

EPHESIANS FIVE

DUTIES OF CHURCH MEMBERS—Continued

B. WALK AS BECOMETH SAINTS— 4:17-5:20

1. Practical Exhortations, 4:24-5:2
2. Walk As Children Of Light; 5:3-14
 - a. Things children of light do not do; 5:3-8
 - b. Things children of light do; 5:9-14
3. Walk As Wise Men; 5:15-20

C. SUBJECT YOURSELVES ONE TO ANOTHER — 5:21-6:9

1. Husbands and Wives; 5:22-23

Text (5:1, 2)

Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.

Thought Questions (5:1-2)

269. What are we told about God's actions in 4:32 that we are here urged to imitate?
270. Which would God prefer, learning and greatness, or a child-like spirit? Can we have both?
271. What does it mean to *walk* in love?
272. Is there any difference between an *offering* and a sacrifice? Explain any difference.
273. What Bible incidents does the expression *an odor of a sweet smell* bring to your mind?

Paraphrase

1. Seeing that God in Christ has forgiven you, be ye therefore imitators of God's forgiving mercy as beloved children who imitate the actions of their parents.
2. And live your lives in a disposition of love, even as Christ loved you, and gave himself up for you when he died on the cross, and made himself an offering and a sacrifice for an odor (savor) of a sweet smell unto God.

Notes (5:1, 2)

1. Many types of offerings in the Old Testament are called "a sweet savor (odor) unto the Lord": the burnt offering (Leviticus 1:9, 13), the meal (meat) offering (Leviticus 2:3, 9), offering of first fruits (Leviticus 2:12, 16), peace offerings (Leviticus 3:5, 16), and sin offerings (Leviticus 4:21). The trespass offering is not so described.

Noah offered up his offering unto the Lord after the flood, and the Lord "smelled the sweet savor" (Genesis 8:21). The critics have had much sport out of belittling such descriptions of God as if He were in human form (anthropomorphisms). But if the Scriptures say that God "smelled the sweet savor," we are not so wise that we can describe what God did any more accurately. The important thing is that the offering pleased the Lord and made the worshipper accepted. Like the people of ancient times, we sorely need

an offering that will be accepted of and well-pleasing to God. We are a people of unclean hands, minds and lips. We thank God that Christ is our sacrifice and odor of sweet smell, and that through His sacrifice we may be accepted by God.

2. The offering of Christ goes up to God for us in two respects:
 - (1) A *sacrifice* for our transgressions. We deserve to die. Christ's death is a substitute for our death. He bore the punishment which we justly deserve to bear.
 - (2) An *offering* to be presented when the transgression has been put out (or expiated), as an act of worship.

Fact Questions

252. Whom are we to imitate? In what way are we to imitate Him?
253. Christ gave Himself up for us as two things. Name them.

Previewing in Outline Form (5:3-20)

3. Walk as children of light. 5:3-14.
 - a. Things the children of light do not do. 5:3-8a.
 - (1) Do not even name vices as if they were becoming to saints. 5:3-6.
 - (a) Those who partake in vices have no inheritance in the kingdom. 5:5.
 - (b) The wrath of God comes upon those who disobey. 5:6.
 - (2) Do not become partakers with the sons of disobedience. 5:7-8.
 - (a) This they once did when they were darkness. 5:8.
 - (b) They are now light in the Lord.
 - b. Things the children of light do. 5:8b-14.
 - (1) Walk as children of light, producing the fruit of the light. 5:8b-9.
 - (2) Prove what is well-pleasing unto the Lord. 5:10.
 - (3) Reprove the works of darkness. 5:11-14.
 - (a) Have no fellowship with them. 5:11.
 - (b) Their deeds are too shameful to speak of. 5:12.
 - (c) Reproof makes manifest the works of darkness. 5:13.
 - (d) A call to those in darkness. 5:14.
4. Walk as wise men. 5:15-20.
 - a. Walk carefully. 5:15.

- b. Buy up the time. 5:16.
- c. Have the good sense to understand the Lord's will. 5:17.
- d. Be not drunk with wine. 4:18a.
- e. Be filled with the Spirit. 5:18b-20.
 - (1) Speaking to one another in psalms, etc. 5:19a.
 - (2) Singing and making melody. 5:19b.
 - (3) Giving thanks always. 5:20.

Text (5:3, 4)

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becometh saints; 4 nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, or jesting, which are not befitting; but rather giving of thanks.

Thought Questions (5:3, 4)

- 274. If we are not to name fornication, uncleanness, etc., why does Paul name them?
- 275. Is covetousness as bad as fornication?
- 276. Why is jesting forbidden? Is all humor wrong? What do people often make jests about?
- 277. What does *befitting* mean?
- 278. What is one type of speech that is always befitting?

Paraphrase

- 3. Seeing that Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, flee fornication, lustful unclean living, greedy desires to have more, and such things. Do not even mention them. For it is becoming to saints not to speak of them. Mention them only to condemn.
- 4. Also shun base and lewd conduct, foolish talking, and jests with double meanings, for these things do not come up to the level of the Christian. But giving of thanks is always befitting.

Notes (5:3, 4)

- 1. *Jesting* refers to speech that is nimble-witted, or easily turned, especially toward a bad meaning. So often the jesting of the world is based on double meanings. Jokes are formed that can be taken with two meanings, one harmless, the other shady. Some comedians think that they are not funny unless they utter a few such jokes.

2. *Befit* means "to come up to, or to have arrived at, or to reach to." Many things are far below the Christian, and he must hold them in abhorrence. He avoids acting self-righteous, but he keeps himself from the evil one.

Fact Questions

254. Name the six things that are forbidden in 5:3-4.

Text (5:5-7)

5 For this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Be ye not therefore partakers with them;

Thought Questions (5:5-7)

279. Do not many people consider sexual vice rather a casual thing, also a harmless diversion? Is it really an inconsequential thing?
280. Why is the covetous man called an *idolater*?
281. What is the kingdom of Christ and God? Can a man outwardly appear to belong to the kingdom, and yet have no inheritance in it?
282. What are *sons of disobedience*? (Compare 2:2.)
283. Why are words which attempt to excuse immorality and covetousness called *empty words*?
284. When does the wrath of God come upon those who disobey?

Paraphrase

5. You must obey the command to abstain from fornication, filthiness, covetousness, etc., for you know this with certainty by the light of the Gospel (v. 8) that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is really an idolater because he trusts in his riches, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God, which is the church.
6. Let no one deceive you with words that sound wise, but are empty of truth, saying that immorality and love of money are relatively harmless things. For on account of these sins the wrath of God has come and will come on those who practice them.
7. Wherefore, be not joint-partakers in their crimes, lest you share also in their punishments.

Notes (5:5-7)

1. We should be fellow-partakers with the saints (3:6), but we must not be fellow-partakers with those who are immoral and covetous. Evil companionships corrupt good morals (I Corinthians 15:33 R.V.).
2. Note the reference to the *wrath of God* in verse six. Some people have said that the God of the New Testament is a God of love, in contrast to the God of the Old Testament who is a God of wrath. But there is only one God, and He is the same in both the Old and New Testaments. The *wrath of God* is plainly taught in the New Testament, as it is in the Old. Those who desire to reject Christ should carefully consider the terrors of God's wrath. Let no clergyman, sociologist, professor, psychologist, or anyone else deceive you by saying that you can practice sin and not suffer God's wrath.
3. Justin Martyr (about A.D. 150) wrote: "We who were formerly the slaves of lust now only strive after purity; we who loved the path to riches above every other, now give what we have to the common use, and give to everyone that needs; we who hated and destroyed one another, now live together, and pray for our enemies, and endeavor to convince those who hate us without cause, so that they may order their lives according to Christ's glorious doctrine, and attain to the joyful hope of receiving like blessings with ourselves from God, the Lord of all."

Fact Questions

255. What do fornicators and covetous men absolutely not have?
256. What comes upon those who are sons of disobedience?
257. What is the covetous man called?

Text (5:8-10)

8 for ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord;

Thought Questions (5:8-10)

285. What relationship are the children of light to have with the sons of disobedience? (Compare 5:7.)
286. Is there any difference between being darkness and being *in* darkness? Which did Paul say that we once were?

287. In whom are we light? Does the world's wisdom add light to our nature?
288. How can light have children, so that we become *children of light*? (Compare I John 1:5.)
289. Is it possible to be light in the Lord, and not be good, righteous, and truthful? Why or why not? (See verse nine.)
290. What does *proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord* mean? How can we do this?

Paraphrase

8. Be not fellow-partakers with those who are disobedient to God. For in the Lord Jesus you are now transformed to become light, instead of being part of the darkness of this world which once you were. Walk therefore as children of light.
9. To do this, you must walk in goodness, righteousness, and truth, for such as the fruits of the light.
10. As you walk as children of light, you will be testing and proving the will of God, proving both to yourselves and to those who see you that that which is well-pleasing to the Lord is best for all mankind.

Notes (5:8-10)

1. The reading, *fruit of the light*, in 5:9 is preferable and more accurate than *fruit of the Spirit*, as given in the King James Version.
2. *Children of light* is practically the same expression as *children of God*, for God is light (I John 1:5).
3. Before our conversion we were actually darkness, not just *in* the dark. Now we are actually made to be light, and are not just *in* the light. As a magnet can rub off its magnetism onto another piece of iron and transform it into another magnet, so we become light as we are in contact with God and Christ. (See John 8:12.)
4. The world needs to see people believe in Christ and obey Him, for such people are testing and proving that that which is well-pleasing to God is best for all mankind. We are told several times in the Bible to prove (or test) that which is well-pleasing to the Lord (Romans 12:2; I Thessalonians 5:21; Malachi 3:10). 'God invites' (and even dares) you to test Him, and see for yourself. No one who has ever given God an honest trial has said that God disappointed him.

Fact Questions

258. According to 5:8, what were we before conversion?
259. In what is the fruit of the light?
260. What will the children of light prove?

Text (5:11, 12)

11 and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them; 12 for the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of.

Thought Questions (5:11, 12)

291. How far can we go in avoiding wicked people, in order that we may have no fellowship with the works of darkness (I Corinthians 5:9-10)?
292. Why are the works of darkness called *unfruitful*? Do they not bear bad fruit?
293. What does *reprove* mean? Is it enough just to ignore evil?
294. Why are the deeds of darkness done in secret?
295. How can we reprove deeds if they are too shameful even to speak of?

Paraphrase

11. As children of light, have no partnership with the works of darkness, such as the heathen ceremonies of Diana; for these works of darkness bear no desirable fruit, and bring eternal death to those who partake of them. Rather, expose, reprove, and convict them.
12. For the impure and wicked actions which are done by them in secret places and in darkness are so abominable that it is a shame even to speak of them, except to condemn.

Notes (5:11, 12)

1. The phrase *have fellowship with* was an expression used by the Greeks to denote participation in their religious rites and mysteries. Paul wanted the disciples to have nothing in common with these.
2. *Reprove* means to convince or convict. It is not enough to ignore evil. We must expose it in such a way that people will not be misled by it.
3. While Paul may have had primary reference to the heathen mysteries of his time as being the *works of darkness*, the workers of iniquity in the 20th century still work in darkness,

and the things they do in secret are still too shameful to speak of. (See John 3:19-21.)

Fact Questions

261. With what are we to have no fellowship?
262. What are we to do with the works of darkness (v. 11)?
263. Where do the workers of darkness do their deeds?
264. How shameful are many of the works of darkness?

Text (5:13)

13 But all things when they are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for everything that is made manifest is light.

Thought Questions (5:13)

296. When does the light make evil things manifest?
297. Is everything that is exposed to the light made to *be* light? Are the wicked transformed into light just by being exposed to the light?

Paraphrase

13. Now all the works of darkness, when they are reprov'd, are made manifest by the light. For everything that makes manifest the wicked works of darkness is light. Therefore, when you reprove them, you show that you are light. (5:8).

Notes (5:13)

1. The King James translation of 5:13b reads: "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light." We much prefer this translation to that of the Revised Version given above.

Our reason for preferring the King James translation here is that many wicked people that are exposed to the light merely run to their lair, and go "under cover," hiding, but not seeking to get right with God. Such people certainly do not become *light* just because the light has been turned upon them.

However, anything that makes manifest the wicked works of darkness is light. The saints who reprove the works of darkness and make them manifest for everyone to see, are light (Ephesians 5:8).

2. The heathen called their mysteries *light*, and those who were initiated into the mysteries, *the enlightened ones*. But if these religious delusions had really been light, they would have revealed the ungodly deeds of their devotees.

We still use the phrase, "light on the subject," to describe information that makes things clear. But much that is called *light* is only darkness disguised as wisdom.

3. Paul had been sent to turn the Gentiles from darkness to light (Acts 26:18).

Fact Questions

265. What is the difference between the King James and the Revised Versions in this verse? Why is the King James Version preferable?
266. What is *everything* that makes manifest the works of darkness?

Text (5:14)

14 Wherefore *be* saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee.

Thought Questions (5:14)

298. Who says, "Awake"? Is this an Old Testament quotation?
299. Can men arise from the dead by their own choice? (See 2:1).
300. At what time in our life does Christ begin to shine upon us?

Paraphrase

14. Wherefore, because we are light and reprove the works of darkness, our work and call to the world is stated in the saying: "Awake, thou that sleepest (in the darkness of heathen ignorance), and arise from the dead (the state of death in which you lie in trespasses and sins), and Christ shall shine upon thee (with the light of truth)."

Notes (5:14)

1. This saying is not a quotation from the Old Testament. It recalls Isaiah 60:1, but is not a quotation of that verse. Perhaps it is a line from an old hymn, or some heretofore unrecorded saying of Christ or one of the apostles.
2. As the morning sun enlightens men aroused from sleep, so Christ enlightens those who rouse from the sleep of sin and turn unto God. When men are converted, they are enlightened (Hebrews 6:4).
3. Many will wake up from spiritual sleep only when they fall into the sleep of death. Like the rich man, they will be

aware for the first time of their actual condition (Luke 16:23-31; compare Psalm 73:17-30).

Fact Questions

267. What is the source of the quotation, "Awake, thou that sleepest"?
268. From what are the sleepers to arise?
269. When the sleepers awake, who will shine upon them?

Text (5:15, 16)

15 Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Thought Questions (5:15, 16)

301. Why does the fact that the days are evil make it necessary to be careful how we use our time?
302. What determines whether our walk is wise or unwise?
303. Is it really possible to redeem, or buy back, wasted hours and days in our past? If not, what does *redeeming the time* mean?
304. Has there ever been a time when the saints could truly say, "The days are good"?

Paraphrase

15. See then that you, upon whom Christ now shines, walk carefully, according to Christ's teachings, not as unwise men, but as wise,
16. making prudent use of every moment, so that by zeal and well-doing you shall purchase the time for the Lord's services. For the days are evil, and there are many temptations to use our time foolishly.

Notes (5:15, 16)

1. *Redeeming the time* does not carry the idea of living for Christ so energetically that we can buy back wasted hours and days of the past. That is impossible. Rather, it is the present moment that we are to redeem (or purchase). With zeal and well-doing as purchase money, we can buy up the moments so as to make them our own. Then on the day of judgment when we give account of the use of our time, it will be on the credit side of our account.

2. Beware of any inclination to call the days *good*. We still live in an *untoward generation* (Acts 2:40). The churches may have more members than ever before, but even with all these members the population has grown faster than the churches. Furthermore, much of our modern "churchianity" is only a form of godliness, and not the real thing. We shall never be able to make a paradise of this sin-cursed world until the Lord returns. Dark pictures are painted in the Scriptures of the condition of the world in the latter days (II Timothy 3:1-5; Matthew 24:37-39). There is no ground for confidence in any social gospel that thinks it can transform the whole world into a paradise. We have great confidence in the power of the gospel. But not all men living at any one time have ever accepted the gospel.

Fact Questions

270. How are we to walk, according to 5:15?
 271. What is the mental condition of those who walk carefully?
 272. What are we to be doing to the time? What does this mean?
 273. What is the condition of the days (or times)?

Text (5:17)

17 Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Thought Questions (5:17)

305. Is there any connection between the days being evil (5:16) and our being foolish?
 306. How can we understand what the will of the Lord is?

Paraphrase

17. Because the old days are evil, and are filled with great temptations, we must constantly beware of foolish, ungodly, time-wasting conduct. Instead, let us keep before our minds at all times that which is the will of the Lord, namely to abstain from all the works of darkness.

Fact Questions

274. What are we not to be, according to 5:17?
 275. What are we to understand?

Text (5:18-20)

18 And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; 19 speaking one to another (or, to yourselves) in psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father

Thought Questions (5:18-20)

307. Can you think of any similarities between the effects of wine and of the Spirit? What difference is there in their effects?
308. What is the *riot* which is connected with the use of wine?
309. What is the difference, if any, between a *psalm*, a *hymn*, and a *spiritual song*?
310. Does the command to use psalms suggest that we ought to make a greater use of the Old Testament Psalms than most of us do nowadays?
311. Is the act of "giving thanks" connected with the singing?
312. Why give thanks in the name of Jesus Christ? Are we so utterly unworthy that we cannot even offer thanks to God except through the name of Jesus?

Paraphrase

18. And be not drunken with wine, as the heathen do in their rituals and revelries, for in wine comes debauchery of manners (fornications, brawlings, riots); but rather be filled with the Holy Spirit.
19. Instead of singing lewd songs, be speaking to one another with psalms such as David wrote, and hymns, and spiritual songs, thus singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;
20. giving thanks also at all times for all things that befall you, whether pleasant or hard, offering the thanks through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ to God, the Father.

Notes (5:18-20)

1. The *riot* that comes through wine drinking refers to the loose type of behavior brought on by wine. The word *riot* (in a

slightly different form) is used to describe the activities of the prodigal son when he left his father's home (compare Luke 15:13 with Luke 15:30).

2. There are some similarities between the effects of wine and the effects of being filled with the Spirit. The apostles were accused of being filled with wine; (cp. Acts 2:1-13).

Similarities between the effects of wine and the Spirit:

(1) Both afford satisfaction from without.

- a. The satisfaction of wine proves to be a mockery. Though it promises escape from reality, it only pulls one down into greater misery (Proverbs 20:1).
- b. The satisfaction furnished by the Spirit never brings regrets.

(2) Both bring feelings of joy.

- a. Wine produces a temporary exhilaration (Esther 1:10).
- b. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit, but it is not just a temporary blessing (Galatians 5:22).

(3) Those who are filled with either the Spirit or with wine always attract attention. Those filled with the Spirit are usually noticed at once because of their good behavior, and what they talk about.

(4) Both wine and the Spirit bring out a person's true, but sometimes hidden, character.

- a. Wine brings out all the bad character, the hidden hoards of wickedness, removing the restraints of conscience, so that lust, pride, and meanness are brought out into the open.
- b. The Spirit brings out hidden treasures of goodness. We have seen many cases where the Holy Spirit brought out fine hidden talents that people hardly knew they had.

3. Some have suggested that the command to speak to one another may refer to singing alternately (or antiphonally), a custom which was early practiced in the church.

4. The Revised Version margin translates 5:19a, "speaking to yourselves" in psalms, etc. This is a permissible translation. This reading suggests that we are to have so much of the Spirit and the music of Zion in our souls, that we will speak to ourselves with spiritual music. It is very fine for people to be humming, or whistling some spiritual song to themselves.
5. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon tells us that *psalms* were songs which took their general character from the Old Testament psalms, though not limited to them. The leading idea of the word "psalm" is *musical accompaniment*. "Hymns" are praise to God. "Spiritual songs" refer to any type of song, whether accompanied or unaccompanied, whether of praise or on any other subject.

(See Special Study II in back of the book, concerning the meaning of *Psalmos* and *Psallo*.)

6. It would be wrong to argue that if "psalms" are accompanied songs that we must therefore sing all music in church worship to instrumental accompaniment. We are also commanded to use hymns and spiritual songs, and these terms do not necessarily include instrumental music.

No one says that all church music has to be accompanied. But it is wicked to disfellowship and condemn those who do use it.

7. When we use psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, we must sing and make melody *with our hearts*. It does no good to mouth words when we sing, unless the words are the thoughts of our heart. The phrase "with the heart" indicates that the words are to originate in and come from our heart. In the Bible the "heart" includes the intellect, the emotions, the will, and the conscience. Whether we sing unaccompanied or make melody with an instrument, it must be done with the heart. We should sing and make melody with understanding, true feeling, and desire to please God.

We find no Scriptural example where the word "heart" means "enthusiasm." Singing with the heart therefore does not mean enthusiastic singing, although such singing is often desirable.

8. We cannot use Ephesians 5:19 to prove that instrumental music *in worship* is either right or wrong. For the whole paragraph (5:18-21) has no reference whatever to worship services, but to our daily "walk." (5:15)

"Singing" and "making melody" are two of a whole list of activities that we should do in order to walk as wise men. The list also includes "giving thanks" (5:20), and "submitting yourselves one to another."

No one would say that "giving thanks" or "submitting ourselves" are commands that apply only to what we do in worship services, or any other limited time. "Singing" and "making melody" apply to exactly the same activities as "giving thanks." They are not limited to what is done in worship services, nor are they excluded from applying to worship services.

9. Besides singing, another action of those who are filled with the Spirit is *giving thanks always* for all things. We can thank God by singing, but thanksgiving is not limited to that which is sung.

It is a humbling thought, but this verse suggests that we are so unworthy that we cannot approach God, *even to thank Him*, except in the name of Christ.

Fact Questions

276. Paul says, "Be not drunken with wine, wherein is....."
277. With what are we to be filled, rather than being filled with wine?
278. With what three types of music are we to speak one to another?
279. What are *psalms*?
280. With what are we to sing and make melody?
281. Through Whom are we to give thanks?

Previewing in Outline Form (5:21-33)

- C. Subject yourselves one to another. 5:21-6:9.
1. The command. 5:21.

2. Wives and husbands. 5:22-33.
 - a. Wives to be subject unto husbands. 5:22-24, 33b.
 - (1) As unto the Lord. 5:22.
 - (2) The husband is head of the wife. 5:23.
 - (3) The wife is to be subject to the husband as the church is to Christ. 5:24.
 - (4) The wife is to fear her husband. 5:33b.
 - b. Husbands to love their wives. 5:25-33a.
 - (1) As Christ loved the church. 5:25-27.
 - (a) He gave himself up for it. 5:25-27.
 - ((1)) That He might sanctify it.
 - ((2)) That He might present the church to Himself.
 - (b) He nourishes and cherishes it. 5:29b-30.
 - (c) The first marriage contained a mystery regarding Christ and the church. 5:31-32.
 - (2) As their own bodies. 5:28-29a, 33a.
 - (a) He that loves his wife loves himself. 5:28b.
 - (b) No man ever hated his own flesh. 5:29a.
 - (c) Each to love his own wife as himself. 5:33a.

Text (5:21)

21 subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.

Thought Questions (5:21)

313. What is the virtue of being subject one to another?
314. If everyone is subject to everyone else, who will have authority?
315. What does the fear of Christ have to do with our being subject to one another?

Paraphrase

21. With respect to your duties one to another, you must be subjecting yourselves to one another, according to the various relationships in which you stand to one another. And this you must do because you fear the authority of Christ who has appointed these relationships.

Notes (5:21)

1. This verse begins a new section in the outline entitled, "Subject yourselves one to another." The general principle is laid down in this verse that we must be subject to one another; then in the development that follows it becomes obvious that what is meant is that we are to be subject according to the various positions we occupy in life. Specifically, the wife is to be subject to the husband, the child to the parent, and the slave to the master.
2. The duty to be *subjecting yourselves one to another* is parallel to *giving thanks* in 5:20. However, the matter of subjecting ourselves occupies such a long section in the text (it goes to 6:9), that we list it as a separate duty.
3. We do have ranks and positions of required subjection in this world. A Communist state where everyone is supposed to be perfectly equal is a slave state. Unless we are willing to be subject where subjection is proper, chaos will result.
4. Many of the Christians in the first century had unbelieving husbands, parents, or masters. The Christians were not to get unwarranted ideas of freedom and independence, and begin to disregard legitimate authority over them.

Fact Questions

282. What is the heading of section 5:21-6:9 in the outline?

Text (5:22-24)

22 *Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.* **23** *For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body.* **24** *But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything.*

Thought Questions (5:22-24)

316. Do women have to be subject to men generally, or just to their own husbands?
317. Does the husband have authority to lord it over his wife, and force her to be in subjection?
318. Has the emancipation of women gone so far that they are no longer in subjection as the Scriptures' command? Should we have scrapped the phrase "love, honor, and obey," from the marriage vows?

319. What lesson should husbands learn from the fact that Christ's headship over the church is accompanied by His being Saviour of the body?
320. Is the husband to be regarded as being as omniscient (all-wise) as the Lord? How can the wife be a helper, and yet be in subjection?
321. Is there any limitation upon the authority of the husband over the wife? How far does "Be subject in everything" go?

Paraphrase

22. Considering the duties of mutual subjection in particular, wives, be subject to your own husbands in the same manner that you are subject to the Lord Jesus.
23. For the husband is the head of the wife and is entitled to direct her, even as Christ is the head of the church. However, Christ is a very kind head, being also the saviour of the body.
24. But as the church is subject to Christ in everything, let also the wives be subject to their own husbands in everything.

Notes (5:22-24)

1. Certainly no church member resents being in subjection to Christ. If husbands were what they should be, no wife should resent being in subjection to her husband. Remember that the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. The man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man. (I Corinthians 11:8-9; Colossians 3:18; I Peter 3:1-6).
2. Nonetheless, when all reasonable causes for subjection (such as care, kindness, wisdom, etc.) are absent, the wife is still to be subject to the husband *as unto the Lord*. "Let her not leave her husband" (I Corinthians 7:13).
3. The wife's subjection does not mean that she has no moral or personal dignity. Her subjection is not servile. She is entitled to respect. She was created to be a helper, not a slave. Her service should not have to be done with fear and trembling. The husband has no authority to speak bitterly against her (Colossians 3:19). He has no authority to beat or abuse her.

Fact Questions

283. A woman's subjection to her husband is like her subjection to whom?
284. What organic relationship does the husband bear to the wife that Christ also bears to the church (5:23)?
285. Christ is indeed head of the church, but what other relation does He have to the body (5:23)?
286. In what things are the wives to be subject to their husbands (5:24)?

Text (5:25, 26)

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; 26 that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word.

Thought Questions (5:25, 26)

322. Whose example is a husband to imitate in his love for his wife?
323. Is the husband expected to give himself up for his wife?
324. Christ desired to *sanctify* the church (5:26). Is this something that is done at one time, or something that requires a lifetime? When and how are we sanctified? (See I Corinthians 6:11.)
325. To what does the *washing of water* refer? What reasons or supporting Scriptures can you give for your answer?
326. How does the word go along with the washing of water?

Paraphrase

25. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church so much that he was willing to give himself up and die for her.
26. Christ gave himself for the church that he might sanctify (purify and consecrate) her through the washing of water in baptism, and this is done wherever the word is taught.

Notes (5:25, 26)

1. "Wouldst thou that thy wife should obey thee as the church obeys Christ? Do thou then care for her, as Christ for the church, even if thou must lay down thy life for her — shrink not, shouldst thou suffer even this. Thou hast not yet matched all that which Christ hath done. For thou doest this after thou hast already won her, but he sacrificed himself for her

that turned away from him and hated him; and when she was thus disposed, he brought her to his feet not by threats, or insults, or terror, or any such thing, but by this great solicitude. So do thou conduct thyself toward that wife of thine. - - - Her that is the partner of thy life, the mother of thy children, the spring of thy joy, thou must not bind by terror and threats, but by love and gentleness." (Chrysostom)

2. The love of husband for wife is not that of passion, but of soul-love.
3. The church is to be sanctified as a result of Christ's sufferings. Because He died, we may be made righteous in the sight of God. The bride-groom relationship with Christ is the strongest possible reason for godly life on the part of the church.
4. The *washing of water* has been interpreted as referring to baptism by most commentators, both ancient and modern. (Compare Hebrews 10:22, and Titus 3:5) There have been some advocates of salvation by faith only who have tried to prove that the water mentioned here does not refer to baptism, and that Christian baptism has nothing to do with salvation or sanctification. Such interpretations are obviously not an effort to present what the Scriptures say, but to prove by the Scriptures the doctrines that one already believes.
5. It is plainly inferred in verse 26 that the entire church has been baptized.
6. *With the word* is literally translated *in word*. Wherever the Word of God has been taught, there Christ has cleansed the church by the washing of water. This plainly indicates that hearing and believing the Word must precede baptism.
This interpretation of *with the word* is in accord with Mark 16:15-16, which describes the process of salvation as being (1) preaching the gospel (or the Word), (2) faith, (3) baptism, (4) salvation.
7. The tense (aorist) of *having cleansed* indicates that the cleansing is one specific action, rather than a progressive cleansing. This cleansing, or sanctification, takes place when we are baptized.

Fact Questions

287. What is the essential duty of husbands to wives?
288. How much did Christ love the church?
289. By what is the church sanctified?

290. How is the phrase *with the word* literally translated? What part does the word have in our being cleansed?

Text (5:27)

27 that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Thought Questions (5:27)

327. What did Christ do that He might present the church to Himself? (See 5:25-26.)
328. When will the church be presented to Christ?
329. What distinction would you make between a *spot* and a *wrinkle*? Applying these terms to the church, what might be called a *spot*, and what might be called a *wrinkle*?
330. Is the church to put on her own wedding garments, or is she to be adorned by the Lord (Revelation 19:7-8)?
331. When, if ever, will the church be without spot or wrinkle?

Paraphrase

27. Christ cleanses the church by the washing of water with the word for this purpose: that he may at his second coming present the church to himself, glorious, not in material garments, but in the beauty of righteousness, a church not having spot from external defilement, nor wrinkle from lack of care of her garments, but that it should be holy and without any blemish.

Notes (5:27)

1. The church shall be presented to Christ at His second coming (I Thessalonians 4:16-17).
2. The church in this world will never become faultless. But since salvation is a gift of grace, and not a matter of merit and moral perfection, the church will be caught up to her bridegroom without spot or wrinkle, washed white in the blood of the Lamb.

Without spot or wrinkle may refer to the perfection of the bodies of the saints, as well as to their spirits. Our present mortal bodies cannot inherit the kingdom of God. But when we are caught up with the Lord we shall have been transformed in body (I Corinthians 15:51-52).

3. It is pure delight to be joined to Christ as a bride to a husband. The joy of being married to Christ is rapturously pictured in the Song of Solomon and in Isaiah 62:4-5. We can call ourselves *Beulah*, which means *Married*.

Fact Questions

288. What kind of a church does Christ desire to present to Himself?
 289. What defects is the church not to have when she is presented to Christ?

Text (5:28-30)

28 Even so ought husbands to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself: 29 for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church; 30 because we are members of his body.

Thought Questions (5:28-30)

332. Is the husband to love his wife in the same degree as he loves his own body? Or is he to love her as being a part of his body? What is the difference between the two ideas?
 333. How can it be that he that loves his wife loves himself?
 334. How does Christ *nourish* the church?
 335. Is the church married to Christ, or just engaged to Him?

Paraphrase

28. Seeing that Christ loved the church so much that he gave himself up for it, men ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. Indeed, the one who loves his wife loves himself, for she is as much a part of him as his own flesh.
 29. And no one ever hated his own flesh, as a man would be doing if he did not love his wife. Rather, a man feeds his flesh to maturity and keeps it warm, just as Christ also nourishes and cherishes the church.
 30. For we, the members of the church, are members of Christ's body, even as a husband and wife are one body.

Notes (5:28-30)

1. Husbands are not to love their wives in the same degree that they love their own bodies, but they are to love their wives as being one body with themselves. The wife is part of the

husband. The two are one flesh. The idea that the two are one makes love a compelling necessity, and not just a matter of condescension.

2. *Nourish* means to feed, feed to maturity, support, etc. Cherish means to warm, keep warm, to cherish with tender love.
3. It is a priceless thought to consider that Christ nourishes the church and cherishes her with the same warmth that a husband loves his wife. But indeed He does this, because we are members of His body, even as a husband and wife are one body. Christ nourishes the church with daily bread and food for the soul.
4. The phrase in the King James Version, *of his flesh and of his bones* is not found in the best and oldest manuscripts of the Bible. Therefore it is not included in the text of the Revised Version.
5. We may be members of the *body of Christ*. But the body (the church) does not exercise the authority of Christ. The head is the seat of all the authority. The body is subject in all things to the head. The church is not an authoritarian institution. (See notes on 1:20-23.)
6. The church is technically only engaged to Christ. The marriage supper of the Lamb is yet to come (II Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:7), but in Bible times the engagement was practically as binding as the marriage.

Fact Questions

290. Husbands are to love their wives as their own.....
291. He that loveth his wife loveth
292. What two things does a man do for his own flesh that he should do for his wife?
293. Christ nourishes and cherishes the church because we are what (5:30)?

Text (5:31-32)

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. 32 This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church.

Thought Questions (5:31-32)

336. What was the background of the original decree commanding that a man should leave his father and mother (Genesis 2:21-24)?
337. What was the original cause for which a man was commanded to leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife (Matthew 19:4-5)?
338. How could the original command to Adam have had reference to Christ and the church when the church was not in existence at that time?
339. What does the expression, *the two shall become one flesh* mean (Compare I Corinthians 6:16.)
340. Why is the relationship between Christ and the church called a *mystery*? Would you have ever imagined that Adam and Eve's marriage was designed to represent the relation between Christ and the church?
341. Can Christ be said to have left His Father for His wife?

Paraphrase

31. Now because God created mankind male and female, they were enjoined that the man should leave his father and mother and be inseparably united to his wife, being joined in fleshly union and in spiritual union.
32. This relationship between Adam and Eve contained a great mystery, a hidden meaning not originally made known, namely that their marriage relationship was not spoken only of them, but had reference to the relationship between Christ and the church.

Notes (5:31-32)

1. It is almost staggering to find that the original marriage of Adam and Eve was designed to represent the relationship between Christ and the church. But there are many points of resemblance:
 - a. Eve was taken from the side of Adam. The church in like manner came from the side of Christ, for the church was purchased with His blood, which came from His side.
 - b. Man was told to forsake parents for his bride. Christ forsook heaven to come to earth to win His bride.
 - c. Adam loved Eve. Christ loves the church.
 - d. There was only one wife for Adam (Malachi 2:15-16), only one bride, one church, for Christ (Ephesians 4:4).

- e. The marriage of Adam and Eve was permanent for their lifetime. The marriage of Christ and the church will be permanent for their lifetime, eternity,
2. When we stop to think about it, it is hard to conceive of any reason why Eve should have been made from the rib of Adam unless God intended to illustrate the relation between Christ and the church. Eve could have been made from the dust as Adam was (and presumably the animals also). However, the appropriateness of the manner in which she was made becomes evident when we realize that it pictures the manner in which Christ produced the church,
 3. The union between the Lord and His people was first conceived, then marriage was devised and employed as an illustration of the relationship. Marriage was not created first, and then later used as an illustration of the union of Christ and the church.
 4. *Cleave to* means to "glue upon, glue to, join one's self closely to." When two pieces of wood are well glued together, the wood will break before the glue-joint does. Likewise in the marriage bond, the husband or wife should die before the marriage bond breaks.
 5. The Vulgate (Latin Bible) says in 5:32 *sacramentum hoc magnum est*, which means, "This is a great sacrament." Upon this erroneous translation of "This mystery is great," the Roman church has proclaimed that marriage is one of the sacraments of the church. By controlling the marriages of its people, the Roman church holds an almost unbreakable grip upon the lives of its members.

Fact Questions

294. To whom, and when, was the statement first made, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother"?
295. What is the significance of the verb, *cleave*?
296. The application of Genesis 2:24 to Christ and the church is called a great

Text (5:33)

33 Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she fear her husband.

Thought Questions (5:33)

342. Does the fact that Genesis 2:24 has reference to Christ and the church exclude its application to husbands and wives?
 343. What degree of fear is a wife to have toward her husband?

Paraphrase

33. Notwithstanding the fact that the original marriage decree was intended to show the relation of Christ and his church, its application to human marriage remains unaffected, and thus each man must love his own wife as being part of himself, and likewise let the wife take care to reverence and obey her husband.

Notes (5:33)

1. Marriage is regulated by divine commandments. The husband MUST love his wife. The wife MUST be in subjection to her husband. They MUST cleave together as long as they both shall live. To do otherwise is sin.
2. The fact that Genesis 2:24 had reference to Christ and the church certainly does NOT exclude its application to husbands and wives.
3. See the notes on 5:28 concerning the identity of the wife with her husband, and the consequent necessity of the husband loving his wife as himself.
4. *Fear* — The wife is not expected to fear her husband as a slave fears a tyrannical master, but rather as the church fears Christ. This is a blend of respect, love, gratitude and subjection.

Fact Questions

297. Accordng to 5:33, the wife is to her husband.