

**“We Are Family”**  
**Week 2: Marriage in Light of Christ & The Church**

**WARM-UP:**

1. Tell us about your dream wedding.
2. Name a couple that you respect and admire the most. What inspires you about them?
3. Share about a recent experience where you were honored & appreciated by someone.

**WORD:**

*“<sup>21</sup> Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. <sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. - Ephesians 5:21-22,25 (Read Eph. 5:21-25)*

Submission is a big word in our generation. In a culture where it tends to despise or question authority and long for self-autonomy, submission in marriage can seem to be very difficult. Yet Christ gives us power to live differently and according to His design. He has appointed order in church leadership that must be honored and He also set order inside marriage so as to keep ourselves from relational chaos. Submission has nothing to do with who is smarter or more talented nor value or ability. It has got to do with God-appointed order and God-ordained authority. Here are 3 key words we can glean on from Ephesians 5:21-25

**1. Submission**

*“<sup>21</sup> Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ - Ephesians 5:21*

Paul in this passage exhorts all believers to take this “under rank” attitude with one another. This does not mean that we should no longer honor God-ordained church leadership positions and that inside the marriage, the wife can sometimes be the head of the husband. But the emphasis is in our attitude of relating with one another where we value and honor our relationships under the saving work of Christ. Whenever we submit to one another willingly as unto the LORD, God’s grace flows. And effective communication is key to express this posture. Whenever we defer with one another our ideas, desires and intentions, trust grows and the relationship is strengthened, God’s best is pursued and wisdom flows out of the humility that is displayed relationally. (For the leader: Share how you navigate conflicts and submit yourself to the Lord at work and in your key family relationships.)

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**2. Respect**

*<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. - Ephesians 5:22*

Inside marriage, God has ordained that the man is to be the head of his wife. Again, this does not diminish the value and the worth of the wife but it has got to do with God-ordained order and authority inside a family unit. The wife is the man’s necessary support, his better half and essential partner in their God-given calling. (For the leader: Share about a couple that inspired you to pursue marital excellence and fruitfulness )

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### 3. Love

<sup>25</sup> *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. - Ephesians 5:25*

The passage shows that the weight of accountability actually rests on the man in marriage. It is growing in our understanding that marriage is supposed to reflect Christ's relationship with the Church that we are empowered to love and give ourselves in service to our spouse and family. The more we understand the gospel love, the more we are empowered to forgive, be patient, to bear and work on our marriages in a way that grows each spouse and gives God the glory He deserves. *(For the leader: Share some practical ideas you have where marriages can be strengthened in our church community )*

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#### APPLICATION:

1. How can we apply the biblical principle of mutual submission in our relationships, regardless of our marital status?
2. What are some practical ways we can demonstrate love and respect in our interactions with our family and in school or in the workplace?
3. How can we create a God-honoring and mutually considerate balance of roles and responsibilities in our family relationships?

#### PRAYER:

- Begin your small group prayer time by thanking God for His humble submission to God the Father to give His life and to save us *(See Philippians 2)*
- Ask God for ways you could outdo other people we are in relationships with in honor.
- Pray for the marriages you know. Bless them. Continue to believe God for household salvation and family restoration. Pray for deeper unity and intimacy and fruitful family life.