

# Family Issues 1 – Authority and Responsibility (Eph 5:22-33)

**Introduction** – While all Scripture is profitable, some passages are more obviously applicable to us on a daily basis. When it comes to family issues, we need to regularly return to the Scripture's teaching not only because it directly affects us over and over again, but also because it is so antithetical to all the other messages being sent to us, including so-called Christian messages. You had to apply these principles yesterday. You will today, and you will have to tomorrow. And each scenario will be different, requiring wisdom. We cannot meditate enough in these passages.

**Text** – particularly, v 23, *“For the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body”*.

**Authority Gone Awry** – In one sense, authority is something that simply exists because of the office a man has been given – “... the husband is the head of the wife...” Modern egalitarians think a husband chooses whether or not to be the head. Scripture teaches us that he always is the head. --- But in another sense, authority is something that can *flee or grow*.

**Matt 7:28f** – The scribes were leaders with authority in their day. But they did not have the kind of authority that Jesus did.

**Matt 23:1-4, 25-28** – The scribes were hypocrites, and that hypocrisy caused their authority to crumble. They are condemned by the One who bestows authority.

**Matt 28:18** – In contrast, we see Jesus, who was obedient even to the point of death on the cross, granted more authority upon His resurrection. He is given the nations of the world.

**Authority from Responsibility** – Christ did not gain this authority simply because He was perfect in His obedience. He gained authority to change (save) us because He assumed covenantal headship, representative responsibility, for His people.

**Covenantally Sinful** (2 Cor 5:21) – The first Adam looked at his sin and blamed it on his bride. The second Adam looked at the sin of His bride and took it upon Himself. Christ could only do so by means of being in covenant with us. It is our covenantal union with Christ that allowed Him to become a curse for us (Gal 2:20, 3:13-14).

**Authority in Covenant** (Eph 5:25-27) – The parallel is not that we are like Christ as perfect saviors – because we aren't. The parallel is that we are in covenant with our bride as Christ is with His. In that covenantal union, we can lay down our lives for our bride with results that will never happen if we lay our lives down for anyone else. This means, we are talking about something much more profound than husbands being really nice to their wives.

**Covenantal Love** – Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church. With the backdrop of covenantal authority flowing from covenantal union and responsibility, what does it mean to love your wife?

**Particular Love** – This love can only be given to one with whom we have this covenantal union. Christ is only loyal to His Bride.

**Efficacious Love** – Covenantal love is efficacious. In other words, it works. There is no doubt about the outcome of Christ's love for His Bride, and so there should be no doubt about the outcome of a husband's love for His wife. This means you should be able to tell whether or not you are obeying the command to love your wife by her loveliness.

**Incarnational Love** – Christ's love is not measured by His sentiments and feelings. It is measured by His visible sacrifice and provision. So it is with husbands. A third party can tell if a husband loves his wife. She is his crown, and everyone around them can tell.

**Selfish Love** (Eph 5:28-30) – Husbands should love their wives, because they are loving their own bodies. This is especially true because of the covenant union of marriage. This leaves no room for keeping score on who has sacrificed more.

**Prayerful Love** (John 17, Heb 7:25) – Christ prayed on behalf of His Bride, and we are told that He always lives to make intercession for her. If Jesus prays for His Bride, how much more should we?

**Constant Love** – A husband must see that his love is constant because of this covenantal union. Just as he organically is always caring for his body, so he is always caring for his wife. Covenantal love is constant, and therefore he must see his whole life in some way connected to his duty to love and care for his wife.

**Learning to Wield Godly Authority** – not as a tyrant, but as a covenant-lord of his home.

**Assume Responsibility for Your Own Actions** – *“The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree...”* Adam blamed God and blamed Eve. The results were a great curse. Whom do you blame for your sin? Stop it. Adam should have only said the end of his sentence, *“...I ate.”* That is true confession.

**Assume Responsibility for Your Own Office and Their Actions** – If your house is a wreck, if your children are a wreck, if your finances are a wreck, if your sex-life is a wreck, if your wife is a wreck, the buck stops with you. You are the husband. You are the head. You will answer to God for all of these. Whether it is as husband or father, you must learn to repent for the family in ways

no other family member can.

**Husband Your Wife by Faith** – Eph 5:22-33 is primarily a passage of commands and a declaration of your sole responsibility for the state of your marriage. But inherent in this passage is the aroma of hope and promise. Covenant responsibility is the means by which God brings great change. Regardless of the difficulty in your marriage, it is always the place to begin, and it is the place that God blesses obedience.

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