

THE CHURCH --- THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

[BIBLE TEXT](#) : Ephesians 5:1-33

LESSON 403 **Senior Course**

MEMORY VERSE: "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (Ephesians 5:30).

[BIBLE TEXT in King James Version](#)

Ephesians 5:1-33

- 1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;
- 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.
- 3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;
- 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.
- 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.
- 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.
- 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.
- 8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light:
- 9 (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)
- 10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.
- 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*.
- 12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.
- 13 But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

[Bible References:](#)

I The Importance of Holy Living

1. We are exhorted to walk in love, Ephesians 5:1, 2;
Ephesians 4:1-4
 - 1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
 - 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;
 - 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
 - 4 *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*
2. We are warned against sinfulness, Ephesians 5:3-7.
3. The believer walks in the light, Ephesians 5:8-13;
1 John 1:7
 - 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.
4. The will of the Lord is to redeem the time, praise and worship God, Ephesians 5:14-21.

II The Church, the Body of Christ

1. The wife, in relation to her husband, is a type of the Church's relationship to Christ, Ephesians 5:22-24.
2. The husband is a type of Christ and His love for the Church, Ephesians 5:25.
3. Christ gave Himself for the Church that he might present it as a Bride unto himself, Ephesians 5:26, 27.
4. Men are taught to love their wives by Christ's love for His Church, Ephesians 5:28, 29.

III The Beauty and Wonder of the Bride of Christ

1. The Bride is united with Christ in a mystical body, unseen but real, and does His will, manifesting true Christian graces in everything, Ephesians 5:30;
Proverbs 31:10-31
 - 10 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price *is* far above rubies.
 - 11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.
 - 12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.
 - 13 She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.
 - 14 She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.
 - 15 She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.
 - 16 She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
 - 17 She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.
 - 18 She perceiveth that her merchandise *is* good: her candle goeth not out by night.
 - 19 She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.
 - 20 She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
 - 21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household *are* clothed with scarlet.
 - 22 She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing *is* silk and purple.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*.

18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 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 blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and

23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

24 She maketh fine linen, and selleth *it*; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

25 Strength and honour *are* her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue *is* the law of kindness.

27 She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband *also*, and he praiseth her.

29 Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

30 Favour *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain: *but* a woman *that* feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

2. As a woman forsakes all for her husband, so Christ's Bride leaves all to be joined to Christ, Ephesians 5:31, 32.

3. Earthly marital ties are deep and wonderful, Ephesians 5:33

Notes:

A Holy Life

The true Church, the Church of the Firstborn, is a mystical body. The church as it is known in its many physical forms in this world, bears little resemblance to the Church that we study about in the New Testament. Christ is the Head of the Church, and this means that the Church is subject to Him in all its teachings, plans, and policies. It is plain for all to see that all church members in this world are not subject to Christ in all they say, think, or do. This brings us to the conclusion that to be a member of the Church of Jesus Christ means much more than belonging to some earthly organisation. Earthly organisations fill their place, of course, but membership in the Church of the Firstborn is the all-important thing.

We are exhorted in this lesson to live a holy life. When the Christian loves God, reads and obeys God's Word, and has been redeemed from sin by the sinless One, Jesus Christ the Lord, he finds it natural to obey every precept that he finds in the Bible. Every exhortation to godliness he appreciates and clings to; and every warning against the dangers that he might encounter he gladly heeds, knowing that in following the Word of God he is proving the love he has in his heart for the Bride-groom of his soul. He is not serving God for reward, nor is he doing it out of fear of reprisal; but his service is a result of his love for Jesus who has done so much for him.

Warnings

There was a danger when Paul wrote this Epistle to the Ephesians that some of them might continue in the sinful, unclean ways of the unrighteous man and be deceived into believing that they had a part in the Kingdom of Christ anyway. He blasts this false conception by telling them: "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." That danger is still with us. In spite of the many warnings of the Scriptures, some people live in sin and call themselves Christians. This lesson enumerates many of the sins and says pointedly that they who do such things have no part in the Kingdom of Christ and of God.

The Christian has passed from under this terrible darkness and now walks in the glorious light of the Gospel. The things that once overcame him he now overcomes. The light of God's Word shows things to him now in a new way and he abhors every evil thing. He enjoys fellowship with God and with the people of God. He does

cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband.

not desire the fellowship and friendship of the world, for he knows these things will draw him away from his love for his Lord and Master.

Separation

The saint of God feels ashamed of the things that the worldly man delights in, for they are at variance with the spiritual life. The fact is that the Christian's love for God just naturally separates him from them who walk in darkness; his life and testimony are a reproof unto them. The man or woman, boy or girl, who has set himself to be ready for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is busy in the Lord's work. Things that others can do that seem necessary to them he sees as foolishness, for he expects his Lord to come for him soon. Others say that things continue as they were "since the fathers fell asleep" (II Peter 3:4). But the Bride of Christ is longing and praying for the hour to come when the Bridegroom will appear to take His Bride out of this world.

Preparedness

If we are going to be ready for Jesus' coming and be a member of the Bride of Christ, we must do more than know that He will come back to earth again. We must prepare for His return and keep in a state of preparedness. We are to be translated by faith, but we will never have such faith unless the Word of God has purified our lives. Without that purifying which comes through the Blood of Jesus and the Word, and without that hope of His soon coming in our heart, we will not have the faith to be translated — to lose gravitation and go up when Jesus comes.

This lesson is taught to us very plainly in the parable of the Ten Virgins in the 25th chapter of Matthew (Matthew 25:1-13). Five of the virgins were wise and five were foolish. The difference was that the wise had oil in their vessels with their lamps; and with their lamps trimmed and burning they went in to the marriage. The foolish virgins had been careless about keeping their supply of oil, and their lamps had gone out. The oil typifies the Spirit of God many places in the Scriptures. The foolish had not walked in the light to obtain the extra supply of oil needed, and had let that which they had leak out. The wise had availed themselves of the opportunity afforded to be filled with the Spirit. Having been baptised with the Holy Ghost, He, the Spirit of Truth, led them into all truth and showed them that their Lord would soon come.

They knew that the careless and indifferent would never be ready; and by watchfulness and prayer they had retained the Spirit upon their lives and were ready when the call came. But with the foolish this was not the case. Through carelessness and neglect their lamps had gone out and they were unprepared when the cry went forth, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." Just so will it be when the Bridegroom comes for His Bride. They who are ready will go in to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, and those who are left on the outside will be left to go through the terrible tribulation that will come upon this earth.

The Bride of Christ is espoused to Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom of her heart. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (Ephesians 5:30). Christ's purpose is that He might have "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27). He supplies the grace to prepare just such a Bride and to sustain her in this state in this present world. We overcome by the Blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony.

Every soul is responsible for walking in the light that has shined across his pathway. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). "And this is

the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5:4). It is impossible to have faith in God or in His promises unless one is walking in the light of the Word. If a person refuses any part of the light that comes to him, the light that is in him becomes darkness.

The Church of the Firstborn is made up of individuals and it can be holy and without blemish as each member of it is purified and made holy. If the members of this Church forget their vows and consecrations to Jesus, they will be tempted to go after "another" and will forget that their main purpose is to please the Lord and to prepare for the day when He will come back for His own.

Husbands and Wives

Husbands and wives are taught their obligations to each other through this lesson of Christ's love and relationship to His Church. Many troubles, heartbreaks, broken homes and divorces would be avoided if the husband and wife were members of the Church of which Christ is the Head. When the husband loves the wife as Christ loves the Church, he will not be the cause of trouble in that home. When the wife is subject to the husband as the Church is to Christ, her side of the marital relationship will make for peace and continuing love. If both husband and wife obey the Word of God and their attitudes toward each other are right, they fulfil the place that God ordained for them in having a happy spiritual relationship. Their children will rise up and call them blessed. Many times we have heard testimonies of the redeemed that gave a great deal of credit to Christian fathers and mothers for living before their children an example that made them want to follow in their parents' footsteps in serving the Lord.

Redeeming the Time

Christians have a great responsibility in the use of their time. Paul exhorts us to redeem the time, because the days are evil. We are to use our time to the best advantage in winning souls for the Kingdom. Many unimportant things come up that someone must do, but the Bride of Christ remembers that her first obligation is to obey the voice of the Master and go forth bearing precious seed. She must do this even though beset by trials and persecutions.

The Bride of Christ is the sorrowing Bride today. She is now bearing the cross. She is pure and holy, washed in the Blood, refined and tried as gold, willing, to be counted as the off-scouring of the earth and suffer reproach for His Name. Jesus was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and He will have a Bride to reign with Him who has first suffered with Him. We are living on the very eve of the coming of the Son of God. Soon our privilege of winning souls for Jesus will be past. Then how many will cry, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jeremiah 8:20)!

The more evil the time the more the Christian shines. The worse the day, the more dire the need for the Gospel of light. In Noah's day every thought and imagination of the hearts of the people was evil continually. But he condemned the world by believing God in the midst of all the evil. When the time for the flood came, Noah and his household rode on top of the flood, just as the Bride of Christ will rise above this old world in the Rapture. She will be at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb while the flood of God's indignation is being poured out on this world during the Great Tribulation. The most profitable way to redeem or use our time is to prepare for the Lord's coming and to help others to get ready also.

QUESTIONS

1. Who is the Head of the Church?
2. What kind of Church does Christ desire for Himself?
3. What love is the husband to have for the wife? With what is it compared?
4. What is the wife's attitude to be toward her husband?
5. What reason given in this lesson urges us to redeem the time?
6. What is our attitude to be toward works of darkness?
7. What are the things listed in this lesson that bar one from the Kingdom of Christ and bring the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience?
8. What will have to be the condition of the Church that is presented to Christ?
9. What are the conditions that keep the Church prepared for the Rapture?