't get a copy, this is a snippet of what you missed. On the following page you can read the first few paragraphs of Chapter 14 from the book.



# THE CHURCH

**WHAT COMES TO MIND** when you think of the church? Stained glass windows? Hard wooden pews? Long dull sermons? The Bible says, “Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25).

You can be sure that Jesus did not give Himself up for stained glass windows, wooden pews, and long dull sermons. So, what is the church and why did Jesus love her so much that He gave Himself up for her?

Jesus spoke of the church on just two occasions, and what He said defines what the church is for us.

## What Jesus said about the church

The first time Jesus spoke about the church, He was referring to all believers in every time and place. Peter had confessed faith in Jesus, and Jesus said,

*“And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18)*

Jesus was speaking about all believers in every time and place: *“I will build my church”* – singular! There is one church, comprising all believers and Jesus Christ builds it. And He has promised that “the gates of hell shall not prevail” against this church.

---

*Transcript of the presentation given by Deacon Rodney Burge and discussed at the church-based, morning home group on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025. All scripture is from the ESV Translation.*

