

# DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

*Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.*

June 2013

## *Ephesians: God's Plan for His Church*

### **Lesson #10: Marriage**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Who do you know that is the model of a healthy marriage? Why?

#### **EXPLORATION**

Read Ephesians 5:21-33

*Note: Submission is a "red flag" word these days, especially in Christian circles. Notice the need for mutual submission to the Lord. This was a radical concept in biblical times because women were considered more of a "thing" than a person with rights. A woman's submission to her husband (and only her husband) was an act of submission to the Lord. The analogy between the relationship of Christ to the church and that of the husband to the wife is basic to the entire passage. (1 Cor 11:3) At a Jewish wedding feast the bride was presented to the groom by a friend. (v. 27)*

1. Why is verse 21 so important in the overall context of these verses? What is the danger of skipping over it or not including it in a discussion of verses 22-33?

2. What does it mean for wives, submit to their husbands "as to the Lord?" v. 22

*Note: Who decides? The frequent argument that this passage does not convey on the husband the right of final decision misses an important point. The believer's task is not to decide, but rather to discern the decision that Christ as head over everything has already made! When the husband loves as Christ, and the wife responds as the church (v. 22), then together they will discern God's will.<sup>1</sup>*

3. How should a wife submit to a husband that is not leading as a mature Christian husband?

4. What command did Paul repeat (to husbands) three times? vv. 25, 28, 33 What does this imply?

*Note: The type of love Paul refers to is "agape" – sacrificial, self-giving.*

5. Christ's love led Him to *die* for us. What does it mean for a husband to *live* for his wife with this kind of love?

6. Why would it be easy for a wife to submit to a husband providing her with agape love?

7. Why is it easy for a husband to love a wife that respects (not fears) him? v. 33

8. What do you think is the main goal of a Christian marriage?

9. How does this compare to the world's view of marriage?

10. What advice would you give a couple whose marriage does not fit the model of verses 21-33?

#### **APPLICATION**

How can you be a better husband (or potential husband)?

*Unless you learn to play a duet in the same key, to the same rhythm, a slow process of disengagement will wedge you apart, first secretly, psychologically, and then openly and miserably.*

– Walter Wangerin, Jr.

*Your willingness to accept the differences between you will allow you to complement one another in ways that make life better for each of you.*

– C.W. Neal

*We feasted on love; every mode of it, solemn and merry, romantic and realistic, sometimes as dramatic as a thunderstorm, sometimes comfortable and unemphatic as putting on your soft slippers. She was my pupil and my teacher, my subject and my sovereign, my trusty comrade, friend, shipmate, fellow-soldier. My mistress, but at the same time all that any man friend has ever been to me. – C.S. Lewis*

<sup>1</sup> Richards, L. O. (1991). *The Bible reader's companion* (electronic ed.) (802). Wheaton: Victor Books.