a. (28-30) As Their Own Bodies: We love our bodies like this: When hungry – we provide food; when cold – we provide warmth; and so on. Remember, husbands, God has placed us into a special one-flesh relationship with our wives. Therefore, as our wives have needs – we are to provide; if her life is threatened – we are to defend, even to the point of laying down our very own lives, even as we would for ourselves!

3: Deeply United

31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." **32** This is a profound mystery-- but I am talking about Christ and the church. **33** However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

- a. Christian Husbands and Christian Wives: Redeemed, forgiven, and holy in God's sight, having become one flesh, and deeply united with each other, may God continually enable us to actively give to our spouses, even as we give to ourselves, +love, +respect, +forgiveness, +encouragement, and +care!
- b. Christ and the Church: Christ is our head, we are His body; therefore,
 → He has made us holy, → He continues to nourish us with Word

and Sacrament, and +He will strengthen us to *daily apply* God's Word to our marriages!

Conclusion

Wives are to submit; husbands are to love. However, many take this negative attitude: I will submit as much as he loves OR I will love as much as she submits.

Dearly beloved, that attitude is not God's intention! Instead, God calls each person, blessed with His Spirit and His guidance, to do his or her own part – regardless of the other person. Doing so honors God and His Word! Here is a more practical reason: As Christian wives completely submit, so Christian husbands will be encouraged to completely love AND as Christian husbands completely love, so Christian wives will be encouraged to completely submit! May the Triune God transform every marriage into a Christ-centered Christian marriage! Amen!

A Standing Offer

Pastor would welcome the opportunity to help you with your marriage! Please contact him using the information in the block below.

Connect and Benefit

Website: <u>BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com</u>

Podcast: "Benefit from the Bible"

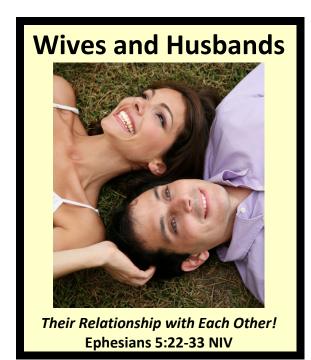
Facebook: "Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma"

Location: 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134

(South of Pleasant Valley)

PH; EM: 440-845-2230; pastor@blc7500.com

(Last Update: 1-15)



Introduction

Wives and Husbands – Their Relationship with Each Other! Is that important? Most definitely! Those with a good relationship rejoice in their bond of marriage, while those with a bad relationship usually choose the way of divorce – even though it shatters their lifelong vows!

Have you vowed to: ★live in holy marriage according to the Word of God, ★love, comfort, and honor each other, ★keep each other in sickness and in health, ★forsake all others, and ★remain as husband and wife as long as you both shall live? Those vows ARE based on God's Word, but are NOT easy to keep; therefore, God wants to help, guide, and bless every aspect of your marriage! Keep reading to reap the benefits!

For all who *are married, *will be married, or *have contact with people who are married, Ephesians 5:22-33 has blessed instructions. The overall passage lays out this important parallel:

As <u>Christ</u> loves the <u>church</u>
and the <u>church</u> submits to <u>Christ</u>,
so <u>husbands</u> are to love their <u>wives</u>
and wives are to submit to their husbands!

Furthermore, Paul is addressing Christian wives and Christian husbands. So what does it mean to be a Christian? Christians belong to Christ! They belong to Him because **†**He put on flesh and blood, **†**He lived a sinless life in their stead, and **†**He bore their sins and eternal punishment, thus He purchased them with His holy, precious blood! Christians know that Christ is +the resurrection and the life, +the only way to the Father, and +the One through whom they have been forgiven and set free. Therefore, filled with the Spirit and with joy, they desire to **†** live Christ-centered lives and +have Christ-centered marriages. To such people, God gives this instruction:

1: Wives → to Their Husbands

NIV Ephesians 5:22 "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything."

- a. (22) Not All Women to All Men: Paul is describing a God-pleasing relationship within a Christian marriage; therefore, he is not talking about how all women are to relate to all men, but only how each wife is to relate to her own husband.
- b. (23) God Has Placed One over Another: 1 Corinthians 11:3 has this order: God → Christ → man → woman. God wants all Christian husbands and wives to live in harmony; therefore, in His wisdom, He has placed the man over the woman. It's not that women are inferior to men, even as Christ is not inferior to God; instead, God wants us to understand and follow His ways, knowing they are always best!
- c. (24) Submission is Voluntary and Joyful: Think about how the church, (which includes only true believers) submits to Christ. The church does so voluntarily because it knows the ways of Christ are always best, and it does so joyfully because it is grateful for God's precious gifts of forgiveness,

life, and salvation! Therefore, "as the church submits to Christ, so also wives

should submit to their husbands in everything."

2: Husbands → to Their Wives

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church-- 30 for we are members of his body.

3. (25-27) As Christ Loved the Church: Husbands, next to God – whom we are called to love with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mk. 12:30) - we are to love our wives "as Christ loved the church." And how did Christ show His love for the church? By voluntarily becoming the "atoning sacrifice for our sins." (NIV 1 Jn. 4:10) By Jesus' saving work He made the church - which includes all true believers - holy, radiant, clean without any stain or wrinkle or blemish of sin! Jesus described His ultimate act of love when He said: "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." (NAS Jn. 15:13) As the church is the body of Christ, so Christ laid down His life for His body. Fellowhusbands, as Jesus laid down His life for us, so God calls us to show extraordinary love for our wives!