



SEQUIM COMMUNITY CHURCH

EPHESIANS

SESSION 10A: THE IDEAL FOR MARRIAGE

Ephesians 5:21-33

"Exploring the new standards and new relationships God intends for us"

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Ice Breaker

1. Name one difference between males and females that amuses you. _____

To fully understand this lesson, we must take into consideration the long-term devastating impact of the sin of Adam and Eve in the garden. They were created perfect, and had a perfect marriage. After they gave in to temptation, everything changed. The result is the problem that this lesson on "The Ideal for Marriage" is trying to solve.

The natural inclination of marriage - when we leave God out of the picture:

- The husband does not feel respect from his wife.
- The husband tries to rule in ways God never intended in order to maintain control.
- The sense of not being honored or respected robs vulnerability and openness on the man's part, and fear does the same on the woman's part.
- The wife doesn't trust in her husband's ability to meet her needs of being loved and cherished.
- The wife is not assured that her husband's decisions will be made with her best interest in mind.
- Even right attempts to try and love a spouse protect a hidden agenda with twin goals of getting your spouse to meet your needs.

The instruction found in Ephesians 5 provides the way to counteract these tendencies with help from the Holy Spirit, because it enables the couple to give love and respect in effective ways.

Submission is one of the attributes of being filled with the Spirit along with worship and thankfulness. We worship and adore God, and in our reverence to Christ we honor each other as well. Submission is often not well understood.

Many people are offended by the word submission as if it points to a passive, weak life which gives up control and free will. This is not Paul's intent.

The definition of submit, from the Greek word "hupotasso", is the respect an enlisted man paid his high ranking officer who had successfully led on a military campaign. In other words it is "the respect paid to someone who has proven themselves faithful."

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." - Ephesians 5:21

2. Based on the above definition of submission how might you interpret this verse?

Remember that submission is one of the attributes of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Our society emphasizes equality, but mutual submission is a much stronger idea. With equality, you still have a battle of rights. With mutual submission, we give up rights and support each other. Mutual submission will not allow us to promote ourselves and our own interests, but neither does it make us "doormats" to be used by others. It is love in action and is the power by which a Christian community establishes itself. Legitimate submission cannot be coerced. It is voluntary. Now we see how submission works in a marriage relationship.

"Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. 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. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything." - Ephesians 5:22-24

3. Submission is "a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden." In verse 5:33, submission is related to "respect." Why would respect for the husband be so important to him? _____

4. What makes men in particular feel respected? _____

A husband who cares and acts like Jesus will show that he is faithful and will naturally gain respect. If he follows Jesus' example, he soon realizes that the only way he can effectively lead is to serve.

5. If a husband acts in ways not worthy of respect, what do you think the wife should do? _____

Praying for one another:

Share how you are doing in terms of loving and serving your spouse (or if you are unmarried, how you are serving others). Resist the temptation to "spouse bash" at this time. Talk about yourself and what you want to change personally. Then pray for one another.