



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Grace

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume XX  
Issue 479

# Husbands Love Your Wives

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it (Ephesians 5:25).*

### THE NEW HUSBAND/WIFE DYNAMIC

Under the Mosaic Law the husband was not to abuse or neglect his wife, and was to assure that her physical needs (food, clothing and sex: Exodus 21:10) were adequately provided.

Under the Pauline revelation, love is added as the husband's preeminent responsibility – not just any love; the new standard is the *love of Christ*. Beyond that, it is Christ's love for the Ecclesia<sup>1</sup> that is the model: sacrificial love.

This new Christ-like standard goes far beyond anything that the law ever could have imagined. Fitting for those destined for the celestials, the husband/wife relationship has been elevated to a new divine dynamic never before revealed.

### THE HUSBAND: A CHRIST-LIKE EXAMPLE

Paul reveals a new pattern for marriage: Christ and the Ecclesia. This new revelation greatly increases the responsibility of husbands. As believing wives are already members of the Body of Christ, their role in marriage is unchanged from their "natural" role. However, the husband has been instilled with that which can be only divinely accomplished.

Christ is the Savior, the Ecclesia the sinner. Christ is the Giver, the Ecclesia the receiver. Christ is the Sacrificer, the Ecclesia the beneficiary. Christ is the Lover, the Ecclesia the loved. Christ is the Embracer, the Ecclesia the resis-



tant. Christ is the Steadfast, the Ecclesia the inconsistent.

### THE HUSBAND'S ROLE IN LOVE

*Husbands, love your wives (Ephesians 5:25).*

After the example of Christ, the husband is to be the lover. He is the divinely appointed initiator and sustainer of marital love. Going beyond the Law, the Pauline mandate is, "*Husbands, love your wives.*" Love is uniquely the role of the husband. We'll seek in vain to find such a command for wives. There is never a directive that says, "Wives, love your husbands."

According to Paul, exactly what is the standard of the husbands' love of their wives? "*Even as Christ loved the Ecclesia*" (:25). Christ's love suggests three basic characteristics:

**Realistic Love.** His love knew that we were sinful (mistake-ridden), unlovable and unreasonable. "... *While we were yet sinners Christ died for us*" (Romans 5:8)

**Sacrificial Love.** His love was extremely costly. His love "*gave*" (:25), spending Himself for the benefit of the object of His love.

**Unreserved Love.** His love for us was without limit, without condition and without reservation. He not merely "*gave,*" He "*gave Himself*" (:25).

### WHAT IT MEANS TO "GIVE YOURSELF UP"

... *gave Himself* ... (KJV)

1. The Greek word often translated as "church" in most English versions is ἐκκλησία (*ekklēsia*, or ecclesia). The word is a compound word meaning "called-out" (*ek* = "out"; *klēsi* = called). The ecclesia is God's "called-out" ones. The ecclesia is not a building or denomination; not a meeting, or doctrinal creed; it is not somewhere we go, or something we do, it is who we as believers are.

## **Bible Student's Notebook™**

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This free weekly electronic publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
  - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
  - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
  - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

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HUSBAND (continued from front page)

... gives Himself up ... (CV)

Women in our society understandably reject headship and patriarchy because they undoubtedly have never seen the Pauline model in action. Shamefully, what they have seen is an abundant example of self-absorbed, self-centered, self-serving men deceitfully professing these ideals and roles.

Paul instructs the husband to model Christ Who “gave Himself up.” Exactly what did that phrase mean to Paul? The context of this “giving up” goes back to :2 where he defines it for us:

*Walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and has given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God ...*

The word translated “gave” from :25 is παραδίδωμι (*paradidōmi*), the same word translated “given” in :2. Paul tells us in :2 exactly what that “giving” of Christ’s love for us was: (1) an offering, and (2) a sacrifice. The *Concordant Literal Version* translates “offering” as “approach present.” An *approach present* was a gift offered to win another’s favor. It was a humble, sacrificial act to enable the giver to draw near to the recipient. An *approach present* was not chocolates and flowers. It represented a most significant sacrifice on the part of the giver.<sup>2</sup>

According to Paul’s own context, the husband’s love is to be an “approach present” and “offering” up of himself to his wife.

### THE SCRIPTURE USAGE OF “GIVE”

*Husbands, be loving your wives according as Christ also loves the ecclesia, and gives Himself up for its sake (Ephesians 5:25).*

As we have already learned, the Greek word used for “gives” in the phrase “gives Himself up” is παραδίδωμι (*paradidōmi*). Here are its definitions:

- To surrender, that is, yield up (James Strong, *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*, G3860).
- To give or hand over to another (E.W. Bullinger, *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*).
- To give over to (Robert Young, *Young’s Analytical Concordance to the Bible*).
- To give into the hands (of another); to give over into

2. A detailed study of the approach present can be seen in *Bible Student’s Notebook* #436.

(one’s) power or use (Joseph Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*).

- To give or hand over (W.E. Vine, *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*).
- To deliver over or up to the power of someone (Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*).
- BESIDE-GIVE – give up, give over, give way (A.E. Knoch, *Greek-English Keyword Concordance*).

To help us appropriately apply the Greek word παραδίδωμι (*paradidōmi*), here are four other examples of the way the word “give” (as in Ephesians 5:2, 25) is translated in the *King James Version*, with the *Concordant Literal Version* translation in parenthesis:

Matthew 4:12

“cast into prison”  
(“given up”)

Matthew 5:25

“deliver to the judge”  
(“giving you up”)

Matthew 10:4

“betrayed him”  
(“gives Him up”)

Acts 15:26

“hazarded their lives”  
(“give up their souls”)

These words speak of sacrifice and loss of liberty. Husbands are no longer their own; like Christ, by choice, they have sacrificially “given themselves up” as an approach present to their wives. For husbands, Christ, Who forwent his “rights” in Gethsemane and proceeded to Calvary as a sacrifice and an approach present for us, is our preeminent example as to how we are to love our wives.

### A DIVINE KIND OF LOVE

As we have seen, it is the husband’s responsibility to love his wife. The Greek word here for love is ἀγαπάω (*agapaō*), which is the base of the word ἀγάπη (*agapē*). The *Concordant Greek-English Keyword Concordance* defines ἀγάπη as:

A complex emotion arousing appreciation or delight in and desire for the pleasure of its object, as well ►

as to please and promote its welfare; to be distinguished from affection, fondness, which is aroused by the qualities of its object, while love may go out to the utterly unworthy, and also from passion [*eros*] (not found in the Scriptures) between the sexes.

There is nothing wrong with a husband having affection, fondness and even passion (*eros*) toward his wife. These are not bad or sinful; but the love to which the husband has been called is divine and is not that which “is aroused by the qualities of its object,” but is that which – like Christ has for us – “may go out to the utterly unworthy.”

### A WIFE: THE GIFT OF GOD'S FAVOR

*Whoever finds a wife finds good, and obtains favor of the LORD (Proverbs 18:22).*

Without any qualification, a wife is declared to be a “good” find, and is a direct result of Divine favor. Wisdom acknowledges this great truth.

God often has chosen to give some of His greatest servants the most challenging of wives (such as Job's wife); still they are among the “all” that God is working for “good” (Romans 8:28). A man at odds with His Creator may become accusatory toward his wife and her role in his life, thus ultimately blaming even the nature of his circumstance on God Himself, as did Adam: “*The woman whom You gave me ...*” (Genesis 3:12).

We are all broken; we're all groaning and subjected to vanity – ALL of us: men and women, husbands and wives alike. This is the nature of the beginning of God's work that will end in glory for all of His creatures. For some husbands it will take the realization of faith to perceive and appreciate their wives genuinely as a favor from God.

Wives need to be reminded and encouraged of their divine placement as “good.” Husbands must foster in their

wives an understanding and acceptance of their ordained “goodness.” Just like the husband, she's God's grand and valuable work. She doesn't need to struggle to be who God has already made her. It is God who has made her “good.” She only needs to *be* – be who she already is. This is her divine calling and placement. As husbands we are trustees and guardians of this “good.” Remind them of it often. Demonstrate it to them daily.

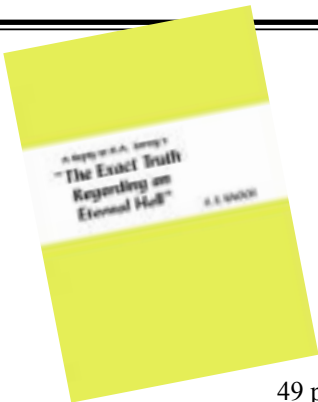
### THE SERVANT LEADER

*You are aware that the chiefs of the nations are lord-ing it over them, and the great are coercing them. Not thus is it to be among you. But whosoever may be wanting to become great among you, let him be your servant, and whoever may be wanting to be foremost among you, let him be your slave, even as the Son of Mankind came, not to be served, but to serve, and to give His soul a ransom for many (Matthew 20:25-28).*

*If anyone is wanting to be first, he will be last of all, and servant of all (Mark 9:35).*

In these passages Christ laid before His apostles the divine principle of spiritual leadership, concerning which A.E. Knoch (1874-1965) wrote,

While the Son of God was in sad contemplation of the deep humiliation of the cross, His disciples were puffed up with pride, arguing about their own greatness. They could hardly have been further removed from Him in spirit. He Who had been above all was now sinking beneath all. Higher than the archangels was His primeval position; lower than the lowest of sinners is the appalling place to which His path is winding. Higher! is the selfish shout of man, intent on his own exaltation, though he tread his fellows under foot to reach his proud pinnacle. Lower! was the cry of Christ, intent on the weal of others, though He be trodden in the mire to serve them. True greatness can



## ***A Reply to R.A. Torrey's "The Exact Truth Regarding an Eternal Hell"***

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

A scriptural response to Torrey's attempt to defend the traditional doctrine of Hell.

49 pp., PB

See order form.

never be attained by striving for self. It lies only in service for others. (*Concordant Commentary on the New Testament, Mark 9*).

Likewise the servant role of husbands is about a man living for his wife and family. The husband is the foremost servant of his family. In the home, as in the Body of Christ, service starts at the top and works its way down: Christ Himself being the premiere example of self-sacrificing service.

Self-serving men will pursue creative ways to circumvent the servant-nature of leadership while attempting to hold on to its “position.” In no place is this more prevalent than in the home. Such actions bring shame, disgrace and mockery to the benevolent role of headship. Little wonder that patriarchy has become such a despised word in our society.

### THE TRUE NATURE OF SACRIFICIAL LOVE

Sacrificial love does not mean that husbands give wives anything and everything they want. “Sacrifice” has nothing to do with what those who are being sacrificed for “want,” but what those who are *doing* the sacrificing “want” (i.e., “value”). For, “to devote with loss” is the meaning of sacrifice. It is the giving up of something of value for another.

Christ does not give us anything and everything that we want. In fact, He loves us too much for that. We often have no idea about what we really need, and what we want is often not the best for us. He does, however, know and gives us all that we truly need and more, “*abundantly above all that we ask or think*” (Ephesians 3:20).

Christ did not sacrifice to His Body what they “wanted.” Rather, His sacrifice was a giving up of what *He* “wanted.”

*O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as You will* (Matthew 26:39).

The nature of divine sacrifice is that which has a disregard to one’s own wants or needs and focuses on the will of the Father and the needs of the one being served and for whom the sacrifice is made.

*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, being rich, because of you He became poor, that you, by His poverty, should be rich* (II Corinthians 8:9).

We are thankful that Christ is not like some men who are so foolish as to think that all that they need to do as a husband is to allow their wives the honor of living with them while refraining from abusing them. Such men are not Christ-like husbands but self-centered, bringing ►



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shame to the Christ Whom they have been called to model to their wives.

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A HUSBAND

What does it mean to be a husband? Our English word *husband* carries a remarkable connection to agriculture that reveals its meaning. Noah Webster defines the verb (transitive) of *husband* as,

To till; to cultivate with good management.

He defines the noun *husbandry* as,

The business of a farmer, comprehending agriculture or tillage of the ground, the raising, managing and fattening of cattle and other domestic animals, the management of the dairy and whatever the land produces.

Why would a man who had a wife be referred to in English by this same agricultural word, *husband*? It could be because of the words used to describe the husbands' care for their wives.

*For no one at any time hates his own flesh, but is nurturing and cherishing it, even as Christ also does the Ecclesia* (Ephesians 5:29).

Webster defines our English words “nurture” and “cherish” as,

Nurture: to feed; to nourish; to promote growth.

Cherish: to treat with tenderness and affection; to give warmth, ease or comfort to. To hold as dear; to embrace with affection; to foster, and encourage.

As powerfully telling as these English words are, the Greek words are even more so.

Nurture: κτρέφω (*ektrepō*)

To rear up to maturity (Strong).

to nourish up to maturity; to bring up (Thayer)

To nourish, rear, feed, to bring to maturity (Zodhiates).

To nourish out, *i.e.*, in full, bring up to maturity (Bullinger).

OUT-NOURISH (Knoch).

Cherish: θάλπω (*thalpō*)

To brood, that is, to foster (Strong).

To heat, to soften by heat; to warm, make warm by incubation, hence to cherish, to nourish (Bullinger).

To warm, keep warm; to cherish with tender love, to foster with tender care (Thayer).

To soften by heat (Liddell/Scott; Vine).

Incubate-do (Knoch).

Of special note are *husbandry* words from these definitions: nourish, brood and incubate. What heartfelt, cultivating truths these words convey. Husbandry is not simply *hanging around* the farm helping oneself to whatever fruit may *happen* to grow. Husbandry is a laborious stewardship, and husbands are divine trustees of the women in their care. ■

(Excerpted from his upcoming book, *Wife Loving*)



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(See order form.)

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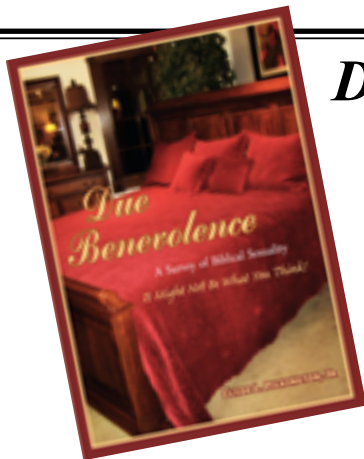


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