

EPHESIANS 5:22-33

MARRIAGE—A DIVINE PRIMER

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Saviour. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”¹

The world has been transfixed by the travail of Tiger Woods. The scandal began with what appeared to have been a minor traffic accident. There had been reports in a broadsheet, mostly ignored by the mainstream media, that the most famous golfer of this generation was having an affair with an attractive young woman. Then, there were reports that the crash of his luxury SUV happened after a fight with his wife in the early morning hours. The reports multiplied and his multiple sexual partners began appearing with astounding regularity. Rumours concerning his wife’s response began to multiply daily. Finally, there were the reports that he had entered a sex rehab clinic in Mississippi while rumours swirled about multiple sexual dalliances by the golfer.

Throughout his career, Tiger Woods had been presented as a model of moral strength, decency and fidelity; suddenly, the carefully crafted image was unravelling. When he pleaded that his problems were a private matter, the public would have none of it. He had cultivated himself as a public personage, and he would now have to face the trials arising from his indiscretion in the hot glare of media spotlights.

On his daily blog, Al Mohler, President of Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, draws several vital lessons from the saga of Tiger Woods. First, Doctor Mohler observes that *Acts done in private can and will have public consequences*. Second, he states that *The public still believes that adultery is a big deal*. Finally, he notes that *A fall from public favour can happen in an instant*.² Most individuals will hear such a list and conclude that these facts are obvious. Though they are obvious, they are nevertheless ignored by many individuals—even individuals who are professed followers of the Risen Son of God.

At the epicentre of our secular cultural media is a writer named Jenny Block, who argued on Newsweek’s website it was not surprising to learn of Tiger’s multiple affairs because his “entire life is based on winning; on having, doing, and being more ... why on earth would anyone think ‘settling down’ was even in his vocabulary?”

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from **The Holy Bible: English Standard Version**. Wheaton: Good News Publishers, 2001. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

² Albert Mohler, “The Travail of Tiger Woods—Lessons Not to be Missed,” December 14, 2009, <http://www.albertmohler.com/>, accessed 16 December 2009

Block declared without reservation that she had cheated on her husband with another woman, and she was the norm, not the exception. Now she and her husband were in one of those fabulously open marriages with no judgmental God and no real vows or commitments.

“Monogamy just isn’t always realistic. There’s nothing wrong with admitting that. It simply doesn’t work for some. And just as people choose different religions, eating habits, and places to call home, I believe we should be able to choose different ways to live out our relationships.”³

This kind of “evangelism” doesn’t cause the cultural elite to explode at the national dinner table. However, it causes me to ask how does any culture build strong families and strong children if such a chaotic and abnormal view dominates? How can any culture survive long if the family is destroyed and if fidelity between husband and wife is not fostered? Brit Hume was vilified because he urged Tiger Woods to look to the Christian Faith in the midst of his troubles. If this were less of a morally upside-down world, it would be Jenny Block who would be sitting in Brit Hume’s corner, taking heat because she was promoting what is patently wrong.

Tragically, we live in a world that rejects the divine intent because it is confused about morality. Modern societies operate on the basis of emotion rather than reason; and this is evident even in the issues surround marriage in this day. What is worse, the churches—the very entities that should be moral arbiters, and certainly should act as the conscience of society—are silenced because of their compromise. Contemporary Canadian society desperately needs to return to a solid moral foundation, but that will not happen until the churches of our nation reclaim the moral certainty that comes from knowledge of the will of God, especially for the family.

MARRIAGE IS DEFINED BY COMPLEMENTARITY — Few passages of the Word provide more insight into God’s expectation for the marriage relationship than the text before us. Modern society has reduced marriage to a mechanism for the gratification of immediate desires. However, God clearly presents the case that marriage is to be a covenant in which husband and wife—man and woman—focus on making the other party of the covenant better, stronger, more complete. From the beginning, this was the divine intent as is evident from reading the account of the first marriage.

In Genesis, we read of God’s provision of a helper for the man He had created. The account is recorded in **GENESIS 2:18-25**. “The LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’ Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 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.’

³ Jenny Block, “The Case Against Monogamy,” Newsweek, December 10, 2009 (<http://www.newsweek.com/id/226348>), accessed 8 January, 2010

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

Unpacking what Moses wrote, we see that God made a theological pronouncement on the man’s singleness—it was not good. Man was not created to be alone; he was created both to enjoy and to give companionship. It is not that singleness is sinful; it is that man was created to share his life. This is obvious as we read the remainder of the account, for God caused the man to realise his deficit by having him witness the lack of complementarity with the animals. This is apparent as we read the assessment, “For Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.”

Perhaps a little insight into the Hebrew would be beneficial. When the text says there was no helper “fit” for Adam, the word used speaks of complementarity. The woman was provided to complement the man—she made his life complete. By the same token, man complements woman. Together, they strengthen one another. The Wise Man recognised this when he wrote:

“Two people are better than one,
because they can reap more benefit from their labour.
For if they fall, one will help his companion up,
but pity the person who falls down and has no one to help him up.
Furthermore, if two lie down together, they can keep each other warm,
but how can one person keep warm by himself?
Although an assailant may overpower one person,
two can withstand him.
Moreover, a three-stranded cord is not quickly broken.”

[ECCLESIASTES 4:9-12]⁴

Together, two have the strength of three—the union is not additive, but rather multiplicable. Together, a couple is far more capable of withstanding adversity and of resisting evil. We long for companionship because God created us as social beings who long for someone with whom to share life. It is not solely that we want someone to fill the emptiness in our life, but if we truly understand God’s design, we want to give ourselves to another—we want to share our lives.

When God presented the woman He had made to the man, the man immediately recognised that she was the complement to him. That is the reason for his exclamation at the presentation of the woman; and that is also the basis for the theological pronouncement that “a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” Indeed, the lives of a husband and wife will merge and blend until they are fully complementary, strengthening one another and building one another, together fulfilling the design of the Creator.

Jesus gave His blessing to this truth when He responded to the duplicitous query of the Pharisees. They had questioned whether Jesus adopted the lax view of Rabbi Hillel or the stricter view of Rabbi Shammai. Jesus cut the Gordian knot by pointing the Pharisees to what the Living God had caused to be written. Quoting the divine commentary, Jesus reminded them, “A man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” Then, He pointed to the final statement of that portion of the Word, adding His own commentary that stands to this day. “So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together let not man separate” [MATTHEW 19:5, 6].

⁴ The NET Bible First Edition (Biblical Studies Press, 1996-2006)

I must point out that the word “helper” does not fully communicate what Moses wrote. The Hebrew term connotes far more than the concept of helping. It is a tragic fact that our English term “helper,” can easily carry the connotation of a subordinate role. However, this connotation is not integral to the Hebrew word. In the Bible, the word is frequently used of God, who is described as the One who does for us what we cannot do for ourselves, or as One who meets our needs. For instance, of God, David writes:

“To You the helpless commits himself;
You have been the helper of the fatherless.”

[PSALM 10:14]

On another occasion, David cries out to the LORD,

“Hear, O LORD, and be merciful to me!
O LORD, be my helper!”

[PSALM 30:10]

On yet another occasion, David exults in God’s work for His benefit:

“Behold, God is my helper;
the Lord is the upholder of my life.”

[PSALM 54:4]

Consider also this testimony of God’s character that Solomon has given us.

“[God] delivers the needy when he calls,
the poor and him who has no helper.”

[PSALM 72:12]

Among the Psalms of Ascent is this one which testifies of God:

“The LORD is on my side as my helper;
I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.”

[PSALM 118:7]

So, the woman was created to be so much more than man’s subordinate; she was designed to do for him what he could not do for himself, to meet his needs—many of which he did not even recognise, to make his life complete. Husband and wife build one another. The wife supplies what the man lacks, and in the same vein the man supplies what his wife lacks. Their union was never meant to be one of competition; rather it is to be complementary.

It should be obvious to all but the deliberately obtuse, that God’s design was for a man and a woman; God created a man and a woman. Contrary to a growing modern perception, contrary to the opinion of many psychologists and of numerous sociologists, two men, or two women, or two men and one woman, or two women and one man, or any multiple of men and women, can never fulfill the divine design for marriage between a man and a woman. The union is to be complementary and exclusive. Husband and wife are to strengthen one another, being committed to one another exclusively.

In our text, a husband is taught to love his wife, to show her honour [see 1 PETER 3:7], to expend himself for her benefit. Likewise, wives are taught to cultivate a spirit of loving submission to her own husband, to respect him because of his divinely assigned role.

MARRIAGE DEMANDS FIDELITY — Our world is terribly confused about marriage. We have adopted the view that marriage is primarily about gratifying our desires. Our modern culture has bought into the lie that people are solely sexual creatures, and that sexual urges cannot be denied. We teach our children that they will act like little savages, so they must “protect” themselves. Then, when they act like savages, we incarcerate them and whine, “How could they do that.” People fall into love and out of love with amazing regularity. Marriage is delayed or ignored as couples simply begin living together, running through multiple partners, while testing the waters.

For many—dare I say “most”—a relationship, whether marriage or merely cohabiting, is based on an emotional bond. If the feeling dies—and feelings are quite fragile—the relationship is effectively over. The attitude of society appears to be that a couple should simply face facts and move on when people no longer feel loved or when they no longer are willing to love. Rector Vaughn Roberts writes, “One celebrity recently justified leaving his wife and children by saying, ‘It was the most difficult decision I’ll ever make ... it would have been a lot easier to have stayed in my marriage, but I had to be true to myself.’ A football personality has even gone so far as to blame God for his adultery, saying, ‘I am not proud of my record with women. I have always had an appetite to explore the delights of love and lust and, I am afraid, one partner was never going to be enough for me. It was simply the way God made me.’”⁵

Such excuses may sound reasonable if we avoid thinking. However, we must realise that God does not accept such excuses. We are not animals driven solely by instinct; we are responsible before God to control our desires. Society recognises this in condemning those who act on their impulses and desires. It is wrong to commit sexual assault—we cannot justify such actions by saying that we wanted gratification. It is wrong to assault another person—we cannot say that they dressed or walked in a provocative manner. It is wrong to steal—we cannot plead that we were justified in stealing because we wanted the item. It is wrong to kill—we cannot argue that we lost our temper. People are expected to control their desires and their impulses.

In a similar manner, God expects that those who marry make commitments to one another; moreover, He expects those commitments to be honoured. The Master Himself provides the model in His love for His church, just as the Father loved His ancient people Israel. God kept His vows to Israel, despite their repeated instances of unfaithfulness to Him. In the same way, “Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her” [EPHESIANS 5:25]. It is this fidelity, this commitment that the Apostle presents as essential to the marriage relationship. After describing what is expected of a husband, and of a wife, the Apostle makes this stunning affirmation: “This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church” [EPHESIANS 5:32].

Many among the churches of our Lord have lived their lives according to a standard of their own making. Among the professed saints of God are many who have committed adultery or who are divorced. Though in an earlier day individuals guilty of such sin were shunned, none should feel that they cannot be forgiven or that their lives are ruined beyond repair. God offers forgiveness and hope to each one. However, He calls those who receive that forgiveness to live from now on according to His standard and not according to their own desires.

⁵ Vaughn Roberts, **Life’s Big Questions: Six Major Themes Traced through the Bible** (Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, UK 2004), 83-84

There is a balance which must be adopted and practised by the churches of our Lord. Recognising the Word of God as our authority for faith and practise, we must live according to the standard that God has established. However, we must act wisely in judging others. If an individual repents, turning from pursuing his own desires, he must be accepted as we ourselves were accepted by the Lord. If a person continues to pursue her own desires, we must hold her accountable both to the Lord Christ, His Word and the Community of Faith to which she has committed herself.

There is no question that the moral landscape has changed dramatically during the past five decades. This is especially true in the realm of the morals of sex and sexuality. “Contemporary society is marked by a breathtaking pattern of moral renegotiation that has led to the virtual evaporation of many moral stigmas, a rebellion against all rules and the increasing legitimization of any number of sexual practices, lifestyles and forms of expression.”⁶ Increasingly, throughout this period that encompasses the lives of most of us, the modern western culture is marked by an attitude of moral revolution and moral relativism.

With the advent of no-fault divorce, marriage was increasingly marginalised until we have come to a day when divorce is no longer the exception but the norm. Marital stability was undermined long before vocal groups of gays began to demand the “right” to be married. Contemporary mores have shifted to permissive extremes in such areas as premarital sex, pornography and the ubiquitous use of sex as a form of entertainment. What is worse, few professing Christians are prepared to speak out against these societal transitions.

Professed Christians consider living together without commitment to be acceptable as evidenced by simple observation.⁷ Nor should we imagine that embracing this destructive attitude is restricted to our youth, for their parents are quite prepared to act in the same way when given the opportunity. We seem blasé about the fact that one-half of clergy members view pornography each month.⁸ Should we be surprised that a vast majority of church members likewise view pornography in any given month? Few professing Christians are prepared to turn off television programs that portray sexual themes, that promote and justify immoral behaviour, that use suggestive or vulgar language as humour, or that depend upon sexual acts as entertainment. Moreover, especially among younger Christians, acceptance of deviant moral attitudes appears to be growing as such behaviour is normalised as result of indoctrination arising within the educational system and through the pervasive adoption of such attitudes in media.

Within marriage is to be fostered an attitude of fidelity. There is no room in the marriage relationship for anyone other than the husband and the wife. Wives are enjoined to practise loving submission to their own husbands, as to the Lord. As a significant aside, no woman is taught to be submissive toward males in general; the language is quite specific that her submission is toward her own husband. The model for a wife’s attitude toward her husband is the model of the attitude of the church (when it functions as a godly entity) toward her Master. Let me point out that the submissive attitude of a wife has nothing to do with inferiority or superiority, neither does the admonition say anything concerning worth. It is a reflection of order within the relationship; it is the acceptance of assigned position for the sake of harmony.

⁶ Albert Mohler, *ibid.*

⁷ “American Faith is Diverse, as Shown Among Five Faith-Based Segments,” Barna Research Organization, January 29, 2002, <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/5-barna-update/66-american-faith-is-diverse-as-shown-among-five-faith-based-segments>, accessed February 13, 2010

⁸ Matt Friedmann, “Half of clergy members view pornography each month,” <http://action.afa.net/Blogs/BlogPost.aspx?id=2147491058>, accessed February 13, 2010

It is vital to establish the fact that the submission that a wife offers must be voluntary—***no man has a right to demand submission of any woman***. It is the woman's privilege to willingly offer her submission to her own husband as a token of her love for him. Her attitude recognises his position as bearing responsibility before God for the spiritual tenor of the home. Through voluntary submission, she reveals her respect for him as her husband, acknowledging his position before God as responsible for the spiritual vitality of the home. Moreover, a wife's voluntary submission to her husband speaks volumes concerning her willingness to serve Christ. Underscore in your mind this vital truth: a wife's voluntary response to marriage is not because of her role in society; her willing submission can only be understood in relationship to her submission to Christ. Her attitude is to be part and parcel of the way in which she serves the Lord Jesus.

Similarly, the Apostle invests considerable time in detailing the man's responsibility within the marriage. The wife's subordination to her husband has its counterpart in the husband's duty to love his wife. While his responsibility is to love his wife with sacrificial love, it will be helpful for us to think of the love men are to cultivate for their wives.

In order to explore this thought more fully, I invite consideration of some exciting instruction found in the Proverbs.

“Let your fountain be blessed,
and rejoice in the wife of your youth,
a lovely deer, a graceful doe.
Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight;
be intoxicated always in her love.
Why should you be intoxicated, my son, with a forbidden woman
and embrace the bosom of an adulteress?
For a man's ways are before the eyes of the LORD,
and he ponders all his paths.”

[PROVERBS 5:18-21]

The Bible condemns drunkenness, but not “marital intoxication.” Whenever we think of intimacy within the marriage relationship, we should know that a wife should find her husband beside himself with passion. It is sometimes said that love is blind, by which we mean that an individual is often drawn to a person that many would find unattractive. However, the Bible suggests that the opposite is true when it comes to married love. In the marriage relationship, a loving husband is keenly aware of his wife's charming features that others may have missed. This means that a godly husband has no time for pornography or flirting with other women!

For the righteous husband, the beauty contest is over before it begins. He declares his wife the winner and happily devotes his heart to her. He is not condemned to settling for second best. When his heart is godly, a husband finds all the delight he can manage—and more. Indeed, he knows intoxication in the presence of his spouse—and this at every stage in life. “Womanhood is a splendid work of God, and surpassingly fortunate is the man to whom the Lord has entrusted a wife. To look beyond her is both unnecessary and unseemly, for she alone has treasures enough to reward the faithful gaze.”⁹

⁹ “A Husband's Chaste Intoxication With His Wife,” Kairos Journal, <http://www.kairosjournal.org/Document.aspx?QuadrantID=1&CategoryID=8&TopicID=31&DocumentID=6214&L=1>, access February 13, 2010

I invite your attention to a portion of an ancient sermon preached by John Chrysostom—John the Golden Mouth. “Seek thou for beauty of soul. Imitate the Bridegroom of the Church. Outward beauty is full of conceit and great license, and throws men into jealousy, and the thing often makes thee suspect monstrous things. But has it any pleasure? For the first or second month, perhaps, or at most for the year: but then no longer; the admiration by familiarity wastes away. Meanwhile the evils which arose from the beauty still abide, the pride, the folly, the contemptuousness. Whereas in one who is not such, there is nothing of this kind. But the love having begun on just grounds, still continues ardent, since its object is beauty of soul, and not of body... Let us seek in a wife affectionateness, modest-mindedness, gentleness; these are the characteristics of beauty. But loveliness of person let us not seek, nor upbraid her upon these points, over which she has no power, nay, rather, let us not upbraid at all, (it were rudeness,) nor let us be impatient, nor sullen. Do ye not see how many, after living with beautiful wives, have ended their lives pitiably, and how many, who have lived with those of no great beauty, have run on to extreme old age with great enjoyment. Let us wipe off the “spot” that is within, let us smooth the “wrinkles” that are within, let us do away the “blemishes” that are on the soul. Such is the beauty God requires. Let us make her fair in God’s sight, not in our own.”¹⁰ This is the responsibility of a godly husband; what woman could not love such a man?

MARRIAGE REFLECTS THE DIVINE — Marriage should be a little bit of heaven on earth. When Paul speaks of the mystery of marriage, he is not saying that it is a sacrament. He is, however, saying that it pictures the relationship of Christ Jesus and His church. As the church loves the Master and submits to Him, so wives are to have the same attitude toward their husbands. Likewise, as Christ loves the church and gives Himself for her, so the husband must consider his wife and give himself for her.

Such instruction flies in the face of modern perceptions. In contemporary culture the focus is on self-fulfilment. You will notice that in the text, however, wives and husbands are taught to focus outward, considering the one to whom they have pledged fidelity and love. Marriage does meet the emotional needs of the couple, which contemporary concepts concede in a tangential fashion. God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone” [GENESIS 2:18].

Marriage also meets the physical needs of a couple, as the Apostle teaches in another place. “Concerning the matters about which you wrote: ‘It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.’ But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband” [1 CORINTHIANS 7:1-3].

However, we must not neglect the spiritual purpose in marriage. As husband and wife experience with each other obedience to the divine teaching, they discover submission to the Master and in turn experience the love of Christ in deeper measure.

The love of a husband, when it reflects the love of Christ, will be sacrificial, sanctifying and satisfying. As is evident, that love will be **sacrificial** because he willingly sacrifices himself for his wife. When the Apostle teaches men, “Love your wives, as Christ love the church and gave Himself up for her” [EPHESIANS 5:25], he is lifting marriage to the highest possible plain. To say that a husband’s love is sacrificial means that he has set apart his wife (sanctified) and reserved himself for her [EPHESIANS 5:26]; this is love that seeks to present her to himself in splendour [EPHESIANS 5:27] and love that enables her to be holy and blameless [EPHESIANS 5:26, 27].

¹⁰ John Chrysostom, **Homilies on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians, Homily XX**, translated by Philip Schaff, **The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, Vol. XIII** (Logos Research Systems, Oak Harbor, WA) 145

A husband's love is to be **sanctifying**, because the husband is set apart for his wife and she is set apart for him. Husbands are not to use their wives for their own pleasure, but rather to honour God in every aspect of the relationship. In the Corinthians letter, Paul instructed men, "The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control" [1 CORINTHIANS 7:3-5].

The marriage relationship is sanctifying as the husband and the wife are set apart for one another. Marriage is an exclusive condition. Any interference with this God-given arrangement is sinful, bringing the wrath of God. As Christ cleanses the church through washing with the Word, so husbands purify their wives through their love, through their prayers and through their constant encouragement. The church is not perfect—spots and wrinkles mar the beauty of the Body. Spots are the result of defilement from outside and wrinkles are caused by inward decay. The Word of God is the cleansing agent, and as the church is nourished by the Word, she is renewed and the wrinkles disappear. The church should be ever renewing herself, and she does so through the Word that is preached.

In the same way, a wife is enjoined to keep herself "unstained" [cf. JAMES 1:27] by avoiding ugly attitudes; but her husband will remove the unsightly wrinkles through his constant nourishment of her soul. I am not saying that the physical spots and wrinkles are removed so that a wife is perpetually a teenager, but her husband should be enthralled with her and he should be perpetually renewing her spirit. This is the responsibility God assigned him.

I must also note that a husband's love is also **satisfying**. In marriage, husband and wife become "one flesh." Listen to the Word: Just as Christ gives Himself for the church, "husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body" [EPHESIANS 5:28-30]. Whatever each does to the other is done to himself or herself. Through loving one another with pure love, husband and wife are nourishing one another. As love is the circulatory system of the Body of Christ [see EPHESIANS 4:16], so love is the nourishment of the home. No Christian wife, no Christian husband, should ever say that they are starved for love, for their love for one another should be such that their physical, emotional and spiritual needs are met. If either is submitted to Christ and to one another they will be satisfied, and they will not be tempted to look elsewhere for such satisfaction.

As I prepared this message, I noted in the headlines on a major news web site the following headline: "U.K. Pastor: 'Wives, Submit to Your Husbands.'" ¹¹ Reporting messages delivered by Vicar Angus MacLeay and Curate Mark Oden at St. Nicholas Church in Sevenoaks, Kent, the article adopted a tone of shock that anyone could preach such a message today, citing a woman who said she was "disgusted," asking "How can they talk that way in the 21st Century?" They can talk this way in the 21st Century because they are firmly grounded in the timeless Word of God. The tragedy is that the most of the world has rejected the wisdom of the ages for the wisdom of this dying age. Generally speaking, modern culture has exchanged treasure for trash. However, if we have received the Word of God, and if we are led by the Spirit of God, we enjoy the peace of God both in our personal lives and in our homes.

¹¹ U. K. Church Leader: 'Wives, Submit to Your Husbands,' Fox News, Saturday, February 13, 2010, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,585771,00.html?test=latestnews>, accessed February 13, 2010

You cannot know that peace of God until you know the God of peace. Our encouragement is for each one who receives this message to ensure that they know the True and Living God. He sent His Son to die because of your sin. Jesus, the Christ, presented His life as a sacrifice for sinful people, and that includes you. Had he merely died, it would be a tragic story that might perhaps move us emotionally for a brief moment. However, this One conquered death, rising from the dead and presenting Himself before His disciples.

Therefore, the Word of God now calls all people to receive this Jesus as Master over life. The promise of God is, “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord!’ believing in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. With the heart one believes, resulting in a right standing with God, and with the mouth one confesses, resulting in salvation.” That passage concludes by quoting a wonderful promise that was given through the Prophet Joel, “Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord shall be saved” [ROMANS 10:9, 10, 13].¹²

I pray that you know the love of God; and I pray that your home is heaven on earth. When Christ rules in the home, this is the result. May it be so for you. Amen.

¹² Author’s free translation