

The Biblical Foundation of Marriage

Read Ephesians 5:20-33

I. Introduction: The Sacred Calling (*Vocatio*) of Marriage (Eph. 5:31)

- A. A call of responsibility
- B. A call to leave father and mother
- C. A call to join one's spouse
- D. A call to oneness
 - 1. Oneness in Christ: The mystery and ideal of marriage (Eph. 5:32)
 - 2. Oneness in intimacy
 - a. A spiritual, mental, emotional, physical union
 - b. A lifelong union between a man and a woman

II. The Calling of a Christian Wife: Reverential Submission (Eph. 5:22-24, 33)

- A. Rooted in biblical authority
 - 1. What is biblical authority?
 - 2. Why retain authority and headship in marriage?
- B. The essence of reverential submission
 - 1. Honor and faithfulness
 - 2. Love
 - a. Giving for your husband's welfare
 - b. Giving for your mutual relationship
 - c. Giving for Christ's sake
 - 3. Submission
 - a. Textual support
 - i. Because of the Christ-church model (Eph. 5:22-24)
 - ii. Because woman was made out of and for man (1 Cor.11:3,8,9; Gen.2:18)

- iii. Because man was created first and sin entered the world through woman (1 Tim. 2:12-14)
- iv. Because of titles given to man: head, guide, lord

- b. How this submission functions properly
 - i. It responds to your husband's authority, while retaining your equality in dignity and value
 - ii. It obeys your husband, not all men
 - iii. It places the Lord over your husband
 - iv. It is complete, heartfelt, voluntary, loving, tender and wise
 - v. It avoids both feminism and chauvinism

III. The Calling of a Christian Husband: Loving Headship (Eph. 5:25-29, 33)

A. How are we men to love our wives?

- 1. Absolutely (5:25)
- 2. Realistically (5:26)
- 3. Purposefully (5:27)
- 4. Sacrificially (5:28-29)
 - a. Providing, not neglecting
 - b. Nurturing, not abusing
 - c. Appreciating, not taking for granted

B. But what about our headship and authority?

- 1. Remember: equality except in authority
- 2. Complementary relationship, not superiority
- 3. Summary: Loving authority

IV. Concluding Needs

- A. The need for spiritual life
- B. The need for each spouse to care for his/her own calling and tasks
- C. The need for realistic expectations: the ideal and the sinful spouses
- D. The need for prayer: "Who is sufficient for these things?"