

## A Godly Family, Pt 6: Theology-Applying Love (Eph 5:31-32)

There are times in life that test your theology and where your trust is. For me it was last weekend of last year as I buried my baby son Mark. I still remember the funeral like yesterday. When you have to hold a tiny casket rather than the tiny baby you thought you'd be holding at that same time, nothing is more practical and important than your doctrine of God, theology applied to your life and thinking.

I wrote these words a year ago: 'A burden is lifted, and I am ready by God's grace for what he has for us next to do, in the next page of this chapter. [I asked those you reading to] open your Bible and read Ephesians 3:14-21 and pray for us in light of that passage. There will be more new mercies tomorrow morning (and every morning) from our God of immeasurable love who strengthens the inner man and is able to do exceedingly immeasurably beyond all we ask or think, to Him be the glory.'<sup>1</sup> (Alleluia, Amen)

I want to ask you to open your Bibles again to read Ephesians 3. Tonight I'll share more how God filled my empty hands literally this very same week, Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> last year, a boy we later adopted, now named Matteus. This morning I want us to look at that text again.

In Ephesians 3:20, Paul prays: *Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,<sup>21</sup> to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.*

**4:1** *Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called ...*

The end of Ephesians 3 and start of Ephesians 4 is the exact center of the letter, and gives its central theme: theology must be applied.

- the theology of God's glorification has practical application
- Your calling (first 3 chapters) informs your conduct (last 3)
- His divine power within us is to empower our daily practice
- The wealth of His resources (1:3) supplies us for our walk
- The great doctrine of the first half of the book of Ephesians gives us a great duty in light of it in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the book
- The divine sovereignty of God in chapters 1-3 must be balanced with our human responsibility in chapters 4-6
- The heavenly truths (part 1) have earthly implications (pt 2)
- The *imperatives* (commands, "do this") in 4-6 are grounded in *indicatives* (verses indicating what God has done for us)
- Eph 1-3 lays out the gospel, the theology of salvation, and Eph 4-6 applies the gospel to all of life, for sanctification
- We must keep the applications with their gospel foundation

**4:32** *Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other [command], just as God in Christ also has forgiven you [gospel].*

**5:2** *and walk in love [your duty], just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice [the doctrine]*

**5:25** *Husbands love your wives [imperative/what to do] just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself [indicative—what He did]*

This is what sets true Christianity apart from other religions, cults, and others who profess the faith but don't possess the true gospel. In biblical Christianity, we don't *do something so that God will do something for us* (forgive, save us). Christ has already paid it all and done all the work for us on the cross. The moment we repent and put our trust in His finished work of salvation and stop trusting what we do and instead trust 100% in what Jesus did for us, we're saved by grace alone (2:8-9). The gospel isn't man's achievement, it's God's accomplishment for man. The gospel isn't "do"; it is "done," as Jesus said on the cross, "It is *finished!*" (not "it is ready for you to finish what Jesus started"). We can't *do* it; it must be *done for us*.

Paul doesn't say "do this *so that God will...*" we do what He calls us to *because of what God has done for us* (2:10). He saved us as His bride who He loved and gave Himself up for. Like a spouse does in marriage for his or her beloved, motivated by love not by legalism, that's the Christ-centered grace-transforming gospel-driven basis of covenant-keeping love, ours and God's, as we saw last week in v. 31: *FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH* [covenant].<sup>32</sup> *This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.*<sup>33</sup> *Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.*

We began to look at v. 32 last week, and will conclude with v. 33 this week, where our focus and title is "theology-applying love." I don't want to just jump to the duties "love your wife" and "respect your husband in v. 33; we need the doctrine first in v. 32.

We're going to spend a good amount of time on the theology of the "mystery" in v. 32 so we can rightly apply that theology in v. 33. If a foundation isn't laid right, a home can't be fixed by mere effort. If our home/marriage lacks gospel foundation, mere effort can't fix it. In context, we've seen God's love is to parallel and power ours:

1. A Love that is *Produced by the Spirit* (5:18-25a, Gal. 5:22)
2. A Love that is a *Predetermined Choice* (5:25b, 27, 1:4-5)
3. A Love that is a *Particular Redemption Love* (5:25c, 2, 1:7)
4. A Love that is a *Prevailing Love that Changes us* (5:26)
5. A Love that is a *Persevering and Preserving Love* (5:27)
6. A Love that is a *Practical Love in Action* (5:28)
7. A Love that is a *Preeminent Cherishing Love* (5:29)
8. A Love that is a *Providing Nurturing Love* (5:29-30)

Last week: Love that is a *Permanent Covenant-Keeping Love*, v.31

Today: Love that is a ***Picture of Christ's Love for His bride***, 32-33

These are not the 10 commandments of marriage, or Law from Mt. Sinai, just imperatives that we have to fulfill in the flesh, these are indicatives of Christ's love for us in the gospel. These flow from another Mt. (Calvary) we're to fulfill in God's Spirit by His grace. Israel couldn't keep Mt. Sinai's covenant, Calvary's was needed. The history of redemption is God's love story, a mystery in the OT and OC until the new came, revealing as v. 32 says, the mystery of marriage picturing Christ, the church/people He loves as His bride.

A "mystery" in the NT is not something smart men like Sherlock Holmes or his friend Watson can solve. It's something that all the smartest men of OT times could not solve, even though some clues were there to some degree. A "mystery" in language of the NT is something only supernaturally revealed by the Spirit to NT writers.

Look back at Eph 3:3: *that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief.*<sup>4</sup> *By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,*<sup>5</sup> *which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets [NT] in the Spirit;*<sup>6</sup> *to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel ...* ...<sup>2</sup> *and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things;*<sup>10</sup> *so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.*<sup>11</sup> *This was in accordance with the eternal purpose ...*

So when Paul talks in Eph 5:31, quoting Genesis 2, about God's creating marriage with Adam and Eve, His eternal purpose always had in mind for His love to *be made known through the church* He loves as a bride and will eternally, which human marriage pictures. The OT does present God as bride to Israel, but the mystery or NT insight includes Gentiles as part of the bride and body, the church. We could refer to it as a "bi-racial marriage" of Jesus the Jew marrying outside His ethnicity. Thankfully Jesus isn't opposed to "bi-racial marriage" because otherwise we Gentiles couldn't go to heaven!

Every love story of man and woman, every marriage since Adam and Eve (which is what v. 31 refers to) points to a greater marriage and greater love story of a greater Man named Jesus (Son of God) who left His Father in heaven to be joined to His bride, v. 31-32, in betrothal covenant relationship to be consummated at His wedding.

From heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride<sup>2</sup>

Many human love stories start with "once upon a time." This story actually begins "before there was time," the eternal fellowship of Father, Son, Spirit, a loving relationship as one God, three persons in perfect unity and love and glory before time began. God chose to create a world as a platform to share the Trinity's unity, love and glory in marriage, 2 persons as one, and also with a chosen people to be given as a bride from Father to Son as a wedding gift (Jn 17). The Father chooses (Eph 1:4), Son pays a dowry (1:7), the Spirit arranges the marriage, sealing, guaranteeing its covenant (1:13-14).

Look at Ephesians 1:4, once upon a time, before there was time... God the Father, it says “*chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him* [that’s language for the bride in 5:27]. *In love* <sup>5</sup> *He predestined us ...*”

In the end of v. 6, it says we’re blessed in union with “the beloved.” This is not a common word, but is a rich OT term used most commonly in Song of Solomon, 33x). Ex:

- “My beloved is mine, and I am his...” (2:16)
- “What kind of beloved is your beloved...?” (5:9)
- “This is my beloved and this is my friend...” (5:16)
- “I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine...” (6:3)
- “I am my beloved’s and his desire is for me...” (7:10)

Solomon in a special way was “beloved” of God and his beloved first marriage has a special place in Scripture (sadly he went away from it later in life, and so we need to look to a greater king). In Mt 12:42 King Jesus says of Himself ‘*a greater than Solomon is here.*’ That greatest OT love poem of Solomon, celebrating marital love between beloved man and wife, and every marriage between man and wife, points us to a greater “Beloved” (which God calls His Son, Mt 3) and a greater marriage for God’s Beloved

In Eph 1:7 we move from the Father’s part to the Son, and another rich OT love story may be part of the “mystery” or imagery Paul has in mind. Just like the word “beloved” in v. 6 appears most in Song of Solomon, the word “redeem” appears most in OT history books in the book of Ruth (great-great-great grandma of Solomon).

An OT *goel* (Redeemer) had to be a kinsman from His own people to redeem, to buy back what was lost, paying for, taking ownership

- involved forgiving debt they could not pay (Eph 1:7b, Ruth 4:6-9)
  - could include payment to redeem and marry (Eph 1:7a, Ruth 4:10)
- Boaz says “*Ruth...I have bought [back] to be my wife*”-ESV

-1:7 *In Him we have redemption...*Jesus redeemed His bride (5:25).

-*redemption* in NT language was purchasing of a slave (*doulos*). In the Greek translation of Ruth 2:13, she describes herself as *doulos*

*I do not have the standing of one of your servant girls*-NIV

-Eph 1:7 ends with “grace” (*charis*) and Ruth uses that same word for the grace she received from Boaz her kinsman-redeemer (2:10)

*she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes...?*-KJV

### **Results of Redemption in Ruth and Ephesians**

Redeeming grace is cause to bless God (Eph 1:3, 7; Ruth 4:14)

*The women said to Naomi “Blessed is the LORD who has not left you without a redeemer today ...”*

The next phrase in Eph 1:8 “*lavished on us*” is a bit like Ruth 3:17 where Boaz who would become the kinsman-redeemer of Ruth and Naomi, gives over-abundant provision sufficient for all their needs. Eph 1:9 and Ruth 2:13 (NASB) uses similar ‘kind’ language ‘*she said ...you have spoken kindly to your servant[doulos]*’

Eph 1:11 speaks of how God works all things according to His will. Ruth 2:3 gives one of the best OT illustrations of Providence

*‘So she went out and began to glean in the fields behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she found herself working in a field belonging to Boaz [who it says was a kinsman]’ (NIV)*

Eph 1:14 talks about the Spirit’s role in sealing for redemption as God’s purchased possession, Greek word for an engagement ring.

Eph 1:14 ends *redemption is for the praise of His glory* (Ruth 4:14)

*“may his [the redeemer’s] name be renowned in Israel’-ESV*

In Eph 2:5 we see spiritually we’re dependent on the grace of another looking upon our desperate and needy state (Ruth 2:2).

Ruth says: *Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace ... (KJV)*

By grace we’re seated with, feasting with him (Eph 2:6, Ruth 2:14)

*at mealtimes Boaz said to her, “Come here and eat some bread and dip your morsel in the wine.” So she sat ... she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over (ESV)*

Saving faith is trusting in the Lord alone (Eph 2:8, Ruth 2:12)

*‘the God...under whose wings thou...come to trust.’ (KJV)*

Those saved are humble, not boastful (Eph 2:9, Ruth 2:10, 13)

*she bowed down with her face to the ground ... “Why have I found such favor...? “May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord,” she said. “You have given me comfort and have spoken kindly to your servant—though I do not have the standing of one of your servant girls.” (NIV)*

Salvation is grace to the hopeless (Eph 2:12, Ruth 1:20-22, 4:14)

Naomi says to the women in her hopelessness: *“the LORD has brought me back empty...the Almighty has afflicted me”*

But in chapter 4: *Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessed is the LORD who has not left you without a redeemer today’*

Grace to far off foreigners brought near (Eph 2:12-13, Ruth 2:10)

Ruth is amazed by grace and favor in Boaz, to her a Gentile widow. It says *‘she fell on her face, bowing to the ground and said to him, “Why have I found favor in your sight that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?”’*

Gentiles become part of the family of faith (Eph 2:19, Ruth 4:11)

Eph 2:19 says Gentile believers in are no longer foreigners, but are now fellow citizens, fellow members of the house

In Ruth 4:11, when the Jew Boaz marries the Gentile Ruth, *'All the people ... said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel ...'*

Ephesians 3:4-6 says the mystery, not fully known in past ages but there were clues there (and I think Ruth is one of them we can see very clearly in hindsight) the mystery this marriage of Boaz and Ruth and other OT passages point to, the mystery that God's Spirit revealed to the NT apostle Paul is in Eph 3:6 that the Gentiles are equally with Israel joint heirs of the covenant blessings, members of the same body with believing Israel, and fellow partakers of the promises through the gospel in Christ our Kinsman-Redeemer! It was not fully understood by Ruth and Boaz or the original readers of the OT, but their marriage points to Christ and His bride (5:32).

His grace can replace bitterness (Eph 4:31-32, Ruth 1:20, 4:14-16)

*"Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara [Heb. for "bitter"], for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me ..."*

But by chapter 4 Naomi sees the kindness of the Almighty, and bitterness is turned to tender kindness (Eph 4:31-32) as we see Naomi tenderly kindly caring for this blessed baby

Redeemed love nourishes and cherishes (Eph 5:29, Ruth 4:15-16)

*'may he be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age ... Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her bosom, and became a nurse to him' (ESV, NIV 'cared for')*

Redeemed love gives and sacrifices (Eph 5:25, Ruth 4:6-10)

In Ruth 4, the closer kinsman/relative was unable or unwilling to pay the price to redeem the land and marry Ruth and commit to raise children with her to keep Naomi's family name alive.

He said *"I cannot redeem it because I might endanger my own estate. You redeem it yourself. I cannot do it." ... [he] said to Boaz, "Buy it yourself." And he removed his sandal. Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, "Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property ... I have also acquired Ruth the Moabitess ... as my wife in order to maintain the name ...'* (NIV)

Jesus was able and willing to be our kinsman-redeemer and left His estate in heaven and put Himself in danger, laying it all down for our sake, to do what we could not do, to buy back all that was lost, and to pay the full price for His bride

The wedding day is a great celebration (Ruth 4:11, Eph 5:27, 2:7)

The wedding audience says to Boaz: *We are witnesses ... may you achieve wealth...and become famous in Bethlehem*

Look back at Eph 2:7 even beyond the wedding celebration there is greater wealth and riches we receive: *'so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.'*

We have greater riches than any earthly wealth the wedding guests wished on Boaz. However famous he became in Bethlehem there's a far more famous person we know from Bethlehem, Christ Jesus, and there is a far bigger and better celebration and wedding of His to come for all in Christ, it's not just "happily ever after," it's for ages to come, forever after, surpassing joy shown to us His bride!

Paul says in Eph 5:32, after referencing the first OT marriage, this is a profound mystery, marriage is about Christ and the church. It is not just about Adam and Eve (as Eph 5:31 refers to), we have a 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam, a greater Man, a greater covenant head/representative for all in Him and this One protects His bride from the serpent and crushes the head of the serpent (as Gen. 3:15 prophesied of Jesus).

One greater than Solomon has come for us. He will not prove to be unfaithful to the wife of His youth as Solomon sadly proved to his. And we have a greater kinsman-redeemer than Boaz was to Ruth. All other marriages and love stories point to Christ's story (5:32). Human weddings are all preparation for and pointing to Christ's.

Paul who wrote Eph also wrote 2 Cor 11:2: "I *betrothed* you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. <sup>3</sup> But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ." (ESV) [note: the verb "set apart" in Eph 5:26 was used by rabbis for "betroth"]

The church is set apart as a betrothed bride to be presented to her husband pure and blameless (like Eph 5:27). In 2 Cor. 11 he refers back to the human marriage of Adam and Eve (like Eph 5:31) and he says Satan wants to lead the bride away from purity for Christ, away from being holy, blameless (5:27). The church is "betrothed" in 2 Cor. 11:2. I started to talk about betrothal customs last week.<sup>3</sup>

Jewish betrothals at times in history were entered by the husband-to-be giving a cup of wine to the bride-to-be, and upon drinking it at the meal they became officially betrothed, covenant relationship only broken by divorce or death, but the wedding consummation was still to come in the future, a greater celebration and feast. And they were already referred to as "husband" (Matt. 1:19) and "wife" (Luke 2:5). This helps us understand how the church is the bride of Christ but Revelation 19 says the wedding feast is still in the future

Jesus gave a cup of wine to His bride-to-be before He died to pay the price the Father required, and it may be that this moment is a fulfillment of the Lord's promise to betroth Himself to His people (Hosea 2:19-20). Jesus gives the cup of wine to His faithful (soon to be known as His church in the book of Acts), and promises them they will in the future be eating at His table with Him, a promise of a wedding supper after He returns (Rev 19), for the consummation.

A dowry was paid to the father to ratify the covenant (Eph 5:25). In Jewish tradition the man would go back to his father's house to prepare a dwelling place for his bride, for some time, and when done would come back to meet her and to bring her back with him. On that same evening around the table at "The Last Supper" (not really the Last Supper, because the Wedding Supper is to come), Jesus said after He gave the cup "*Do not let your heart be troubled ... In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 'If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also* (John 14:1-3)

Gifts might be given to the bride to show her love during a long betrothal period to comfort and keep her and remind her of what he had said and promised. In the same chapter Jesus says to His bride He will give them "*the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will ...bring to your remembrance all that I said to you...You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father* (v. 26, 28)

In western weddings, a groom and party wait at the front of the church and the bride and her party come down the aisle, the father escorting the bride and special music signals the entrance of the bride to meet her groom. But in Jewish weddings the groom and his friends come to meet the bride to take her back to the father's house for the wedding feast. The special music when the groom is getting near is a trumpet and a shout and voice of the messenger. She has been changed to bridal clothes when called to meet him.

1 Corinthians 15:52 *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound ... and we will be changed.*

1 Thess 4:16 ***For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel [the "chief messenger"] and with the trumpet of God ...<sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.***

One other part of this picture is that the betrothed bride washed in water in a special bath and was ready to meet the groom. In Eph 5:26, "washing with water" is likely 'the imagery of the bridal bath practiced in the first century ... In 1 Cor. 6:11 it also mentions ... believers were *washed, sanctified* ... The prenuptial bath in Jewish marital customs reflected the imagery of God's marriage to Israel related in Ezek 16...God entered into a covenant with her...bathed her with water, washed...making her exceedingly beautiful [5:27]<sup>4</sup>



Matthew 25 *Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom ... at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' ... the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast ... (Mt 25:1, 6, 10)*

Revelation 19:6 *Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns." <sup>7</sup> "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." <sup>8</sup> It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. <sup>9</sup> Then he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'"*

(But you have to respond to the invitation before that day comes, because if your name isn't on the list then, it's too late, Rev 21:27)

[only those who repent and worship Jesus the Lamb are in His book]

... <sup>11</sup> *And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True... [this is His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming]*

Isa. 59:17 says the Lord puts on His armor like a warrior or knight. "The Lord's armor" (Eph 6) is also called "the armor of light" that those with Him are to put on (1 Thess 5:8). He's coming in shining glory – you might even say – like a warrior or a knight in shining armor riding on a white horse to bring the bride to the wedding. He has already fought the dragon in Revelation 12 who was attacking the woman (dragon there is the devil, the woman is God's people). Satan enslaves and seeks to take captive, until the Prince of Peace redeems and frees her.

The Lord comes for His woman in Revelation 19, conquering the devil and his armies, and casting them into a dungeon for 1,000 years in Revelation 20 while His bride/saints reign with Him. And after He finally defeats all the enemies of His kingdom, Jesus and His bride will live happily forever after in a castle or celestial city with walls over 300 feet wide and over 1,000 miles high (Rev 21). Hollywood has nothing on this love story! Disney can't come close to the drama of the true Prince all movies and books fall short of, the love story and marriage all human ones picture and point to but pale in comparison to the real thing, as Paul explains in Eph 5:32.

And the bride that is already in heaven has a word for you, inviting you to the wedding by the Spirit of God, respond to this love story: Rev. 22:17 *The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. [the gospel!]*

That's some of the mystery and the imagery of Ephesians 5:32, the theology that Paul then applies in v. 33 to husbands and to wives. The applied theology of v. 33 says to human husbands: *each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself*

B.B. Warfield applied this theological truth. He contributed to theology on par with Augustine, Luther, and Calvin (*Table Talk*, Apr 2005, p. 10). R.C. Sproul: "I believe that Warfield is second only to Jonathan Edwards as America's greatest theologian" (p. 7).

Early in his marriage to his beloved wife Annie, she suffered a trauma to her nervous system (I think it was a freak ‘accident’ in a thunder storm) and never recovered. They were never able to have children, and she could never travel or move about very much.

“Dr. Warfield devoted his life to her care, seldom traveling far from her, following the marriage vows he had taken with her with unusual care and faithfulness ... he also stayed close with his wife, who was often confined to bed. He seldom was away from her side for more than two hours. He set aside time to read to her every day. ... One of his students [said of this professor] this man stands out in my mind as the most Christlike man I have ever known” (p. 10)

“He devoted himself to his primary responsibility of care for his wife. He submitted to the trials God had put before him” (p. 11)

“B.B. Warfield lived until Feb. 16, 1921, dying after teaching a class ... about how Christ had laid down His life for us” (p. 11)

That’s someone who applied the theology of Eph 5:25 and v. 33. In our house, one of our picture frames has this quote from B.B. Warfield: ‘God will so govern all things that we shall only reap good from what befalls us’ (that’s theology applied)

Some of you listening to this message may not know that kind of love toward you in your earthly relationships. Not every marriage or family among us has stayed together – some have broken pasts beyond repair – not every story ends that way, but there’s still hope

George Matheson was engaged to be married when he went blind. Rather than face life married to a blind person, the young lady called off the engagement. Brokenhearted over human love that had ended, he found hope in God’s never-ending love. He wrote:<sup>5</sup>

O Love that wilt not let me go ... O light that foll’west all my way ...  
O Joy that seekest me through pain, I cannot close my heart to thee;  
I trace the rainbow through the rain, And feel the promise is not vain ...  
O Cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from thee...Life that shall endless be

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<sup>1</sup> <http://lifeatthelaytons.blogspot.com>

<sup>2</sup> “The Church’s One Foundation.”

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?sermonid=921218341510> See endnotes on this message for some of the background and manners and customs works on ancient Jewish betrothal customs.

<sup>4</sup> Harold Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, p. 751-54.

<sup>5</sup> John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Romans*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), p. 517-18.