

The Church the Bride of Christ

The New Testament uses many figures of speech in its teaching about the church. By comparing the church to things that we already know about, the Bible makes known the significance and importance of the church. In Eph. 5:22-32, Paul compares the relationship of a husband and wife to the relationship between Christ and the church. This passage emphasizes several important truths.

First, Christians are married to Christ. When we become dead to the law of sin and death, we are joined to (marry) Christ. “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to [marry, KJV] another, (even) to him who was raised from the dead (Rom 7:4).”

Second, as a husband, Christ loved the church. Using the example of husband and wives, Paul wrote,

Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, 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 (Eph. 5:25-27).

Third, as the husband, Christ is head over the church. “For the husband is the head of the wife, and Christ also is the head of the church, *being* himself the saviour of the body (Eph 5:23).”

Fourth, the church is subject to Christ, the head. “Wives, (be in subjection) unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. But as the church is subject to Christ, so (let) the wives also (be) to their husbands in everything (Eph. 5:24).”

Fifth, Christ and the church join as one. “. . . Because we are members of his body. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church (Eph. 5:30-32).”

Sixth, the bride of Christ is the New Jerusalem, the heavenly city. “I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven of God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:2).

Finally, as one, Christ and the church act together to call us home: “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely (Rev 22:17).”