



10/21/25

Ephesians 5:22-33 used to be a passage read at almost every wedding. Its only rival was 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter. Now people try to pick some really interesting, unique passages. What's the most interesting passage you've heard read at a wedding?

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Ephesians 5:22-33 ~

"Then the Lord God said, 'It is NOT GOOD that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him...' And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man He made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.'" This is a beautiful picture of what God has done... man and woman together as one... but is it the whole picture? Did God just make woman so man would not be alone? Is the horizontal relationship between man and woman His whole goal for us? It's easy to think that. It's easy to make it all about me whether I'm thinking vertically with God or horizontally with man.

How many times have I seen in the movies someone say, "I want to be with you because YOU MAKE ME HAPPY. I like WHO I AM when I'm with you"? Who's at the center? ME. What happens on those days when I'm not happy? What happens when I don't like who I am? God's perspective for marriage or any relationship never centers on ME. It centers on a mutual relationship with the husband as the Head, but both being intentional in caring for the other. God made it this way because... Marriage is a model of Christ and the Church.

Before I start with vs. 22, I need to get a running start with vs. 18-21...

- Be filled with the Spirit... I am incapable of doing ANYTHING God calls me to do if I'm not continually being filled with the Spirit by first and foremost submitting to Him.*
- Address one another... all believers... in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with melody in your heart TO GOD... Again, I have to be vertical before the Lord before I*

can have healthy horizontal relationships with others, whether it be in marriage or any relationship.

- *Give thanks always and for everything TO GOD! I see a pattern here. God comes first.*
- *Submitting to ONE ANOTHER out of reverence FOR CHRIST... Because I worship Jesus, He calls me to humble myself before others and yes, submit to EACH OTHER. Before the husband is called to lead, he is called to submit... first to God, then to others. This means... give preference to others. Don't just fight for your own way. Be open to where the Lord wants to lead.*

Now... with this in mind, that the Lord comes first and all I do is for Him, let me see what Paul wants to teach me about marriage.

Vs. 22-24 ~ "Wives, submit to your own husbands, AS TO THE LORD." This is really important for me to see. Yes, I am called to submit to my husband's leadership... but I am not called to WORSHIP my husband. Anything that he asks me to do that does not align with God's word... that is sin... would be wrong for me to do.

Submission to my husband takes humility, but it does not mean that I'm inferior. Otherwise, Jesus would be inferior to the Father because He said that He submitted to the will of the Father.

Also... there is a much bigger picture here. This is not about my kingdom, my rights, and my concerns. This is about the relationship between Christ and the church... all believers. The husband models Christ and the wife models the church in how we relate to each other.

When Tim and I were first married, this was SO HARD for me! I fought against it! I believed God was calling me inferior by expecting me to submit to Tim. It has taken me YEARS to overcome this. The first step was in seeing that Jesus submits to the Father and He is not inferior. He is God. But that was only the first step. Renewing my mind has taken years... and God is still working on me. Pride gets in the way. That's why God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

I realize that before I can truly submit to my husband in a God honoring way, not being a peace-faker who just does what will avoid conflict... and not being a peace breaker who attacks (both are self-serving, not God honoring)... before I can submit "righteously", I have to start by submitting to the Lord. I have to say, "Not my will but Yours be done" no matter what His will is. His will is ultimately good and pleasing and perfect... even when His will is that I submit to my husband.

Vs. 25-30 ~ The wife is the model of the church, and the husband is the model of Christ. I used to avoid these verses so that I wouldn't point fingers at my husband about how he was failing in this. I don't know if that was good, but I do know I was missing something really

important here. These verses tell me so much about JESUS!

Before I get to that, let me pay attention to something very important. It does NOT say, "Husbands, make sure your wives are submitting to you and pummel them if they're not." And it does NOT say, "Wives, make sure you point out how your husband is failing you until he finally responds." We are responsible for our own behavior, not for the behavior of others. God is never conferring with us to examine our spouses and saying, "Yeah, you're right. Good catch. That has to change in the other one. But you're all good!!!" O Lord, please help me to get the log out of my own before I try to get the speck out of my husband's!

How does the husband model Jesus?

- He's called to love his wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her... sacrificially. One thing I know about God's love is that He does NOT center the world around me. Yes, His love is sacrificial, but His love is not enabling... making it easier for me to sin against Him. In fact, Jesus' purpose in loving sacrificially is...*
- That He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word... His love is not a pampering love, but a perfecting love. Just as I'd prefer the Lord to pamper me rather than perfect me... because that happens through suffering... I would also prefer that my husband just pamper me. But that's not what's best for me. Just as I'm called to submit to him AS TO THE LORD, He's called to love me AS THE LORD does.*
- Jesus sacrificially loved and cleansed the church that He might present us to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, SO THAT the church might be holy and without blemish... Clean... splendor... no spots... no wrinkles... without blemish. God wants my husband to pay for BOTOX and FACIALS! No... this is how the unblemished sacrificial lambs were described. God wants to make me holy, like Him. HOLINESS is what will make me beautiful, not outward appearance.*
- In the same way, husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife, loves himself... This will only happen as the husband continues to be filled with the Spirit... and even that transformation is "one degree of glory to the next" (2 Corinthians 3:18). Rather than focusing on whether or not my husband is doing this perfectly, let me focus on my own walk with the Lord... letting the Holy Spirit fill me... doing everything out of reverence for Christ, not trying to get my husband to worship ME. I will know if I'm truly worshiping the Lord when I don't choose how much I will submit to my husband according to how well he treats me... but according to how Jesus treated me when He laid down His life for me.*
- The husband is called to see the wife as part of his own body... to nourish and cherish her just as Jesus nourishes and cherishes the church. When any one of us as believers is hurt, Jesus feels it in His own body. Jesus said, "When you've done it unto one of the least of these My brothers and sisters, you've done it unto Me." Jesus takes it personally. He calls the husband to take it personally.*

Vs. 31-32 ~ Therefore, because we model Christ and the church, a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast... cling to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh" just as we are one with Jesus.

As no other person should come between my relationship with Jesus, no other relationship with any person... not my mom or dad, not my kids, not my grandkids, not my friends, not my boss... no other relationship should come between my husband and me. This is a profound mystery... that the husband and wife model the relationship between Christ and the church. It is only when I see marriage through that lens that I will be able to stop expecting my husband to behave a certain way... and that I will stop using the Bible as a weapon against him rather than as the love letter from God that it is.

Let me not miss this... All of these commands for the husband describe Jesus! I am part of His church, His body, His BRIDE! Tim is my rehearsal husband. I am preparing for a wedding day with Jesus, to live with Him forever. So... even for single women... a wedding is coming. I pray that we will all prepare for that day!

Jesus is the PERFECT husband!

Jesus...

- *Humbled Himself and sacrificed Himself for me.*
- *Jesus, who IS the word, cleansed me by the washing of water with the Word.*
- *Jesus is sanctifying me so that He can present me to Himself in splendor! He is taking away all my sinful spots and unholy blemishes.*
- *Jesus loves me as His own body... where He is the Head.*
- *Jesus nourishes and cherishes me.*

O Lord, please help me to be a faithful bride of Christ, submitting to You in everything I do... including how I treat my rehearsal husband.

Vs. 33 ~ If I only consider these verses horizontally between husband and wife, I will easily forget the eternal perspective... and probably focus more on my husband's behavior than my own... and give up when he doesn't meet MY requirements. Truly, I like the nourish and cherish part, but the sanctifying part? That might hurt.

If I only look at this passage vertically, I might ignore my husband altogether. That's not it either. As a model of Christ and the church, the husband is called to love his wife and the wife is called to respect her husband. It's never okay to say, "I love you but I don't like you." That gives me permission to dishonor the person. I need to always rely on the Lord, submit to Him, and do what God wants me to do... and then respect my husband for the position in which God has placed him.

O Lord, please fill me with Your Spirit. Help me to be humble before You. Help me to see and celebrate who Jesus is as my Head, Husband, and Savior. Help me to submit first to You so that I will submit to my husband without worshiping him. When I'm honoring him regardless of his behavior, and not giving up, I will know that I'm ultimately and genuinely submitting to You.

0/21/25