

Study Guide #15 (Leader's Guide): K-group Bible Study for Week of February 18, 2018

Title of the Lesson: Marriage

This week's bible passage talks about Christian marriage by describing how husbands and wives submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

- Remind your group that one of the discipleship skills that we want to develop this year is the ability to verbalize scripture to people with whom we will have the opportunity to minister. So we will continue to ask one of you to tell the bible story from memory.
- So, let's give our undivided attention to _____ as he/she verbalizes tonight's bible study passage.

Ephesians 5:21-33

²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

²² Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—³⁰ for we are members of his body. ³¹ "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." ³² This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Questions

- Now, let's open our bibles to Ephesians 5:21-33. Let's review the scripture and look for details that need to be emphasized and remembered.
- After clarifying what the bible says, ask what resonated with you the most and why?
- Context Analysis: The story that precedes our passage is talking about being filled with the Holy Spirit instead of being drunk with wine (see Eph. 5:18). Why do you think Paul chose this particular analogy? In other words, what is the connection to being "filled with the Spirit" and being "drunk with wine?"
- The preceding passage goes on to give four key participle phrases that explain what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Can you identify these four phrases (see vv. 19-20)? What stands out to you from these four examples of Spirit-filled Christianity?

- The last of these participle phrases is to “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” When you think of the word “submit,” what comes to mind? What meaning do you think Paul has in mind here?
- Ephesians 5:21 appears to be a “bridge verse.” This means that it is directly connected to what precedes it (i.e., “being filled with the Holy Spirit”) and it is also connected to the next topic of marriage – especially the topic of what “submission” in marriage looks like.
- Based on this, who is supposed to submit to the other in marriage – husbands or wives? If you agree that it is both – then why do we primarily use this passage to talk about wives submitting to their husbands but fail to talk about husbands submitting to their wives?
- One of the challenges with this passage is that Paul is not telling people to relinquish authoritative roles. For example, husbands are still to be the head of their wives and families, children are still under the authority of their parents, and masters are still to maintain authority over their servants (see Eph. 5:22 – 6:9). However, what he seems to be teaching concerns how Christians respond to authoritative roles from both perspectives – of the one in authority and the one under authority. Any thoughts about this idea?
- One of the debated issues in this passage concerns what it means for husbands to be the head of the wife (vs. 23). What do you think this means and how should it be applied to 21st century Christian marriages in North America?
- It seems that this text is defining “submission” as voluntarily placing another person’s needs before their own. If you agree, what specifically should wives do in order to put their husbands’ needs before their own? What should husbands do to put their wives’ needs before their own?
- Who do you think has the more challenging job – wives or husbands? Why?
- Can anyone share a testimony about a Christian couple that lives this out in their marriage? Take a moment and discuss what this would look like in today’s world.
- What should a single person learn from this message?
- What do we learn about God from this passage?
- What do we learn about ourselves (mankind) from this passage?
- What actions do you plan to take as a result of this study and discussion?

Close with prayer. Pray specifically that the group can follow through with what God has put on their hearts to do.