



The Character of the True Church
August 25, 2019
Ephesians 5:21-33 & 6:1-4

“Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Ephesians 5:21).

When Paul wrote about the Church and described how Church members ought to live, he insisted that Jesus Christ is, or at least ought to be, the Head of the Church. As the Savior and Head of the Church, Jesus Christ directs and gives life to the Church, which is the Body of Christ on earth. Without a head, a human body soon becomes lifeless and begins to decay. When a congregation or leaders and members of a church begin to disregard or disobey Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church, their church soon becomes lifeless and begins to decay, and too often that church does not recognize what others see and smell. For this reason, some church historians have distinguished between the “visible church,” the buildings and the people that bear the label “Christian,” from the “invisible Church” (that they often spell with a capital “C”), where Jesus Christ remains the Savior and the Head of gathered Christians. Jesus Christ “nourishes and tenderly cares” for the Church just as Christians nourish and care for their bodies (Ephesians 5:29). Out of reverence for Christ, members of the Church love and obey Jesus Christ and His commands. Each member in the Church loves the other members as they love themselves; moreover, they love one another as Jesus Christ loves them and loves His Church. As Christians worship God and turn to Jesus Christ as their Lord, they obey the Bible, the Word of God written, which cleanses them from sin and makes them holy: in this way the Church “may be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:27). Therefore, in the Church, Christians love, respect, and seek to serve one another.

Thinking Further

1. What does it mean to be subject to someone? What does it mean to be “subject to one another”? What reason does Paul give why Christians ought to be “subject to one another”?
2. Why do you think some people reject the Biblical role of wives that Paul described in Ephesians?
3. What does “be subject . . . as you are to the Lord” mean to you?
4. How do you think Jesus Christ being the Savior of the church effects how He relates to the church as “head of the church”?
5. How should husbands love their wives?