

## *The Comedy of Errors*

In the Acts of the Apostles, the reader is presented with a striking incident that took place while Paul was preaching in the city. This incident depicts the city's ambiguity in terms of its religion as well as the direct relationship between religion and the market that existed in Ephesus. The incident is described in the Geneva Bible in the following way:

24 For a certaine man named Demetrius, a silver smith, which made silver temples of Diana, brought great gaines unto the craftsmen:

25 Whom hee called together, with the workemen of like things, and sayde, Sirs, yee know that by the craft wee have our goods.

26 Moreover, yee see and heare, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia this Paul hath perswaded, and turned away from people, saying, That bee not gods which are made with hands:

27 So that not onely this thing is dangerous unto us, that the state shoulde bee reprooved, but also the temple of the great goddesse Diana should bee nothing esteemed, and that it woulde come to passe that her magnificence, which all Asia, and they worshippeth, should be destroyed.

28 Nowe when they heard it, they were full of wrath, and cryed out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

29 And the whole citee was full of confusion, and they rushed into the common place with one assent, caught Gaius, and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Pauls companions of his journey.

30 And when Paul would have entred in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.<sup>1</sup>

The Christian associations of the Ephesian *locus*... it was in the specific city that Paul had brought Christianity and marriage together. For Paul, unity between Christians and the preservation of a functional marriage were incorporated and intertwined in a sermon to the Ephesians. In Chapter V of his epistle, Paul preached the wife's

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<sup>1</sup> The Acts of the Apostles, Chapter XIX, 24-30, in *Geneva or Black Letter Bible Better Known as the Breeches' Bible* (London, 1560; repr. 1600).

submission to the husband as an analogy of that of the church to Christ. It is important to note that church is presented as female and Christ as her husband:

22 Wives, submit your selves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the husband is the wifes head, even as Christ is the head of the Church, and the same is the saviour of his body.

24 Therefore, as the Church is in subiection to Christ, even so let the wives bee to their husbands in every thing.<sup>2</sup>

Women should obey their husbands in analogy to the church's obedience to Christ. Paul goes one step further in the remainder of his letter: husbands should love their wives in the same way that Christ loved the church and sacrificed himself to its well-being. Man must therefore abandon his father and mother and become attached to his wife, so that the two will be transformed to one body. Thus, in sum, every man should love his wife like himself and every woman must be afraid of (and therefore submissive to) her husband.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, Chapter V, 22-4, in *Geneva or Black Letter Bible Better Known as the Breeches' Bible* (London, 1560; repr. 1600).

<sup>3</sup> See *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, ed. by J. Armitage Robinson (London: Macmillan, 1904), pp. 204-9.