

Sermon Discussion – 14 April 2024

Read Ephesians 5:22-33

Consider having a woman read verses 22-25, and a man read verses 26-33.

Getting Started *Sharing from personal experience*

This can be a challenging portion of Scripture. Sadly, it has been so misinterpreted and abused that many women avoid reading it and the men teaching it tend to approach it with hesitation. With that in mind, let's prayerfully approach this section, asking the Holy Spirit to remove our preconceived ideas in exchange for the truth. Be gentle with one another and remember it is the role of the Holy Spirit to move our hearts, not man.

With that in mind...we all have pet peeves. Some of us have words that get under our skin. Share a pet peeve or a word that you don't like.

Observation *Discovering the context*

As we've seen in Ephesians, the Apostle Paul has gone to great lengths to teach and remind us of the Gospel - what it is and how it shapes our identity. Up to this point, Paul has spoken about how believers are to engage and interact with the world around them at large and within the Church. At this point in his letter, he turns the attention to our homes. In this week's passage, Paul touches on the key responsibilities of husbands and wives and gives us a beautiful analogy of Christ and the Church.

- In what ways do you think cultural attitudes influence individuals' understanding of marriage?
- How can single individuals contribute to the understanding and promotion of biblical marriage within their churches?

Interpretation *Discovering the meaning*

1. Submission can seem like a dirty word. It's important for everyone to start on the same page. What is submission? What isn't it? If you've got the ability, make a chart listing what submission is and isn't for reference during the discussion. What are some good examples of submission in the Scriptures?
2. Look back to verses 15-21. How does "submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ" set the context of this passage?
3. Christ gives us the ultimate example of submission. Read Philippians 2:1-8. Sin makes submission scary and painful because sinful people take advantage of others and use

their power for themselves. How does Christ's example further clarify your understanding of submission?

4. What is the distinction between "submitting" and "obeying" within the context of marriage? How does the relationship between God the Father and God the Son serve as a model for understanding submission in marriage?
5. How can spouses navigate areas of disagreement or differing opinions within the framework of biblical submission?
6. Paul compares a husband being head of his wife to Jesus as head of his Church. Knowing this, in what ways can a husband model Jesus? What does it look like to love your wife as Christ loved the Church?
7. How does understanding marriage as a reflection of Christ's relationship with the church impact the way couples approach their relationship?

Application *Putting knowledge into practice*

WIVES

According to verse 33, have a conversation with your husband about what respect looks like to him. You might be surprised! Often, words have different meanings to different people.

HUSBANDS

According to verses 28-30, ask your wife the following questions: What makes you feel nourished by me? How can I make you feel cherished?

SINGLES

Have a conversation with a friend about what Godly submission looks like practically. Where can you grow as someone who looks first to the needs of others and are willing to lay down your wants and desires for their benefit?