

Pastor Richard Schwartz

“There Is No Other God But Christ: How Marriage Points to Christ and the Church”

Genesis 2:18-25 and Ephesians 5:22-33

**For Note-Takers: Underline any words or phrases which stand out to you. Circle words or phrases that you have a question about.**

### **Point #1**

God had given His complete Creation to Adam along with all of its perfection. Adam had every blessing that anyone could ever want. The world was beautiful and flawless. Adam had all the best food and had many types of animals for companions. Adam had work that was fulfilling and without sin or pain. But he was the only human person in existence in all the world. God said that there was one thing that was still not perfect in all His Creation: that Adam was alone.

### **Point #2**

Desiring to create a perfect helper for Adam, God put him into a deep sleep and removed one of Adam's ribs. Adam had been created from the dust of the earth and Eve would now be created from Adam. Eve was brought by God to Adam, and he was very happy to have a helper that was made specifically for him. Adam was no longer alone, and he named his helper after himself because she was created from his own flesh. The first marriage was born, and the first human fellowship was experienced by Adam and Eve.

### **Point #3**

The Word of God, addressing the relationship between husband and wife, commands wives to submit to their husbands. This submission of wife to husband is to be done as if her submission to him is submission to Jesus. As the wife struggles with sin and disobedience to the Word of God in her relationship with Christ, so she will struggle with sin and disobedience to the Word of God in her relationship to her husband. But she must seek continually to submit to her husband as her submission to him is submission to Jesus her Lord.

### **Point #4**

As Christ is the head of the Church, He is also the Savior of the Church. So, also, the husband's desire for his wife is for her final salvation. As the Church submits to Christ, He seeks and works toward the final salvation of the Church. Thus, as the wife submits to her husband, the husband seeks and works for her salvation. Her final salvation is achieved not just through faith in the Gospel, which the husband must point his wife to, but also through her sanctification in obedience to Christ's Word. By teaching the Word of God to his wife as Christ teaches His Word to the Church, the husband seeks for his wife's sanctification, which is reflected in her obedience to Christ.

### **Point #5**

Paul makes clear that in exactly the same way that the Church hears the Words of Christ in the Bible and submits to them, so wives should submit in every circumstance to their husbands as their husbands point them to Christ and His Word. We know from the teaching of the Gospel that this will not be a process without struggle and sin involved for both wife and husband, but the command of the Lord Jesus for wives is that they will submit to their husbands in everything.

### **Point #6**

Husbands are commanded to love their wives, not simply in an emotional sense or to meet her physical needs, but to give themselves up for their wives for the purpose of their sanctification. As the wife submits to the husband's spiritual leadership, he seeks to see her

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cleansed in the same way that Christ cleanses His Church. This happens through the application of the Word of God to the wife’s soul. This does not happen without work. Just as Christ works through His sacrifice for the good of His Church, so the husband must lay down his life to teach the Word of God to their wife and help her apply the Word to her heart.

**Point #7**

Christ’s goal is to present the Church to Himself when they finally stand before Him as holy and righteous, having been sanctified and cleansed by the work of the Holy Spirit through His Word. In the same way, the husband must desire and strive to see his wife presented before God holy and righteous in His sight. This happens as the husband knows Christ’s love for his wife and acts on this love as he seeks to see her grow to be more like Christ so that she will reflect the righteousness of Christ over time in His Word.

**Point #8**

The husband must love his wife in the same way that he loves his own body. If a husband truly loves himself, he will seek his own sanctification first before he seeks to see his wife sanctified. This means spending time applying the Gospel and the Word of God to his own life in the hope that he will grow in sanctification as an example to his wife. By loving his wife in the same way that Christ loves the Church, the husband is loving himself as well. Husband and wife are washed by the Word of God together, and they grow together to be more like Christ.

**Point #9**

If the husband fails to nourish and cherish his wife with the teaching and application of the Word of God, then it is as if he is hating his own flesh. A husband who does not lead his wife spiritually through the Word brings great conflict and sin into their marriage. There will be conflict and sin in every marriage, but the marriage where the wife submits in everything to her husband as the husband seeks both the wife’s sanctification and his own will flourish and both of them will grow over time to be spiritually strong and Christ-like.

**Point #10**

When a marriage demonstrates the qualities talked about here it points to the Gospel. As the wife submits to her husband, even when he fails to be a perfect spiritual leader, this points to the Church submitting to her Lord Jesus. As the husband responds by seeking his wife’s greatest good through the application of the Word to her life and heart, this points to Christ loving and serving the Church to see her sanctified and holy. When this is lived out truthfully in the power of the Holy Spirit, everyone around this marriage is pointed to the Gospel and Christ is exalted in the lives of other Christians and even unbelievers.

**Point #11**

Paul, speaking through the Holy Spirit, reminds us one last time that every husband is to love his wife just as he loves himself, which is to bring himself to Christ in His Word so that he can grow to be like Him. And the Spirit reminds us that the wife is to respect her husband by submitting to his leadership in every circumstance.

**Point #12**

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As God created the first marriage between husband and wife, Adam and Eve, He created them to be sinless and perfect. Adam was created to lead and point Eve towards their God, Jesus Christ, and Eve was created to submit to Adam’s leadership and follow him as he pointed her to Christ. And there was no sin and no shame in this perfect Creation. But a lie would soon destroy this perfect marriage and pollute God’s will for them with terrible sin. A lie that Adam and Eve could be God over their own lives and do things their own way. But there is no other God but Christ.

### **Application #1**

Satan has spread a lie since the Garden of Eden itself that marriage does not have to be the way God intended. There are strong cultural arguments, even infiltrating the Church, that wives are not required by God to submit to their husbands and that they can even be the spiritual leaders in their marriages.

### **Application #1 (Continued)**

There are also lies from Satan that husbands are only responsible to please their wives and keep peace in their homes instead of seeking to lead spiritually even when it might result in conflict to do so. Because of this, there are two applications to follow for husbands and wives and some important application for those who are not married.

### **Application #2**

Husbands, the Word of God does not simply, or even primarily, address your responsibility to physically and emotionally provide for your wife. Even though both these responsibilities, physical and emotional, are very important to God, the primary command of God to you as a husband is to seek the sanctification, or growth in holiness, of your wife.

### **Application #2 (Continued)**

The Word of God is clear that this happens through the washing of the Word. This washing can only happen if you understand and apply the Word of God to yourself first, and then afterwards teach your wife what has moved your own heart.

### **Application #2 (Continued)**

Another way of putting it is: Husbands, explain and apply to your wife what you have learned from Jesus in His Word, expecting her to submit to you in every circumstance as her leader. And one last caution, there will be conflict and sin in both your lives which make this process more difficult. Turn to the Gospel, don’t accept peace if it means compromise on what God says, and always love Jesus more than you do your wife.

### **Application #3**

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Wives, the Word of God does not simply call you to be passive as you submit to your husband. You are to submit to him in every circumstance, but you are still your husband’s sister-in-Christ and because of that you need to point him to the Gospel and work together to serve Christ. You are an important member of the church and the growth that you experience in your marriage as you submit to your husband is valuable to be taught to other women in the church.

#### **Application #3 (Continued)**

As you learn from your husband, the conversations you have will sanctify you. If your husband does not do what God is requiring of him, you will still learn patience, kindness, and love of your neighbor as you love and submit to your husband. And finally, do not be passive in your own time with Christ in His Word. Love and cherish your own growth in Christ just as your husband loves and cherishes your growth together.

#### **Application #4**

So, what does any of this have to do with single Christians in the church? Is there anything for them to learn through this teaching about marriage? The answer is that there is something essential about single Christians in how they understand marriage. You may not be able to serve Christ by serving your spouse, but you can serve Christ by serving your married brothers and sisters.

#### **Application #4 (Continued)**

There are going to be many times when there is sin, compromise, and disagreement in the marriages of our church. As you minister to your married brothers and sisters, point them to the Gospel and point them to obey what Christ commands them to do.

#### **Application #4 (Continued)**

Unmarried sisters-in-Christ, you have an essential role in reminding the married women to submit to their husbands and learn from them. Unmarried brothers-in-Christ, you have an essential role in encouraging married men to lead their wives and to love and cherish their spiritual growth. And even when you cannot directly encourage, you can pray for them.

#### **Application #5**

Do not be jealous of your married brothers and sisters, because being single can be a great gift, as the Apostle Paul who commanded these truths on marriage experienced himself. He was not married, but had great concern for the holiness of his married brothers and sisters in Christ and their testimony to the Gospel.

#### **Use of the Greek word “submit” (ὑποτάσσω)**

##### **Romans 8:7**

<sup>7</sup>For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not **submit** to God’s law; indeed, it cannot.

##### **Romans 10:3**

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<sup>3</sup> For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not **submit** to God’s righteousness.

**James 4:7**

<sup>7</sup> **Submit** yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

**Suggested Bible Passages for Further Study**

**Malachi 2:10-16**

**Matthew 19:1-12**

**Colossians 3:18-21**

**1 Peter 3:1-22**