

Message Ten

The Great Mystery of Christ and the Church

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:18-25; Eph. 5:23-32

I. Christ and the church are a great mystery—Eph. 5:32; cf. 1 Tim. 3:15-16a:

- A. God is a mystery, and Christ, as the embodiment of God to express Him, is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2.
- B. Christ also is a mystery, and the church, as the Body of Christ to express Him, is the mystery of Christ—Eph. 3:4.
- C. Christ and the church as one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17), typified by a husband and wife as one flesh (Eph. 5:29-31), are the great mystery.

II. Ephesians 5 reveals that the first couple in the Bible, Adam and Eve, presents a significant and complete picture, a mysterious type, of Christ and the church—Gen. 2:21-24; Eph. 5:23-32:

- A. Adam is a type of God in Christ as our Husband, who is seeking a wife for Himself—Rom. 5:14; John 3:29; Matt. 9:14-15; 2 Cor. 11:2:
 - 1. Just as it was not good for man to be alone, it was not good for God to be alone, showing that God needed to have a complement, a counterpart—Gen. 2:18-20; Isa. 54:5.
 - 2. A husband and a wife as a complete unit are a marvelous picture of Christ and the church as one entity—Gen. 5:2; Eph. 5:28-32.
- B. Ephesians 5:25-27 reveals Christ in three stages so that the church may be produced and built up to become His bride; this is seen typologically with Adam and Eve in Genesis 2:18-25:
 - 1. In the past, the incarnated Christ, the last Adam, died on the cross as our loving Redeemer in accomplishing God's judicial redemption for the purchasing of the church—Eph. 5:25; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Heb. 9:22; Acts 20:28:
 - a. God becoming man, the last Adam, was typified by the creation of man, the first Adam—Gen. 1:26; John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b.

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- b. God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; his sleep is a type of Christ's death (Gen. 2:21; 1 Cor. 15:18; 1 Thes. 4:13-16; John 11:11-14) for producing the church through the accomplishment of God's judicial redemption, which includes:
 - 1) The forgiveness of sins—Luke 24:47.
 - 2) The washing away of sins—Heb. 1:3.
 - 3) Justification by God—Rom. 3:24-25.
 - 4) Reconciliation to God—5:10a.
 - 5) Positional sanctification unto God—Heb. 13:12.
2. In the present, Christ as the sanctifying life-giving Spirit is saturating us for our organic salvation with Himself as the flowing, divine, unbreakable life for the building of the church as the real Eve—Eph. 5:26; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 5:10:
 - a. The Lord's pierced side was prefigured by Adam's opened side, out from which Eve was produced—Gen. 2:21-22; John 19:34:
 - 1) The blood out of the Lord's side was for purchasing the church; the water out of His side is the flow of His divine life, which produces, builds up, and prepares the church to be His bride—Zech. 13:1.
 - 2) The rib out of Adam's side typifies the unbreakable resurrection life that is signified by the water flowing out of Christ's side—Exo. 17:6; 1 Cor. 10:4; John 19:31-33.
 - 3) Just as God built a woman with the rib of Adam, God builds up the church with the resurrection life of Christ—Gen. 2:22; Matt. 16:18.
 - 4) This life flows within us, transforms us, and builds us up to be the bride of Christ, the New Jerusalem as the ultimate Eve—Rev. 21:2.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

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- b. The church comes out of Christ, as Eve came out of Adam (Gen. 2:21-22); it has the same life and nature as Christ and becomes one with Him as His counterpart, even as Eve became one flesh with Adam (v. 24):
 - 1) Only that which came out of Adam could return to Adam as his counterpart; in like manner, only that which comes out of Christ can return to Christ to be His bride—1 Cor. 12:12; Col. 3:10-11.
 - 2) The church is a pure product out of Christ; the church is a part of Christ and is nothing less than Christ Himself—cf. Eph. 5:28-30.
- c. The church is being beautified through the process of sanctification by Christ as the life-giving Spirit cleansing us by the washing of the water as the flowing life of God in the word—v. 26:
 - 1) The cleansing by the washing of the water of life is in the word of Christ; this indicates that in the word of Christ is the water of life.
 - 2) The Greek word rendered “word” in verse 26 is not *logos*, the constant word, but *rhema*, which denotes the instant word, the word the Lord presently speaks to us.
 - 3) Christ’s speaking is the Spirit; it is the very presence of the life-giving Spirit—John 6:63; Eph. 6:17.
 - 4) The indwelling Christ as the life-giving Spirit is always speaking an instant, present, living word to metabolically cleanse away the old and replace it with the new, causing an inward transformation.
 - 5) Through such a washing process, we are saturated with Christ and transformed by Christ to be His holy, beautiful, God-expressing bride, a bride without blemish or imperfection—Rev. 19:7; cf. S. S. 6:13; 8:13-14.

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3. In the future, Christ as the holy Bridegroom will present us to Himself as His counterpart for His marriage just as God presented Eve to Adam as his counterpart for his marriage—Eph. 5:27, 31-32; Gen. 2:22-24; Rev. 19:7-9:
 - a. Ephesians 5:27 reveals the beauty of the bride, saying that Christ will “present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.”
 - b. The beauty of the bride comes from the very Christ who is wrought into the church and who is then expressed through the church—Rev. 19:7.
 - c. The Lord’s recovery is for the preparation of the bride of Christ, who is composed of all His overcomers—vv. 7-9; Gen. 2:22; Matt. 16:18.