

Bible Study: Ephesians

(Part 4-Chapter 5:20-6:9)

by Gary T. Panell

Outline: In the first section we had the I. Wealth of the Believer (Doctrinal) in Chapters 1-3. Now we are in the second section of the outline, II Walk of the Believer (Practical) in Chapters 4-6:9.

Chapter 5:20-6:9

(5:20) ...giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ,

Paul mentions this often in his letters and that is because this is a mark of a truly born again believer, they are thankful! We have much to be thankful for! "...in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Thessalonians 5:18) The converse is also true, the unsaved are ungrateful: ".because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened." (Romans 1:21) We go to Him with thanksgiving in our hearts. "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise." (Psalm 100:4)

(5:21) ...submitting to one another in the fear of God.

Paul talks about submitting to one another first, before he talks about wives submitting to husbands. Sometimes we as husbands like to forget about this verse and go right to the next one, about the next verse we can say "amen brother," "preach it!" "But" it doesn't just say for wives to submit, it also says for husbands to submit! This is the only way a marriage will work, if both are submitted to the Lord and to each other. Someone has said that you can tell how mature a Christian is by how long it takes him or her to ask God for forgiveness when they sin. I would like to take it a step further, in marriage you can tell how far you have come in your relationship with the Lord and each other, by how long it takes to apologize to your spouse when you 'blow it.' We need to keep short accounts not only with God, but with each other. Of course, this applies not only to spouses, but others in the church as well.

As we "both" draw closer to the Lord we will also draw closer together. This takes humility on the part of both the husband and the wife. We just went to a fifty year anniversary of a Christian couple in our church, and this Sunday we will go to another one. My wife's aunt, a Christian lady married to a Christian gentleman, just had their sixty-fifth wedding anniversary also. If you were to ask anyone of these three couples, "Is it important for both in a marriage to submit to each other?" I'm sure you know what they would say. Of course, this verse applies to more than just married couples, but it is put in this section for a reason, it applies to the whole Church, we are to submit to one another.

(5:22) Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

Maybe in some countries submitting for wives may be an easy thing to do, but in our American culture this is not something that comes easily. We are living in a culture and a time, that says, "You have come

a long way baby!" Often this slogan is used to sell women something like cigarettes or something else. God wants the wives to have a full and wonderful life. Sometimes though, women think that God wants to rob them of their independence. This is not the case; God has your best interest at heart. When a wife is submitted to her husband, God can do marvelous things through that couple! I'm thinking of Christian couples that have been used mightily of the Lord, they were first and foremost in love with Jesus, and secondly they were submitting in love to each other.

Let's look at some other scriptures on this subject: "Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear." (By the way, this is not fear like we so often think of it, but a respect or reverence.) (1 Peter 3:1, 2)

The passage goes on with some great advice for wives here: "Do not let your adornment be merely outward-arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel-rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror." (1 Peter 3:3-6)

Notice it doesn't stop there with the wife and her responsibility, but it also goes on in these verses to speak about the husband and his responsibility. "Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered." (1 Peter 3:7)

Some would look at the phrase "as to the weaker vessel" as meaning inferior, this is not the case. What it is saying here is that the woman has been given by God a tenderness that the man so often lacks. We can run roughshod over our wives' feelings and not even realize it. God wants us to be more thoughtful than that, we are to understand them, and that is that they are created by God to be nurtured. So be thankful someone has some feelings in the two of you. This is a good thing husbands, and not a bad thing. We need some of that sometimes, and that is, especially in the way we treat our wives. We need to honor them as the verse says, and in this way she will also respect and obey us. Notice also, if you want your prayers answered men, I'm including myself, we need to treat them right.

Now wife you need to treat your husband as if he were the Lord Jesus Christ. That puts a whole new perspective on it doesn't it? The wife obeys because she is in obedience to Christ. As she does that, it is like showing she is a daughter of Sarah and the other holy women that have lived before us. It says much the same thing as this verse 22 in Colossians 3:18-19, "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord." Then it goes on to show how this will happen, and that is, if the husband will do his part and that is to "love" his wife: "Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them." What happens is that if we are bitter or upset with them it just makes it worse, that is like putting gas on the fire. If we as husbands, however, will just "love" our wives, there is no end to what God can do in and through our marriage!

We can show our wives we love them by doing tangible things such as helping with the children, doing some of household chores, getting flowers, listening to them when they want to talk, but we also need to show that we love them by hugs and words. There is no substitute for simply saying, "I love you!" They say the hardest words to say are: "I was wrong," but I would say that for men sometimes, "I love you" is also hard to say. Now I do not set myself up as an example when it comes to marriage, far from

it, we are all still learning, but I think I have come a long way in the area of saying, "I love you," and saying it often. I can't say that I was always good at that, and I can't say that I always truly meant it at times. We have had our ups and downs in marriage, but thank God for His help, without Him we would not have had the many years together that we have had. However, no one can say that they have arrived at a perfect marriage. I will say that when things are going well, it is probably the closest feeling to heaven on this earth! The book of Ruth in the Bible is a beautiful picture of what courting and marriage should be like. Also, just for sheer pleasure read the Book of Song of Solomon together out loud.

When I got back from Vietnam as a soldier I wanted so much to marry Marlene, but she seemed somehow withdraw from me, and I could not for the life of me understand why. So I asked her, she shocked me when she told me why. She explained, you have told me all the "practical reasons" why we should get married, but you haven't told me that you love me." I was so stunned, I was sure I had said it in letters, and other times.

The problem was I had not made it obvious, even though I felt tremendous love for Marlene in my heart; I had really not put those feelings into words. So that night I went home, through many tears, and thought about what she had said, she was right; I had mainly talked about the "practical reasons" for getting married. Then an idea came to me, I went and got some typing paper and some rocks. With these I formed a huge sign on her front yard, which read, "Marlene I LUV U!" Needless to say, she was really quite impressed, and as you guessed, it worked. Remember that saying, "Keep it simple, stupid!" Show her you love her, but also say it, and say it often, until you convince her you really mean it!!!

(5:23) For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

God is a God of order, and there is a "chain of command" like what is in the military. This does not mean that the husband is any better than the wife; it just means that after consulting the Lord and each other someone has to make the final decision. It is just like there is order in the Holy Trinity; there is the Father Son and the Holy Spirit. Does that mean that anyone is better than the other? Of course not, but there needs to be order. "Let all things be done decently and in order." (1 Corinthians 14:40)

(5:24) Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

You see there are two tracks, like train tracks going side by side in this world. One is the physical and the other is the spiritual. Christ is over the Church like the husband is supposed to be over his wife. Christ is the husband and the Church will be His wife throughout eternity, right now those who are born again are the Bride of Christ, as we will see in verse 32. Now since this is the case, for a wife to be subject to the husband is a beautiful picture of the Church being subject to Christ. In other words, we love this relationship we have with Christ, He is our Leader and Head and we love Him. So too, the wife should enjoy being obedient to the husband. Does that mean that she becomes a doormat to be walked on? No, husbands that are in love with Christ would never treat their wives with disrespect, just as Christ is our example and treats us in the Church with respect. We love to serve and obey Him in return. "So Samuel said; 'Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD?'" Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams." (1 Samuel 15:22)

There are Christian wives that do not show respect to the husband as their head and this is not of God. It offends not only the husband but the angels that are looking on as well. "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels." (1 Corinthians 11:8-10) (We have a study on this section of [1 Corinthians](#) that goes into more detail.)

(5:25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

We have spoken of what the Church is before, so I won't belabor the fact, but I would like to give to you: "The Apostles' Creed," and it goes like this: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into [Hades]. The third day He arose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, whence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy *[Catholic Church](#), the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen. *The word "catholic" refers not to the Roman Catholic Church, but to the universal church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Church is the Body of Christ, and it should agree upon these basic doctrines of the word of God. It is not any one denomination, but all born again believers, from the day of Pentecost, until the rapture of the Church, who belong to this body. "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-whether Jews or Greeks (Gentiles), whether slaves or free-and have all been made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:13)

You see we are to love our wives as Christ did the Church. We are to dedicate our lives to their cause as He did for us and our salvation. One of the best things we can do for our wives, to let them know we love them, is to assure them by our actions that they are safe with us. That they can trust us to always love them. There is no greater security you can give your wife than to let her know that you will always love her, and her alone! The world knows nothing of this kind of love, and it is from God alone, agape love!

This is a tall order for us as husbands because we love the conquest, but let us make our conquest to have the best marriage that has ever been. Think about King David and how he must have made his first wives feel when he went after Bathsheba. Think about King Solomon, David's son, how wonderful it would have been if he had not married anyone else except the wife he speaks of in the Song of Solomon. What a love story for believers and the world to emulate if he had stuck to this one wife. History would have been rewritten!

In between the ages of 35 and 64 there are some real temptations for men. I personally can attest to this, because my marriage was almost cut short by my thinking about someone other than my wife. I knew better, but walked away from the Lord during this short time period. I know the temptations first hand. Thank God, people were praying for Marlene and I, and we were able with God's help, to renew our commitment to the Lord and to each other.

Face Marriage Problems: "This can be a dangerous period for marriages (between the ages of 35-64). In the later years of middle age, established family patterns are often broken by divorce and remarriage.

Even people who may have seemed comfortable with their relationship sometimes overturn everything for what seems to be a newer, more exciting change. This problem is increased by the lowering moral standards in society at large and the pressure to conform." (Understanding People, Evangelical Training Association) "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are my friends if you do whatever I command you." (John 15:12-14)

If there has been divorce and remarriage in your life, Christ wants you to start where you are, and go on with your life, you cannot go back and undo what has been done, but you can go forward with God's help! That means if you are not saved, you need to receive Christ as your personal Savior right here and now. Just stop right here, say God, I have blown it in the past, but right now I confess my sins to You, and I want You to save me. I know I am a sinner, and I believe that Jesus died on the cross in my place, thank you for saving me, in Jesus name amen. Now make a Christian marriage for your wife and family. Read your Bible and pray every day. Go to Church every Lord's Day and put Him first in your home!

(5:26) that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

"How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. (Psalm 119:9) This applies for a young woman as well, and us older ones as well, of course. What God is saying is that when we read His word the Bible, it is like water that cleanses us from sin. When the Jewish nation had its tabernacle or temple the priests had to go to the altar of sacrifice first, but after this they had to go to the brazen bowl of water to be cleansed. The altar of sacrifice is a picture of the cross and of salvation, but the brazen laver is a picture of continual cleansing.

"But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. That having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus 2:4-7)

After they had sacrificed the priests would go to the Brazen Laver to get cleaned up. Here they could see their reflection in the water and also they could see their reflection in the polished bronze. The large "bowl" that they put the water into to wash themselves, was made out of the women's mirrors. Yes, in those days women liked to look nice too, and they had learned how to make mirrors out of polished brass. When we were in the military we had to spend some time polishing our brass, and when we did it just right, we could see our reflection in it. Well, this is what the brazen laver was made out of, the women's mirrors. "He made the laver of bronze and its base of bronze, from the bronze mirrors of the serving women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting." (Exodus 38:8)

The point of all this is that when we go to the word of God each day to read and study it we should see our flaws, just like when we go to the mirror each day to get cleaned up and presentable for the public. So too, we want to be presentable to God and to our fellow man spiritually. James makes this point as well, "For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does." (James 1:23-25)

So we need to read God word morning and evening to live lives pleasing to the Lord. (Many Bibles have a daily Bible reading chart, but if yours does not have one, we have one on this site as part of our literature. Ours is actually a two year meditation chart. The reason for this is because some of us are reading the Bible through very fast each year, but the scripture actually asks us to meditate on it morning and night.) "This Book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." (Joshua 1:8)

Some Christians teach that all this passage is saying is that we will miraculously be changed as we are going up to heaven in the "Rapture" of the Church. I agree with this to a point, but I really think this verse 26 of chapter 5 of Ephesians is speaking of what God wants us to be like before He returns for us as His Bride. God the Father wants us to be a pure Bride for His Son. "For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (2 Corinthians 11:2)

For a Jew to be betrothed would be almost the same as being married, even though the marriage had not been consummated. So it is with us in the Church, we have not come into the full intimate relation with Christ, as we will have in heaven, but we are promised to Him now. God wants us to be faithful to Him in all our actions. As we read His love letter to us, the Bible, we find what He wants us to be like, and what to do while we are waiting for Him to return for us. One thing He wants especially is pure holy living. So as we read His love letter to us and we find some things in our lives that do not please Him, we need to confess this to Him. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

(5:27) 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.

Remember when you "fell in love" as we say, or maybe more correctly, came to love the one for us. There was something special about that relationship; we wanted to be with each other all the time. We wanted to communicate a lot. We hurt deeply when someone or something came in between us and our loved one. The Song of Solomon is a great book to read about this first love, but in the book of Revelation Jesus says something to His Church that is very important: "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lamp stand from its place-unless you repent." (Revelation 2:4-5)

Sometimes people misquote this verse 4, they say you have "lost" your first love, but it does not say that, it says "left" your first love. God wants all of us, and He is a jealous God, He will not be satisfied with less than all our love! If we you and I have "left" our first love, we can be assured He did not change, but we did. Also we can be assured that we can get this love back if we seek Him with all our heart and soul!

All the letters to the seven churches of Revelation have things Christ wants to say about this relationship He has with the Church on earth. He wants us to be like the church in Smyrna, which happens to be the persecuted church. No doubt it will take persecution for the Church to become holy. "Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God." (1 Peter 4:1) There is just something special about the Church when it is

going through persecution. There is something so Holy about it, not that we want Christians to suffer, but when we do suffer God does something special for the Church. My prayer though, is that we will not need persecution to live for the Lord the way we should!

(5:28-29) So husbands out to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

One of the ways we show love is through the sexual union and this is spoken of in more detail in verse 31. Paul says in another book: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit." (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8)

(5:30) For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

Because Paul is using this relationship of marriage to explain the relationship the Church has with Christ, he keeps going back and forth between the two. In 1 Corinthians there is such a beautiful illustration of the Church being like a body with different parts, the parts all working together and Christ being the Head as pointed out here. He by the Holy Spirit is also in every part like the blood and oxygen in our body flows to every part to keep it working. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all." (1 Corinthians 12:4-6)

"For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free-and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body?

If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'; nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.

And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually." (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)

You may wonder why I quoted this whole section, and by the way we have the 1 Corinthians Commentary that goes into every verse, but the reason I quoted it here is because this is about the Church, not just the gifts. Christians need to understand that God did not make a mistake when He planned and organized the Church. You may look at it and think what a mistake, look at all the denomination, etc. I agree there are a lot of them, and this has been emphasized a lot by the world. We are not to think of our denomination, though, as the only right one. I believe in spite of the differences we have a lot in common. We do have basic doctrines that we agree upon, and this is good, but I believe God is teaching us that there is more that He wants of the Church.

He wants us to understand that even though there are differences in the various denominations, if they are Christians that accept Jesus as Lord, we should love and accept them as part of the body of Christ! We do not have to understand on this side of "glory" what it is all about. We do need to accept each other since Christ has accepted us! I will be very frank with you, I am considered by some Christians to be extreme when I say these things. I have had people tell me that we have no business accepting those who claim Christianity if they are in such and such a church. For example, I hear very often on the radio, and elsewhere, that "right now" the Roman Catholic Church is the Great Harlot of Revelation. I do not agree with this teaching, and let me tell you why:

It is true that when the Church is raptured out to heaven there will be a one-world government, and a one-world religion, but the one-world religion will not just be made up of Roman Catholics that were not born again and left behind, it will be made up of all those in churches that did not know the Lord as their personal Savior! It will be made up of all false religions that do not accept our LORD Jesus Christ as the Holy Son of God. It will be an apostate church, made up of all the false religions of the world rolled into one! Some Christians believe that because the Roman Catholic Church has its embassies in every part of the world, it is the religious harlot of the book of Revelation now. Just like a Hermit Crab uses an empty shell, so the apostate church may very well use the shell of the Roman Catholic Church and other denominations' organization in the future.

They also say the Roman Catholic Church is this religious harlot and fits the description in Revelation because it has persecuted believers in other denominations in the past, and in some countries is still doing this today. As wrong as this is, and Pope John Paul the II also admitted as much about what happened in the Dark Ages, it still does not make the Roman Catholic Church "of today" the religious Mystery Babylon that Revelation speaks about.

I believe Christians who teach this view are sincere, but that they are misinformed. It may be popular in your church to say these things, but it is not supported by the word of God. Yes, there are things that we may agree are wrong in the Roman Catholic Church today, and in the past. There are also some teachings that go contrary to the word of God, some of these doctrines are ones that have been changed in the church in recent years, but that still is no grounds to call the Roman Catholic Church "today" the religious harlot of Revelation. They have unsaved people like any other denomination, but there are others that love the Lord Jesus Christ with all their hearts and they are brothers and sisters in Christ. We need to love and pray for those who are unsaved in the denominations other than our own. Even as we would hope they would do for us!

We could go into finger pointing at probably all the church denominations that there are today, or that have ever existed, and point out the flaws, and there are many I am sure. There have been many scandals as well, but that does not give us the right to condemn the whole denomination and everyone

it. We can point out the errors in scriptural doctrine in love, and encourage people to find a denomination or church that more correctly agrees with the word of God.

There are those born again Christians in some of these denominations that are going liberal, who think of themselves as missionaries to those unsaved in these churches. These believers find their fellowship in other churches though, so they don't become stagnant. This can become a risky business if you are not strong spiritually yourself, because you could become cold and dead spiritually. A better suggestion sometimes is for that church to break away from the liberal church and form one that is sound in the Lord, so that you do not compromise your stand on the word. Only God can give you wisdom in each situation today, where so many false things are being tolerated and accepted in the churches.

Every church has its problems and errors, none of us will be perfect until we get to heaven. But the point is we need each other in the body of Christ, even those who we disagree with doctrinally at times. If the church claims Jesus as Lord, then be careful calling them names. "Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:3) "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God." (1 John 4:15)

This may be hard for some Christians to understand because you have been brought up in primarily one church, so it is hard to accept Christians from other churches, but this is what God wants us to do. You will understand this more and more as we get into more persecution, which I believe, will come. Those who have experienced persecution in your country will, no doubt, testify to how God brings Christians together when there is this persecution. If you have not gotten on to our link Voice of the Martyrs, why not do this and you will see what I mean, all "born again" Christians working together.

(5:31) "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

I want to quote here a section from our 1 Corinthians study Part 2, chapter 7:

One could be married, though, and not fulfill the needs of the other, and then in effect it would be like they were not married, and result in lusting for others. This has been the downfall of countless marriages, Christian and unsaved alike! Paul is speaking here not only to the importance of love in marriage for the spouse, but also of the importance of sexual intercourse in marriage. The *NEW SPIRIT FILLED LIFE BIBLE*, has this comment on verses 3-4. Sexual intercourse is an intimate expression of affection between a husband and wife. The apostle underscores its importance in marriage by declaring that it is, in fact, a duty: a husband is to be available for his wife at her request, and a wife for her husband at his request.

The Bible calls sexual intimacy in marriage a privileged "MYSTERY" BY WHICH TWO PEOPLE, A MAN AND A WOMAN, BECOME ONE (Eph. 5:32; see Gen. 2:24). The privilege is abused when people who are not married to each other have intercourse (see 1 Cor. 5:1, 6:16); then the intended blessing becomes a cause of judgment (see Eph. 5:5,6).

Marriage is the only place that God has provided for sexual union. In that setting it becomes a powerful symbol of the love between Christ and the church, a pure sharing of joy and delight in one another that

is a gift from the hand God. Outside those boundaries, it is destructive (1 Corinthians. 6:15, 16; Proverbs. 5:3-11, 15-18). (Song of Solomon 7:1-9/Ephesians 5:21-23) L.C."

A husband and wife are to remember that they have agreed to submit themselves to each other in this marriage relationship. Without real "agape" love (this is God's love in us) we cannot do this. If we really love each other then sexual intercourse will be the climax of a wonderful time together. Some men think that the woman should just get in bed anytime he wants without him showing love to her. Paul is saying we will be showing loving affection for our spouse, and intern they will want to be intimate with us.

When a person is married he or she gives the keys to his or her body to their mate. This is the secret of successful sex in marriage. "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge." (Hebrews 13:4) Some Christians think that Psalm 51:5 is saying just the opposite, where it says, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me." But what this verse is talking about is that the "sin nature" is passed on to the child from the parents at the moment of conception. There is no contradiction here in Scripture, it does not say it is wrong in one place to have sex, and then in another it is ok. It does say sexual pleasure in marriage, between a man and a woman is honorable, and undefiled!

(5) Some Christians think that the only time a person should have sex in marriage is when they want children, Paul makes it perfectly clear this is not the case! You see "sex" is one of the strongest drives we have as humans. If this drive is not satisfied correctly we will try to satisfy it in wrong ways. I believe God gave men and women a strong desire for sex, so that they might be drawn to each other in a very strong way in marriage.

But Satan has used this desire to tempt men and women. That is why you see so much heartache when this urge is used wrongly, either outside marriage or in marriage. In marriage it is used wrongly by one or the other, or both looking at pornography to stimulate themselves. (Please read my article on Pornography, if you haven't already.)

The other point Paul is making is that the sex life of the Christian, in marriage, is a very important part of their spiritual lives as well. If we are not fulfilling each other's needs then Satan can use this to tempt us to sin, men and women I cannot emphasize too much the importance of this Scriptural principle. Many, many homes of the unsaved and Christians alike have been destroyed by Satan, because married couples' sex lives were not in order. This is really a travesty, because God intended just the opposite for us in marriage.

Think of it, God created this wonderful pleasure for us down here on this earth and; we cannot even think about what wonderful things He has in store for us in heaven! (See the article, [Will Heaven be One Eternal Church Service?](#)) "You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore." (Psalm 16:11) When I say this I am not advocating that we will have sex in heaven! I do not believe we will have sex in heaven, as some teach, but I am saying if God invented sex in marriage for our pleasure here on earth, what does He have planned for us in heaven? He has "spiritual" things beyond our wildest imaginations. "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven." (Matthew 22:30) Those that have been filled with the Spirit of God know a little bit of what this is about, Ephesians 5:18.

Paul does make a little exception to having sex all the time in marriage, and that would be for a short time, if they both agreed upon it, to spend more time in prayer and fasting. This was to be just a brief time, though, or else Satan could get a foot hold here. Then they are to come together again in sexual intercourse. Pastor Tim LaHaye has a wonderful book on this subject, it is called *The Act of Marriage*.

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

"In the case of the Church, there is a mystical union of Christ and the members of His body. The members differ widely; but under the Holy Spirit's power they grow into oneness, and thus God is glorified. In the family there is a similar union and it also glorifies God if the teachings of God's Word are followed. A God controlled and love-governed home is an ideal place to rear children." (J. Irvin Overholtzer)

(5:33) Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

If the husband loves his wife she will respect him for it. This is a wonderful thing when the home is functioning the way it is supposed to. There are so many dysfunctional homes today even among Christians, but there are reasons for this. The main reason for dysfunctional Christian homes is because they are not living by the principles that God has set down for the home. We have looked at some of them earlier in the chapter.

If the husband is the head of the home as he should be, he will be the priest of the home. In other words he will make sure he is a good example, and that includes taking the family to church regularly. Before my Dad was saved he sent us kids to Sunday School by ourselves. I can still remember the picture of Jesus on the wall and the nice songs, but I was not saved then. It was not until my Father was saved, and my Mom came back to the Lord, then we all went to church together and then it did make sense to me. Then I received Christ as My Savior and my sisters did as well. As a family we were baptized together.

"What we are in our own homes is what we really are. The Spirit-filled life will transform our homes. But the Word gives us instruction as to the home life, and we do need such instruction. This instruction does not deal with detail, but with the great abiding principles which under gird a Christian home. If these great principles are understood and followed, the details will be largely as they should." (J. Irving Overholtzer founder of *Child Evangelism Fellowship*) This leads us into the next chapter and the first part on children.

Chapter 6

(6:1) Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

If parents fulfill their responsibility as spiritual leaders of the home the children will naturally grow up to love and obey their parents, and love and serve the Lord. Now this does not happen automatically. A lot of prayer, sweat, and blood go into raising a family for the Lord! Someone says, "I wish children would come with an instruction book." In a sense they do come with an instruction manual, and that is the Bible. That does not mean that we will be perfect parents or that they will always be perfect children. Even if we could be perfect parents, which none of us are, there are those children, because of freewill, may chose to rebel. Look at God the Father's first two children Adam and Eve, they had their problems.

How about Adam and Eve's children, they certainly had their problems. Even some of the godliest men in scripture had rebellious children at times. Look at Samuel, David, and many more that we could mention, that had some children who did not follow the Lord.

So even though not every child will serve the Lord, even if we bring them up in the "fear" (reverence for the Lord), there is a very good possibility they will serve the Lord. This does not mean that they will not get away from the Lord for a time, but God has promises in the Bible for us as parents if we do our part. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6) Fathers God tells us what that means: "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up." (Deuteronomy 6:5-7)

This means that we are not to be silent about the things of God. If we love God, we will pass this on to our children every chance we get. I have heard of parents that say, "I don't want to influence my children one way or the other, I want them to make their own decisions about religion, and to express their real selves. A father mentioned this to a godly man when he was visiting with him in his home. The godly man said that is an interesting view point. He then took the father to see his garden; the man was shocked because the garden was all overgrown with weeds. The godly man said, "You see I want the ground to express itself for what it really is, and I don't want to interfere with it." The father got the point!

In Proverbs we are given several verses about raising children, and here is the answer I gave someone on our interactive Bible study:

Question: Spare the rod spoil the child, where is that in the Bible please? I am discussing 'discipline' with a professor.

"He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly." (Proverbs 13:24)

"Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him." (Proverbs 22:15)

"Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod, and deliver his soul from hell." (Proverbs 23:13-14)

I hope this helps, but let me also comment on these verses. I believe God is teaching about how to correct children in love. Yes, they do need discipline, but some Christians believe this can only be done by spanking. I do not believe this is what God is teaching with these verses, and if it is we are in trouble in Washington State because we can only spank children with our hands on the bottom, and this cannot leave marks that last, I believe more than 24 hours. In other words you cannot use a belt, branch, or other objects. The child cannot be hit anywhere except on the bottom.

I personally believe this is a reasonable law and we as parents, and grandparents need to follow the law of the land on this subject. Yes, we need to discipline them, but do it when we are not angry, and use wisdom and love. Putting a child in time out would fulfill the spirit of the law here. The point is to show direction, and show where the boundaries are so the children will show respect and follow our good

examples of behavior. We need to treat the children as God treats us, with love at all times, even when they disobey. As a father of three, two boys and a girl, and eight grandchildren, I would rather error on the side of love than on the side of discipline. There is, however, a healthy balance between correction and love, God alone can give us the wisdom we need for our own children!

"Parents must avoid falling into a pattern of physical threats, spanking, or isolation to control unwanted behavior. There is a difference between punishment and discipline. Punishment inflicts retribution and causes hurt, but discipline provides safety and control. Its purpose is to retrain. The key to discipline is consistency and reason. It is very important that the child develop the inner emotional security that consistent limits and reasonable discipline provide.

As parents, God has appointed you the primary source of protection and spiritual authority over your home and family. Begin by examining your own personal relationship with Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. Clean up the sin in your life. Read the Word of God and act on it. Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to fill you and flow through you to your child. (Dr. Ken Olson)

(6:2-3) "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

This, of course, is one of the Ten Commandments: "Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may be well with you." (Deuteronomy 5:16) "The birth and rearing of children is of supreme importance; and a home such as God's Word depicts will teach and require obedience based on "nurture," or patient, tender instruction of each child in the Word of God. This will naturally result in each child being brought to saving faith very early. Such children will "honor" their parents; and "admonition," or discipline, administered in the love of God will result in the development of sturdy faith and obedience in each child while still under the parental roof. With bodies, minds, and spirits trained for God, long life should be the natural and supernatural reward. (J. Irvin Overholtzer)

(6:4) And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

God wants us to go to heaven by families. That is why He says: "So they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.'" (Acts 16:31)

"The Apostle uses the mystery of the relation of Christ to His invisible Church as an illustration of the principles which should govern the home. These principles are: (1). Headship, involving responsibility as well as authority; (2). Love, the supreme requirement; (3). Unity, to see the family as a God-ordained unit; (4). Obedience, based on love and understanding; and, (5). Holiness, or high ethical and spiritual standards. Such a home will be a blessing to its members and to all who come under its influence. According to God's plan the Home is the most vital unit of society." (J. Irvin Overholtzer)

I have known of many children that receive the Lord when they are very young, if given an opportunity to do this. In fact about 90 percent of all Christians were saved when they were children. That is why Jesus instructed the disciples and us not to hold them back, but to encourage them to receive the Jesus as their Savior. "Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them,

'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.' And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them." (Mark 10:13-16)

We spent many years in Child Evangelism Fellowship here in the States and overseas in Trinidad and Tobago. We were able to see many children receive the Lord as their own personal Savior. In almost every case children want to believe in God and want Jesus to be their Savior, it is only adults that hinder them. Sometimes parents did not want their children hearing the truth. This is a very sad thing, and the parents will pay dearly in the future for this choice.

Also to hurt a child in any way is considered a very serious crime with the Lord. "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." (Luke 17:1-2) Parents who are drinking or doing drugs, these are harming children, and they will answer to God for this. Those that don't go to church and take their family with them are offending them.

"At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.'" (Matthew 18:1-3)

(6:5-6) Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,

This could apply to bosses or supervisors today in the work place. We need to obey our bosses even as Christians, now that does not mean to obey if they tell us something wrong to do. We do need to show them respect, and be very sincere. When I was in the military service, sometimes people would try to be friendly to the boss, not because they liked them, but because they wanted something in return. We are not to be this way on our jobs, but we should truly be their friend for the right reasons. Look at Joseph from the Old Testament for a good example of this, and look where it got him in the end, and what a wonderful testimony he was to the nation of Egypt and the world. Think about how you could win your unsaved boss or supervisor to the Lord, by your hard work and ethical behavior!

(6:7) ...with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men,

We want to do our job as if it were the Lord Jesus Christ as our boss, because we want to do it for Him. This makes the work so much better, I love working for the Lord!

(6:8) ...knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.

It is God who is going to reward us when we go to meet Him. He is noticing everything you do on your job! I have found that even if others don't notice my extra work, God does, and He rewards us often times even here and now.

(6:9) And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Christian bosses, you need to think of your employees as Christ would, and you are working for Him. How would you treat Him, and how does He treat you? What if it was an angel that was working for you and you didn't know it? "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels." (Hebrew 13:2) Remember, one day we all have to give account to our own "Boss" in heaven!

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