



**Gospel-Centered Families**

*Marriage Part 2: Gospel-Centered Roles*

Ephesians 5:22-33

How to Prepare

Begin preparing by reading the full passage a few times. Then answer the questions for yourself. Then think about how your Small Group might answer them. Try re-wording the questions to fit you and your Small Group. Don't feel tied down to the discussion guide, just be sure to discuss the main point of the text in your conversations.

Resources-

<https://learn.ligonier.org/devotionals/two-people-two-roles-april-2021>

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/male-and-female-he-created-them-in-the-image-of-god>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/complementarianism.html>

Sermon Outline:

Ephesians 5:22-33

1. Self-Sacrificial Desires Are Produced by the Gospel. Vv. 1-2
2. Self- Sacrificial Wives Love and Respect Their Husbands. Vv. 22-24, 33
3. Self-Sacrificial Husbands Love and Lead Their Wives. Vv. 25-33

**Ephesians 5:22-33**

**Marriage Like Christ and the Church**

22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.

24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,

27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;

29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church,

30 because we are members of His body.

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

32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.

# Discussion Questions

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**Ask a volunteer to read Ephesians 5:22-33.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Here is a question or two to help introduce the topic and jump-start discussion.

- 1. What was one thing that stood out to you from the sermon?**
- 2. What do you think was the main point or central message of the sermon/text?**

## **UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION**

These questions should help your Small Group dig deeper into the text and then apply it to your lives today.

- 3. What did this sermon teach you about God, about the gospel, or about yourself?**
- 4. Were there any particular scriptures, stories, or illustrations that resonated with you? Why?**
- 5. Were there any parts of the sermon that you found challenging, confusing, or that you'd like to understand better?**

**6. How was the biblical text connected to our lives today? Were those connections clear and helpful?**

**7. What are some of the key theological concepts or principles that were discussed in the sermon?**

**8. What was the most encouraging aspect of the sermon/text for you?**

**9. What was the most convicting aspect of the sermon/text for you?**

**10. What is one thing you feel prompted to do or learn more about as a result of this sermon/text?**

**Eph. 5:22–33** Wives and Husbands. The first example of general submission (v. 21) is illustrated as Paul exhorts wives to submit to their husbands (vv. 22–24, 33). Husbands, on the other hand, are not told to submit to their wives but to love them (vv. 25–33).

**Eph. 5:22** submit. Paul's first example of general submission from v. 21 is the right ordering of the marriage relationship (see also Col. 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1–7). The submission of wives is not like the obedience children owe parents, nor does this text command all women to submit to all men (to your own husbands, not to all husbands!). Both genders are equally created in God's image (Gen. 1:26–28) and heirs together of eternal life (Gal. 3:28–29). This submission is in deference to the ultimate leadership of the husband for the health and harmonious working of the marriage relationship.

**Eph. 5:23–24** the husband is the head of the wife. This is the grounds of the wife's submission to her husband and is modeled on Christ's headship over the church. Just as Christ's position as head of the church and its Savior does not vary from one culture to another, neither does the headship of a husband in relation to his wife and her duty to submit to her husband in everything. "Head" (Gk. *kephalē*) here clearly refers to a husband's authority over his wife and cannot mean "source," as some have argued. In fact, there is no sense in which husbands are the source of their wives either physically or spiritually. In addition, in over 50 examples of *kephalē* in ancient Greek literature, with the idea "person A is the head of person(s) B," person A has authority over person(s) B in every case (see also 1:22; Col. 2:10; see note on 1 Cor. 11:3).

**Eph. 5:25 love.** Paul now turns to the duty of husbands. He does not command the husband to submit to his wife but instead tells the husband that he must give himself up for her. Thus, husbands are to love their wives in a self-sacrificial manner, following the example of Christ, who "gave himself up for" the church in loving self-sacrifice. Clearly the biblical picture of a husband laying down his life for his wife is directly opposed to any kind of male tyranny or oppression. The husband is bound by love to ensure that his wife finds their marriage a source of rich fulfillment and joyful service to the Lord. Notably, Paul devotes three times more space to the husband's duty (nine verses) than to the wife's (three verses).

**Eph. 5:26–27** The focus in these verses is on Christ, for husbands do not "sanctify" their wives or "wash" them of their sins, though they are to do all in their power to promote their wives' holiness. Sanctify here means to consecrate into the Lord's service through cleansing. washing of water. This might be a reference to baptism, since it is common in the Bible to speak of invisible, spiritual things (in this case, spiritual cleansing) by pointing to an outward physical sign of them (see Rom. 6:3–4; and note on John 4:15).



## Commentary (from ESV Study Bible)

There may also be a link here to Ezek. 16:1–13, where the Lord washes infant Israel, raises her, and eventually elevates her to royalty and marries her, which would correspond to presenting the church to himself in splendor at his marriage supper (see also Ezek. 36:25; Rev. 19:7–9; 21:2, 9–11). without blemish. The church's utter holiness and moral perfection will be consummated in resurrection glory, but is derived from the consecrating sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

**Eph. 5:28–30** Paul reiterates a husband's calling to self-sacrificial love for his wife by comparing this love to regard for one's own body (their own bodies), himself, and his own flesh (vv. 28–29; see also v. 33) and then to Christ's love for his body. As vv. 29–30 make explicit, the "body" for which Christ sacrificed himself was not his own person but the "body" which is the church.

**Eph. 5:31** one flesh. The command for a husband to love his wife as he loves "his own flesh" (v. 29) originates in the creation reality that God joins husbands and wives together to "become one flesh." Paul's quotation is from Gen. 2:24, speaking of marriage before there was any sin in the world; see also Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:8; 1 Cor. 6:16.

**Eph. 5:32** By mystery Paul means the hidden plan of God that has come to fulfillment in Christ Jesus (see 1:9; 3:3–4, 9; and 6:19), thus his quotation about marriage from Genesis 2 (in Eph. 5:31) ties in to the relationship between Christ and his church. Paul's meaning is profound: he interprets the original creation of the husband-and-wife union as itself modeled on Christ's forthcoming union with the church as his "body" (see v. 23). Therefore, marriage from the beginning of creation (Genesis 1) was created by God to be a reflection of and patterned after Christ's relation to the church. Thus Paul's commands regarding the roles of husbands and wives do not merely reflect the culture of his day but present God's ideal for all marriages at all times, as exemplified by the relationship between the bride of Christ (the church) and Christ himself, the Son of God.