



THE CAMPUS CHURCH
LOVE AND SERVE GOD AND PEOPLE

Small Group Discussion Resource

One – Household dynamics

As usual, pray that God would speak through His word. Often when we discuss family dynamics it can cause some anxiety in us. Pray that God would control our emotions and allow us to hear and apply His truth.

Read the whole section of Ephesians 5:21-6:9. Share what jumps off the page to you.

1. Discuss these “review” ideas from the previous study. Agree or disagree?
 - We often struggle with understanding this passage due to our bias. We do need to interpret this passage in light of the broader context of Ephesians, which is about oneness in Christ.
 - The pivotal verse linking this section with the previous sections in this book is verse 21 – Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
 - When Paul speaks of headship in chapter 5, he is not necessarily outlining an org chart for the family. Rather is he speaking about unity in relationships.
2. Why do couples struggle with growing together spiritually? Who is to take the initiative in growing spiritually as a couple? Reflect on this statement - *Paul uses the term headship to illustrate unity and relationship, not authority. Paul's instruction to wives to submit is based on this idea that she should do this, that she should want to do this - because he is going to do this for her as well. Mutual submission out of reverence for Christ.*
3. Is it harder for wives to submit or husbands to love?
4. Discuss any thoughts from this passage, but please keep it “PG”. *But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife. 1 Corinthians 7:2-4.*
5. React to these thoughts: *Marriage is a picture of the kind of relationship God wants with all people. Our marriages are a picture of the kind of loving intimacy God wants to have with all people. Husbands and wives communicate together, care for each other, share with each other, think of each other all the time, they enjoy intimate times and together endure difficult times together, they laugh together and cry together. In short, their lives are intertwined; the two become one in marriage. Marriage is a demonstration of the kind of relationship God wants with every person. That is why in the New Testament*

Jesus is referred to as the bride groom and the church as a bride. This is a secret which God held for thousands of years...from Creation, until this clue was penned by Paul under the inspiration and authority of God. Up until this was revealed, no one really knew of the spiritual significance of marriage. But now we do. God is using the picture of my marriage and your marriage to describe to the world the kind of personal relationship He desires to have with every person. Oneness. Here is the big idea - You see, just as the church needs to be one and provide a picture of a contrast community, so the world can see what God's grace looks like in a redeemed life – So, Christian couples need to be a contrast couple and provide a picture of what God's grace looks like in a Christian marriage.

6. Now look again at the next section of 6:1-4. Read it over our loud again. Why would these thoughts be so revolutionary to the Ephesian believers?
7. The first challenge is to kids, and God's instruction for them is to obey and honour their parents. The reference Paul draws attention to is the Old Testament teaching from Deuteronomy 5:16, which is one of the ten commandments. Growing up, how did you do with this commandment? Does honouring our parents ever end?
8. This passage tells us that parents are to avoid needlessly irritating their children and instead, teach them the ways of the Lord. If you have children, share some times when you have exasperated your kids. Or, share how at times your parents exasperated you while you were growing up. How did that affect you?
9. Discuss what a realistic plan for intentional spiritual development in the family might look like?
10. Re-read what Paul says about slaves and masters. Is Paul endorsing slavery with these comments? Speculate what that might look like for Christian households and how that would impact the prevailing culture.
11. How do these thoughts about slaves and masters relate to employers and employees?
12. Circle back to the pivotal verse in this section - *Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Ephesians 5:21*. Quickly review how we are to be a contrast community in our general behaviour, in our marriages, in our homes and even in the workplace – We are to live differently because of God's grace in our lives.
13. Watch this video again from The Princess Bride. Discuss how this concept of “as you wish” might be a good summary of this section in Ephesians.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bj9LGIWybG4>