

## **Ephesians Chapter V Part 1**

*Translation: The Orthodox New Testament, Vol. 2, Holy Apostles Convent, Buena Vista CO., 1999)*

**1 Keep on becoming imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And be walking in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smelling fragrance.**

### **1. The New Commandment**

*Jon 13: 34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."*

That you may not then think it an act of necessity, hear how He says that 'He gave Himself up.' As your Master loved you, love your friend . . . Forgive another, and you are 'imitating God,' you are made like unto God. It is more our duty to forgive trespasses . . . if you shall forgive trespasses, you are 'imitating God.' . . . You have yet another cogent reason to imitate Him, not only in that ye have received such good at His hands, but also in that you are called His children. And since not all children imitate their fathers, but those which are beloved..." (Chrysostom, Homily XVII, on Ephesians)

### **2. Be walking in Love**

"Be a lover then of love; for by this are you saved, by this you have been made a son." (Chrysostom, Homily XVII, on Ephesians)

### **3. Even as Christ – self-emptying love**

"Surely it is clear that it will be, by our doing good to our enemies. Do you see that to suffer for one's enemies is 'a sweet-smelling fragrance,' and an 'acceptable sacrifice'? And if you shall die, then will you be indeed a sacrifice. This it is to 'imitate God.'" (Chrysostom, Homily XVII, on Ephesians)

"That our loving God, having accepted them (the gifts being offered – which represent us) at his holy mystical altar in heaven as an offering of spiritual fragrance, will in turn send down upon us divine grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit, let us pray (From the Divine Liturgy)."

**3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not even be named among you,- even as it is becoming to saints, - 4 and filthy conduct, and foolish talking or jesting,- which are not fitting,- but rather giving of thanks.**

### **1. On lust and its causes**

For as 'bitterness,' and 'clamor,' and 'all malice,' and 'railing,' and the like, are the works of the passionate man, so likewise are 'fornication, uncleanness, covetousness,' those of

the lustful; since covetousness and sensuality spring from the same passion. But just as in the former case he took away 'clamor' as being the vehicle of 'anger,' so now does he 'filthy talking' and 'jesting' as being the vehicle of lust...Be ye all pure. For words are the way to acts. (Chrysostom, Homily XVII, on Ephesians)"

## **2. On Silence and Soberness**

Look at the countenances of men in battle, their dark and contracted demeanor, their brow terrible and full of awe. Mark the stern eye, the heart eager and beating and throbbing, their spirit collected, and trembling and intensely anxious. All is good order, all is good discipline, all is silence in the camps of those who are arrayed against each other. They speak not, I do not say, an impertinent word, but they utter not a single sound. Now if they who have visible enemies, and who are in nowise injured by words, yet observe so great silence, dost thou who hast thy warfare, and the chief of thy warfare in words, dost thou leave this part naked and exposed? (Chrysostom, Homily XVII, on Ephesians)"

## **3. On joking, flippancy...**

"Where filthiness is, there also is jesting; where unseasonable laughter is, there also is jesting. Harken to what the Prophet says, 'Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice with trembling.' (Ps. ii. II) Jestings renders the soul soft and indolent. It excites the soul unduly, and often it teems with acts of violence, and creates wars. . . . It is well if the soul that is 'sober' be not stolen away; but one that is relaxed and dissolute, who cannot carry off? It will be its own murderer, and will stand in no need of the crafts or assaults of the devil. (Chrysostom, Homily XVII, on Ephesians)"

**5 For this you know, that every fornicator or impure person, or coveter (who is an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of the Christ and of God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words; for on account of these things comes the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore cease becoming partakers with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now are you light in the Lord; be walking a children of light-**

## **Keep from backsliding**

Observe how wisely he urges them forward; first. . . he reminds them of their former wickedness. That is to say, thinking what you once were, and what ye are now becoming, do not run back into your former wickedness, nor do "despite to the grace" (Heb. x. 29) of God. (Chrysostom, Homily XVIII, on Ephesians)"

**9 For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth –10 proving what is well-pleasing to the Lord.**

## **True Life is found in relation to Christ – maturing in Christ**

'In all goodness,' he says: this is opposed to the angry, and the bitter: 'and righteousness'; this to the covetous: 'and truth'; this to false pleasure: not those former

things, he says, which I was mentioning, but their opposites. 'In all'; that is, the fruit of the Spirit ought to be evinced in everything. 'Proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord'; so that those things are tokens of a childish and imperfect mind. (Chrysostom, Homily XVIII, on Ephesians)"

**11 And cease having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things which are reprov'd are made manifest by the light; for all which is made manifest is light. 14 Wherefore, He says, "Rouse yourself you who sleep and arise from the dead, and the Christ shall shine on you." (Isa 9:2, 26:19,52:1,60:1-2)**

### **1. Confession as the exposing of wounds in order to be healed**

"As a wound, so long as it is imbedded and concealed outwardly, and runs beneath the surface, receives no attention, so also sin, as long as it is concealed, being as it were in darkness, is daringly committed in full security; but as soon as 'it is made manifest,' becomes 'light'; not indeed the sin itself, (for how could that be?) but the sinner. For when he has been brought out to light, when he has been admonished, when he has repented, when he has obtained pardon, have you not cleared away all his darkness? Have you not then healed his wound? (Chrysostom, Homily XVIII, on Ephesians)"

### **2. Spiritual Death – Great Lenten Hymn**

"By the 'sleeper' and the 'dead,' he means the man that is in sin; for he both exhales noisome odors like the dead, and is inactive like one that is asleep, and like him he sees nothing, but is dreaming, and forming fancies and illusions. . . . Depart from sin, and you shall be able to behold Christ. 'For every one that does ill, hates the light, and comes not to the light.' (John iii. 20.) (Chrysostom, Homily XVIII, on Ephesians)"

**The Hymn of the Bridegroom "See! The Bridegroom sets forth in the dead of the night. And blessed is that servant whom he shall find on watch; unworthy the one he shall come upon lazing. See to it, soul, that sleep does not overtake you, lest you be given up to death and be shut out of the kingdom. Bestir (rouse) yourself, then, and sing out: "Holy, holy, holy are You our God..."**

## **Ephesians Chapter V Part 2**

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**Be taking heed then how exactly you walk, not as unwise ones, but as wise ones, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.**

### **1. Redeeming the time – keeping one’s faith**

“The time is not yours. At present ye are strangers, and sojourners, and foreigners, and aliens; seek not honors, seek not glory, seek not authority, nor revenge; bear all things, and in this way, ‘redeem the time’; give up many things, anything they may require. Imagine now, I say, a man had a magnificent house, and persons were to make their way in, on purpose to murder him, and he were to give a large sum, and thus to rescue himself . . . he has redeemed himself. So you also have a large house, and a true faith in your keeping. They will come to take all away. Give whatever they may demand, only preserve the principal thing, I mean the faith. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XIX)”

### **2. The Days are Evil & Good**

“In what sense is the ‘time’ evil? It is not the essence of the thing, not the things as so created, but it is the things transacted in them. In the same way as we are in the habit of saying, ‘I have passed a disagreeable and wretched day.’ And yet how could it be disagreeable, except from the circumstances which took place in it? Now the events which take place in it are, good things from God, but evil things from bad men. So then of the evils which happen in the times, men are the creators, and hence it is that the times are said to be evil. And thus we also call the times evil. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XIX)”

**17 On this account cease becoming foolish, but become as ones understanding what the will of the Lord is.**

### **1. All things in moderation – evils come from misuse of freedoms**

“For indeed overindulgence in this renders men passionate and violent, and hot-headed, and irritable and savage. Wine has been given us for cheerfulness, not for drunkenness. ... ‘Wine maketh glad the heart of man’ (Ps. civ. 15), says the Psalmist. How then does wine produce drunkenness? For it cannot be that one and the same thing should work opposite effects. Drunkenness then surely does not arise from wine, but from intemperance. Wine is bestowed upon us for no other purpose than for bodily health; but this purpose also is thwarted by immoderate use. But hear moreover what our blessed Apostle writes and says to Timothy, ‘Use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake, and your infirmities.’ (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XIX)”

### **2. Grant me the spirit of Moderation – strive for the food of immortality**

“This is the reason why God has formed our bodies in moderate proportions, and so as to be satisfied with a little, at once instructing us that He has made us adapted to another life. . . for a little cup of wine and a single loaf is enough to satisfy a man’s hunger. And man the lord of all the brute creation has He formed so as to require less food in proportion than they (the animals), and his body small; thereby declaring to us nothing else than this, that we are hastening onward to another life. ‘Be not drunk,’ says he, ‘with wine, wherein is riot’; for it does not save but it destroys; and that, not the body only, but the soul also. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XIX)”

**18 And cease being drunk with wine, in which is prodigality, but keep on becoming filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and chanting in your heart to the Lord, 20 giving thanks always for all things to the God and Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

### **1. Drunk with the Spirit – the role of worship**

“I give thee spiritual drink . . . Learn to sing psalms, and you shall see the delightfulness of the service. For they who sing psalms are filled with the Holy Spirit, as they who sing satanic songs are filled with an unclean spirit. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XIX)”

### **2. Worship requires attentiveness & thankfulness**

“What is meant by ‘with your hearts to the Lord?’ It means, with close attention and understanding. For they who do not attend closely, merely sing, uttering the words, while their heart is roaming elsewhere. . . That is, ‘let your requests be made known unto God, with thanksgiving (Phil. iv. 6)’ ; for there is nothing so pleasing to God, as for a man to be thankful. But we shall be best able to give thanks unto God, by withdrawing our souls from the things before mentioned, and by thoroughly cleansing them by the means he has told us. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XIX)”

### **3. Cleaning the temple invites the Holy Spirit**

“And is then this Spirit within us? Yes, indeed, within us. For when we have driven away lying, and bitterness, and fornication, and uncleanness, and covetousness, from our souls, when we become kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, when there is no jesting, when we have rendered ourselves worthy of it, what is there to hinder the Holy Spirit from coming and lighting upon us? And not only will He come unto us, but He will fill our hearts; and when we have so great a light kindled within us, then will the way of virtue be no longer difficult to attain, but will be easy and simple. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XIX)”

### **4. Give thanks for everything?**

“Are we to give thanks for everything that befalls us? Yes; be it even disease, be it even poverty. For if a certain wise man gave this advice in the Old Testament, and said, ‘Whatsoever is brought upon you take cheerfully, and be patient when you are changed to a low estate (Ecclus. ii, 4)’ . . . But if you give thanks when you are in comfort and in affluence, in success and in prosperity, there is nothing great, nothing wonderful in that. What is required is, for a man to give thanks when he is in afflictions, in anguish, in discouragements. Utter no word in preference to this, ‘Lord, I thank you.’ (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XIX)”

### **5. God loves us more than our own parents**

“For He loves us more than our parents; and wide as is the difference between evil and goodness, so great is the difference between the love of God and that of our fathers. And these are not my words, but those of Christ Himself Who loves us. And hear what He Himself says, ‘What man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will

give him a stone? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him? (Matt. vii. 9, 11.)' . . . For if He loves us not, wherefore did He create us? Had He any necessity? Do we supply to Him any ministry and service? Does He need anything that we can render? (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XIX)"

### **6. Sin is the only real evil**

" 'But such an one,' you will say, 'is poor, and poverty is an evil. And what is it to be sick, and what is it to be crippled?' Oh, man, they are nothing. One thing alone is evil, that is to sin . . . And yet we omit to search into the causes of what are really evils, and busy ourselves about other things. Why is it that not one of us ever examines why he has sinned? To sin - is it then in my power, or is it not in my power? And why need I go round about me for a number of reasons? I will seek for the matter within myself. Now then did I ever master my wrath? Did I ever master my anger, either through shame, or through fear of man? Then whenever I discover this done, I shall discover that to sin is in my own power. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XIX)"

### **21 subordinating yourselves to one another in the fear of Christ.**

"Let there be an interchange of service and submission. For then will there be no such thing as unquestioning service. Let not one sit down in the rank of a freeman, and the other in the rank of a slave; rather it were better that both masters and slaves be servants to one another . . . for this He washed His disciples' feet . . . But he does not choose to submit himself to you? However do you submit yourself; not simply yield, but submit yourself. Entertain this feeling towards all, as if all were your masters. For thus shall you soon have all as your slaves . . . For you will then more surely make them yours, when without receiving anything, you of yourself render them of your own. This is 'submitting your selves one to another in the fear of Christ,' in order that we may subdue all the passions, be servants of God, and preserve the love we owe to one another. And then shall we be able also to be counted worthy of the loving kindness which comes of God, through the grace and mercies of His only-begotten Son, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and forever and ever. Amen. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XIX)"

## **Ephesians Chapter V Part 3**

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### **22 Wives be subordinating yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord.**

### **1. The blessing of being in unity**

“A Certain wise man, setting down a number of things in the rank of blessings, set down this also in the rank of a blessing, "A wife agreeing with her husband." (Ecclus. xxv. 1) And elsewhere again he sets it down among blessings, that a woman should dwell in harmony with her husband. . . For there is no relationship between man and man so close as that between man and wife, if they be joined together as they should be. . . Thus even from the very beginning woman sprang from man, and afterwards from man and woman sprang both man and woman. Do you perceive the close bond and connection? (Ecclus. xl. 23), (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XX) .”

### **2. Harmony in spouses produces a family in harmony**

“Because when they are in harmony, the children are well brought up, and the domestics are in good order, and neighbors, and friends, and relations enjoy the fragrance. But if it be otherwise, all is turned upside down, and thrown into confusion. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XX) .”

### **3. Order in Marriage : *as to the Lord***

He either means this, ‘as’ knowing that for the Lord your serve; or else he means, whenever you obey the husband, do so as obeying the Lord. For if he who resists these external authorities, those of governments, I mean, ‘withstands the ordinance of God’ (Rom. xiii. 2), much more does she who submits not herself to her husband. Such was God's will from the beginning. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XX) .”

**23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also the Christ is head of the Church, and is Himself savior of the body. 24 But even as the Church subordinates herself to the Christ, so also the wives to their own husbands in everything.**

### **Order within marriage**

“For indeed the head is the saving health of the body. He had already laid down beforehand for man and wife, the ground and provision of their love, assigning to each their proper place, to the one that of authority and forethought, to the other that of submission. As then ‘the Church,’ that is, both husbands and wives, ‘is subject unto Christ, so also ye wives submit yourselves to your husbands, as unto God. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XX) .”

**25 Husbands, be loving your own wives, even as the Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself up for her,**

### **1. Love is the pre-condition for obedience**

“Would you have your wife obedient unto you, as the Church is to Christ? Take then the same provident care for her, as Christ takes for the Church. Yea, even if it shall be needful for you to give your life for her, and to be cut into pieces ten thousand times, and to endure and undergo any suffering whatever, -refuse it not. Though you should undergo all this, yet will you not, no, not even then, have done anything like Christ.

(Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XX).”

## **2. Love must be the same unconditional love of Christ**

“Though you see her looking down upon you, and disdainful, and scorning you, yet by your great thoughtfulness for her, by affection, by kindness, you will be able to lay her at your feet . . . But the partner of one's life, the mother of one's children, the foundation of one's every joy, one ought never to chain down by fear and menaces, but with love and good temper. For what sort of union is that, where the wife trembles at her husband? And what sort of pleasure will the husband himself enjoy, if he dwells with his wife as with a slave, and not as with a free-woman? ... do not upbraid her; for neither did Christ do this. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XX) .”

## **3. Christ took the Church as a “worthless bride”**

“So then she was unclean! So then she had blemishes, so then she was unsightly, so then she was worthless! Whatsoever kind of wife you shall take, yet shall you never take such a bride as the Church, when Christ took her, nor one so far removed from you as the Church was from Christ, And yet for all that, He did not abhor her, nor loathe her for her surpassing deformity. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XX) .”

**26 in order that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her in the laver of the water with the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself the glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such things; but that she may be holy and unblemished.**

**Laver** = a large basin used in ceremonial rites of the Jews. (The Baptismal Font)

### **The wife is baptized in the Image of Christ**

“What word? ‘In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.’” (Matt. 28: 19) And not simply has He adorned her, but has made her ‘glorious, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.’ Let us then also seek after this beauty ourselves, and we shall be able to create it. . . She is of God's fashioning. You reproach not her, but Him that made her; what can the woman do? . . . Seek for beauty of soul. Imitate the Bridegroom of the Church. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XX) .”

**28 So ought the husbands to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as also the Lord the Church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones; 31 because of this ‘shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall be into one flesh. 32 This mystery is great; but I speak in regard to Christ and in regard to the Church. 33 However do you severally be loving in this manner each one his own wife as himself, and the wife in this manner that she be fearing the husband.**

## **1. The mystery of being One Flesh**

“And how is she his flesh? Harken; ‘This now is bone of my bones,’ said Adam, ‘and

flesh of my flesh.' (Gen. ii. 23) For she is made of matter taken from us. And not only so, but also, 'they shall be,' said God, 'one flesh.' (Gen. ii. 24) (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XX) .”

## **2. Our relationship to Christ is the same**

“Thus then are we in relation to Christ; we become one flesh by participation, and we much more than the child. And why and how so? Because so it has been from the beginning. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XX) .”

## **3. Love is the greater principle**

“... he would rather that this principle prevail, this, namely, of love; for where this exists, everything else follows of course, but where the other exists, not necessarily. For the man who loves his wife, even though she be not a very obedient one, still will bear with everything. And of what nature is this "fear"? It is the not contradicting, the not rebelling... it is enough that fear be kept within these bounds. (Chrysostom, Ephesians, Homily XX).”