



[study guide]

RELATIONSHIPS: Week 6: Tale of Two Marriages

11.4.12: Ephesians 5:22-33

[warm up]

What is the ultimate goal of marriage?

What examples come to mind of both healthy and unhealthy marriages you have seen growing up and what were the characteristics of each? What kind of marriage did your parents model for you? How about your grandparents?

What are some of the biggest issues surrounding marriages today and how does understanding the roles of men and women play a part in those issues?

[digging deeper]

Read Ephesians 5:22-33. What does this passage teach us about God's design for marriage and God's roles for men and women in a marriage?

Which concepts in the Ephesians passage seem easy to understand and apply and which ones are more challenging or misunderstood, especially in today's culture?

Read Support verses 1 Corinthians 11:3, Colossians 3:18-19 and 1 Peter 3:1-7. How do these verses strengthen or support the roles God has laid out for men and wives in Ephesians 5?

Emmerson Eggerichs wrote a book called Love and Respect based on Eph. 5:33. How have you seen the principle that women are motivated to live out God's role of submission when they feel loved by their husband and how husbands are motivated to live out God's role of loving leadership when they feel respected by their wives?

Both men and women want to be loved and respected. Typically men feel loved most when they feel respected and women feel respected most when they feel loved. Eggerichs offers the following acronyms to help us better understand how to live out this principle

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How wives can spell out respect for their husbands "CHAIRS"	How husbands can spell out love for their wives "COUPLE"
<u>Conquest</u> —Appreciate his desire to work and achieve.	Closeness—She wants you to be close.
<u>Hierarchy</u> —Appreciate his desire to protect and provide.	Openness—She wants you to open up to her.
<u>Authority</u> —Appreciate his desire to serve and to lead.	Understanding—Don't try to fix her; just listen.
<u>Insight</u> —Appreciate his desire to analyze and counsel.	Peacemaking—She wants you to say, "I'm sorry."
<u>Relationship</u> —Appreciate his desire for shoulder-to-shoulder friendship.	Loyalty—She needs to know you're committed.
<u>Sexuality</u> —Appreciate his desire for sexual intimacy with you	Esteem—She wants you to honor and cherish her.

As you read through the Ephesians passage, there is clearly a connect to a deeper understanding of marriage. How has God designed marriage to help us better understand/experience/demonstrate our relationship with Christ? (These verses can help - Matt. 9:15; Matt. 25:1-13; John 3:29; Rev. 19:6-9)

Read through and interact with the following quotes to elaborate on your answer to the above question: "Marriage is patterned after Christ's covenant relationship to the church. And therefore the highest meaning and most ultimate purpose of marriage is to put the covenant relationship of Christ and his church on display. That is why marriage exists."

John Piper, sermon "Staying Married Is Not About Staying in Love" (1. 28.07)

"To the Christian, marriage is the means to the fulfillment of divine ends. The marriage union, like man himself, is designed for the glory of God, and for the exhibition of His purposes of love on earth...marriage was instituted as an earthly symbol of the spiritual relation between God and man..."

Dwight H. Small, Design for Christian Marriage.

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"What if God had an end in mind that went beyond our happiness, our comfort, and our desire to be infatuated and happy [in our marriage] as if the world were a perfect place? What if God designed marriage to make us holy more than to make us happy?" Gary Thomas, Sacred Marriage

[living it out]

What is the ultimate goal of marriage?

What understanding or application of God's design for marriage and His roles for husbands and wives needs to be strengthened or restored in your heart and mind? What can you do to apply them to your future or current marriage?

How has this study helped you better understand your relationship with God and your marriage relationship to the Lord as a follower of Christ? What areas of your life are you not submitting to your "heavenly husband" that need to change?

Close this time in prayer for your future or current spouse and for yourself. Thank God for the strengths and joys of what you are experiencing. Lay before God your desires to grow in your God-designed role. Pray



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for your future or current spouse to eagerly and openly embrace their God-designed role. Ask for forgiveness where there have been failures. Ask for the willingness to forgive where you have been failed. Pray that your future or current spouse will unite with you and display the glory and love of God's heavenly marriage with man through your earthly marriage. This would also be a good time to lift up any marriages in prayer that you know are struggling. Pray for healing, for humility, for the willingness to forgive, for them to learn and live God's roles for their marriage.

Further resources to help you study and strengthen your future or current marriage:
Suggested Marriage Resources

Conference

****INTIMATE MYSTERY CONFERENCE****

with Dan Allender

Saturday, 2/9/13 at CVC

For details: www.theallendercenter.org/intimate-mystery-conference/cleveland/

Books

- Sacred Marriage - Gary Thomas
- Hidden Keys of a Loving, Lasting Marriage - Gary and Norma Smalley
- The DNA of Relationships - Gary Smalley
- His Needs Her Needs - Willard F. Harley
- Saving Your Marriage Before it Starts - Les Parrott
- Love and Respect - Emerson Eggerichs
- Just How Married Do You Want To Be? - Jim and Sarah Sumner
- The Meaning of Marriage - Tim Keller
- Real Marriage - Mark and Grace Driscoll
- Your Time-Starved Marriage – Les and Leslie Parrott
- Preparing for Marriage – Dennis Rainey

Websites

- Familylife.com
- Focusonthefamily.com
- Laughyourway.com
- Realrelationships.com
- <http://blogs.christianpost.com/marriage/>
- www.marriagetoday.com/

Podcasts and Sermon Series

- [Marriage, Christ, and Covenant: One Flesh for the Glory of God -](#)
- [Man vs. Wife – www.newspring.cc/series/man-vs-wife/](http://www.newspring.cc/series/man-vs-wife/)
- [Real Marriage – www.marshall.com/media/real-marriage](http://www.marshall.com/media/real-marriage)