

Sermon Supplement

Ephesians 5:21-33

A Walking Sermon

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

1. **Main Idea of the Passage:** Paul gives his readers a distinctively Christian vision for marriage, based not on the culture of the day, but on the gospel itself – on the relationship between Christ and his bride, the church. Husbands are called to love their wives in the way that Christ loved the church. Wives are called to recognize and follow the leadership their husbands provide, in the same way that the church does to Christ.
2. **Melodic Line of the Letter:** The two become one for His glory. God the Father, through God the Son, by the power and presence of God the Spirit, is making a multi-ethnic people for the purpose of His glory, based in his eternal plan, in this final age.

KEY WORDS

1. **Submit** (*hupotassō*) **vv. 21, 24** – to subject oneself in the sense of voluntarily yielding love; humbly putting oneself in a place to serve another; see also, 1 Cor. 16:16; 1 Pet. 5:5.
2. **Head** (*kephalē*) **v. 23** – a being of high status (of Christ in relation to the church and the universe, see Eph. 4:15, Col. 2:10); the Jesus-authorized calling of a husband to love his wife like Jesus would, sacrificial and loving leadership; see also, 1 Cor. 11:3.
3. **Mystery** (*mustērion*) **v. 32** – something that was at one time hidden, but now revealed by God; that which transcends normal understanding; see also, Eph. 1:9; 3:3ff; 6:19.

STRUCTURE/OUTLINE OF THE PASSAGE

1. Overview (v. 21)
2. Gospel Wives (vv. 22-24)
3. Gospel Husbands (vv. 25-33)
 - a. Love is the way to be a head (v. 25-27)
 - b. Union is the way to be a head (v. 28-32)
 - c. Summary statement (v. 33)

GOSPEL CENTRALITY

Christian marriage is a walking sermon of the gospel that has been described in Ephesians 1-3.

KNOWING AND BEING KNOWN

- How do you feel when the gospel is communicated through marriage imagery – specifically that Christ is our bridegroom and we, the church, both men and women, are his bride?
- For those who are married, how is this imagery of mutual submission (i.e. husbands like Christ and wives like the church) intersecting in your marriage?
- For those not married, how do you see marriages lived this way communicating the gospel?
- What has the Holy Spirit put on my heart to share in order to be known?

RESPONDING IN PRAYER

- Thank God that through the life and death of Christ He is making us holy and will one day present us to himself completely holy and blameless.
- Pray for the marriages in your group – that they would be a walking sermon that points to the gospel.
- Pray for the single people in your group – that they would be a reflection of the gospel in the roles God has given them.
- Pray that we would all walk in a manner worthy of our calling – in unity, holiness, love, light and wisdom.