

## **2013/4: A Wedding Message (Eph. 5:22-33)**

by BS Poh

A father said to his son three sentences: "Yes, drink it up completely." "It is good for your health." "This is fresh fruit juice." If you were a stranger listening to them, you would be wondering what the father was saying when he uttered the first sentence, "Yes, drink it up completely." Things became clearer when you heard the second sentence, "It is good for your health." Everything became clear when you heard the third sentence, "This is fresh fruit juice." To those who are new to the Bible's teaching, it would be better if you listen to the teaching of this passage from the back to the front. There are three main points, but we shall consider the verses from the bottom to the top.

### **I. Jesus Christ love His people (30-33)**

The first point is taken from verses 30 to 33. *Jesus Christ loves His people, which is the church.* Many people wrongly think that the church is the building that Christians meet in, to worship God. Although the word "church" is used in that way today, the Bible uses it to refer to those who have believed in Jesus Christ. In this passage, the word "church" refers to all true Christians considered together.

There are those who call themselves Christians when, actually, they are not true Christians. They are attracted to the Christian faith, they go to church once in a while, or they have been born to parents who are Christians. They may even have been baptized but their lives are not submitted to Jesus Christ. All these people are not true Christians until they understand the gospel, repent of their sins, and trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. True Christians will always be learning from the Bible and obeying what God says.

There is only one true God who exists as three Persons from eternity. They are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each Person is fully God, but there is only one true God. This is a mystery revealed to us in the Bible. The Son of God came to this world by taking upon Himself perfect human nature, without ceasing to be God. He is the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ died on the cross as the payment for the sins of His people. His blood was shed to cleanse them of their sins. He rose from death on the third day to give eternal life to those who trust in Him. H and C have repented of their sins and are trusting in Christ for salvation.

### **II. Husbands must love their wives (25-29)**

The second point is taken from verses 25 to 29. *Husbands must love their wives, just as Christ also loved the church.* Many people wrongly think that love is a romantic feeling between a man and a woman. Today, it is thought that such romantic feelings can exist even between man and man, or woman and woman. In the Bible, a special Greek word is used for "love", which means to do good to others at an expense to self. Such love is not just giving money to the poor. Many people are not poor and, therefore, do not need your money. Others are poor but by giving money to them you might not be helping them. Instead, you might be spoiling them. When you show biblical love to others, you have to spend time, energy, your health, and even your life for them.

When Christians show such love, it is because they have experienced the love of God. The Bible tells us that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in

Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16)." The Bible also tells us that Jesus Christ died on the cross for His people because "having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end (John 13:1)." The present passage tells us that "Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word (25-26)."

Husbands must love their wives in the same way that Christ loves the church. Jesus Christ has only one bride, which is the church. H will have one wife only, namely C. Christ loves the church sacrificially. H will have to love C sacrificially. The church is imperfect, and is being sanctified by Christ who works by His Spirit through His word. With God's help, H must guide, protect, and provide for the family because he is the head of the wife.

### **III. Wives must submit to their husbands (22-24)**

The last point is taken from verses 22 to 24 - *wives must submit to their husbands*. Wives are to submit to their husbands in everything that is right, good, and true. Wives do not submit to their husbands in things that are wrong, or against God's law. The church recognizes Jesus Christ as the Head. The church willingly obeys Jesus Christ by following His teaching in the Bible. Wives are to submit to their husbands only in things that are not against the Bible's teaching.

There is an English saying about people who are "a Jack of all trades and a master of none". This means that such a person knows a little of everything but does not know anything well. It will be good if you are "a Jack of all trades and a master of one". In other words, it will be good if you know a little of everything and know one particular thing very well. You are the "sifu" (or "master") in one area, yet you know something about many other matters. Such a person will be very useful and is able to help many people.

Whatever area you may be expert in, you must acknowledge that you do not know everything well. One area that most of us do not know well concerns life and death. You do not know how life began, what happens after death, and what will become of the universe. On these matters, we must listen to Jesus Christ who declares, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me (John 14:6)." Jesus Christ also says, "I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me (John 6:38)." In life, you trust in doctors to cure you when you are sick. You trust in the pilot to fly the aeroplane safely to your destination. In the serious matter of your eternal destiny, you need to trust in a Saviour. H and C have trusted in Jesus Christ as the Saviour who will bring them safely home to heaven. C will respect H and submit herself to him because H is submitted to Christ, the Head of the church.

### **Conclusion**

We must draw to a close. We have learn three main points: firstly, Jesus Christ loves the church and gave Himself for her. Secondly, husbands must love their wives, just as Christ also loved the church. Thirdly, wives are to subject themselves to their husbands, just as the church is subject to Christ. Parents whose children are true Christians should be happy that they are guided by such sound teaching. As parents, we are not able to be with our children for ever. In fact, from the moment of their marriage, they are no longer under our care officially. Much as we love them, we must let them develop into a family of their own. We rest in the knowledge that the Lord will guide them and bless them, even when we are no longer around.

We wish H and C God's blessing. We wish every couple present here God's blessing. May we all come to know the Father in heaven, through faith in Jesus Christ. Amen.

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