

CALL to PRAYER - How is your relationship with God? Pray for a closer walk with Christ.

Ephesians 5:30-33 - The Marital & Mystical Union

1 Cor. 13:12 – “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.” That verse is an apt description of what is before us in Ephesians. There is a fog to our faith that won’t be completely erased until eternity. Some things we just cannot fully understand here. And a mist surrounds a mystery in the revealed truth of our text today.

The last couple of weeks we have noted the application of our salvation to the institution of marriage. Marriage is a mystery in itself (it does seem hard to figure out). Sin set off a smoke bomb within marriage which makes finding each other increasingly difficult but losing each other very easy. Couples are ever groping through the smoke trying to make the relationship work. There is a definite mystery to marriage...but there is a greater mystery OF marriage. **Marriage is a motif** ...it is a pattern that is to be duplicated. Our marriages are a *TYPE* that should follow the *PROTOTYPE*. We are to reflect the original and not distort the original. The passage in Eph. 5:22-33 is applying a pattern to marriage of what is true & modeled in the *Ultimate Marriage*... The marriage between the Redeemer & His redeemed...the marriage between the Son of God and the bride that His Father picked out for Him.

The main focus of this passage is not on our relationships as husbands and wives, but on the relationship between Christ and His church. The aspects of Christian marriage ought to mimic what is true of Christ’s marriage. And EVERY aspect of marriage is applied (including the intimate parts). John Calvin commented about this text saying, “This is a remarkable passage on the mysterious intercourse which we have with Christ.” pg. 323 “**Mysterious Intercourse**” is not a common Christian cliché. A more common (comfortable) one is “Christianity is not a religion; it is a relationship.” This is true. Christianity **is** a relationship, but it is a close and intimate relationship like that between a man and his wife in the marital union. The marital act is a parable of the gospel. ^a
mysterious parable

The point of this passage is to point to the prototype of marriage as a pattern for your marriage. Our marital relationship ought to reflect (not distort) the original pattern. Both nature & scripture teach us about our relationships. Now you may be here today and are not married and so think, “This message is not for me...” But if you are part of Christ’s church then this message is for you for as a believer you are in a relationship with your Redeemer. Isaiah 54:5-6. This marital analogy informs us about the kind of close fellowship we are to have with our God. From the dawn of our creation to God’s institution of marriage we find illustrations that point to the kind of relationship God has initiated with the people He has saved and brought to Himself.

There is a vital and mystical union between Christ and His church. She was formed from His wounded side (while He “slept”) and she is “bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh.” Jesus came so she could exist, and she can only exist as a part of Him. She is part of His body and is joined to His body so closely that the church is actually called “The Body of Christ.” Jesus worked for

her, provided for her, and suffered for her so He could redeem her and marry her. And Jesus has so identifies Himself with His bride that He is incomplete without her. Eph. 1:22b-23

Christ can only be Christ if there is His church. She is His fullness, and He is her fruitfulness. (John 15:5) She can only be fruitful in union with Him and He can only be Christ in connection with her. The Redeemer & Savior must have someone to redeem & save. He has given her everything...including His name. She drops her old name and now calls herself by His name. She is "*Christian*" with no hyphen. But long before she left her old life, He left His. The Son left the Father above so He could be joined to His wife below. In response to this love she leaves her life below to be united with her Husband above.

The gospel message carries a marriage motif. A marriage is in the making. A place is being prepared and a glorious wedding supper is planned. Invitations are being sent out to the ends of the earth announcing the Royal Wedding of the universe. And the consummation of the ages will coincide with the union of Jesus Christ and His bride – the church. That marital ecstasy is what is waiting for us in eternity. Heaven is a honeymoon of eternal duration.

You see, there is a big picture that is presented in scripture. And marriage, along with the marital act, are part of the parable that shows forth the gospel. It is a big picture, but it is not clear picture. We see it through a glass darkly. It is a mystery and is surrounded in mystery ... but if you are engrafted into the church then you are included in this vital connection to Christ. So, let's squint our eyes and see what we can see as we peer into this foggy text.

- Eph. 5:30
 - The church is the body of Christ 5:23
 - The Head/Body analogy shows a pretty close connection.
 - That connection should spur great affection - 5:28-29
 - But that union is not the only connection a Christian has with Christ
- Eph. 5:31
 - The analogy changes from a *Head/Body* union to a *Husband/Wife* union
 - This verse is a quote from Gen. 2:24
 - In the creation account there is the forming of the woman out of man ^{Gen. 2:21-23} and the institution & consummation of marriage in the one flesh union ^{Gen. 2:24-25}
 - But his initial picture points to a bigger picture
- Eph. 5:32
 - The creation account is a parable of the gospel.
 - God gives The Man dominion and then gives Him a wife – Eph. 1:22-23
 - Marriage is a motif and even the marital act is acting out the gospel.
 - This is a mystery (5:32) but it is a mystery revealed in scripture
 - This is high & holy ground and we need to take our shoes off...
 - the Shekinah glory shrouds a complete and clear view
 - But the Genesis account does explain aspects of the gospel and Christ's relationship with His bride the church – 5:31-32
- Eve was formed from Adam's side while he slept – she was created from his body – out of his body
 - The church was formed from Christ's wounded side while He "slept"

- His side was opened after death – blood & water - John 19:34
- The church is formed from the broken body of Christ
- We are bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh
 - We celebrate this at the Lord’s Supper – “ *This is My body....*”
- Marriage brings in a new relationship
 - Eph. 5:31 / Gen. 2:24
 - There is a leaving of the father so there can be a cleaving to a wife
 - Jesus left the Father so He could be united to another
 - The eternal Son of God left heaven above and took on flesh so He could take a bride 1 Tim. 3:16
 - Jesus will forever be the GodMan
 - He was made like us to be one with us...forever!
- Marriage brings an intimate relationship
 - A one flesh union that is only to be shared with that person in covenant union.
 - The communion of the one flesh union is a reminder of the kind of relationship the church is to have with her Husband Jesus Christ exclusive
 - Eph. 5:31-32
 - This is a glorious mystery that brings hope - Col. 1:27
 - A “mysterious intercourse” and mystical union
 - The marital union is a foretaste of glory divine
 - The ecstasy in marital unity is a taste of eternity
 - Heaven is an eternal honeymoon of eternal duration
 - The eager anticipation people have before their wedding and wedding night should be the kind of hope and expectancy we should have for eternity.
 - Behold the Bridegroom cometh and the bride has made herself ready
 - Rev. 19:7-9
- Eph. 5:33
 - The main focus of this passage is on the mystery of the *mystical union* but there is application to the marital union & our marital communion
 - ***Love & Respect***
 - I want to make a further application to our cultural situation regarding marriage and the family
 - The fight against patriarchy is a fight against The Father and family.
 - The devil comes to steal, kill and destroy ^{John 10:10} – family in crosshairs
 - The war over the definition and institution of marriage is a war against the Maker of marriage. **Our culture hates the Creator**
 - The sexual revolution is deliberate distortion of the gospel. Heb. 13:4
 - God made the sexual union to enjoyed within marriage and it is a picture of the intimate covenant love of Christ toward us.
 - A philandering lust corrupts the message of Christ’s love.
 - The battles within our marriages mar the image of the original
 - Christian marriages should reflect, not distort, the picture of Christ’s marriage to His church
 - God invites you to a marriage and into an intimate and permanent relationship