

BODY or BRIDE

by Bill Robinson

Is the church of today the “Bride of Christ” or the “Body of Christ” or “both”? Groups can be found in support of each of these.

Some claim that Israel is the wife of Jehovah and the church is the bride of Christ. I don't understand this one because Christ is Jehovah.

Some, including myself, believe that Israel is the bride and we, the church of today, are the body. It should be noted that while the Bible calls the church “the body of Christ” several times, not once is the church called “the Bride of Christ.”

The majority, however, seem to believe and therefore teach that the church of today is both the bride and the body.

Scripture clearly tells us that a husband and his wife are one but that oneness is not achieved until after their marriage. Since it is also clear from scripture that the marriage of Christ has not yet taken place, I find it difficult to believe that the body (the church) of the groom (Christ) and the bride (whoever she may be) are already one.

Never the less, what does the Bible say about it?

A clear picture of the Bride of Christ is given in Revelation 21 starting with verse 9.

Admittedly, Christ is not marrying a city. So this city, New Jerusalem, must be a metaphor of the bride. Assuming this to be so, what does it mean?

1. The wall around the city has twelve gates which are named after the twelve tribes of Israel.
2. The twelve foundations of the wall are named after the twelve apostles. (Note: Paul, our apostle is not one of the twelve! Cf. Acts 1:16-26 and Gal. 1:10-2:9)
3. There is no temple in this city for God is there and He is the temple.

All of these characteristics are clearly Jewish and therefore the only conclusion I can draw is that the city represents Israel. Therefore, the wife of the Lamb, the Bride of Christ can only be Israel!

Rev. 21:9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying Come hither I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

One of the seven angels (heis ek tôn hepta aggelôn). As in Re 17:1 with the same introduction when the angel made the announcement about the harlot city (Babylon), so here the description of the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, is given by one of the same group of angels who had the seven bowls. Thus the numphê (Bride) is placed in sharp contrast with the pornê (Harlot). The New Jerusalem was briefly presented in verse Re 21:2, but now is pictured at length (Re 21:9-22:5) in a nearer and clearer vision. The bride the wife of the Lamb (tên numphên tên gunaika tou arniou). Twice already the metaphor of the Bride has been used (Re 19:7; 21:2), here termed "wife" (gunaika), mentioned proleptically as in Re 19:7 if the marriage is not yet a reality. For the use of the same metaphor elsewhere in the N.T. see on Re 19:7.

Rev. 19:10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

He carried me away in the Spirit (apênegken me en pneumati). See same language in Re 17:7 when John received a vision of the Harlot City in a wilderness. Here it is "to a mountain great and high" (epi oros mega kai hupsêlon). So it was with Ezekiel (Eze 40:2) and so the devil took Jesus (Mt 4:8). It was apparently not Mount Zion (Re 14:1), for the New Jerusalem is seen from this mountain. "The Seer is carried thither 'in spirit' (cf. Re 1:10; 4:1); the Angel's deuro is a sursum cor to which his spirit under the influence of the 'Spirit of revelation' (Eph 1:17) at once responds" (Swete). And he shewed me (kai edeixen moi). First aorist active indicative of deiknumi, just as he had said he would do in verse Re 21:9 (deixô soi, I will shew thee). Precisely the same words about Jerusalem as in verse Re 21:2, save the absence of kainên (New).

Rev. 19:11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Having the glory of God (echousan tèn doxan tou theou). Syntactically this clause goes with verse Re 21:10, the feminine accusative singular participle echousan agreeing with polin, the radiance of the dazzling splendour of God as seen in Isa 60:1; Eze 43:5. God's very presence is in the Holy City (the Bride). Light (phôstêr). "Luminary," late word (in LXX, papyri), in N.T. only here and Php 2:15. Christ is the light (phôs) of the world (Joh 8:12) and so are Christians (Mt 5:14) who have received the illumination (phôtismos) of God in the face of Christ (2Co 4:6) and who radiate it to men (Php 2:15). See both words in Ge 1:3,14. "The 'luminary' of the Holy City is her witness to Christ" (Swete). Like unto a stone most precious (homoios lithôi timiôtatôi). Associative instrumental case after homoios. Timiôtatôi is the elative superlative. As it were a jasper stone (hôs lithôi iaspidi). As in Re 4:3, which see. Clear as crystal (krustallizonti). Verb not found elsewhere from krustallos (old word, Re 4:6; 22:1), "of crystalline brightness and transparency" (Thayer), "transparent and gleaming as rock-crystal" (Moffatt).

Rev 19:12 And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Having a wall great and high (echousa teichos mega kai hupsêlon). John returns, after the parenthesis in verse Re 21:11, to the structure in verse Re 21:10, only to use the accusative echousan as before to agree with polin, but the nominative echousa as again with "twelve gates" (pulônas dôdeka). Pulôn is an old word (from pulê gate) for a large gate as in Lu 16:20 and six times in Rev. for the gate tower of a city wall (Re 21:12,13,15,21,25; 22:14) as in 1Ki 17:10; Ac 14:13. See Eze 48:31 for these twelve gates, one for each tribe (cf. Re 7:1-8). At the gates (epi tois pulôsin). "Upon the gate towers." Twelve angels (aggelous dôdeka). As pulôroi or phulakes according to Isa 62:6; 2Ch 8:14. Names written thereon (onomata epigegrammena). Perfect passive participle of epigraphô. Which are the names (ha estin). Just as in Ezekiel's vision (Eze 48:31), so here the names of the twelve tribes of Israel appear, one on each gate.

Rev. 19:13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on

the west three gates.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Three gates (pulônes treis) on each of the four sides as in Eze 42:16; "on the east" (apo anatólês, as in Re 16:12, starting from the east), "on the north" (apo borra, from the north, as in Lu 13:29), "on the south" (apo notou, from the south, as in Lu 13:29), "on the west" (apo dusmôn, from the west, as in Mt 8:11).

Rev. 19:14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Had (echôn). Masculine present active participle of echô instead of echon (neuter like to teichos), and the participle occurs independently as if a principal verb (eichen) as often in this book. Twelve foundations (themelious dôdeka). Foundation stones, old adjective (from thema, from tithêmi), here as in 1Co 3:11; 2Ti 2:19, with lithous (stones understood), though often neuter substantive to themelion (Lu 6:48; Ac 16:26). See Isa 28:16; Heb 11:10. Twelve because of the twelve apostles as foundation stones (Eph 2:20). On them (ep' autôn). On the twelve foundation stones. Names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb (onomata tôn dôdeka apostolôn tou arniou). Jesus had spoken of twelve thrones for the apostles (Mt 19:28); names of all twelve are here written, not just that of Peter, as some would argue from Mt 16:18. As a matter of fact, Christ is the corner stone or akrogôniaion (1Pe 2:6; 1Co 3:10; Eph 2:20), though rejected by the Sanhedrin (Mt 21:42). One may wonder if the name of Judas is on that stone or that of Matthias.

Rev. 19:15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Had (eichen). Regular imperfect here, no longer echôn. For a measure a golden reed (metron kalamon chrusoun). See Re 11:1 for kalamos (reed). Metron is an old word, kin to mêtêr (mother, moulder, manager), an instrument for measuring (metreô) as in Mt 7:2, here in the predicate accusative. To measure (hina metrêsêi). Purpose clause with hina and the first aorist active subjunctive of metreô. The rod of gold was in keeping with the dignity of the service of God (Re 1:12; 5:8; 8:3; 9:13; 15:7).

Rev. 19:16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Lieth foursquare (tetragônos keitai). Present middle indicative of keimai. The predicate adjective is from tetra (Aeolic for tessares four) and gônos (gônia corner, Mt 6:5) here only in N.T. As in Eze 48:16,20. It is a tetragon or quadrilateral quadrangle (Re 21:12). The length thereof is as great as the breadth (to mêkos autês hoson to platos). It is rectangular, both walls and city within. Babylon, according to Herodotus, was a square, each side being 120 stadia. Diodorus Siculus says that Nineveh was also foursquare. With the reed (tôi kalamôi). Instrumental case (cf. verse Re 21:15 for kalamos) and for metreô (aorist active indicative here) Twelve thousand furlongs (epi stadiôn dôdeka chiliadôn). This use of the genitive stadiôn with epi is probably correct (reading of Aleph P), though A Q have stadious (more usual, but

confusing here with chiliadôn). Thucydides and Xenophon use epi with the genitive in a like idiom (in the matter of). It is not clear whether the 1500 miles (12,000 furlongs) is the measurement of each of the four sides or the sum total. Some of the rabbis argued that the walls of the New Jerusalem of Ezekiel would reach to Damascus and the height would be 1500 miles high. Equal (isa). That is, it is a perfect cube like the Holy of Holies in Solomon's temple (1Ki 6:19). This same measurement (platos, mêkos, hupsos) is applied to Christ's love in Eph 3:18, with bathos (depth) added. It is useless to try to reduce the measurements or to put literal interpretations upon this highly wrought symbolic language. Surely the meaning is that heaven will be large enough for all, as Jesus said (Joh 14:1) without insisting on the materialistic measurement of a gorgeous apartment house full of inside rooms.

Rev. 19:17 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

A hundred and forty and four cubits (hekaton tesserakonta tessarôn pêchôn). Another multiple of 12 (12x12=144) as in Re 7:4; 14:1. It is not clear whether it is the height or the breadth of the wall that is meant, though hupsos (height) comes just before. That would be 216 feet high (cf. verse Re 21:12), not enormous in comparison with the 7,000,000 feet (1500 miles) height of the city. According to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel (metron anthrôpou, ho estin aggelou). No preposition for "according to," just the accusative case of general reference in apposition with the verb emetrêsen. Though measured by an angel, a human standard was employed, man's measure which is angel's (Bengel).

Rev. 19:18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

The building of the wall (hê endômêsis tou teichous). Or endomêsis, elsewhere so far only in Josephus (Ant. XV. 9. 6, a mole or breakwater) and in an inscription (Syll. 583 31), apparently from endomeô, to build in, and so the fact of building in. The wall had jasper (verse Re 21:11) built into it. Was pure gold (chrusion katharon). No copula ên (was) expressed. The city shone like a mass of gold in contrast with the jasper lustre of the wall. Pure glass (hualôi katharôi). Associative instrumental case after homoion. Hualos (apparently from huei, it rains, and so raindrop) in N.T. only Re 21:18,21.

Rev. 19:19 And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Were adorned (kekosmêmenoi). Perfect passive participle of kosmeô as in verse Re 21:2, but without the copula êsan (were), followed by instrumental case lithôi (stone). With all manner of precious stones (panti lithôi timiôi). "With every precious stone." The list of the twelve stones in verses Re 21:19,20 has no necessary mystical meaning. "The writer is simply trying to convey the impression of a radiant and superb structure" (Moffatt). The twelve gems do correspond closely (only eight in common) with the twelve stones on the high priest's breastplate (Ex 28:17-20; 39:10; Eze 28:13; Isa 54:11). Charles identifies them with the signs of zodiac in reverse order, a needless performance here. See the stones in Re 4:3. These foundation stones are visible. For jasper (iaspis) see Re 4:3; 21:11,18; Isa 54:12; sapphire

(sappheiros) see Ex 24:10; Isa 54:11 (possibly the lapis lazuli of Turkestan); chalcedony (chalkêdôn) we have no other reference in N.T. or LXX (described by Pliny, H.N. XXXIII.21), possibly a green silicate of copper from near Chalcedon; emerald (smaragdos) here only in N.T., see Re 4:3 smaragdinos, and like it a green stone.

Rev. 19:20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Sardonyx (sardonux), here only in N.T., white with layers of red, from sardion (red carnelian) and onyx (white); for sardius (sardion) see Re 4:3; chrysolite (chrusolithos), here only in N.T. (Ex 28:20), stone of a golden colour like our topaz or amber or a yellow beryl or golden jasper; beryl (bêrullōs), again here only in N.T. (Ex 28:20), note the difficulty of identification, much like the emerald according to Pliny; for topaz (topazion), here only in N.T. (Ex 28:17), a golden-greenish stone; chrysoprase (chrusoprasos), here only in N.T. (not in LXX), in colour like a teak, translucent golden-green; jacinth (huakinthos), of the colour of the hyacinth, a violet colour (Pliny), already in Re 9:17 like blue smoke, like achates in LXX; amethyst (amethystos), only here in N.T. (Ex 28:19), of a violet and purple colour, more brilliant than the huakinthos. Swete sums up the colours thus: blue (sapphire, jacinth, amethyst), green (jasper, chalcedony, emerald, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase), red (sardonyx, sardius), yellow (chrysolite). But even so there is great variety in hue and brilliancy and in the reaction on each other. Clement of Alexandria argues that this variety illustrates the variety of gifts and graces in the twelve apostles. Possibly so.

Rev. 19:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Twelve pearls (dôdeka margaritai). These gate towers (pulônes) were mentioned in verses Re 21:12. Each of these (cf. Isa 54:12) is a pearl, one of the commonest of jewels (Mt 7:6; 13:46; 1Ti 2:9). Each one (ana heis hekastos). Distributive use of ana, but with the nominative (used as adverb, not preposition) rather than the accusative (as a preposition) as appears also in Mr 14:19; Joh 8:9; with kata in Ro 12:5, "a barbaric construction" according to Charles. Street (plateia). For which word (broad way, hodos understood) see Mt 6:5, here the singular, but includes all the streets. Transparent (diaugês). Old word (from dia, through, augê, ray, shining through), here alone in N.T.

Rev. 19:22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. (It should be noted that the Body of Christ has never had a temple. In fact, we are called the temple (1 Cor. 3:16 and 2 Cor. 6:16) of God. The only way that this city can be related to the Body of Christ is through Replacement Theology, ie. the Body of Christ took Israel's place.)

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

I saw no temple therein (naon ouk eidon en autêi). "Temple I did not see in it." The whole city is a temple in one sense (verse Re 21:16), but it is something more than a temple even with its sanctuary and Shekinah Glory in the Holy of Holies. For the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple thereof (ho gar Kurios ho theos ho pantokratôr, naos autês estin kai to arnion). "For the Lord God, the Almighty, is the sanctuary of it and the Lamb." The Eternal Presence is the Shekinah Glory of God (verse Re 21:3). In 2Co 6:16 we are the sanctuary of

God here, but now God is our Sanctuary, and so is the Lamb as in chapters Re 4; 5. See Re 1:8 and often for the description of God here.

Rev. 19:23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

To shine upon it (*hina phainôsin autêi*). Purpose clause with *hina* and the present active subjunctive of *phainô*, to keep on shining. Light is always a problem in our cities. See Isa 60:19. Did lighten it (*ephôtisen autên*). First aorist active indicative of *phôtizô*, to illumine, old verb from *phôs* (Lu 11:36). If the sun and moon did shine, they would give no added light in the presence of the Shekinah Glory of God. See verse Re 21:11 for "the glory of God." Cf. Re 18:1; 21:3. "Their splendour is simply put to shame by the glory of God Himself" (Charles). And the lamp thereof is the Lamb (*kai ho luchnos autês to arnion*). Charles takes *ho luchnos* as predicate, "and the Lamb is the lamp thereof." Bousset thinks that John means to compare Christ to the moon the lesser light (Ge 1:16), but that contrast is not necessary. Swete sees Christ as the one lamp for all in contrast with the many *luchniai* of the churches on earth (Re 1:12,20). "No words could more clearly demonstrate the purely spiritual character of St. John's conception of the New Jerusalem" (Swete).

Rev. 19:24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Amidst the light thereof (*dia tou phôtos autês*). Rather "by the light thereof." From Isa 60:3,11,20. All the moral and spiritual progress of moderns is due to Christ, and the nations of earth will be represented, including "the kings" (*hoi basileis*), mentioned also in Isa 60:3, "do bring their glory into it" (*pherousin tèn doxan autôn eis autên*). Present active indicative of *pherô*. Swete is uncertain whether this is a picture of heaven itself or "some gracious purpose of God towards humanity which has not yet been revealed" and he cites Re 22:2 in illustration. The picture is beautiful and glorious even if not realized here, but only in heaven.

In Hosea, chapter 2, Israel is portrayed as a wife who has deserted her husband and become a harlot, but God calls on her to repent and return to Him and He will betroth her to Himself forever. In verses 14-17 God speaks to Israel of a day in which she will be restored to Him as in the days of her youth and from then on shall call God her husband, not her Lord. (cf. Isa. 54:5-8 and Jer. 3:1, 20-22)

Ho. 2:1-21 Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah. 2 Plead with your mother, plead: for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband: let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts; 3 Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst. 4 And I will not have mercy upon her children; for they be the children of whoredoms. 5 For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink. 6 Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths. 7 And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now. 8 For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal. 9 Therefore will I return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness. 10 And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand. 11 I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. 12 And I will

destroy her vines and her fig trees, whereof she hath said, These are my rewards that my lovers have given me: and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them. 13 And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgat me, saith the LORD. 14 Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. 15 And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. 16 And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, that thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali. 17 For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name. 18 And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. 19 And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. 20 I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD. 21 And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the LORD, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; 22 And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. 23 And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God. (KJV)

There are at least two places in Paul's epistles where the idea that we are the bride is taken from. I do believe, however, that with careful and prayerful attention to what is actually said, and the context in which it is said, will clear up the misunderstanding.

First: 2 Corinthians 11:1-4. The context here is that of correct doctrine and an exhortation to the Corinthians to continue to follow Paul rather than allowing others to lead them astray. Paul admonishes them like a jealous husband admonishes his wife. He does not say that the church is to be the bride of Christ. What he does say is that he has "espoused her to one husband" so that he may "present her as a chaste virgin to Christ." Since Paul says that a married woman must learn only from her husband (1 Cor. 14:34-35) he seems to be using this as a metaphor to describe himself in relation to the Corinthians. In order for the husband (Paul) to present his wife, (the Corinthian church) as a chaste virgin to Christ, she must be pure in the doctrine of the grace of God and the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore she must learn doctrine only from Paul.

2 Cor. 11:1 Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Would that ye could bear with me (*ophelon aneichesthe mou*). Koiné way of expressing a wish about the present, *ophelon* (as a conjunction, really second aorist active indicative of *opheilô* without augment) and the imperfect indicative instead of *eithe* or *ei gar* (Robertson, Grammar, p. 1003). Cf. *Re 3:15*. See *Ga 5:12* for future indicative with *ophelon* and *1Co 4:8* for aorist. *Mou* is ablative case after *aneichesthe* (direct middle, hold yourselves back from me). There is a touch of irony here. Bear with me (*anechesthe mou*). Either imperative middle or present middle indicative (ye do bear with me). Same form. In a little foolishness (*mikron ti aphrosunês*). Accusative of general reference (*mikron ti*). "Some little foolishness" (from *aphrôn*, foolish). Old word only in this chapter in N.T.

2 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

With a godly jealousy (*theou zêlôi*). Instrumental case of *zêlos*. With a jealousy of God. I espoused (*hêrmosamên*). First aorist middle indicative of *harmozô*, old verb to join, to fit together (from *harmos*, joint). Common for betrothed, though only here in N.T. The middle

voice indicates Paul's interest in the matter. Paul treats the Corinthians as his bride.

2 Cor. 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

The serpent beguiled Eve (ho ophis exêpatêsen Heuan). Paul's only mention of the serpent in Eden. The compound exapataô means to deceive completely. Lest by any means (mê pôs). Common conjunction after verbs of fearing. Corrupted (phtharêi). Second aorist passive subjunctive with mê pôs of phtheirô, to corrupt.

2 Cor. 11:4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Another Jesus (allon Iêsoun). Not necessarily a different Jesus, but any other "Jesus" is a rival and so wrong. That would deny the identity. A different spirit (pneuma heteron). This is the obvious meaning of heteron in distinction from allon as seen in Ac 4:12; Ga 1:6. But this distinction in nature or kind is not always to be insisted on. A different gospel (euaggelion heteron). Similar use of heteron. Ye do well to bear with him (kalôs anechesthe). Ironical turn again. "Well do you hold yourselves back from him" (the coming one, whoever he is). Some MSS. have the imperfect aneichesthe (did bear with).

Second: Ephesians 5:22-33. The context here is love and proper relationships. It should be noted that nowhere in this text is the church called the "Bride of Christ." It does say that Christ is the head of the church and the saviour of the body. Compare Eph. 1:22-23 where Christ is said to be the head of the church which is His body.

Many conclude that the church is the bride of Christ because husbands are exhorted to love their wives as Christ loved the church (Ep. 5: 25). In Ep. 5: 28, however, a man is told to love his wife as he loves his own body. Neither of these verses identify the church as the bride or body of Christ. They rather set forth an example of the type of love a man should have for his wife. Since wives are to be in submission to their husbands in all things because the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church and the church is in submission to Christ in all things, husbands are given an example of the relationship they are to have with their wives. They are not to dominate but rather are to love and protect.

Ep. 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Be in subjection. Not in the Greek text of B and Jerome knew of no MS. with it. K L and most MSS. have hupotassethe like Col 3:18, while Aleph A P have hupotassesthôsan (let them be subject to). But the case of andrasin (dative) shows that the verb is understood from verse Eph 5:21 if not written originally. Idiois (own) is genuine here, though not in Col 3:18. As unto the Lord (hôs tôi Kuriôi). So here instead of hôs anêken en Kuriôi of Col 3:18.

Ep. 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

For the husband is the head of the wife (hoti anêr estin kephalê tês gunaikos). "For a husband is head of the (his) wife." No article with anêr or kephalê. As Christ also is the head of the church (hôs kai ho Christos kephalê tês ekklêsias). No article with kephalê, "as also Christ is head of the church." This is the comparison, but with a tremendous difference which Paul hastens to add either in an appositional clause or as a separate sentence. Himself the saviour of the body (autos sôtêr tou sômatos). He means the church as the body of which Christ is head and Saviour.

Ep. 5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

But (alla). Perhaps, "nevertheless," in spite of the difference just noted. Once again the verb hupotassô has to be supplied in the principal clause before tois andrasin either as indicative (hupotassontai) or as imperative (hupotassesthôsan).

Ep. 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Even as Christ also loved the church (kathôs kai ho Christos êgapêsen tên ekklêsian). This is the wonderful new point not in Col 3:19 that lifts this discussion of the husband's love for his wife to the highest plane.

Ep. 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

That he might sanctify it (hina autên hagiassêi). Purpose clause with hina and the first aorist active subjunctive of hagiazô. Jesus stated this as his longing and his prayer (Joh 17:17-19). This was the purpose of Christ's death (verse Eph 5:25). Having cleansed it (katharisas). First aorist active participle of katharizô, to cleanse, either simultaneous action or antecedent. By the washing of water (tôi loutrôi tou hudatos). If loutron only means bath or bathing-place (= loutron), then loutrôi is in the locative. If it can mean bathing or washing, it is in the instrumental case. The usual meaning from Homer to the papyri is the bath or bathing-place, though some examples seem to mean bathing or washing. Salmond doubts if there are any clear instances. The only other N.T. example of loutron is in Tit 3:5. The reference here seems to be to the baptismal bath (immersion) of water, "in the bath of water." See 1Co 6:11 for the bringing together of apolousasthe and hêgiasthête. Neither there nor here does Paul mean that the cleansing or sanctification took place in the bath save in a symbolic fashion as in Ro 6:4-6. Some think that Paul has also a reference to the bath of the bride before marriage. Still more difficult is the phrase "with the word" (en rêmati). In Joh 17:17 Jesus connected "truth" with "sanctify." That is possible here, though it may also be connected with katharisas (having cleansed). Some take it to mean the baptismal formula.

Ep. 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

That he might present (hina parastêsêi). Final clause with hina and first aorist active subjunctive of paristêmi (see Col 1:22 for parallel) as in 2Co 11:2 of presenting the bride to the bridegroom. Note both autos (himself) and heautôi (to himself). Glorious (endoxon). Used of splendid clothing in Lu 7:25. Spot (spilos). Late word, in N.T. only here and 2Pe 2:13, but spiloô, to defile in Jas 3:6; Jude 1:23. Wrinkle (rutida). Old word from ruô, to contract, only here in N.T. But that it should be holy and without blemish (all' hina êi hagia kai amômos). Christ's goal for the church, his bride and his body, both negative purity and positive.

Ep. 5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Even so ought (houtôs opheilousin). As Christ loves the church (his body). And yet some people actually say that Paul in 1Co 7:1ff. gives a degrading view of marriage. How can one say that after reading Eph 5:22-33 where the noblest picture of marriage ever drawn is given?

Ep. 5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Nourisheth (ektrephei). Old compound with perfective sense of ek (to nourish up to maturity and on). In N.T. only here and Eph 6:4. Cherisheth (thalpei). Late and rare word, once in a marriage contract in a papyrus. In N.T. only here and 1Th 2:7. Primarily it means to warm (Latin foveo), then to foster with tender care as here. Even as Christ also (kathôs kai ho Christos). Relative (correlative) adverb pointing back to houtôs at the beginning of the sentence (verse Eph 5:28) and repeating the statement in verse Eph 5:25.

Ep. 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Of his flesh and of his bones (ek tês sarkos autou kai ek tôn osteôn autou). These words are in the Textus Receptus (Authorized Version) supported by D G L P cursives Syriac, etc., though wanting in Aleph A B 17 Bohairic. Certainly not genuine.

Ep. 5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

For this cause (anti toutou). "Answering to this" = heneken toutou of Ge 2:24, in the sense of anti seen in anth' hôn (Lu 12:3). This whole verse is a practical quotation and application of the language to Paul's argument here. In Mt 19:5 Jesus quotes Ge 2:24. It seems absurd to make Paul mean Christ here by anthrôpos (man) as some commentators do.

Ep. 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

This mystery is great (to mustêrion touto mega estin). For the word "mystery" see Eph 1:9. Clearly Paul means to say that the comparison of marriage to the union of Christ and the church is the mystery. He makes that plain by the next words. But I speak (egô de legô). "Now I mean." Cf. 1Co 7:29; 15:50. In regard of Christ and of the church (eis Christon kai [eis] tèn ekklêsian). "With reference to Christ and the church." That is all that eis here means.

Ep. 5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Robertson's NT Word Pictures:

Nevertheless (plên). "Howbeit," not to dwell unduly (Abbott) on the matter of Christ and the church. Do ye also severally love (kai humeis hoi kath' hena hekastos agapâtô). An unusual idiom. The verb agapâtô (present active imperative) agrees with hekastos and so is third singular instead of agapâte (second plural) like humeis. The use of hoi kath' hena after humeis = "ye one by one" and then hekastos takes up (individualizes) the "one" in partitive apposition and in the third person. Let the wife see that she fear (hê gunê hina phobêtai). There is no verb in the Greek for "let see" (blepetô). For this use of hina with the subjunctive as a practical imperative without a principal verb (an elliptical imperative) see Mr 5:23; Mt 20:32; 1Co 7:29; 2Co 8:7; Eph 4:29; 5:33 (Robertson, Grammar, p. 994). "Fear" (phobêtai, present middle subjunctive) here is "reverence."