

#FORMARRIAGE

Community Group curriculum for the week of September 14, 2014

Big Picture

The glory of God is the ultimate aim of marriage. The grace of God is the ultimate hope for marriage. The Gospel is the ultimate picture in marriage. Wives give a picture of the church to the world. Husbands give a picture of Christ to the world. As Christ relates to the church, the husband is the head of his wife. As the church relates to Christ, the wife is the helper for her husband. In Genesis 2 God designs this picture. In Genesis 3, sin distorts this picture. So wives revere Christ through submission and respect to your husband and husbands reflect Christ through sacrifice for your wife. Guys love her unselfishly. Nourish, cherish and love her completely.

Let's Explore Together!

1. Read Ephesians 5:22-33. How many times does the word "as" appear in this passage? What is Paul's purpose in using this word to connect marriage to Christ and His church?
2. Why are the verses directed at wives so controversial? How would you respond to someone who says, *"This is the reason I don't believe the Bible. It's archaic and oppressive to women. We've moved beyond this, haven't we?"*
3. How does Ephesians 5:22-33 relate to other passages specifically about women (1 Timothy 2:9-15; 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; 1 Peter 3:7)?
4. A definition of the word "submit" is to willingly lay down one's life and to structure what we do in such a way to support another. What does "submit" look like? How is it different from obey? Does submission mean that one person is inherently inferior or superior to the other? Why would wives be asked to submit?

5. Reread Ephesians 5:25-30. Paul devotes twice as many words to telling husbands to love their wives as to telling wives to submit to their husbands. How should a man love his wife? Guys, let's count the ways!

6. The clarifying statement "as to the Lord" found in 5:22 indicates that a wife's submission to her husband is ultimately an act of obedience to God. Since her ultimate allegiance is to God not any man (including her husband) a wife should not follow her husband into something that is clearly sin in the eyes of the Lord. What are some examples where a wife should NOT follow her husband's lead?

7. Read Genesis 3:16 and list some of the negative effects of "the fall" on husband/wife relationships. What distinguishes a Christian marriage (Ephesians 5:22-33) under the control of the Holy Spirit over a non-Christian (Genesis 3:16) marriage?

8. Finally, what advice (married couples) would you give to those (single adults) desiring to marry in the future? Likewise, what advice (single adults) would you give to married couples in improving their marriage?

Prayer for Marriages

"Father, I plead that we would speak the truth in love to each other, honestly and openly sharing our feelings with each other" (Ephesians 4:15, 25)

"Lord, I pray that our marriage will glorify You and be an example of Your intention for marriage" (1 Corinthians 10:31)

“Father, bless and strengthen our marriage in the midst of the pressure and problems of our lives” (2 Corinthians 12:9)

“Father, grant that we might find great delight and joy in each other” (Proverbs 5:18)

“May we be kind and tenderhearted to one another, forgiving one another even as God for Christ’s sake has forgiven us” (Ephesians 4:32)

Personal Responsibility for Marriages

So if you want your marriage to be the most exciting and rewarding journey of your life, the question to ask is not whether your mate is doing enough to make the marriage work, but instead: Do you love your mate unconditionally by taking responsibility for your role in the relationship? Try this – promise to look at yourself first, to take responsibility for your own part of the marriage, and stop trying to change your mate. This puts “meat” on unconditional love. It says you are willing to put your needs on hold for a time and make what’s best for the relationship a priority.

Suggested Reading

“The Meaning of Marriage” by Tim Keller

“Just How Married Do You Want To Be? By Jim and Sarah Sumner

“Sacred Marriage” by Gary Thomas

#FORFAMILY: #FORMARRIAGE

So, Just How Married Do You Want To Be?

Brent Van Elswyk

September 14, 2014

INTRODUCTION:

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 5:1, 32

EXPOSITION:

1. Your _____ is to _____ and _____ God.
(Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 9:6; Eph. 5: 1,32; Rom. 8:29)

2. You fulfill your responsibility best when you _____ as God
_____ you!

As God is to _____, so I must be to my _____!

3. The marriage relationship best reflects and represents God's
_____ love for His people through:

(Deut. 7:9; Jer. 7:23; Jer. 31:33; Ps. 89:34; Mk. 14:24; 1 Cor. 11:25; Eph. 5:32;
Heb. 7:22)

a. _____ - _____
(Gen. 2:24-25; Matt. 19:3-6; John 13:34; 1 John 4:19; John 15:9, 15)

b. _____ - _____
(Ex. 34:5,6; John 1:14; Rom. 3:24; 5:20-21; Eph. 2:5-8; Titus 2:11; 3:7; Heb. 4:16;
James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5,10)

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James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5,10)

C. _____ - _____
(Eph. 5:21; Rom. 12:1-8; 1 Cor. 12:1-31; Gal. 5:22; note all "one anothers"
in NT)

d. _____ - _____
(Matt. 10:30; Mark 12:29-31; Rom. 5:8; Ps. 139; 1 John 4:18, 19)

BOTTOM LINE:

APPLICATION:

1. _____ at your marriage!

2. _____ your marriage!

3. _____ your marriage!

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