

INTRODUCTION.

THIS MORNING, ~ WE CONTINUE OUR LOOK AT Eph. 5:21 - 6:9, ~ believers' relationships in various settings.

▶▶ In verses 25-33, ~ which we'll look at today, ~ Paul spells out the God-given responsibilities of a husband in his relationship with his wife.

BEFORE WE LOOK AT THE DETAILS, ~ LET'S TAKE A VERY BRIEF OVERVIEW TO GET OUR bearings.

▶▶ Now, ~ obviously, ~ there is a lot of material here. ~~ But basically, ~ when we boil it all down here's what we see.

▷▷ First, ~ Paul begins with the command to husbands to love our wives. ~~ Next, ~ he shows us two ways we are to do that. ~~ He then summarizes and concludes his instructions to husbands and wives.

OK, ~ VERSE 25a.

"HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES."

▶▶ Notice, ~ as in the case for wives, ~ this is a command. ~~ This is not something optional. ~~ Paul is not saying, ~ "Husbands, ~ if you feel like it, ~ love your wives." ~~ God's . . . .

▶▶ Observe also, ~ there are no qualifications with this.

▷▷ Paul does not say, ~ "Husbands love your wives if they are X or if they do X."

▷▷ He does not say, ~ "Husbands love your wives unless . . . ."

▷▷ No, ~ it's "Husbands, love your wives ~ PERIOD!" ~~ Unconditionally.

▶▶ And we should note that the verb form Paul uses is telling husbands to continually love our wives unconditionally.

▶▶ We should also make note here that in vv. 25-33, ~ Paul tells husbands three times to love our wives. ~~ God's message to husbands is loud and clear. ~~ He doesn't want us to miss this.

▷▷ The Holy Spirit is shouting at husbands, ~ "Guys, ~ this is extremely important, ~ love your wives." ⇓⇓ 1/8

**IN VERSE 25b, ~ PAUL EXPLAINS THE FIRST WAY WE ARE TO LOVE OUR WIVES.**

"AS CHRIST LOVED THE CHURCH."

▶▶ This is a specific application of Jesus' general command to all believers.

▷▷ E.g., ~ Jn. 15:12, ~ "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

▶▶ Here Paul applies it to husbands. ~~ Jesus is the model for how we are to love wives.

▶▶ So my fellow husbands, ~ we are to love our wives as much as Jesus loved the church.

**IN VERSE 25c, ~ PAUL EXPLAINS HOW JESUS LOVED THE CHURCH.**

HE "GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR HER." ~~ HE SACRIFICED HIS LIFE FOR US ON THE CROSS.

▶▶ In Jn. 15:13, ~ Jesus said, ~ "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

▷▷ He called us His friends ~ and loved us so much that He willingly and unselfishly sacrificed Himself for us on the cross. ~~ The cross reveals the depth of Jesus' love.

▶▶ And we, ~ husbands, ~ are to have that kind of love, ~ Christ-like love, ~ i.e., ~ selfless, ~ sacrificial love, ~ for our wives.

▷▷ Our love for them is to be marked by giving, ~ not getting.

**IN VERSES 26-27 PAUL INSERTS A PARENTHETICAL COMMENT, ~ IN WHICH HE SPECIFIES TWO PURPOSES FOR WHICH JESUS DIED.**

1<sup>st</sup>, ~ VERSE 26, ~ JESUS GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR THE CHURCH IN ORDER "THAT HE might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word."

▶▶ The phrase "having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word" is simply a poetic and very vivid way of referring to the gospel.

▶▶ Jesus gave Himself up to cleanse the people who would make up the church from their sin and to set them apart as God's special people.

▷▷ This cleansing and setting apart takes place when a person hears the gospel, ~ believes it, ~ and is born again. **⇓⇓ 2/8**

▶▶ This is the first stage of our salvation. ~ Jesus has saved believers from sin and death and clothed us in His righteousness and set us apart as His special people.

## THE SECOND PURPOSE, ~ VERSE 27.

▶▶ Jesus sacrificed Himself for us "so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish."

▷▷ I.e., ~ Jesus sacrificed Himself to that the church could be pure and without a single fault or flaw, ~ with no evil or sin or any other wrong thing in it.

▶▶ This points to the final stage of our salvation, ~ which happens when Jesus returns.

▷▷ As Paul says in Phil. 3:21, ~ when Jesus returns He "will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself."

▶▶ Just think, ~ my brothers and sisters in Christ, ~ there is coming a day ~ and an eternity to follow ~ when we will be totally holy and perfect.

▷▷ There will be no sin nature, ~ sin, ~ evil, ~ or any other wrong thing within us. ~ Our days of sinning will be over.

▷▷ And we will live on a new earth in a new universe totally cleansed of the curse and in which righteousness dwells.

↪↪ As Peter says in 2 Pet. 3:13, ~ "But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

## NOW LETS' APPLY JESUS' PURPOSES TO PAUL'S INSTRUCTIONS TO HUSBANDS.

▶▶ Notice Jesus' motivation behind these two purposes.

▶▶ It was not what would benefit Him. ~ His motivation was what would benefit us.

▷▷ Likewise, ~ the motivation for everything a husband does in his marriage relationship should not be what would benefit him.

↪↪ It should be what would benefit his wife.

THEN IN VERSES 28-32, ~ PAUL GETS BACK ON TRACK AND SHOWS US A SECOND way we are to love our wives. ↯↯ 3/8

IN VERSE 28a, ~ PAUL SAYS, ~ "IN THE SAME WAY HUSBANDS SHOULD LOVE THEIR wives as their own bodies."

▶▶ The phrase "In the same way" is a forward-pointing reference, ~ even though it seems to be pointing backwards.

▶▶ The idea here is that husbands are to love their wives in the same way they love their own bodies.

PAUL WILL EXPLAIN WHAT HE MEANS BY THIS, ~ BUT FIRST, ~ IN VERSE 28b, ~ HE adds another parenthetical note.

▶▶ This one is some added information about loving our wives.

▷▷ "He who loves his wife loves himself."

▶▶ Though Paul does not spell it out, ~ we can surmise that he is basing this on the declaration that in marriage husband and wife are one flesh, ~ which he explicitly states in verse 31.

▷▷ So in verse 28b here, ~ Paul is saying since a man and his wife are now one, ~ a man who loves his wife with Christ-like love is actually showing love for himself.

↳↳ She is as much a part of him as his own flesh.

▶▶ But there's something else going on here as well.

▷▷ By loving his wife with Christ-like love, ~ a man is actually promoting his own welfare.

▷▷ Solomon expresses this concept in a general principle in Prov. 11:17. ~ "A man who is kind benefits himself, but a cruel man hurts himself."

↳↳ kindness benefits its giver, ~ because the kindness is returned by its recipients.

→→ Cruelty backfires, ~ harming its giver.

▷▷ So a husband benefits greatly when he loves his wife with Christ-like love.

↳↳ We mentioned one of those benefits last time.

→→ If love our wives with Christ-like love, ~ our wives will have no problem recognizing, ~ accepting, ~ and yielding to our authority and leadership. ↯↯ 4/8

NOW, ~ IN VERSE 29a, ~ PAUL GETS BACK ON TRACK AND EXPLAINS WHAT HE MEANS by saying "husbands should love their wives as their own bodies."

▶▶ "For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it."

▶▶ Although we can find exceptions to this, ~ the normal pattern is for a person to lovingly and tenderly care for their body.

▷▷ In fact, ~ people go to great effort to care for the needs and comforts of their own bodies.

▶▶ So when Paul tells husbands to love our wives in the same way we love our own bodies, ~ he is telling us to lovingly and tenderly care for our wives, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to give serious attention to ~ and go to great effort to provide for ~ their needs and comforts.

THEN IN VERSE 29b, ~ PAUL ONCE AGAIN SHOWS US THAT THE MODEL THAT husbands are to follow is Jesus.

▶▶ "just as Christ does the church."

▶▶ We husbands are to consider how Christ presently cares for his church and follow his lead.

▷▷ He lovingly and tenderly cares for his church.

▶▶ He also functions as the head of the church, ~ and exercises all the duties that headship demands.

▷▷ But He does it with loving grace, ~ never with threats or brutality.

▶▶ Let each husband, ~ then, ~ follow Jesus' example in leadership ~ and be wholehearted in lovingly and tenderly caring for our wives, ~ as Jesus is with the church.

IN VERSE 30, ~ PAUL GIVES THE REASON JESUS TAKES CARE OF THE CHURCH. ~ ~ "because we are members of his body."

▶▶ The reason that Jesus takes care of the church is because every believer is individually a member of his corporate body.

▶▶ Just as husbands and wives are one body, ~ with the husband as the head, ~ Jesus and the church are one body, ~ with Jesus as the head. ¶¶ 5/8

▶▶ Jesus loves and takes care of His own body. ~~ And therefore, ~ husbands are to do the same.

▶▶ Each husband is to love and care for his wife because she is a member of his body.

### THEN IN VERSE 31, ~ PAUL QUOTES GEN. 2:24.

▶▶ "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

▶▶ Now, ~ obviously, ~ this makes explicit what we've talked about this morning, ~ that the husband and wife are one body.

▶▶ Also, ~ this tells us that when God looks at a married couple, ~ He sees one person.

▶▶ And of course it reinforces Paul's command to love our wives as ourselves.

▶▶ But this is not primarily why Paul is quoting this verse. ~~ Context, ~ remember?

▷▷ This quote follows directly on the heels of Paul saying in [verse 30](#) that believers are members of Christ's body, ~ i.e., ~ that the church is the body of Christ.

↳↳ So Paul here in [vs. 31](#) is using [Gen. 2:24](#) primarily to point something out about that.

### IN VERSE 32, ~ PAUL TELLS US WHAT HE WAS POINTING OUT.

▶▶ "This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church."

▶▶ Now, ~ this verse is extremely difficult to understand.

▷▷ And when we encounter these extremely difficult verses, ~ we need to exercise great caution and extra humility in our interpretations; ~ ~ ¶¶

↳↳ and not be overly dogmatic when deciding on an interpretation or when accepting one interpretation over another. ~ ~ My take . . . .

▶▶ As we've noted in the past, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ in Scripture, ~ "mystery" refers in a general sense to God's gracious revelation to his people ~ of something hidden by Him in ages past ~ ¶¶

↳↳ that we could not possibly know unless He makes it known. ¶¶ 6/8

▶▶ In vs. 32, ~ Paul is saying that this important truth that husband & wife become one flesh contained a hidden important truth not revealed until now by the Holy Spirit through Paul.

▷▷ Namely that the marriage relationship was not speaking only of a husband and wife, ~ but also was referring to the relationship between Christ and the church.

↪↪ I.e., ~ marriage pictures an even greater union than husband and wife: ~~ the union between Christ and His people.

▷▷ So along with showing that husband and wife become one, ~ marriage illustrates the bond between believers and Jesus.

▶▶ We can also draw comparisons between the two unions: ~~ e.g., ~ Christ leads the church; ~ the man leads the marriage.

▷▷ The Church submits to Jesus; ~ the wife submits to her husband.

▶▶ And here, ~ I would suggest is the application to the marriage relationship.

▷▷ The union between Jesus and the church becomes the model for how a marriage should be.

↪↪ So it is incumbent upon every husband to study the Scriptures to see how Jesus is with the church and then apply it to his marriage relationship.

↪↪ And it is incumbent upon every wife to study the Bible to see how the church is to be with Jesus and then apply it to her marriage relationship.

### *IN VERSE 33, ~ PAUL CONCLUDES HIS DISCUSSION ON HUSBANDS AND WIVES.*

"HOWEVER, LET EACH ONE OF YOU LOVE HIS WIFE AS HIMSELF, AND LET THE WIFE see that she respects her husband."

▶▶ Just a quick technical note, ~ the Greek word for "However" is used here to summarize and conclude Paul's discussion on husbands and wives.

▷▷ Verse 33 could be paraphrased this way: ~~ ¶¶

↪↪ "To sum up, ~ let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."

▶▶ In his summary here in verse 33, ~ Paul has two commands, ~ one for the husband and one for the wife. ¶¶ 7/8

▷▷ Basically, ~ Paul repeats what he said earlier to husbands, ~ "let each one of you love his wife as himself."

▷▷ But for the wife, ~ he switches from the word "submit," ~ used in verses 22 & 24, ~ to the word "respects."

↪↪ The implication here is that that submission is the showing of respect.

### CONCLUSION.

IN CLOSING, ~ I WILL JUST SAY THIS.

▶▶ Rest assured, ~ when a husband and wife fulfill their biblical roles, ~ their marriage will function the way God intended, ~ and He will be honored and glorified.

▷▷ And both husband and wife will benefit greatly.

LET'S PRAY . . . . 8/8