

I. Intro

A. Text: **Eph. 5:15-27**

¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another in the fear of God. ²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 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. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. 5:15-27)

B. Series Recap

C. Historical/Cultural Setting: Ephesus was a port city on the West Coast of Asia Minor. It was considered to be the center of commerce for Rome and the entire international trading market of that day. The gateway of Asia, Ephesus housed an affluent, ... advanced population who had a knack for self-indulgence and self-pleasure.

1. The city was beautiful, but the moral character was downright ugly.
2. God decided to do a work in the middle of Ephesus. He decided to use the church in Ephesus to provoke the city to jealousy.
 - a. Church: Much of what God has planned to do in the earth, He decided to do it in and through his church.

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- b. Family: On a micro level, the family is the principal unit that God has ordained to display His glory throughout all the earth.
 - i. God used the family unit in Ephesus to introduce the self-pleasing Ephesian population to a greater love than self-love could ever imagine.
 - ii. God is still using the family unit today to provoke the self-pleasing world around us to receive a greater love than self-love could ever dream of.

II. Body

A. Grace-Filled Gospel (**Eph. 2:1-9**)

Grace: *God bending or stooping to show favor toward another who is inferior, unmerited favor, that which produces joy and delight, the inexhaustible resources of God that supplies our desperate need.*

- 1. You who were once dead in trespasses, He made alive.
 - a. We once conducted ourselves in a way that only pleased self.
- 2. But God... who is Rich in Mercy, Extravagant in Love, Excessive in Grace... (**Eph. 2:4**)
 - a. Poured Himself out for us. Poured Himself out on us.
 - i. Even though we were dead, He made us alive
 - b. Raised us up to sit with Him in heavenly places. (**Eph. 2:6**)
- 3. The rest of our time in this world, and all of the time in the worlds to come, the riches of His grace will be made known to the universe by what He's doing in and through us. (**Eph. 2:7**)

*That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (**Eph. 2:7**)*

- 4. We didn't earn His love, but He gave us that which we did not deserve.
 - a. For by grace are you saved through faith, and not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.

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5. We are the product of His grace-filled artistry, perfectly crafted to produce good works.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:10)

6. If we could just catch the Magnitude of this Grace Gift...
 - a. I wish that you knew the love of Christ which passes knowledge...
 - i. That you would experience the fullness of God.
(Eph. 3:19)
7. **Ch. 4:** Paul points to giftings in the church as the place to develop the fullness of God (glorious grace). (Eph. 4:13)

B. Grace-Filled Marriage

1. God's Lofty Call To Women (Eph. 5:22-24)

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 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. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (Eph. 5:22-24)

- a. Wives, submit to him like he's Jesus.
- b. **Problem:** He's clearly not Jesus (Sisters).
- c. He doesn't deserve my submission
- d. All likely true.
 - i. Yet God has never lowered His standards based on mankind's inability to reach the standard.
 - ii. He's never moved His standard based on the beneficiary's competence or lack thereof.
- e. God didn't instruct the wife to submit to the husband because he's more competent than her.
- f. God certainly didn't give this instruction because men are in any way superior to women.
- g. Not an issue of competency; but an issue of calling.

C. Husband's Challenge (**Eph. 5:25-27**)

*²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. (**Eph. 5:25-27**)*

1. Husbands, love her like you're Jesus
 - a. **Problem**: You're not Jesus (Brothers).
 - i. Only Jesus would put up with...

D. The Enemy's Tricks

1. "We're incompatible"
 - a. **Revelation**: If you do get married, you are going to marry someone that you are completely incompatible to!
2. "He/she isn't who I thought he was."
 - a. **Revelation**: If you do get married, you are going to marry someone who (upon further investigation) are not who you thought they were on the front end.
3. "I don't love him/her anymore"
 - a. **Revelation**: Love is a choice (best displayed by God's love for us)

E. **The Point of Transformation**

1. There is a point in marriage where we come to the realization that our spouses are not who we initially thought they were.
 - a. Disappointment, Disillusionment
2. There is a point where we realize that our spouses are incapable of meeting God's standard for marriage.
 - a. Frustration, anger

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3. There is ultimately a point where we come face to face with the fact that we too are completely incapable of meeting the standard.
 - a. That realization is either crippling or liberating (which is the point I want to rest on).

III. Marriage Is A Battlefield

A. ~~Marriage Made In Heaven~~

B. Battlefield

1. Lauryn Hill: Loving you is like a battle, and we both end up with scars.
 2. Francis Chan: Being in war together may be what keeps us from being at war with each other. Rather than neglecting the battle to focus on your marriage, maybe the best thing for your marriage is to enter the battlefield together.
- C. God knows our inability to meet His standard all too well. Yet He refuses to lower His standards.
1. **David Sliker**: Two ways to look at the impossible standard that God has called us to. (2014)
 - a. **Grace**: You've just been freely given millions of dollars.
 - i. Even though you haven't experienced all that entails yet.
 - b. **Works**: You've got to earn a million
- D. **Foolishness of Man**: We tend to set Biblical goals for our marriages based on **Eph. 5:22-33** without considering the means to reach the goal (**Eph. 5:15-21**).

¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (**Eph. 5:15-16**)

1. Be careful. Be wise. Redeem the time.
 - a. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days.

¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, (**Eph. 5:17-18**)

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2. Don't be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
 3. Don't be drunk with wine, but be filled!
 - a. What I want to do through you will require more power than you possess
 - i. It will impact more people than you ever imagined.
 - b. Anything (even the fruit of the spirit) can become a weight that crushes us if it's not empowered by the Holy Spirit.

E. Result of the Always being filled.

¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another in the fear of God. (Eph. 5:19-21)

1. A new culture of worship and surrender to God in the home.
 - a. Together → Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.
 - i. Communicate words of grace so sweet that it sounds like a symphony.
 - ii. Operate in a culture of submission to one another.
2. Wives, Submit to Him Like He's Jesus: Opportunity to cling to the leadership of Jesus in faith.

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 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. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (Eph. 5:22-24)

- a. Wives, this type of submission is more to Jesus than to your husband.
- b. But God is a good, good father. He's a perfect leader.

3. Husbands Love Like Jesus

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. 5:25-27)

- a. Husbands, this type of love is more a product of your love for Jesus than your love for her.
 - b. Entrusting you with your wife gives God the opportunity to display His glory through grace.
 - c. The Complaint: She doesn't deserve that type of love.
 - i. Will you redeem this time?
 - ii. Will you walk in my will for your wife's life?
4. Loving like Jesus, requires the super-natural filling of Holy Spirit.
- a. When we love, our motive is an immediate return on our investment.
 - b. When God loves, His motive is eternal return on His investment.

IV. Conclusion

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (Eph. 5:32)

- A. God is using the institution of marriage to further his story about Himself and His Bride: The Church.
 - 1. Humbling to think that God would use my marriage to help illustrate the story that He's been writing from eternity past: A story of forgiveness, love, grace, redemption and restoration.
 - 2. Also humbling to think that God has been using my marriage (with all the bumps and bruises) to do some of the washing.
 - a. That my faith surrender to Jesus in my marriage is shaping my wife for eternity.

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- i. When my weak love is met with the power of the One who spoke the worlds into existence, something explosive begins to take place in her.
 - b. That her faith surrender to Jesus in our marriage is doing something to me (and in me) for eternity.
 - i. When her flawed submission is met with the power of Holy Spirit, things begin to shift in me.
 - B. **Question in marriage:** Are you willing to surrender to Jesus in ways that your spouse doesn't deserve, in order to bring about a holiness in each other that would be impossible otherwise?