

Out of I-ness, Into We-ness—part 2, the Husband

Ephesians 5:21-33

October 19, 2025

DAY 1: Picture and principles of marriage

Ephesians 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

²² *Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do 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.*

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 their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—³⁰ for we are members of his body.*

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.*

1. Interwoven into this passage on marriage are two big ideas:

a. Gender specific roles that help a couple, over time, navigate how to build a marriage that has both strength and beauty to it, and

b. How Jesus’s relationship to both God and sinful mankind provide the metaphor for us living out these roles!

2. To begin this week, map out what Paul says in the following three categories:

a. What example and actions did Jesus provide to help us know how to navigate marriage?

b. What roles is a husband to play in building a marriage?

c. What roles is a wife to play in building a marriage?

2. What strikes you from today’s devotion?

DAY 2: Husband role #1, headship

Ephesians 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do 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.

1. Our secular culture is quick to mock any kind of authority, especially in the family.
2. It is easy to understand why. First, there is a long history, in every institution, business, school, government, and home of corrupting legitimate, God-given authority. Second, we all have a rebellious streak in us that hates the idea of anyone having authority over us.
3. But the headship Paul teaches us in this passage is **not** a corrupt headship. The model of headship is Jesus Christ being the head of the church.

4. What does it mean to be head? What does it mean to be head of your wife? How was Christ the head of the church?

Phil. 2:5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

5. What strikes you from this passage regarding Jesus as our head?

6. Rather than headship being about perks, power, prestige, and position, headship for Jesus meant service and sacrifice for those He loved.

7. More specifically, He saw our greatest, most dire need, and took the initiative to meet that need at the greatest possible cost to Himself!

8. That is the husband's model of headship!

9. What strikes you from today's devotion?

DAY 3: Headship explored

1. As we saw in Philippians 2:5-11 Jesus emptied Himself of His divine glory and took on the role of a servant. He laid aside all privileges, expectations, and the height of His position and took on the lowest of positions—servant.
2. He subordinated Himself, His rightful position for the lowest of positions.
3. He **voluntarily submitted Himself to God the Father's plan** of salvation for sinful mankind. Voluntary submission. It was not a duty God coerced from Jesus.
4. Here is the wondrous paradox! After Jesus subordinated Himself to His role in salvation and redemption, God exalted Him “to the highest place...”

1 Corinthians 11:3 But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, ' and the head of Christ is God.

5. The relationship of God the Father to God the Son is the pattern for relationship of husband to wife. Jesus submitted to the Father's headship freely, voluntarily, and with the intent to please the Father and further the Father's purpose in redeeming people. His was not a submission of being inferior, less than, or under coercion.

6. You rarely hear of the need for a husband to submit, but in order to faithfully function of the head at home, he must submit to Jesus, and roles Jesus has for him to play as husband!

7. We are meant to emulate Jesus' self-sacrificial, loving authority. (A wife is to take on a submission to Jesus that courageously and lovingly submits to her husband. More on that next week).

8. The roles that a husband is called upon to live out do not come naturally to him.

We are called to be servant-leaders.

Matt. 20:25 You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ²⁶ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. ”

9. Biblical leadership and authority is the antithesis of how the secular world sees leadership. The secular world puts the leader at the top of the pyramid, while Jesus puts a real leader at the bottom of an upside-down pyramid. He is to be the servant of everyone he leads!

10. What strikes you about headship?

DAY 4: Husband's tender love

Ephesians 5:28 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 their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—³⁰ for we are members of his body.

1. The illustration is that we men already “feed” and “care” for our own body with hardly a thought. And we do these things *daily*. We rarely miss a meal, rarely don’t get enough sleep, and do some kind of exercise for our long-term health.
2. That *daily* consistency of attention and care is the beginning of Paul’s point in these three verses.
3. Paul gives us two verbs to illustrate the kinds of love that we are to give our wives. What kind of “feed” and “care” are to give?
4. “Feed” – ἑκτρέφω (Gk.) to *rear up* to maturity, to *cherish* or *train*, nourish.
5. The Greek word means to nourish. It is used metaphorically to cherish, train, or to raise up. Paul’s use of this verb in the context of a husband’s love is to *nourish her soul or heart*. Some examples include affirming her strengths, expressing gratitude for who she is or what she does, sharing words that you appreciate her, or that you are glad to be her husband, etc.
6. “Care” – θαλπώ (Gk.), akin θάλλω (to warm); to *foster*, cherish.
7. The Greek verb is used warm something, like bread, to soften something hard, or to create warmth, like a fire. Used metaphorically, as in this passage, it means to touch the heart of your wife tenderly, softly, personally, etc.
8. I think of this as the “princess question” every wife quietly asks herself. “Does he still love me? Does he cherish me? Treasure me? Am I still a princess?”
9. This is largely communicated with how you look at her, smiling at her, being relaxed in her presence, enjoying her company, giving an affectionate hug, holding her hand, etc.
10. Putting sacrificial love with this kind of tender love is the point of Paul’s teaching to husbands! We are to reflect Jesus’ sacrificial love and His tender and personal love to our wives. We give our wife a taste of Jesus’ love for her.
11. What strikes you from today’s devotional?