

CHRIST, THE HUSBAND'S EXAMPLE

EPHESIANS 5:25-27

by

Ronald E. Boehm

Submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of Master of Divinity in
Grace Theological Seminary
May 1978

Title: CHRIST, THE HUSBAND'S EXAMPLE
Author: Ronald E. Boehm
Degree: Master of Divinity
Date: May, 1978
Advisor: Dr. Paul Fink

Ephesians 5:25-27 commands husbands to love (ἀγαπάτε) their wives just as Christ loved (ἡγάπησεν) the Church and gave (παρέδωκεν) Himself for her that He might sanctify her . . . and present her to Himself. Interpreters have minimized the value of the comparison Paul employs by intentionally or negligently refusing to relate the παρέδωκεν clause to the initial command, ἀγαπάτε. It is the purpose of this study to demonstrate that Paul intended the παρέδωκεν clause in its entirety to aid the original hearers' understanding of the initial command.

There is no evidence that παρέδωκεν is parenthetical. Grammatically speaking, both verbs, ἡγάπησεν and παρέδωκεν are cradled between καθώς and οὕτως, being connected by καί. Hermeneutically the main verbs ought to be considered as a unit because the basic comparison is with the subject of the verbs, namely Christ. Biblical comparisons also demonstrate that παρέδωκεν is not an unusual addition or an unnecessary expansion of the text and therefore should not be reckoned as a divergency from the subject under discussion.

The imagery which Paul employs in the παρέδωκεν clause maintains a marriage theme. This clause has often been used to expound the bridal relationship Christ has with the Church. Comparing the wedding customs of the first century and the flow of events pictured in the simile, it becomes obvious that Paul is still interested in the marriage theme. Therefore, παρέδωκεν, while illustrating Christ's past, present, and future love for the Church, also suggests the kind of love husbands ought to have for their wives.

The historical setting would not have allowed Paul to make such an odd demand of husbands without some kind of explanation as to what he specifically intended. Husbands were not instructed by society to love their wives, their subordinates. If Paul's intentions were to teach the great doctrine of the Church and Christ, he would not have employed such an unusual means, ἀγαπάτε.

Therefore, the language of the text, the imagery employed in the text, and the historical setting of the text demonstrates that παρέδωκεν illustrates and explains the kind of love a husband should show towards his wife.

Accepted by the Faculty of Grace Theological Seminary
in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree
Master of Divinity

Paul R. Smith

Advisor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	The Need of the Study	
	The Text of the Study	
	The Intent of the Study	
	The Procedure for the Study	
	The Pertinent Literature Relating to the Study	
	The Presuppositions of the Study	
II.	THE LANGUAGE OF THE TEXT	19
	The Comparative Structure	
	The Compound Structure	
III.	THE IMAGERY OF THE TEXT	30
	The Wedding Customs of the First Century	
	Relating the Historical Background to the Text	
IV.	THE HISTORICAL SETTING OF THE TEXT . . .	43
	The Roles of Men and Women	
	The Current Ethical Teachings Regarding Husbands and Wives	
	Summary	
V.	CONCLUSION	61
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	65

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Need of the Study

Socially

At the present time there is a great deal of pressure upon the American home. Husbands and wives are abandoning their roles as they relate to each other and searching for some other way to find fulfillment in life. Divorce rates continue to climb.¹ Social trends have not left the church untouched, for many within the ranks of Christianity are struggling with the institution of marriage. There was a time when divorce was a shameful thing even outside the "religious" circle; today, it is not uncommon at all to find regular pew warmers approaching the judge's bench for a divorce. Many pastors today find their time being devoted more and more to marriage counseling.

¹Divorces per 1000 people in the U.S.--before 1940, less than 2.0; 1969, 3.2; 1970, 3.5; 1971, 3.7; 1972, 4.1; 1973, 4.4; 1974, 4.6; 1975, 4.8. U.S. Dept. of HEW, Vital Statistics of the United States, vol. 3, "Marriage and Divorce" (Rockville, Maryland, 1977), pp. 2-5; and U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the U.S., 1976 (Bureau of the Census, 1976).

Undoubtedly the American home is on shakey ground; marriage as an institution is being challenged.

There has been a growing surge of interest in the rights of women. The Equal Rights Amendment has promised "liberty" to the women of today. Many do not want to be considered in any way inferior to their counterpart, man. The "submission" of the wife to the husband in the home is regarded as a thing of the past, even disgusting. Along with this trend has come a surge of material for the Christian woman of today seeking to instruct her about her proper role in the home. Women meet for special Bible studies in this area of life. Pastors preach on the role of women in the home. But what about the man's role in the home? Shall it be concluded that because there is no great social movement to protect his rights that he is doing a good job and that it is only the women who are having difficulties?

On the contrary, because of the current sociological trends it is actually the men who are having greater problems in regard to knowing their role in the home. The men of today feel that they should lead the home and provide for it, but they are certainly not sure how that is to be done. Hence many men spend their time trying to land a good-paying job (or two), thinking

that a sufficient paycheck will acquire for them the chair of leadership and respect in the home.

Does it work? Well, not very often. It takes more than a paycheck and steady work to hold a husband and wife together. The question is, "What is the role of the man in the home, really?" This study will seek to answer this question as it is expounded from Ephesians 5:25-27. As a result of this study the understanding of the husband's role in the home should be greatly extended so that people in the world of today may understand God's design for marriage, and specifically the man's role in that relationship.

Biblically

Biblically there is a need for a study of this passage because many interpreters have failed to relate properly the doctrinal matters of the passage with the practical exhortation.

Some interpreters¹ err by dismissing the practical teaching directed to the husbands by claiming that such instruction was already a common understanding of the times and that the writer of Ephesians

¹George A. Buttrick, The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1953), pp. 716-22; Edgar J. Goodspeed, The Meaning of Ephesians (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1933), p. 61; Clyde K. Landrum, "The Washing of Water by the Word" (Bachelor of Divinity Thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1948), p. 14.

was merely trying to expound more doctrinal dogma regarding the church.

Other interpreters¹ neglect to relate the glorious doctrinal matters regarding Christ's love and care for the Church, His Bride, to the controlling interest of the context, namely the husband's love for his wife, a practical matter. Ephesians 5:25-27 beautifully, uniquely, and eloquently expounds the "bride" relationship which the Church has with Jesus Christ, but the interpreter must be careful to explain these matters in light of the command, "Husbands, love your wives."

Throughout this study of the Bible a proper balance of doctrine and practical exhortation must be kept. Clarity must be made as to why the writer of Ephesians included such a lengthy doctrinal treatment amidst such practical instruction for everyday life.

¹T. K. Abbott, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897), p. 174; Charles Hodge, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1856), p. 308; Homer A. Kent, Jr., The Glory of the Church (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971), p. 105; R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians and to the Philippians (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1937), p. 636.

Personally

There is a hope to gain a better understanding of what is the role of a man in the home and how that can best be fulfilled. The pastor is continually in view of those to whom he ministers. His people watch him, observing not only his life style but also his life attitudes. The sheep are worthy of a good shepherd who can lead them by example. A pastor will teach more regarding the man in the home by actual fulfillment of that role than by what is said about it. The Scriptures therefore require that a pastor be firmly established in the Christian life regarding his family relationships.¹

Hence this writer wants to improve his understanding of the Word of God in Ephesians 5:25-27. He desires to improve not only his own life, but also the lives of those he leads. The meaning of this text seems to go beyond a simple love. The question is how far beyond does it go?

The Text of the Study

A Historical Construction of the Text

The Ephesian letter is one of four letters believed to have been written by Paul while he was in

¹1 Tim. 3:1-7; Ti. 1:5-9.

his first Roman imprisonment during the early 60s.¹

The letter seems to have been written not only to the church at Ephesus, but also to all the churches of Asia as a circular letter.²

Ephesus was a prominent city of Asia Minor, having an active seaport at the time and possessing one of the seven wonders of the world--the temple of Artemis.

Paul first arrived in the city about A.D. 53.³ During 200 B.C. Ephesus was the most crowded city of Anatolia; from 50 B.C. to A.D. 150 it was a most prosperous city.⁴ During the first century the city built a theater (A.D. 41-54),⁵ a stadium (A.D. 54-68),⁶ and a gymnasium and baths (A.D. 81-96).⁷ The long standing temple of Artemis was the largest edifice in the Hellenic world and also the first architectural work

¹Everett F. Harrison, Introduction to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), p. 321.

²Ibid., p. 332.

³George E. Bean, Aegean Turkey (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1966), p. 165.

⁴Ekrem A. Kurgal, Ancient Civilizations and Ruins of Turkey (Istanbul, 1973), p. 143.

⁵Ibid., p. 158. ⁶Ibid., p. 155.

⁷Ibid., p. 157.

of monumental proportions ever constructed entirely of marble.¹

During Paul's first visit to Ephesus he encountered the Jews in the synagogue there (Acts 18:18-21). Priscilla and Aquila came there with him; it was at Ephesus that they ministered to Apollos (Acts 18:24-28).

Paul had a great ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19) lasting for a period of three years (Acts 19:31). He knew the people there well and was deeply touched, along with the others, when he departed from them for the last time (Acts 20:17-38).

Paul was very much involved with the intended readers of the text. He knew them, their ways, and their customs. He knew their interests and their ambitions. He knew how they thought and how best to teach them.

A Rendition of the Setting of the Text

Ephesians 5:25-27 is a portion of the instructions given to husbands, all of which is a part of Paul's specific exhortations to six groups of persons: wives and husbands, children and fathers, slaves and

¹Ibid., p. 147.

masters (Eph. 5:23-6:9). These specific exhortations immediately follow the command "be subject to one another in the fear of Christ" (Eph. 5:21), which sets the mood for the three couplets.

The book of Ephesians can be divided into two major portions, the second portion beginning with 4:1. The first three chapters of Ephesians are primarily doctrinal, discussing the calling and design of the church universal.¹ The second half, chapters 4-6, are hortatory, discussing the conduct and duty of the church.

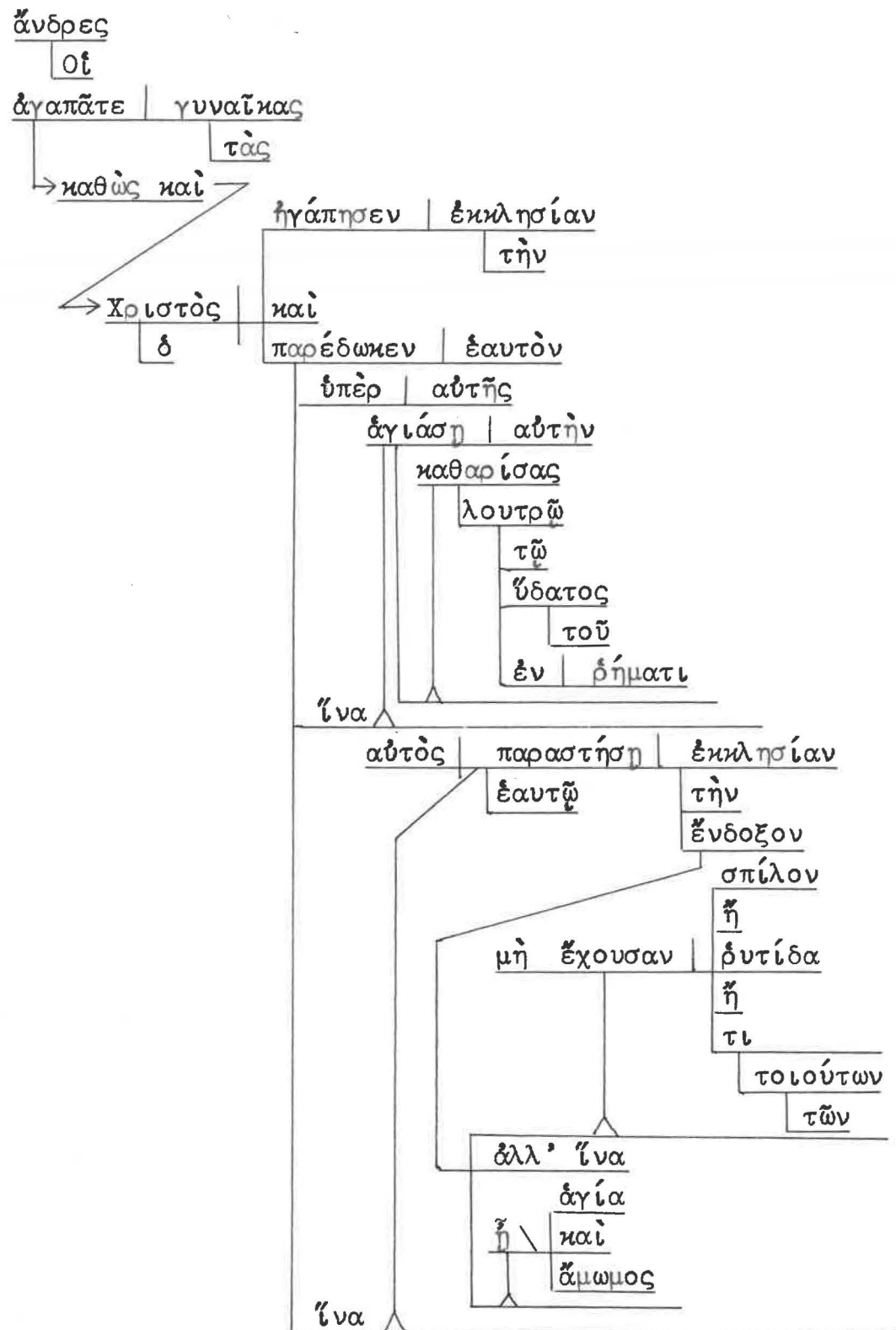
The second portion of the book describes and urges organic unity and growth into Christ (4:1-16), glorious renewal (4:17-6:9), and the effective armor (6:10-24). The portion exhorting Christians to renewal (4:17-6:9) can be segmented to regard all Christians in general (4:17-5:21) and the specific individuals classified (5:22-6:9).²

A Diagrammatical Analysis of the Text

(See following page.)

¹Lehman Strauss, Devotional Studies in Galatians and Ephesians (New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1957), p. 207.

²William Hendricksen, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1967), p. 248.



The Intent of the Study

Positively Speaking

The intention of this study is to propose three major considerations which will demonstrate that the purpose of the whole simile (καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς . . .) concerning Christ and the Church in Ephesians 5:25-27 is to enhance the understanding of the husband's responsibilities (ἀγαπᾶτε) to his wife. Some suggestions will be made in regard to his specific responsibilities.

Negatively Speaking

One may ask at this point what else could be derived from this simile? Here there emerges two problems, one much greater than the other. The lesser problem is that which some good Bible-believing teachers have with the text¹ who teach well the doctrine of the Church and Christ, but simply fail to expound the text fully by not relating that doctrine with the command, "Husbands, love your wives." The greater problem lies with those² who claim that the command to

¹Abbott, Critical Commentary on Ephesians; Hodge, Commentary on Ephesians; Kent, The Glory of the Church; Lenski, Interpretation of Ephesians.

²Buttrick, The Interpreter's Bible; Goodspeed, The Meaning of Ephesians.

husbands is really very small and insignificant in the eyes of the original author and what he actually wanted to say was in regards to the Church. Along with the latter view is the belief that the command to the husbands was not really new or profound in any way, but rather a well-known and commonly accepted ethic of the times.¹ Hence the writer merely "hung" his theology on a well-known oral teaching of the times so that his new doctrine could be expounded.

Interpreters have done various things with the simile before us. The intent of this study will be to reveal their error by exposing the proper purpose of the simile.

The Procedure for the Study

The procedure for this study will be to clarify and defend three major considerations regarding the overall thesis.

First, the language of the text demonstrates that an extended simile is being employed to enhance the husband's understanding of his role in the home. This aspect will consider some of the specific words used in the text, a study of other similes used by Paul, and a clarification of hermeneutical principles.

¹James E. Crouch, The Origin and Intention of the Colossian Haustafel (Goottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1972), p. 112.

Secondly, the imagery of the simile does not depart from the marriage theme, thereby maintaining the reader's interest in the husband's responsibilities to his wife. This aspect of the study will regard the current marriage customs of the day, the basic similarities and differences in the bride metaphor, and the significance of the position of *ἐαυτὸν* in the sentence.

Thirdly, the historical context would not allow the author to use the simile in any other way. This portion will consider the husband/wife relationship as it was in the world at that time by custom and the current ethical teaching of the times. Placed in that setting the command and comparison will be evaluated as to whether or not the author would have even considered using the command as a springboard into ecclesiastical doctrine.

The study will then be concluded with a summary of the responsibilities a husband has toward his wife based on Ephesians 5:25-27.

The Pertinent Literature Relating to This Study

Literature pertaining to this study, excluding general exegetical and explanatory aids, could be categorized in one of the following groups:

Hermeneutical Aids

Mickelsen,¹ Terry,² and Ramm,³ have produced good works dealing with the interpretation of Scripture. However, not enough has been written about the interpretation of similes and their application. Terry⁴ gives much more freedom than Mickelsen⁵ with the interpretation and application of similes. This study favors the Terry approach yet recognized the cautions that Mickelsen makes.

Historical Aids

Various authors were consulted in regards to the life and customs of the world at the time the letter of Ephesians was written. However, no author was found who specifically wrote about the life and times of the people of Ephesus during the first century A.D. Therefore, a study had to be made of the three cultures affecting the culture of Ephesus at that

¹Berkeby A. Mickelsen, Interpreting the Bible (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1963).

²Milton Terry, Biblical Hermeneutics (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.).

³Bernard Ramm, Protestant Biblical Interpretation (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1970).

⁴Terry, Biblical Hermeneutics, pp. 254-56.

⁵Mickelsen, Interpreting the Bible, p. 182.

time, namely: Roman, Greek and Jewish.¹ The contributions made by Becker,² Grimal,³ and Kurgal⁴ were especially helpful.

Critical Aids

Critical scholarship, especially that from Germany,⁵ has become very interested in what they call the "haustafel", which means, "a list of rules for the household", so named by Luther.⁶ Their attention focuses on certain passages⁷ which, they assume, have a common source. Their studies have exposed and analyzed the current teachings of the first century and related those teachings to the texts of Scripture.⁸ Though

¹Stuart A. Queen and John B. Adams, The Family in Various Cultures (Chicago: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1952), p. 149.

²Professor H. Becker, Charicles, trans. Frederick Metcalf, 3rd ed. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1889).

³Pierre Grimal, Love in Ancient Rome, trans. Arthur Train (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1967).

⁴Kurgal, Ancient Civilization of Turkey.

⁵Crouch, The Origin of the Haustafel.

⁶William Lillie, "The Pauline House-tables," The Expository Times, March 1975, p. 179.

⁷Col. 3:18-4:1; Eph. 5:21-6:9; 1 Pet. 2:18-3:7; Ti. 2:2-10, 3:1-8; 1 Tim. 2:1-15, 6:1; Rom. 13:1-7.

⁸Ibid.

their conclusions undermine the authenticity of the Scripture and therefore must be rejected, the historical evidence they bring forth has been helpful in determining the accepted role of the husband in the home during the first century.

Popular Writing

There is a growing concern in our society regarding the husband's role in the home. This concern is not limited to the realm of Christianity. Newsweek published an article on the changing roles of men.¹ There is a total lack of interest in the spiritual needs of husbands and wives among the non-Christian philosophy today. Whereas the typical husband of our society once regarded his wife as the one who was supposed to look pretty and stay home to take care of the children, now he is telling her to be herself and develop her life the best she can. It has been suggested that because of the surge of women's rights in the 60's there is yet to come an appeal for men's rights in the form of a man's liberation movement.² Needless to say, the popular non-Christian view of the

¹David Gelman, "How Men are Changing," Newsweek, January, 1978, pp. 52ff.

²Ibid., p. 55.

role of the husband in the home today does not consider him responsible in any manner for the spiritual well-being of his wife.

There are several good works on the market today written by "Christian" authors for men regarding their responsibilities in life, for example: For Men Only,¹ Man of Steel & Velvet,² and The Total Man.³ Though these works have many good principles for the Christian man, they are seldom exegetically based, having been written for the popular reader. In general these works support the headship of the husband in the home,⁴ and the man's responsibility to lead his wife spiritually,⁵ or at least be the spiritual example.⁶ In regard to Ephesians 5:21-33, Augsburger says that headship means "responsibility

¹J. Allan Petersen, ed., For Men Only (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1973).

²Aubrey P. Andelin, Man of Steel & Velvet (Santa Barbara, California: Pacific Press Santa Barbara, 1972).

³Dan Bensen, The Total Man (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1977).

⁴Andelin, Man of Steel, p. 62.

⁵David Augsburger, "Man, the Leader," in For Men Only, ed. J. Allan Petersen (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1973), p. 54.

⁶Bensen, The Total Man, p. 133.

and initiative: responsibility to act in love; initiative to act in service. As Christ acted in self-giving love and self-humbling service . . . , so husbands take the initiative in building an atmosphere of loving, self-sacrificing service."¹

This study will give an exegetical base for some of the principles taught by these popular writers. It will also relate the husband's responsibility to purify his wife morally and spiritually.

The Presuppositions of This Study

The Scriptures

The Bible is the Word of God which was given through men. It is without error or fault, and is given for the instruction of the children of God, those depending on Jesus Christ alone for their personal salvation.

Sound Hermeneutics

The interpreter of Scripture must explain the meaning of the text in regards to its original intent, using the "literal" means of deduction. To interpret the Scriptures literally means to assume the normal, historical, grammatical meaning of the words.

¹Augsburger, "Man, the Leader," p. 54.

Therefore, not only grammar, but history as well needs to play an important part in understanding the author's original intent. After the author's original intent is delineated, then one can determine the meaning of the text for today, based on his former study.

Former Studies

Former Studies do not have to be reiterated. The student of the Word can accumulate knowledge assuming it is well-proven. Specifically speaking, Clyde K. Landrum has adequately considered the problems of verse 26 regarding "the washing of the water with the word."¹

¹Landrum, "The Washing of Water by the Word."

CHAPTER II

THE LANGUAGE OF THE TEXT

The Comparative Structure

The overall structure indicates that the statement regarding Christ and the Church is to relate to the command addressed to the husbands by way of comparison. The command is given, Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπᾶτε τὰς γυναῖκας, and correlated with what is to follow by καθὼς καὶ. The statement is then made, ὁ Χριστὸς ἠγάπησεν . . . καὶ παρέδωκεν After the extended discussion of the Church and Christ's relationship with it, Paul then restates the controlling thought of the context by saying in verse 28, οὕτως ὀφείλουσιν καὶ οἱ ἄνδρες ἀγαπᾶν

Καθὼς καὶ, also used in Ephesians 4:17-20, another extended simile, often appears in the writing of Paul. It relates that which is being instructed or pronounced to that which is familiar to the readers by way of common knowledge or experience.

By virtue of its native demonstrative force, οὕτως refers to what precedes. It refers to similitudes and comparisons, and serves to adapt them to the

case at hand.¹ Thus working together, καθὼς . . . οὕτως point out to the reader the example that Christ is for the husband. Sandwiched between these two adverbial comparitives is an obvious simile.

Therefore, the overall context would indicate that what lies between the καθὼς and οὕτως relates specifically to the command given to the husbands, unless a portion of it is parenthetical, being totally non-related to the command, which is very unlikely since there are no grammatical indications of such a break in thought.

The Compound Structure

Connected by καὶ

The comparative statement regarding Christ and the Church is a compound sentence. The text says that the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for her Many commentators, such as Abbott,² Hodge,³ Kent,⁴ and Lenski,⁵ agree that the husband is to love his wife as Christ

¹Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Company, 1886), p. 468.

²Abbott, Critical Commentary on Ephesians,

³Hodge, Commentary on Ephesians,

⁴Kent, The Glory of the Church,

⁵Lenski, Interpretation of Ephesians,

loved the Church, but then they stop the comparison here, saying that the author of the passage got carried away with diversified thoughts about the Church, somewhat straying from his teaching about the husbands.

However, due to the grammatical structure of the immediate comparison, it is not right to divorce the love of Christ from the giving of Christ. These two verbs, ἡγάπησεν and παρέδωκεν are connected by καὶ. Hence there is a unity to the statement regarding Christ and the Church.

Related by καὶ

The question which arises at this point is how does one relate these two main verbs? Further, how do these main verbs relate to the husband's command to love his wife? Here are four possibilities.

One possibility is that ἀγαπᾶτε relates only to ἡγάπησεν; παρέδωκεν is an afterthought of no significance to ἀγαπᾶτε, but greatly significant to the author of the book for it is theological in nature and deals with the overall theme of the book, the Church.

A second possibility is that παρέδωκεν is a further description of ἡγάπησεν and adds to its character, but has little or nothing to do with the matter ἀγαπᾶτε. This possibility suggests that the doctrinal matters regarding Christ and the Church are greatly

related to Christ's love for the Church, but such doctrinal matters have nothing to do with the practical matters at hand.

A third possibility is that παρέδωκεν is fully equal with ἡγάπησεν in regards to ἀγαπάτε. Hence, ἡγάπησεν could be eliminated entirely and the sentence would make perfectly good sense.

A fourth possibility is that παρέδωκεν is a further description of ἡγάπησεν and adds to its character, thereby greatly affecting ἀγαπάτε, because the character of the love a husband should have for his wife should be similar to the character of the love Christ had for the Church.

To determine which of the above possibilities is best, some general observations will be made, Biblical hermeneutics will be consulted, and some Biblical parallels will be compared.

General observations and questions.--The first two possibilities above must be rejected because of the comparative structure of the context and because of the compound structure of the sentence itself.

The third possibility above is a grammatical possibility. However, for some reason Paul thought it necessary to repeat the word "love." Perhaps he wanted to avoid the thought that the husband could actually

crucify himself for his wife for the purpose of actually sanctifying her. In the strictest sense Christ's work could never be duplicated by someone else and actually made effective.

'Αγαπᾶτε and ἡγάπησεν are much more closely related to each other than to παρέδωκεν by virtue of their common root, ἀγαπάω, and by virtue of the repetition of the love theme in the context (see vv. 28,33). Also, it is possible that καὶ does not have a direct connective force, which is frequent in comparisons.¹ Therefore παρέδωκεν serves to explain ἡγάπησεν and enhances the reader's understanding of the command, ἀγαπᾶτε. The love concept has become a means to explain the general character and purpose of Christ's dealings with the Church, who in turn is an example, a general pattern for husbands to follow in regard to their wives. That is, husbands are to love their wives in the same manner in which Christ loved the Church, and in the same manner in which Christ gave Himself for the Church sacrificially for Her, that she might be made morally perfect.

¹Samuel G. Green, Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek New Testament (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1907), p. 340.

Biblical hermeneutics.--Biblical hermeneutics would also assert that there is a unity between ἀγαπάτε and παρέδωκεν. Due to the grammatical arrangement, both are displayed as a formal comparison with ἀγαπάτε, and together they comprise a simile, which is "a formal comparison between two different objects so as to impress the mind with some resemblance or likeness."¹

Mickelsen warns at this point not to become over-zealous and make a simile say more than it obviously intends to convey: "If you cultivate them too strenuously, they lose their beauty."² Hence many interpreters stop their instruction to the husbands with the word "love" and fail to apply that which follows in any way.

What then, is the purpose of this simile which is compounded in the predicate? Is παρέδωκεν really a meaningful part of the simile, or a diversion of thought from the real intent of the simile? Though it is true that the first verb of this compound simile is the same verbal root as that of the command, both verbs

¹Terry, Biblical Hermeneutics, p. 254.

²Mickelsen, Interpreting the Bible, p. 183.

have the same subject, ὁ Χριστός. The real comparison is not "love" to "love", but "Christ" to "husband", or "Leader" to "leader" (1 Cor. 11:3), and concerns that position in relation to the subordinate one. Therefore all that is in the predicate of this comparison, ἡγάπησεν καὶ παρέδωκεν, serves as an illustration for husbands.

Terry suggests that interpreters afford themselves the pleasures of the simile which are: (1) tracing the resemblances and differences, (2) enjoying the clearer view, the stronger impression, and (3) enjoying the new, and commonly splendid object, associated to the principle one of which is treated.¹ There is much a husband can learn about his responsibilities to his wife if he will but take the time to meditate on the doctrine of Christ's relationship with His Bride, the Church. Terry does not strictly limit the simile to one point of comparison; he suggests that there are many conclusions which can be drawn from a simile.

Therefore, hermeneutically speaking, ἡγάπησεν and παρέδωκεν are best related to ἀγαπάτε as a unit. Παρέδωκεν greatly enhances not only what the author meant by the love of Christ, but also what he meant by

¹Terry, Biblical Hermeneutics, p. 256.

the original command, ἀγαπᾶτε. The fourth possibility mentioned in the previous section would be favored with this understanding. Παρέδωκεν serves to explain ἡγάπησεν and adds to its character, thereby greatly affecting ἀγαπᾶτε.

Biblical comparisons.--Παρέδωκεν is not an unusual addition or an unnecessary expansion of the text. On the contrary it is not unusual for Paul to lengthen his similes for further explanation. Not only does Paul extend his similes, but also he and other New Testament writers commonly supplement the verb "love" with additional verbs and phrases. Such expansions and additions are given for the purpose of clarifying and explaining the controlling concept of the immediate text. Such expansions and additions should not be regarded as being parenthetical or diversive from the basic intent of the surrounding context.

Paul commonly added phrases to the basic verbs of his similes.¹ For example, note Ephesians 4:17-19. Paul is instructing the Ephesians how they should live (or "walk"). He employs a negative comparison; he tells them not to walk "as the Gentiles also walk." Paul then adds many additional phrases which further

¹Rom. 15:7; 1 Cor. 1:6-8; 1 Cor. 10:33; 2 Cor. 11:12; 1 Thes. 4:13.

explain what he means by the walk of the Gentiles:

"in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness."

These phrases, not only refer to the walk of the Gentiles, they also demonstrate by negation how the Christian should walk, which is the controlling thought of the context.

This same phenomenon is observed in Ephesians 5:25-27. Paul was not satisfied with simply stating that husbands should love their wives as Christ loved the Church; he added παρέδωκεν with its two explanatory "ἵνα" clauses. Such additions do not detract from the topic of the context, but rather add to it.

Not only does Paul add descriptive phrases to his basic similes, but sometimes he adds another verb.¹ In regard to this phenomenon, A. Van Roon comments:

The modal subordinate clauses introduced by ὡς or καθὼς, which are parallel to a principle sentence, subordinate clause, or an equivalent phrase, have much correspondence, in form and content, with the dominant sentence-part and repeat the verb On the basis of the conclusions reached by Norden,

¹ 1 Cor. 10:6-10; Eph. 5:2, 25; 1 Thes. 4:6.

this far reaching correspondence must be defined as non-Greek; for it is Semetic in character. This type of Semiticism is typical of Paul. In Ephesians 5:25 the parallel modal subordinate clause is followed by an additional καὶ ἑαυτὸν παρέδωκεν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς to reinforce the exhortation.¹

According to Van Roon's conclusions, παρέδωκεν has much correspondence, in form and content, with ἡγάπησεν, and it also reinforces ἀγαπᾶτε. Again it should be noted that there is no reason to regard παρέδωκεν and the following ἵνα clauses as divergent, but rather they should be considered explanatory and applicable to the husband's responsibility to his wife.

Finally, ἀγαπάω is commonly followed by another verb, being connected together by καὶ. This is very common with Paul,² as well as John.³ Love has many facets of meaning and many implications. Apparently, these New Testament writers deemed it necessary to supplement and expand their concept of love for the benefit of the readers. And so it is, Paul adds παρέδωκεν as a supplemental phrase for the purpose of explaining ἡγάπησεν and ἀγαπᾶτε.

¹A. Van Roon, The Authenticity of Ephesians (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), p. 133.

²Eph. 5:2; Gal. 2:20; 2 Thes. 2:16; Col. 3:19.

³Jn. 3:35; 1 Jn. 4:10, 5:2; Rev. 1:5.

These Biblical comparisons testify that there is good reason to regard παρέδωκεν and its ensuing ἵνα clauses as being a meaningful, supplementary addition to ἠγάπησεν which in turn helps clarify exactly what Paul's initial command, ἀγαπᾶτε, was meant to convey.

Conclusion

The specific structure of the simile, Biblical hermeneutics, and other New Testament comparisons demonstrate that παρέδωκεν with its ἵνα clauses is an integral part of the simile regarding Christ and the Church and ought to be understood as enhancing the intent of the controlling theme, ἀγαπᾶτε. Negatively speaking, παρέδωκεν must not be regarded as diversive in thought, far-removed, and irrelevant to the command made to the husbands. The manner in which Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for Her is certainly a model for the husbands to follow.

CHAPTER III

THE IMAGERY OF THE TEXT

The second reason why the simile in verses 25-27 is given to enhance the understanding of the husband is that the imagery of the simile does not depart from the theme of the husband's relationship to his wife. On the contrary, Paul incorporates into his exposition for the husband probably the most significant occasion between two persons, their wedding, that he might demonstrate to his readers precisely the role that the husband should perform for his wife.

Within the simile there exists another figure of speech, the metaphor. This cannot be detected from the main verbs used (ἡγάπησεν and παρέδωκεν), but appears in the explanatory "ἵνα" clauses which follow the second verb. The metaphor used, namely ἵνα ἀγιάσῃ . . . ἵνα παραστήσῃ . . . , incorporates wedding customs of the day and pictures Christ as the bridegroom and the Church as the bride. By so-doing Paul maintains the marital interest while discussing theological truths which are meant to edify the husband in regard to his responsibilities to his wife.

That the imagery used here might be better understood, the marital customs of the day will be examined and related to the metaphor, noting the similarities and differences.

The Wedding Customs of the First Century

There are possibly three (or more) cultures affecting the actual marital customs familiar to the Ephesian readers. There is the Roman culture, the Hebrew culture, and the Greek culture. Though Rome was the ruler of the world at this time, it does seem questionable whether or not the Ephesian people practiced the marital customs of Rome, since the passage shows a greater similarity with the Greek and/or Hebrew customs. Nevertheless, there is enough similarity between the three cultures to warrant a brief survey of each to demonstrate the universal character of the marriage customs of the day.

The Roman Wedding Customs

Betrothal.--Prior to any two people's marriage there had to be an agreement. Such was made either by those getting married or their fathers, depending on their social status at the time. Betrothal was not required by law in Rome but it was regarded as being in

good taste. Gifts were commonly exchanged at this time between the betrothed, a ring usually given.

Dowry.--"It was a point of honor with the Romans . . . for the bride to bring to her husband a dowry."¹ The dowry was provided either by the bride herself, or her father.

Preparation.--The day before the wedding was a special day for the bride. She removed those things (bulla and the toga Praetexta) which married women never wore and put on the tunica recta, or regilla. In the early morning of her wedding day, her mother would dress her for the occasion, especially giving attention to her hair.

Ceremony.--The husband was taken to the home of the bride early in the morning by relatives, friends, and clients. The guests often arrived at the bride's home before sunrise.

At the home of the bride there were two main activities. One was the ceremony proper. Included was the making of offerings to the gods, and the joining of hands. The second activity was the wedding feast, which lasted until evening.

¹Grimal, Love in Ancient Rome.

Bridal Procession.--After the wedding feast, the bride was taken to the bridegroom's house. This activity was never omitted so long as the couple had social standing. At this time the general public could join the procession. It was a joyous occasion with much singing. Upon the arrival of the procession, only the guests were allowed to enter the home. The bride wound the door posts with bands of wool, and then her husband carried her across the threshold.

So it was with the Roman marriage. Some of the details varied from wedding to wedding, but these were some of the more common practices.¹

The Hebrew Wedding Customs

Betrothal.--The choice of marriage among the Hebrews belonged to the parents or guardians of the couple to be married. Betrothal was entered upon by legal agreement, being finalized by the dowry. The parents may have planned to marry their children to each other while they were yet young, but the betrothal was not performed until marriage was reasonably certain.

Betrothal was the most binding part of marriage. Though the couple did not live together during this

¹Ibid.

time, they were legally bound. Infidelity during this period could be regarded as fornication. To break the betrothal the couple would have to be formally divorced. Hence betrothal was far more binding to the Hebrews than engagement is for us in the twentieth century; it was even more binding to the Hebrews than it was to the Romans.

Dowry.--The dowry played an important part in the betrothal agreement. Throughout Hebrew history it took various forms. Sometimes it was gifts presented to the bride by the groom; sometimes it was gifts presented by the groom to the parents of the bride; sometimes it was gifts presented to the bride by her father.¹

Preparation.--The bride was made ready for the wedding during the daylight hours. It was common that she bathed herself and properly robed herself, possibly with the aide of attendants.

Ceremony.--In the evening the groom, attended by friends, would come to the home of the bride that he might escort her to his home. The main act of the wedding day was this procession through the streets.

¹International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, s.v. "Betroth," p. 872.

Torches were carried; music was made. Upon the arrival of the procession to the groom's house there was a feast. Sometimes this feast lasted for an extended time, possibly seven to fourteen days.

It is very difficult to determine what the wedding was like exactly because of a lack of details and variants in procedure from place to place and time to time. It is interesting to note however, that in many ways the Hebrew wedding was much more like the Greek than the Roman.¹

The Greek Wedding Customs

Betrothal.--The betrothal of the Greeks is much more similar to that of the Hebrews than the Romans. A public agreement to betrothal was made by the parents. At this time a dowry was settled. The bride was not consulted at all for this arrangement. Usually the bride and groom did not know each other.

Dowry.--The dowry was that presented to the wife by her family. Upon marriage it became a part of the husband's possessions. If divorce were ever to occur, the husband was obligated to return the dowry.

¹Andrew Paris, "The Bride of Christ," Seminary Review (Fall 1973): 1-35.

So it was that the dowry was a significant part of the Greek marriage, though it was not legally demanded.

Preparation.--Either the night preceding the wedding, or the morning of the wedding, the bride and groom independently prepared themselves for the occasion. One of the most significant parts of this preparation was the bath. Sacrifices made to the gods were also very important, as throughout the remaining ceremonies.

Ceremony.--In the afternoon of the wedding day a feast was held in the bride's home. Sacrifices were made to the gods. Toward evening the groom escorted his bride publicly to his home. This was a joyous occasion. The bride was not unveiled until she was taken to the groom's home. On the following day a banquet was held in the home of the groom's parents.¹

Relating the Historical Background to the Text

The historical background relates to the text at three major points, which are the three major movements of thought in the second half of the compound sentence. The first movement of thought is the second

¹Becker, Charicles.

main verb, παρέδωκεν (gave). The next two thoughts are the two ἵνα clauses, controlled by the verbs ἀγιάσῃ (He might sanctify) and παραστήσῃ (He might present, both relating back to the verb παρέδωκεν, to give. Buttrick, Hendricksen, Hodge, Kent and others have seen this passage as relating to the wedding customs of the day for from this passage they teach that the Church is the Bride of Christ.¹ Let us now relate some of these teachings about Christ and the Church back to the wedding procedures of the day.

The Giving

Neither the Greek nor the Hebrew wedding procedures began without an official betrothal period. One of the central factors of the initiating of this period was the exchange of a dowry. A price had to be paid, an acceptable amount had to be given before the betrothal could be entered. So it was with the Church. A price had to be paid, one that was adequate for the occasion. And so it was that Christ, the Bridegroom, also became the Dowry when He gave His life in payment for the penalty of our sin. Hence there now exists a sure relationship between the Church and the Groom,

¹Buttrick, The Interpreter's Bible, p. 727; Hendricksen, New Testament Commentary, p. 256; Hodge, Commentary on Ephesians, p. 316; Kent, The Glory of the Church, p. 183.

though they be separated, that binds them to each other on the basis of the dowry given, Christ Himself. This dowry is forever in effect; it cannot be returned.

The Sanctifying

Each bride had to be made ready for her special day. She looked upon herself as one leaving behind an old way of life and preparing to take on a new way of life. She set herself apart from her previous lifestyle that she might become what a wife ought to be. And so it is with the Church. She needs to be sanctified for Her Husband.

A part of this sanctification requires a cleansing, a bathing of the bride. Both the Greeks and the Hebrews practiced this custom. Of course, the act itself had different religious reasons. The vessel which was used to bring the water to the bath sites of the Greeks was called ἡ λουτροφόρος ¹ (λουτρῶ alludes to the bath of the bride before marriage).² Likewise, in the text at hand the Church is made ready, a part of

¹Ibid., p. 483.

²Abbott, A Critical Commentary on Ephesians, p. 168.

which includes a washing. It has already been demonstrated that this cleansing process refers to the act of practical sanctification which Christ brings to our lives by the Word of God.¹

The Bride and the Groom are now separated, but there is coming a day when they will be forever united (Rev. 19:7-9). The Church is yet in preparation for that great event. This is the second movement of thought relating to the marriage customs of the day.

The Presenting

The third great movement of thought in this passage is the presenting of the bride. Each wedding ceremony included a bridal procession to the home of the groom. In the hearts of those getting married this must have been one of the climaxes of the whole occasion. For possibly the very first time, at least in most situations, the groom really gets a good look at the one with whom he gets to spend the rest of his life. In the Greek ceremony the wife was first unveiled at this time. During her singleness she had been kept from much public exposure. How exciting it must have been.

¹Landrum, "The Washing of Water by the Word," p. 37.

So it is to be with the Church. The verb *παράσῃ* speaks of a future event referred to in Revelation 19:7,8. The Church has not yet been presented to Christ, but when she is, she will be "holy and without blame," having no "spot or wrinkle or any such thing" that might be displeasing to her Husband.

The Big Difference

Assuming that the original readers of this text correlated these three basic movements of thought with the wedding customs of the day, there then becomes one glaring difference. Who gave the dowry and of what did it consist? Who prepared the bride? Who presented the bride? The answers to these questions from the human point of view is another person or thing, but in the text before us it is always Christ Himself.

So it is that the word *ἐαυτὸν*, "Himself", becomes very significant. Paul has been very careful to make this point known for *ἐαυτὸν* is placed forward for the obvious reason of emphasis.¹ A comparison of the Greek word order in these texts, Ephesians 5:2, Galatians 2:20, 2 Thessalonians 2:16, 1 John 4:10, Revelation 1:5, demonstrates that usually the direct

¹Archibald Thomas Robertson, A Short Grammar of the Greek New Testament (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1908), p. 209.

object follows the verb. But in this passage, the direct object, *ἑαυτὸν*, precedes the verb. This makes the word itself emphatic.

Indeed it was meant to be emphatic for Christ Himself is the One who loves, gives, sanctifies, cleanses, and presents His bride "holy and without blame." Thus the imagery of the text demonstrates that Paul was not losing sight of his intent to instruct the husbands. He spoke in terms familiar to them. He was not sidetracked in any way by the delineation of the doctrine of Christ and the Church. Rather, he beautifully draws upon the doctrine to illustrate the responsibilities that the husband has toward his wife. He related the doctrine of Christ and the Church metaphorically by picturing Christ as the Groom and the Church as His Bride. In so-doing he not only unveiled the mystery of the Church but also related that mystery to the responsibilities of the husband by maintaining a marital image in the figure of speech. Therefore the simile does enhance the reader's understanding of the husband's responsibilities toward his wife.

Summary

Having considered the subject matter of the context, the marital customs of the times, and the flow of events in the simile, it becomes conclusive that the

imagery of the simile does not depart from the marriage theme, thereby maintaining the reader's interest in the husband's responsibilities to his wife. The emphasis placed on the work of Christ departs drastically from the marriage practices of the day, while at the same time magnifies the great love He has for His Bride, a love which should be imitated by husbands. Hence, the interpreter needs to consider carefully the doctrinal matters of the simile, and then carefully relate them to the husband's role in the home.

CHAPTER IV

THE HISTORICAL SETTING OF THE TEXT

The purpose of this chapter will be to demonstrate that the simile used in verses 25-27 was employed to instruct the husbands in regard to their responsibilities to their wives because the historical context would not have allowed the author to use the command to the husbands for an occasion to discuss theological issues not relevant to the command. The command issued, "Husbands, love your wives . . . ," would have been a very poor issue around which to build some more important theological truth because of the current relationships practiced between the men and women of the Ephesian society.

The current concepts of the husband's domestic role as seen by the Hebrews, the Greeks, and the Romans will need to be studied. "In the first century domestic mores were not distinctively Christian, but Jewish, Greek, and Roman, and so on. In spite of the 'universal' rule of Rome there was a great diversity of family

life and of moral codes."¹ Not only the basic concepts of these three cultures, but also the content of some of the current domestic teaching of the time will be considered.

If it can be demonstrated that it was not a common, well-accepted view that a husband was obligated to love his wife devoutly, then it can be concluded that the command, "Husbands, love your wives . . ." was a new teaching having a fundamentally accepted theological reason for obedience.

The Roles of Men and Women

At this point both the role of the husband and the role of the wife of the various societies, especially Greek, will have to be considered. There seems to be much more information available regarding the woman's role in the home as opposed to the man's role. As the woman's role is being discussed, one needs to be considering what the husband's role must have been in light of the woman's position.

¹Queen and Adams, The Family in Various Cultures, p. 149.

The Greeks

Greek women never attained a level of dignity as high as the Roman women.¹ From the early times of Greek society to the latter the position of women tended to decline.² The amount of freedom they attained differed from city to city; the Sparta women had greater liberty than those of Athens. Generally speaking there were four groups of people recognized in the Greek society: the male citizens, legal wives, prostitutes, and slaves.³ The degree of freedom which they maintained declined accordingly.

Marriage was monogamous.⁴ Legal wives were recognized for the purpose of having legal children. Men were allowed to practice infidelity though women were prohibited from doing so. Demosthenes said, "Harlots we keep for the sake of pleasure only, concubines for daily service, but wives for bearing us

¹G. Angus, The Environment of Early Christianity (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 44.

²Harold T. Christensen, Handbook of Marriage and the Family (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1964), p. 425.

³Ibid., p. 421.

⁴Angus, The Environment of Christianity, p. 44.

legitimate children and acting as loyal guardians of our household."¹

Women led a secluded life.² Their primary duties were to produce legitimate children, raise those children, supervise the slaves, and manage the affairs of the household. Her primary place of duty was the home and she was not expected to be involved with the affairs of public, or government. In regard to women Sophocles wrote:

We women are nothing; happy indeed in our childhood, for then we are thoughtless; but when we attain maidenhood, lo! We are driven away from our homes, sold as merchandise, and compelled to marry and say "All's well."³

Love was not in the marriage contract. If she received the maintenance due to her and the mistress-ship of the house, and was the mother of lawful children, she had all that a freeborn woman could demand.⁴

Menander said a wife was a necessary evil;⁵
Thucydides ignored women with an infinite contempt;⁶

¹Christensen, Marriage, p. 426.

²Angus, The Environment of Christianity, p. 45.

³William Stearns Davis, A Day in Old Athens (New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1959), p. 36.

⁴George Gillanders Findlay, The Expositor's Bible: The Epistle to the Ephesians (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1903), p. 364.

⁵Christensen, Marriage, p. 426. ⁶Ibid.

Plato said, "Do you know, then, of any human activities in which the males do not surpass the females in all respects?"¹ Socrates asked, "Is there a human being with whom you talk less than with your wife?"²

As for the men of Greece, they were not attracted to home life. They preferred instead the company of men out of doors and that of the prostitutes. The state was more hallowed than the sanctities of love.³ They served as household priests and general managers of all the household affairs.⁴ Wise husbands trained their wives if for some reason they were not ready to assume the household duties properly upon marriage.⁵

Certainly the men of Ephesus had good opportunity to fill such a role in Asia Minor. In Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the world, the temple of Artemis. During the first century the stadium was built and expanded and the theater was enlarged.⁶

¹Ibid.

²International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, s.v. "Husbands," by George B. Eager, p. 1442.

³Angus, The Environment of Christianity, p. 44.

⁴Christensen, Marriage, p. 425.

⁵Davis, A Day in Old Athens, p. 39.

⁶Bean, Aegean Turkey, p. 172.

The harbor was still functioning allowing for much trade of goods and thought with the western worlds, Greece and Rome. Ephesus was alive and well; Greek culture flourished.

Greek society did not require that a husband love his wife.

Marriage, in reference to procreation of children, was a necessity enforced by their duties to the gods, to the state, and to their ancestors. Still it must be admitted that sensuality was the soil from which such passions sprung, and no other than a sensual love was acknowledged between man and wife. This is very distinctively stated by Parsanias, in Plato.¹

The man of the Greek society had other concerns to which he would much rather give attention.²

How would a Greek husband have responded to verses 25-27? From the picture given regarding the position of men and the position of women in the Greek society, it is very doubtful that any man born and raised in a Greek culture could have apathetically responded to Paul's command, even a born-again Greek husband. On the contrary this command would have been of great interest to him and would have needed further explanation.

¹Becker, Charicles, p. 473.

²Percy Gardner and Frank Byron Jevons, A Manual of Greek Antiquities (London: Charles Griffin and Co., 1895), p. 323.

The Romans

The Roman woman was less dominated by the male than the Greek.¹ She often ate at the table with her husband.² Unlike the Greek woman, she could discuss with the man various affairs of family and public interest. Unlike the Greeks she was considered the mistress of the house, not only of her apartment.³ However, even in the best days of the republic the legal status of women was very low. The Roman literature made marriage altogether subservient to the interest of the state, and allowed it in its legal form to free citizens alone.⁴

The extent of the woman's freedom increased with the passing of time in the Roman empire. Earlier in the kingdom women needed to be escorted if leaving the home. Roman law gave the husband almost unlimited power over his wife, but during the first century this law was put aside. It might seem that with such changes coming about that things were really changing

¹ Christensen, Marriage, p. 436.

² Angus, The Environment of Christianity, p. 45.

³ Christensen, Marriage, p. 436.

⁴ Phillip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, AP&A, vol.1, p. 161.

for the better for the women and their relationships with their husbands. However history indicates that with the gaining of women's liberties also came a laxity of morals and a deterioration of the Roman home.¹ Divorces became more common.² Husbands were not able to maintain the unity of the marriage.

In the Roman society the males did enjoy a higher social status than that of the women. The man controlled the property of the wife.³ He also served as the priest of the family.

Interestingly, the moralists and philosophers of the Empire were unanimous in requiring equal virtue from men. Pagan religions lacked moral enthusiasm. Men were better than their gods; it was not the gods who improved them, but they who improved and elevated their gods. The virtue of men needed great improvement but even more so the virtue of their gods.⁴

Hence the Roman male, primarily interested in power and politics, was also strongly autonomous,

¹Angus, The Environment of Christianity, p. 45.

²Howard Becker and Reuben Hill, eds., Family, Marriage and Parenthood (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1948), p. 99.

³Christensen, Marriage, p. 436.

⁴Angus, The Environment of Christianity, pp. 60-61.

though he shared more with his wife than the Greeks. His gods did not lead him into a virtuous life. He could not have led his wife as Christ lovingly led the Church. Such love he did not know. Therefore, having to operate on his own premonition it does not appear that he learned to love his wife, nor did society dictate that to him. Antiquities fail to reveal any evidence of such virtue in Roman husbands.

The Hebrews

Hebrew women throughout history have been ranked under their husbands. However by the first century their status had been lowered still more.¹ The Talmud states that the "testimony of 100 women is equal only to the evidence of one man." The devout Jew of the second century prayed, "Blessed are Thou, Lord our God, who has not made me a woman."² Yet the Talmud also says, "Any Jew who has not a wife is no man."³

The Hebrew male, leader of a family, was to be for the family the guardian, business manager, judge, priest, and teacher. The husband had the power of life

¹Christensen, Handbook of Marriage, p. 415.

²Ibid., p. 416.

³International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, s.v. "Marriage," by George B. Eager.

and death over his wife only in case she committed adultery. He does not seem to have abused his authority. He is pictured as zealously devoted to his wife and his children. And though love did not determine marriage, it often flowered out of it.¹

However one must question the trend in the society of the times and wonder how well the husbands of the first century really performed their responsibilities to that which they regarded to be their inferior, their wives. Did any wife, Greek, Roman or Hebrew, really ever hold in the eyes of the husband the position which the Church holds before Christ?

Both the Hebrews and the Greeks practiced the mating system whereby the couple is matched by the parents or guardians.

Such arrangements were unfavorable to the existence of real affection, and we cannot be surprised at the frequent prevalence of coldness, indifference, or discontent At Athens . . . couples might often find themselves mutually disappointed. Love after marriage was of unfrequent occurrence, though an instance is to be found in the Hecyra of Terence. It was probably still more unusual for the lady's inclinations to be consulted.²

Therefore it would seem that current customs, laws and practices shed a great deal of doubt as to whether

¹Christensen, Handbook of Marriage, p. 415.

²Becker, Charicles, p. 476-77.

husbands really felt obligated to love their wives. If this be the true current mood of the times, then it is doubtful that Paul would use such a profound statement such as "Husbands, love your wives . . ." around which to build his theological exhortation regarding the Church's relationship to Christ. The command would have greatly attracted the male listener. At that point he would not have been interested in a theological discussion without relevance to the issue concerning his responsibility to his wife. Perhaps the author could have done so if the command would have been some well-accepted practice of the times, but this is not the case. This was a new concept and needed further explanation.

The Current Ethical Teachings Regarding Husbands and Wives

So far we have seen that the basic historical cultures active during the first century A.D. did not obligate the husband to love his wife. The husbands of that period did not naturally practice such concern and devotion to their mates.

Some have suggested, however, that the responsibility of the husband to love his wife was a current

ethical teaching of the first century.¹ They say that Ephesians 5:21-6:9 and its parallel, Colossians 3:18-4:1, as well as other passages (1 Pet. 2:18-3:7; Ti. 2:2-10, 3:1-18; 1 Tim. 2:1-15, 6:1; and Rom. 13:1-7) all have a common source, the Haustafel, meaning "a list of rules for the household."²

German scholarship has poured over the existing material of the first century and adjoining ages before and after the first century in hopes of finding evidence which would varify the claim. So far there has been no conclusive evidence brought forth which clearly demonstrates the existence of the Haustafel.

Not being able to find a single source which lists the household duties, scholarship then turned to the consideration that the household code was orally transmitted. Some said that it was part of the oral catechism of the early church, while most look to Greeks, Stoics, Hellenistic Jews, and Palestinian writings.³

¹Buttrick, The Interpreter's Bible, pp. 716-22; Crouch, The Origin of the Haustafel, pp. 102, 112; Winsome Munro, New Testament Studies: An International Journal (July 1972): 439f.

²Lillie, "The Pauline House-table," p. 179.

³Munro, New Testament Studies, p. 434f.

What evidence has been found will now be considered and then that evidence will be evaluated in light of this study.

The Content of the Haustafel

On the basis of a brief study of textual data from the fourth and fifth century, Crouch offers the following summary of the "unwritten laws," or the *ἄγραφα νόμιμα*, of Greek ethics: one should revere the gods, honor his parents, return the good deeds of benefactors, be helpful (especially toward the weak and helpless) and avoid incest.¹

According to the Stoic, Cicero (44 B.C.), one's primary obligation is to country and then to parents. Next come children, the entire family and relatives. Separated from these relationships, but no less important, is that of friendship.²

Evaluation of the Haustafel

First of all there is a lack of reciprocation. Among the Greek thought there is an emphasis on the wife's submission to the husband, the child's to the father, and the slave's to the master. Only among the

¹Crouch, The Origin of the Haustafel, p. 45.

²Ibid., p. 48.

Hebrew writers is there any indication that the husbands, the fathers, and the masters are to reciprocate to their subordinates in any way.¹

Even if a Jewish writer did speak of the husband's responsibilities to his wife, could he have said it as Paul did here, especially in the light of current Jewish thought towards women? To the Jew of the first century, women were not only religiously and socially inferior, but also morally inferior and the cause of sin. Philo, a Jewish philosopher of the first century, had nothing good to say about women. He also said that wives must be in servitude to their husbands, a servitude not imposed by violent ill-treatment but promoting obedience in all things. Josephus said that the woman is in all things inferior to the man. Let her accordingly be obedient, not for her humiliation, but that she may be directed; for God has given authority to the man.²

Though Jewish thought did consider reciprocation, it is doubtful that oral tradition among the Jews would have promoted such love of the husband for the wife.

Secondly, any evidence regarding the Haustafel fails to reveal such a high expectation of the

¹Ibid., p. 102. ²Ibid., p. 109.

husband's responsibility to his wife. Crouch, arguing that the writer of Colossians did utilize a previous source, states that "the opinion that we are dealing with specifically Christian material in the exhortation to the husbands is based merely on the rather superficial assumption that the term ἀγάπη bears a specifically Christian content whenever found in the New Testament."¹ He goes on to claim that "in reality, Delling and Lohmeyer are correct when they note that the concept of love of the husband for his wife in the Colossian Haustafel is not specifically Christian, although neither of them offers convincing non-Christian parallels."²

Crouch then demonstrates that the Greek word, ἀγάπη, is equivalent to the Hebrew word, אהב. Once he establishes that in his opinion, he sights B. Yebamoth of the Rabbinic literature, who refers to the idea of husbands loving (אהב) their wives. He concludes that it is the love "which all men--not merely Christian men--demonstrate toward their wives."³

His argument is weak on two accounts. The first is that which regards the writing of B. Yebamoth as being before the time of Paul. Yebamoth is the

¹Ibid., p. 111. ²Ibid., p. 112. ³Ibid.

first treatise of the third part (Nashim) of the Mishna. The Mishna was arranged about the year A.D. 200 or 220, perhaps 150 years after the writing of Ephesians.

The sayings recorded in the Mishna reach back to the times of Simon the Just, a contemporary of Alexander the Great; and it expounds also some religious and political usages introduced by Ezra; but the bulk of the book is made up of the decisions or opinions of the rival schools of Hillel and Shammai, who arose at the beginning of the first century of the Christian era, and of the subsequent teachers"¹

It remains to be proven that B. Yebamoth precedes Paul.²

Secondly, in regards to the word ἀγάπη (love), the context before us, Ephesians 5:25-27, clearly likens that love which a husband ought to have for his wife to that of Christ's love for the Church; there cannot be a much more "Christian" concept of love than that!

Also, Lillie points out that the Stoic concern with the individual emphasized his relation to others not for their sake but merely because they had some relationship to him. The Stoic's interest in friend or brother was certainly not the Christian ἀγάπη which

¹Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, s.v. "Mishna," p. 334.

²Lillie, "The Pauline House-table," p. 179ff.

Barth described as a "turning from self to another for the sake of the other."¹

Therefore it does not seem likely that non-Christian ethical teaching of the time incorporated the concept of love as the husband's obligation to his wife, and especially in the sense related in the simile under study. It is more likely that "in the tables of neighborly and domestic duties borrowed from profane ethics, an entirely new and essential Christian statement is added: 'Husbands, love your wives . . .'"²

Summary

If it be so that the understood roles of men and women of the first century did not expect that the husbands love the wives with a self-sacrificing love, and if it be so that this instruction is new to the known world at that time, then it must be assumed that those who first read the words of Paul must have been somewhat surprised when told that husbands must love their wives. It is not logical to think that Paul would make such a profound statement as "Husbands, love

¹Ibid.

²Karl Hemann Schelkle, Theology of the New Testament, trans. William A. Jurgens, 3 vols. (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1970), p. 260.

your wives as Christ loved the Church . . ." and then wander into a subject not related to the specific command. The profoundness of the statement would not allow a literary artist to deviate into divergent theological thoughts. Therefore the simile given between the καθὼς and the ὅτως specifically aids the understanding of the command, οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπᾶτε τὰς γυναῖκας.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The intent of this study has been to propose three major considerations which demonstrate that the purpose of the simile concerning Christ and the Church in Ephesians 5:25-27 is to enhance the understanding of the husband's responsibilities to his wife. It has been demonstrated that language of the text indicates that the extended simile is being employed for this purpose, that the imagery employed maintains an interest in the command issued, and that the historical context would not allow the author to use the simile in any other way. Therefore it must be concluded that the author of the text wished his readers to regard the entire simile that they might specifically understand how a husband should show his love for his wife.

Before concluding, consider some of the specific ways a husband should understand this command to love his wife.

First of all, a husband is not to act without regard for his wife. Christ knew the needs of the Church before He took action. On the contrary the husbands of the first century and even today are able to act quite independently, without regard for the

needs or concerns of the wife. Godly love is not an independent love, a self-sufficient and self-caring love. It is a love which causes two persons to interact with each other. Christ became actively involved with the Church; He cared enough to die for Her.

Secondly, a husband ought to choose to love his wife. He is not to wait for a feeling or an emotion to move him to love; Christ did not wait (Eph. 1:4,5). The husband's love for his wife should be just as willful as Christ's love for the Church.

Thirdly, a husband is to love his wife with a purifying love, a love which seeks her moral and spiritual welfare. The love spoken of in this passage does not degrade or lower the spiritual quality of the one loved. Christ acted on behalf of the Church that He might sanctify Her, with the purpose of presenting Her holy and without blame. The motives behind the deeds a man performs for his wife should be such that would seek her spiritual maturity, with the view toward making her everything she should be in Jesus Christ.

Fourthly, a husband is to perform his duties sacrificially. Christ did not stand by and just say that He was willing to die for the Church, but rather He did it. A husband should take the initiative to demonstrate his sacrificial love for his wife.

Fifthly, a husband is to utilize the Word of God as he leads, instructs, and "sanctifies" his wife. That is the tool which Christ uses as He sanctifies the Church. This is also in accordance with Deuteronomy 6:1-9.

Sixthly, a husband is to love his wife with a special kind of love, one which will distinguish his wife from all others. As Christ seeks to set His Bride apart as Someone very special, so a Husband should seek to distinguish his wife with holy character.

And so the list could go on, so long as it maintains the character of the deeds which Christ performed for His Bride, the Church. Each man should regard his wife as his little church. As he seeks to minister to the needs of that church, his marriage will take on the character of Christ's relationship with His Church. If each husband would only realize and accept the position of responsibility which Paul assigns to him here, he would begin to realize the vast amount of responsibility that God has really placed on his shoulders. His home would be transformed.

In conclusion, this study ought to challenge the interpreter in regard to the way in which he handles Biblical similes. Perhaps there are cases such as this one where he should look beyond the

simple, singular comparison so long as he is guided by the grammar of the text and the historical setting.

Secondly, this study also emphasizes how important doctrinal matters are in everyday life. God has beautifully employed the design of His work on man's behalf in order that men may be instructed how to be the husbands they ought to be.

Thirdly, husbands today ought to be challenged to love their wives as Christ loved the Church. Usually the husband's spiritual responsibilities toward his wife are discussed in regard to his leadership, not in regard to his love. Men need to understand that unless they are spiritually caring for the needs of their wives, they are not really loving their wives as Christ loved the Church. When most men think of love, they do not think of going to Church, reading the Bible, or praying with their wives. Christ's love for the Church certainly does not neglect the physical needs of the Church, neither does it make the spiritual and moral development of the Church second rate. Men do well to keep in mind the supreme value He places upon the moral and spiritual condition of His Bride and the great price He paid to secure it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abbott, T. K. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians and to the Colossians. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897.
- Andelin, Aubrey P. Man of Steel and Velvet. Santa Barbara, California: Pacific Press Santa Barbara, 1972.
- Angus, G. The Environment of Early Christianity. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915.
- Augsburger, David. "Man, the Leader." in For Men Only, pp. 53-57. Edited by J. Allan Petersen. Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1973.
- Bean, George E. Aegean Turkey. London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1966.
- Becker, Howard and Hill, Reuben, eds. Family, Marriage and Parenthood. Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1948.
- Becker, Professor H. Charicles. Translated by Frederick Metcalf. 3rd ed. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1889.
- Bensen, Dan. The Total Man. Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1977.
- Blummer, Professor H. The Home Life of the Ancient Greeks. Translated by Alice Zimmerman. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., n.d.
- Buttrick, George Arthur. The Interpreter's Bible. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1953.
- Christensen, Harold T. Handbook of Marriage and the Family. Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1964.

Crouch, James E. The Origin and Intention of the Colossian Haustafel. Goottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1972.

Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature. 1876 ed., s.v. "Mishna."

Davis, William Stearns. A Day in Old Athens. New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1959.

Findlay, George Gillanders. The Expositor's Bible: The Epistle to the Ephesians. New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1903.

Gardner, Percy and Jevons, Frank Byron. A Manual of Greek Antiquities. London: Charles Griffin and Co., 1895.

Gelman, David. "How Men are Changing." Newsweek, January, 1978, pp. 52ff.

Goodspeed, Edgar J. The Meaning of Ephesians. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1933.

Green, Samuel G. Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek New Testament. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1907.

Grimal, Pierre. Love in Ancient Rome. Translated by Arthur Train. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1967.

Harrison, Everett F. Introduction to the New Testament. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971.

Hendriksen, William. New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1967.

Hodge, Charles. A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians. New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1856.

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. s.v. "Betroth."

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. s.v. "Husband," by George B. Eager.

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. s.v.
"Marriage," by George B. Eager.

Kent, Homer A., Jr. The Glory of the Church. Chicago:
 Moody Press, 1971.

Kurgal, Ekrem A. Ancient Civilization and Ruins of
 Turkey. Istanbul, 1973.

Landrum, Clyde K. "The Washing of Water by the Word."
 Bachelor of Divinity Thesis, Grace Theological
 Seminary, 1948.

Lenski, R. C. H. The Interpretation of St. Paul's
 Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians and
 to the Philippians. Minneapolis: Augsburg
 Publishing House, 1937.

Lillie, William. "The Pauline House-tables." The
 Expository Times, March 1975, pp. 179ff.

Mickelsen, A. Berkeby. Interpreting the Bible. Grand
 Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans
 Publishing Co., 1963.

Munro, Winsome. New Testament Studies: An Inter-
 national Journal, July 1972, pp. 434f.

New American Standard Bible. Carol Stream, Illinois:
 Creation House, Inc., 1971.

Paris, Andrew. "The Bride of Christ." Seminary
 Review, Fall 1973, pp. 1-35.

Petersen, J. Allan, ed. For Men Only. Wheaton,
 Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.,
 1973.

Queen, Stuart A. and Adams, John B. The Family in
 Various Cultures. Chicago: J. B. Lippincott
 Co., 1952.

Ramm, Bernard. Protestant Biblical Interpretation.
 Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House,
 1970.

Robertson, Archibald Thomas. A Short Grammar of the
 Greek New Testament. New York: George H.
 Doran Co., 1908.

- Schaff, Phillip. History of the Christian Church.
AP&P. vol.1.
- Schelkle, Karl Hemann. Theology of the New Testament.
Translated by William A. Jurgens. 3 vols.
Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press,
1970.
- Strauss, Lehman. Devotional Studies in Galatians and
Ephesians. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1957.
- Terry, Milton. Biblical Hermeneutics. Grand Rapids,
Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.
- Thayer, Joseph Henry. A Greek-English Lexicon of the
New Testament. New York: American Book Co.,
1886.
- U.S., Department of Commerce. Statistical Abstract of
the U.S., 1976. Bureau of Census, 1976.
- U.S., Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.
Vital Statistics of the United States. vol. 3.
Rockville, Maryland, 1977.
- Van Roon, A. The Authenticity of Ephesians. Leiden:
E. J. Brill, 1974.