

Bible Basics Conference 2009: "Walk Worthy of the Calling!"

Part 12

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[00:00:00] Okay, if we can read these verses that are before us in Ephesians chapter 5 verse 22 to 33. Verse 22. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and he is the Savior of the body. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without [00:01:04] blemish. So ought men to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man has ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they too shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Nevertheless, let every one of you, in particularly, so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

[00:02:10] I would like to begin by going to the end of the last section. It doesn't mean I'm Irish, but I would like to begin with verse 32, because in this verse we are told that what we are going to speak about this afternoon is a great mystery.

Those of you who read through the New Testament will know only too well that there are a number of mysteries. I've counted about 18, and of those mysteries only two are designated as a great mystery. The other one is 1st Timothy 3, where it speaks of great is the mystery of godliness. God was [00:03:04] manifest in flesh. And here we find another great mystery, because what we are speaking about is Christ and the assembly. So we can see that this mystery is very important, because there are no greater thing in this world than the assembly, and there is no greater person in heaven than Christ. We sing the hymn 225, the Father's full delight is centered in the Son. We also read in Colossians, in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And so we would all agree that Christ is supreme in heaven. And on this earth there is a [00:04:01] vessel which is God's interest, and that is his assembly, that is beloved friends you and me. And because what we have in this marriage bond is a wonderful picture of Christ and the assembly, we know that as we learnt yesterday that the Church of God, although it was formed on the day of Pentecost, as we record in Acts 2, really the

Church of God, in the thoughts of God, began before the time was. We read in chapter 1, is it verse 3, that before the foundations of the world, the church was there. And it has ever been God's intention that there should be a company of people suitable to his beloved Son, to be with his beloved Son through all eternity. And every time there was a marriage in the Old Testament or in the New Testament, it pointed to that glorious day when the [00:05:05] Lord Jesus Christ will be married, united to his wife the bride. And therefore I believe that this is the one thing in which Satan, throughout the centuries, has attacked. He's attacked the idea that one man and one woman should live together, that one man and one woman should be married together. And in order to illustrate this, I picked up four points that will show some of the ways in which Satan is attacking marriage today. Right back in the very beginning, it didn't take Satan long to introduce that which was an attack on the very foundation that God had instituted. God made Adam and God made Eve. But when [00:06:01] Lamech came along in the fourth chapter of Genesis, it says he took for himself two wives. Now we might think that one wife is good, so two wives is a double blessing, but according to what we read in Genesis 1 and 2, God gave Adam a wife and man's ideas is we'll have more. And so we see that Lamech, on the line of Cain, takes for himself two wives. We're thankful that we live in a country which has outlawed the idea of having more than one wife. The second attack has come and we read of it in Genesis 19 and also in Romans chapter 1. And here is a subject which, to mention it, would be politically incorrect. In the world in which we live in, particularly this country, we are thankful there are some [00:07:01] countries in which you would be elected if you preach this, that what happened in Genesis 19, homosexuality is wrong. It is not something that should be named amongst the people of God. It is not something that should be named amongst the creation of God. It is an outlaw. It is something which Satan has introduced. And particularly if we want any information on this, if we look at the question of Sodom and Gomorrah, we read that they were sinners before the Lord. And again in Romans chapter 1, we read there, men with men work in that which is unseemly. Why did they do it? Because they did not like to contain God in their thoughts. And so we find that here is an attack of Satan on the marriage bond. Malachi 2 verse 16. The other attack that men have brought in, [00:08:03] very popular, is yes, we'll get married. But if things go wrong, we can always divorce. How often have we heard that said? If we make a mistake, sometimes along the line, we can make a divorce. Malachi 2 verse 16 says, God hates putting away. God hates divorce. And divorce is not an option for Christian marriages. Divorce should not be an option for marriage full stop. Because when God created man and woman, and when he brought them together, it was for life. The idea that you could change is against the Word of God. And then we come to 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 3. We've already mentioned this afternoon the question of fornication. Those verses in 1 Thessalonians 4 says, this is the [00:09:11] will of God that ye abstain from fornication. Not as the Gentiles which know not God. And we've had it already in this weekend, that there is a system of things in this world which is going on happily without God. We read about those that knew not God. And here there are some that are acting in their lives in a way which is not according to the will of God. And I want to make this statement. That all sexual intercourse between those that are unmarried is fornication. And is against the Word of God. And if we go in for things like that, we're doing something which will come under the judgment of God. And I quote one verse. [00:10:01] Hebrews 13. I'm going to read it.

Hebrews 13.4. Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled. But whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. And one thing that impressed me on reading the Old Testament, whenever there is a sin of fornication, it is not only a sin as we read in the New Testament against the body, but it's a sin against God. I quote to you the creation of Joseph when he was in Potiphar's house. And Potiphar's wife said, come lie with me. And Joseph said, how can I do this thing and sin against, not Potiphar, but against God? David, in Psalm 51, speaking about the [00:11:05] sin which he had committed with Bathsheba, he could utter these words. Against thee, against thee only have I sinned. And I believe

that Satan has introduced these ideas in order that he may ruin the thought that God had in the beginning of marriage. So the next point that I would like to bring out, going back a couple of verses, is in chapter, is in verse 31.

Verse 31, we have a quotation. And this is a rather remarkable quotation. Because it is recorded three times, or if we like, four times in the Scriptures. The first time it is recorded, it is the words of God himself, as recorded in Genesis [00:12:05] chapter 2. The second time it is recorded, it is recorded by the Lord himself, and that would be in Matthew 19, and the corresponding verses in Mark chapter 10.

And here we get those same Scriptures recorded by the Apostle Paul, led by the Holy Spirit. So I think that we can see, as it says, is it in Ecclesiastes, a threefold cord is not easily broken. And here we have this verse, with the stamp of authority of God, the stamp of authority of the Lord. And here, the stamp of authority of the Holy Spirit. And we have this little verse, should we say, which many years ago a Jewish rabbi wrote. The woman was made from Adam's [00:13:04] side, not from his head to rule over him, nor his feet to be trodden on by him, but from his side to be loved by him. And how true it is that this verse is applicable to Adam. And it's a good starting point to realize that our wives are not to be our heads, and we all see that as we come down these verses, and they're not to be trampled on. We will also pick up that, but they are to be at our sides, to be loved. Now another thing that is important, I feel, with this verse in, as it is recorded in Genesis chapter 2, here we have what I call the basis of all marriage. And you will notice, and even the youngest here will know, that chapter 2 comes before chapter 3. Elementary, but in chapter 3 we [00:14:06] have the fall of man, and in chapter 2 we have God's institution of marriage. And so you can see that marriage is not as a result of sin. Marriage is not something which God gave because man fell. Marriage is the divine order that God has instituted in creation. When we come down to this little verse here, we find there are three things in this verse, and I believe they are very important. I'm quoting from verse 31, and it says, for this cause shall a man leave his father and mother. I think it pre-supposed that we are talking about a man, we are not talking about a boy, we're not talking about someone who is immature, we're talking about someone who is mature and has the thinking of an adult, and also he [00:15:03] has the ability to leave his parents and to be with his wife. And you know when you leave your parents home, when you're living in your parents home, you are under the headship of your parents, you're under the headship of your father. We can see that even in our portion that is before us. And this person that leaves his father and his mother, he has to be of a mature age in order that he can maintain and support his wife. And so the scripture says we need to leave our father and mother and be joined unto his wife, or as the verse in Genesis says, and to cleave to his wife. What does it mean to cleave to one's wife? Well in 1 Corinthians 7 we read the verse as answer to a question yesterday. It says he that has a wife cares for her. He seeks how he might care for her. He [00:16:07] seeks how he might please her. And if we are going to fulfill these scriptures, as husbands we have to care for our wives. That is what is brought out in these verses. Not only do we have to care for them, but in verse 29 it says that we have to, no man has ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it. And that's what we have to do to our wives, nourish them and cherish them. And this is what this verse says. And finally of course they too shall be one flesh. And there we get the question of sexual intercourse which is allowed but only in that order. And we do find that there is this order given in these verses that the men of the world want to turn over and turn around. But it is very very [00:17:04] clear that we first of all we leave our father and our mother. We set up a home, we cleave to our wife, and then it is quite legitimate to be joined together and to be one flesh. And I'm going to go back to the beginning.

Verse 22. When I come to this junction I think it would be a good thing if all the husbands and all those here which anticipate that one day you will or would like to be husbands, that you leave the room. Because I have experienced that the husbands know very well verse 22 of Ephesians chapter 5. And I also know that [00:18:07] the same thing applies when we come to verse 25 that perhaps the wives should leave the room. Because here the Spirit of God is speaking to the wives. Before we come to that I'm just going to go back and tread into Jeff's portion. I believe there is something that will help us husbands to have wives that will submit to us. If you come back into verse 19 it says speaking to yourselves. In verse 20 it says giving thanks. And in verse 21 submitting yourselves. I think one of the great problems that we have as husbands is that we come home from work and we go in and the first thing that we want to do is to sit down. The [00:19:04] first thing that we want to do is to open the post or to check the emails. And our wife has probably been in the room in the house all day looking after the children and the first thing that she wants to do is to talk. What a good thing it is if we can sit down together and speak one to another. Here it is speaking to one another in Psalms, hymns, spiritual songs. I'm not suggesting that we go in and we we sing a psalm to our wives but the Psalms are Christian. The Psalms are experience. And we can sit down and we can speak about our experiences throughout that day. And we can speak about how the Lord has been with us and we can communicate one with another. And we can also give thanks. What a wonderful thing it is that as husband and wives you can give thanks for what the Lord has done for that day. And then we can submit to one another. And this is the [00:20:05] husbands as well as the wives as well as all of us has to have this spirit of being under being submitting to one another. And then you know it does actually say and here I speak direct to those that are wise or those that would would like to be or will be in the Lord's will. The actual word submit this is not what I've made up. This is what Strong's Concordance says. It means to obey. To be under obedience and to subdue. That's what the scripture says. And the challenge to you tonight, you this afternoon, is are you prepared to accept the teaching of scripture? It's not me. It's not the brethren. It's what the Word of God says. Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3 both gives us this text that we that [00:21:08] the wives should submit to their husbands. The second reason and this is a reason that I find to be very touching I'm sure it will touch each one of us is the example of our Lord Jesus. In Luke's Gospel chapter 2 verse 51 we read their words similar to this that the Lord Jesus having returned from Jerusalem he was subject unto his parents. What a tremendous statement. What a tremendous thing that the Lord of glory the creator of the universe was subject to his parents. Being subjective or being in subject does not in any way mean that you are inferior. We know that the Lord was far greater. He was the Son of God. He [00:22:05] was God himself and yet he was prepared to submit to his parents because he entered into that order. He entered into this world as a babe in Bethlehem and he grew up in that family and as such he was to submit to his parents. The same thing applies to us here. Having entered into marriage relationship with your husband it is duty bound upon you to obey these verses here and to submit to your husband. And the third reason and perhaps the most obvious reason why a wife should submit is because your husband loves you. And I was once speaking to a well-known brother and he said to me the trouble is with my wife she doesn't submit. And I thought I doesn't tell him the trouble is with you [00:23:04] is that you don't love. And if we are finding that our wives are not submitting perhaps we should try to love them even more. Now when we think of the the wife and the husband I'm sure there is aspects and there are spheres of work in which the wife is far better at doing than the husband. I'm sure there are things about the husband that he can do which are far better than the wife. But doesn't mean to say and I want to emphasize this that because the wife is submitting is that she is any inferior to the husband. It's remarkable to me that when we read of the birth of Moses in the second chapter of Exodus we read there of his birth and the emphasis is upon Jochebed Moses's mother. And there [00:24:04] it says she saw, she hid, she took, and she laid. And according to Exodus chapter 2 you would only think that Moses had a mother. There is no mention made of Amram. But when you

come into Acts chapter 7 where the Spirit of God is using Stephen to speak to the high priests he speaks of that same occasion and there he says Moses was nourished up in his father's house. As far as the public testimony is concerned the man is the head of the house and so Stephen mentions that it was his father's house. But I'll add something to these things which is even more beautiful and that is in Hebrews 11 that grand chapter of faith we read there by faith Moses was hid three months of his parents. What a [00:25:08] wonderful thing that both mother has their sphere of service the husband the father has his sphere of service and also faith both of them together in the bringing up of their children can exercise their faith. And we come to husband. It was always suggested that I would have ran out of time the time I got to the question of husbands so I will just touch this as we go down first of all scripture says and it's very clear that it says it you are the head the husband is the head of the wife not that you might like to be or that [00:26:03] you should be but you are the head and you cannot dodge your responsibility I speak to every husband here and to myself included I and you are the head we know that we are the head of the home and therefore just as Christ and in this little portion we read this expression both in relation to headship and in relation to love that we are the ones that have to be head and we have to love as Christ and as Christ is head of the church and as head of the church he directs the movement of the body and so we as husbands should direct we should steer as it were that the family and the what husband and the wife and any children that the Lord should give in a way which is pleasing to him but also I believe in the question of headship we should take the lead and you know here is a practical thing how often as husbands and wives do we wait for the [00:27:04] wife to take the lead especially if it's in a in the question of simply saying sorry and perhaps if we were to be more taking the lead what how better it would be and then of course husbands love your wives and here again we have such a very high thing to follow love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it we remember that the Lord Jesus in order that he might secure his church the proof of the Lord's love was that he died upon Calvary's cross and you know each one of us if we're really going to love our wives as he did we've got to be prepared to give for our wives one of the problems I think with a lot of us men is that we know more about our cars than we do our wives because our wives have different emotions and different [00:28:05] feelings and different times they will be acting in a different way and we need to understand it and if we really love our wives we will take these things into consideration we will love them even though they might be in a mood we've still got to love them even though they might be doing things that we wouldn't want them to do at 12 o'clock at night we've still got to love them we've got to care for them and we've also got to support them and it is even as Christ did for the church and I'm going to finish but in verse 2 to just to sum it up husbands are told to love their wives even as Christ gave himself and he gave himself for us what a wonderful thing that we love our wives but we only love our wives because Christ has given himself for us and here we've listed [00:29:02] this as a sacrifice of love and this took place in the past but now that he might sanctify it and cleanse it with the washing of the water by the word this is what is taking place at the present that as we are here today is it not as the Word of God comes into our lives and applies us and cleanses that verse in the psalm wherewith shall a young man cleanse his ways but by taking heed thereto according to thy word not only is there a service of love which is taking place today but there is a sacrifice of love which took place in the past and there is a satisfaction of love which we read in that he might present it to himself which is going to take place in the future what a wonderful day is to come when the Lord Jesus will have his bride at his side we can read about it in Revelation 21 we can also read about it in the very pages [00:30:02] that we've been looking at today at the end of chapter 3 of our Gospels unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages world without end amen and so this church this bride although it began at Pentecost we've already said in the thoughts of God it was being to be I gone eternity and that has been brought into a fruition in time in time through the death of Christ there has been drawing out of this world the Lord is a people for himself and in the future day there is to be that

marriage of the Lamb with his bride with his church and that will last into eternity