

Fountain of Gardens

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This month, I want to give you a few minutes of meditating the book of Ephesians as a marriage manual between a husband & his wife, to reflect the prosperity of God in the earth, & to spread it throughout every nation of the world, beginning first at Jerusalem, which according to Hebrews 12:22 is the Church. In saying what I'm about to say, I'm not attempting to usurp the plain text meaning of the book of Ephesians for general Christian instruction, but merely want to look deeper into it's pages as a way of strengthening the home. I'm not asserting that the unmarried don't inherit the Kingdom or anything of the sort. That would be foolishness. Nor am I implying that anyone not married yet is in any way outside of His will, necessarily. Obviously, where God's made other arrangements, then one should abide in the state in which they were called, as St. Paul said elsewhere, so if God's called you married, then you don't have any business not being, of course!

7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, (Ephesians 1:7-9)

17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (Ephesians 5:17-19, 22-33)

He made the riches of His grace to abound towards us by making the mystery of His will known to us, the great mystery, that husbands leave father & mother & are joined to their wives & the two become one flesh speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, & spiritual songs, singing & making melody in their hearts, as one flesh, to the Lord from a position of fullness of His Spirit that's an ongoing refilling with His Spirit through thanksgiving.

14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, 16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. 17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. 18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. (Ephesians 2:14-18)

Although this Scripture is obviously, contextually, talking about the dividing wall between Jews & Gentiles having been torn down, He's likewise talking about the mystery of His will that He's made known to us of the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through which we're to submit to one another in the fear of the Lord, giving thanks always and maintaining a Spirit-filled home-life. He Himself is our prosperity, who has made both man & woman one, in marriage, having broken down the middle wall of separation (or the potential for divorce in their flesh - He tore that down when He Covenanted them to each other in His own Blood), having made of the two one flesh, because in their relationship with Him, He brought them together & created in Himself of the two, one new man. He sealed them with the Holy Spirit of Promise, according to Ephesians 1:

10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. 11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. 13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

He's abounded towards us in all wisdom & understanding, having made known to us the great mystery of His will that He works all things, that He's drawn together into one, in Himself, according to the counsel of His will. The good news of marriage that He's intended as Good News has been slipping away from the people, even as the culture has been moving away from the Judeo-Christian ethic & becoming increasingly Unitarian with the view that all roads lead to heaven, which can't help but spill into people's reasons for marriage & why they believe they should stick together. The reason is, that He's created them as a New Creation in Himself, if He brought them together. He abolished in His flesh the enmity between what He wanted brought together into one in Himself & drew the man away from father & mother to complete one new household, loving her as Christ loves the Church & keeping the glory of God on that home!

As in Adam all die, even so in that marriage that He's created together in Himself, should all things pertaining to their lives together be made alive 'cause if they did this right, they submitted to one another out of their submission to Him, according to the riches of His grace wherein He has abounded towards them in all wisdom & prudence in having made known to them the great mystery of His will.

22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Ephesians 1:22-23)

If husbands love their wives as Christ loves the Church & He removed the man from his parents in His drawing of the man to Himself & towards that woman to make of the two, one new man, then that marriage, through the wisdom that He's abounding towards them through all thanksgiving & grace, is supposed to be the local residential fullness of Him who fills all in all. He took that man away from his parents in order to make him a full spiritual life for his wife. They're supposed to make a home together, according to 1Peter 3, as partakers of God's manifold grace on one another's lives.

14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, to the age of ages. Amen.

He wants that wife knowing all of the dimensions of the love of her husband so that Christ & the husband would be glorified (John 17) in the wife that the husband shows off to his God & Father through Christ Jesus, through incessant thanksgiving ascending through the Spirit-filled life they're maintaining in that home through their mutual submission to the plan of God for their lives that they'd be together as a dwelling place for God in the Spirit, a new location where His all in all plan is materializing through the abundance of grace, wisdom, & understanding He's given of all He's drawing together into their prosperity, since they're not only Christ's, but Christ in the earth & His body together as husband and wife. He wants her glorified through her husband. Her husband's love should deeply move her as to the depth of the love of God for her. Yes, they're still a man & a woman, doing what a husband & a wife do together to keep Satan from tempting either one, according to 1Corinthians 7, & because it's one of their highest acts of worship in the Christian home, & not just for the furtherance of the species, as some religious people have thought in previous generations.

But whether or not he's in her holy of holies offering up a sacrifice, well pleasing to his wife & to God, whether he's in season or out of season with doing that, she's supposed to be receiving a continual outpouring of the Holy Spirit through her union with that man & seeing the kind of love in all of it's dimensions that she would know in God with his devotion to her & his devotional life to God about her, talking of her before God as a delicate precious treasure that he's presenting to God without spot & without blemish as her head & heart.

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.
11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (Ephesians 6:10-11)

We're supposed to put on the whole strength of God through His Spirit in the inner man as we keep a Spirit-filled home, for which God separated the men from their father & mother, according to the great mystery of God that He abounds towards us in Christ with recreating the lives of two people into one new man with the prosperity He's creating of a little chapter of His all in all universe in the neighborhood through the two of them, so that we can stand against the strategies of the devil. Since faith works by love, according to Galatians 5:6, I'm totally satisfied that the shield of faith that He's talking about in Ephesians 6 is the Spirit-filled bonds of that marriage:

16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. (Ephesians 6:16)

because Ephesians closes out with the language He used in Ephesians 5 about being filled with the Spirit speaking to one another in the home with the very symphony of God, which is the prophetic that would come out of their union & communion with one another in Him. Again, this is the language of Ephesians 5 for maintaining a Spirit-filled experience expanded in it's effects like a tidal wave to the whole Body of Christ:

18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints (Ephesians 6:18)

I love all of you very much & I'm daily "always struggling for you in prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God." according to Colossians 4:12 in the CLNT.