

“Christ and the Church as Seen in the Family”

By Kirk Orelup

Sunday, October 29th, 2017

I am the first victim this morning. I like this rotation of people speaking; you're not really sure, you don't know who to expect. Even sometimes the speakers themselves don't know. This morning, I got a text from Malcom, saying, “Who is supposed to be delivering the message this morning? I sure hope it's not me.” I said, “Don't worry Malcom. You've already had your delivery.” So, I'm supposed to be giving a message.

At my dad's house there's this book, it's titled, “Everything Men Know About Women.” I thought, “Who could write a book saying that they know everything, about any topic, let alone a topic about women?” I had to go look at this book, and I opened it up, and it took about two seconds to read it cover to cover, and the reason why is because all the pages were blank. Obviously, men know nothing about women. But, I assume that women know very little to nothing about men, also. I assume that just for the sake of argument. Let's just say that men are a mystery to women, and women are a mystery to men. And, what happens when you put one mystery with another mystery in what they call marriage? What do you get? A great mystery. Let's look at Ephesians, five, because the Bible actually calls marriage a great mystery, five, verses thirty-one and thirty-two:

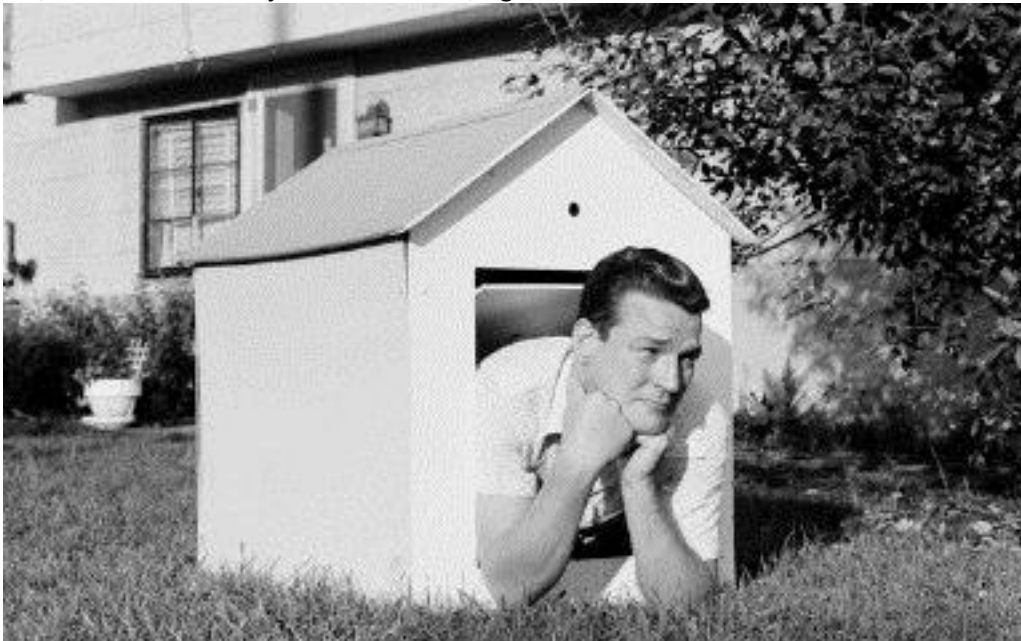
Ephesians 5:31-32 *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: [Now, right from here we go, okay, he identifies this. And, the very next few words are going to open up the door for us of understanding, because, he's going to tell us that marriage is a type of Christ and the church. And, so, it says,] but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

So, from this we know that marriage is a type of Christ in the church. And, thus we know what the purpose of marriage is, which is to be this type, to be this example, of Christ and the church. And, from this we can also understand what is the role, or the job description, if you will, of the wife, and what is the job description of the husband. So, let's look at this, and Ephesians chapter five goes on, if you read it, but, it tells us that in general terms that the wife's role throughout Scripture is to submit to her husband. I see a lot of men nodding about how right this is, it's going where it needs to go, and, they're thankful for this message, yes. And, the women are thinking to themselves, “Man, this is about to be the longest fifteen minutes of my life.” Well, if you take this and read it in the full verse, which is verse twenty-two, it says:

Ephesians 5:22 *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.*

Now, women, do you have any problems submitting yourselves unto the Lord? I would expect no. You say, “No, why would I? He's loving, He's good, He's righteous, He's kind, He's forgiving, He's everything that He should be. He's everything that my husband is not.” And, that's the truth, because, if we compare our righteousness to God's righteousness, we have nothing. We really are nothing. And, so, when the wives are told to submit themselves unto their husbands as unto the Lord, they are supposed to submit themselves on the merit, not on the merit of the husband, but the merit of the Lord, on His righteousness, on His goodness, and that's why they do this. And, when they do this, then the world then sees the church in their life. That's her part, she portrays the church. Now, submission is a bad word in our society, and it has images of oppression, and slavery, and all these things that are negative. So, we'll take it in the context of what we see. What's the application of submission in terms of Christ and the church? And, then we'll

see it a little more of the way it's really supposed to be, instead of the way the world would portray it. Okay, we could do the same thing with love or anything. If we look at it, in terms of how the Bible describes it, illustrates it, submission is being the receiver. Okay, now it sounds a lot easier than this way, but being the receiver is still a difficult task. When we live for God, we are the receiver of God's grace, of His love, of His mercy, of His salvation. We are able to do this *only because* we are able to do this by faith, it's always a challenge for us, in our fleshly bodies, to accept all the things that God has for us. But, it's still a challenge to live by faith. So, wives, when they do this, when they're submitting themselves to their husbands, they are doing it by faith in Christ, who is the head of the husband. So, what is the opposite of receiving? You would say giving, right? In the application of this, the opposite of receiving is not giving; in terms of the wife receiving from the husband, the opposite would be to be self-sufficient, to be independent. Okay? And this is the temptation of women. They want to be their own selves, they want to have their own identity. They want to have their own name. A lot of people—You see this happening more and more now in society. Retain their own name, have their own job, career, have their own bank account, have their own whatever it is, that is the big temptation, okay? An example of this, when you think about this, it's something I think everybody can identify with, whether you're married or not. You've heard the scenario: if a man and wife get into a fight who winds up on the sofa? the man does, right? He ends up in the proverbial dog house because the wife's temptation is to refuse affection when she's upset. When she's dissatisfied, she would then reject the husband, right?



That's the role, that's the thing. She's the one that would do that, rather than the husband. He doesn't say, "Okay, you're going in the doghouse today." It's the other way around. So, the reason though, why marriage is a beautiful and even functional arrangement is because the wife wasn't sold, she wasn't conquered, she wasn't a slave, she wasn't any of those things; she chose him. The man extended the invitation, he did the proposal, and she accepted it, she received it. See, it's totally different from the way the world sees it. This is the way we see it play out in Christ and the church. So, ladies when you submit to your husbands as unto the Lord, you're submitting to Christ. And, the world sees the church in you. So, then, the wife preaches the Gospel. Now, husbands, it's your turn. Ephesians, five, twenty-three says:

Ephesians 5:23 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.

Now, when we talk about being the head, it seems like the glamorous position; Hey, we want to have the power, we want to have the authority. Actually, if you look again in application: He is the head, but, he's also, in application, he is in the role of the giver. And that's why it says in Ephesians, five, twenty-five:

Ephesians 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;*

If you look at the word, 'gave,' in this application, I've heard from people who speak Greek, or write Greek, or read Greek; you know, they understand it that this really translates well as, 'He gave up himself.' So, Christ gave up himself for the church. So, husbands, then, are charged to love. If you notice, it says, "Husbands, Love your wives." "Wives submit," so wives, actually, are never told to love. It may seem like an odd thing in a marriage, you have two people married, but only one person is supposed to love the other is not. I'm just breaking it down. That doesn't mean that she doesn't, in terms of the word, and one, if you understand in the sense of giving, the one is told to be the one who gives of himself. He is told to love in the sense of, as Christ loved, which is to sacrifice, it's sacrificial love, that's his job primarily. Nothing defines love more divinely than Christ sacrificing Himself for the church. To define submission, divinely, then is the church's dependence on Christ. So, when the husband sacrifices himself, when he loves by giving of himself to his wife, his wife, then, is to receive the offering, his offering, as sufficient for her. And, we see again, this is definitely portraying Christ and the church; Christ, our offering; He gave Himself so that we could receive that offering as being sufficient for us. Now, if you know something about the offerings of the Old Testament, and I'm sure some of you do, anyone that was a sinner would just be anybody who was part of the children of Israel, they were all sinners, they would bring their offering and, when they would bring their offering, the priest, through reverence to God, would examine the offering, and if the offering was accepted, then the sinner was accepted on the merit of the offering. So, the sinner was still a sinner, but then he became accepted before God's eyes because of the merit of the offering. The offering was considered good for an offering, it was acceptable. It had to be without spot, wrinkle, or blemish. In the same sense, the wife is accepted in God's eyes. That's why it goes on, if you read the rest of Ephesians five, it says that he, the man, can present her, the wife, without spot, wrinkle, or blemish. It says the church is presented without spot, wrinkle, or blemish.

So, what's the number one complaint of a wife of her husband? Usually, people say, "Because he doesn't do enough," Okay? He doesn't do enough. The number one complaint of a husband of his wife is, "She complains too much." So, the daily struggle is for the husband to withhold, and for the wife to murmur and complain, okay? It's the husband who should be giving of himself, sacrificing himself; the wife should be receiving. Now, talking about the husband as giving, what's the opposite of giving? Taking, think about it, taking. We look at Ezekiel, it talks about the role of a shepherd, if the shepherd isn't doing his job, it's because he's eating of the flock. He's now looking at the flock as a resource for himself, to feed to himself, okay? But that is not the role of the husband. When you talk about being the head, that's not the proper application. If he's starting to do that, taking advantage, if he's starting to exploit, subjugate his wife, if he's objectifying her; all of those things are totally outside of what the husband should be doing. When the husband does that, you start to see, or even when a man does that for any reason, we start to see why women want to find their own independence, and, obviously, these things happen a lot of times. We have the Harvey Weinstein's and so forth of this world. Then, if we examine Christ in His will, does He ever force... As we lead our life, in our walk, day to day, you know, we do wrong, we do right, but, you know, we're always sinners saved by grace, does Christ ever force himself on us? Does He abuse us? Does He manipulate us to get His will? Does He steal from us to get what He wants? None of those things. You know He loves us. Oh, how He loves us. So, 'husband,' that's related to the word husbandman. If you look in the verses, you see that a husbandman is someone who is charged with caring for a field, or a vineyard,

or a plot of land for the owner. So, a husband, he is a caregiver, he is a shepherd, he is a steward. He is not an ogre, or a miser, or a dictator. Talking about Noah, he became a husbandman, because he planted a field. Zechariah, it said he was a husbandman, because he was taught to keep cattle from his youth. So, men, husbandry, we live it as Christ loved the church, and your husbandry will preach Christ to the world. So, what does this look like from day to day? When we were contrary to God, when we were His enemies, when we opposed him, He loved us. First John, four, nineteen says:

1 John 4:19 *We love him, because he first loved us.*

So, husbands are first charged to love in any situation that lacks love. No matter how contrary our wives become, hypothetically speaking, of course, love as Christ loved us, while we were yet sinners. If your wife hides your golf clubs, when she hides the remote, when she throws out the golf clubs, you can't retaliate, you can't throw her whites in with the darks, you can't Saran-wrap the toilet seat, you can't do any of those things. You cannot retaliate. You must love her. You must pour in grace, an abundant grace, even mercy. I'll talk about forgiveness just for a moment. The disciples asked, how many times should we forgive? Should we forgive seventy times? And, as we know, seven is the number of completion or perfection, so seventy times would be like, is this every time? Every time? Is that how many times we forgive? And He said, "Not seventy times, but seventy times seven." So, yes, you forgive them every time. But you also forgive them completely every time. And that's the way we forgive.

Now, one of the greatest sources of pain in any relationship is division. You are one body. Try severing your arm from your body. You can pick the arm; just take the one that your least favorite, cut it off. The entire idea is contrary to our nature. It opposes our very thinking, it hurts to think about it. And, this is because division is very painful. A man, a friend of mine, asked me one time, "How is it that this love of my life can become this monster from hell?" because they were divorced, and that was what he asked, and I said, "Well, it's division. Division hurts. Division causes pain. Pain causes us to retaliate against that which we perceive as the source of our pain, and that creates greater animosity, which creates greater division, which creates greater pain, and it keeps cycling, cycling and division is brought greater and greater. And pretty soon, the love of our life, now is the image of all of our pain. We see this person, and we think that they are the reason that we have this pain. But, that really isn't that the case. The enemy isn't the person. The enemy is our inability to love, or our inability to communicate well. This will continue on until somebody says, "You know what? Christ loved me, and therefore I will love them." And that responsibility falls first to the husband. So, it's his job to first give up himself in that situation. And, that's why, you know, you talk about the head as being something that we look at as, "Oh, yes, I want to be the head," but it's actually very demanding. It really requires a lot, and it puts a lot of responsibility on the husband in a way that the world just doesn't perceive. And, when the husband loves first, what's the response to that begotten love? She loves him because he first loved her. That's what it says in John, four, nineteen. In this God is glorified. Others may see the loving, the husband loving, the wife receiving; seeing Christ and the church played out day after day after day. And, this is the purpose of marriage. So, what a blessing it would be if our children saw our marriage, and said, "You know, I want to accept Christ as my Savior." If others saw it, and said, "I want to have that kind of love." And that's the challenge, that we can live up to, that we can really fulfill it because we have God in us, that our marriage would preach Christ and the church to others, so that a family or friends or neighbors would look at us and say, "I want to make a covenant with Christ. I want to put on His name. I want to be buried in the likeness of His death, raised to walk in newness of life. I want to be married to Jesus Christ."