

Wives and Husbands

Day 1 – Introduction to Ephesians 5:22-33

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

 Please refer to Lesson 3: Ephesians 2:1–10 for the Greek definitions of “love”.

John 15:19 If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

Q1. To what is Jesus referring when He speaks of the “world”?

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Q2. Do you feel “chosen”? Why? Or why not?

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Q3. Does the “world” love you? Or hate you? Or is it ambivalent toward you?

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1 Peter 3:1 Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, ² when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

Q4. In 1 Peter 3:7 is this phrase “as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life”; what is the “gracious gift of life”?

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Q5. Additionally, in the 1 Peter 3:7 phrase “as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life”: if a wife is an heir alongside of her husband, does that mean the husband and wife are partners? Why? Or why not?

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Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

²² Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

Q6. How do you describe Paul’s use of “submit” in this verse?

Q7. Can you provide examples of people who “submit”?

Q8. If your spouse is a non-believer in Christ Jesus, do these verses apply?

1 Corinthians 7:12-14a, 16 For the rest of you who are in mixed marriages — Christian married to non-Christian — we have no explicit command from the Master. So this is what you must do. If you are a man with a wife who is not a believer but who still wants to live with you, hold on to her. If you are a woman with a husband who is not a believer but he wants to live with you, hold on to him. The unbelieving husband shares to an extent in the holiness of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is likewise touched by the holiness of her husband. ¹⁶ You never know, wife: The way you handle this might bring your husband not only back to you but to God. You never know, husband: The way you handle this might bring your wife not only back to you but to God. [The Message (MSG)]

Q9. Did Jesus submit to His Father?

John 5:19 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

John 12:44-45, 49-50 Then Jesus cried out, "When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. . . For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So, whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

John 15:10 If you **obey** my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have **obeyed** my Father's commands and remain in his love. [Read John 15:10 again and change the word “obey(ed)” to “submit(ed) to”.]

Q10. Even though Jesus was without sin, do you think He “struggled” with submission?

John 13:3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God

Matthew 26:39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

²³ 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.

Q11. How is Christ “the head of the church”?

Q12. Can you explain how the “church” can also be considered “His body”?

Q13. What does the phrase “the head of the wife” mean to you?

²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Q14. What does the phrase “wives should submit to their husbands in everything” mean?

Q15. Does “wives should submit to their husbands in everything” mean blind obedience? Or being a doormat? Or as a partner?

Q16. Does “submit” give the husband the right to verbally or physically abuse his wife?

Q17. Why might the Holy Spirit direct Paul to write, “wives should submit to their husbands in everything”?

Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Q18. What does the Greek word “agapé” mean to you?

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Q19. Did Christ Jesus come into this world to demonstrate how to rule in this world? Or to serve in this world?

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John 13:12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³ "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

Matthew 20:25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ²⁶ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave -- ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Q20. Paul teaches a husband to “love your [wife]”. Women: what would you like to experience? Men: list some examples of how you “love your [wife]”?

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Q21. Regarding your answers to Question 20. Do the items you wrote promote partnership? Selfishness? Pragmatic love? Agapé love?

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Q22. How do husbands make their wives “holy”?

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Q23. How do husbands cleanse “her by the washing with water through the word”?

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John 4:10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

John 7:37-39 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." ³⁹ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Q24. How can husbands “present her... without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless”?

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Q25. Can you describe the kind of “love” in verse 25 in which husbands are to envelop their wives?

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Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Q26. The phrases “love . . . as their own bodies” and “loves himself” sounds egotistical, selfish. How would you explain this verse to an unbeliever? (Consider the Greek word Philautia love; see Lesson 3: Ephesians 2:1-10)

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²⁹ After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church – ³⁰ for we are members of his body.

Q27. Do you hate your body? Why?

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Q28. Do you believe that you are made in the image of God? Why? Or why not?

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Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Psalms 139:16 Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Q29. How does Christ Jesus feed and care for His church?

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Q30. Do you feel that you are a “member of His body”? Why or why not?

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Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

³¹ "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." [Genesis 2:24] ³² This is a profound mystery -- but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Q31. Paul is writing about similarities between a husband and wife and Christ Jesus and His church. How would you explain this marriage concept of Christ Jesus to His church?

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³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Q32. How can a husband “love his wife as he loves himself” and maintain that level of “love”? Is it easy to do?

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Q33. How might a wife maintain “respect” for her husband?

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Q34. The worldly culture in which we live demeans the Bible and its teachings. How would you explain God’s teaching on the relationship between a husband and wife to a non-Believer?

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Q35. Do these verses tell us that we can terminate our marriage because we no longer love someone? Because we found someone else? Because our partner refuses to honor the 50-50 share in our marriage? Because . . . ?

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Extra Credit

 In the following passage from the Gospel of John, the written Greek text uses two different definitions of “love” (agapé and philia) which seems best emphasized by the Living Bible (TLB) translation. The English Standard version (ESV), New International version (NIV), King James version (KJV), and others use the English word “love” throughout this passage.

John 21:15 After breakfast Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these others?”

“Yes,” Peter replied, “you know I am your friend.”

“Then feed my lambs,” Jesus told him.

¹⁶ Jesus repeated the question: “Simon, son of John, do you really love me?”

“Yes, Lord,” Peter said, “you know I am your friend.”

“Then take care of my sheep,” Jesus said.

¹⁷ Once more he asked him, “Simon, son of John, are you even my friend?”

Peter was grieved at the way Jesus asked the question this third time. “Lord, you know my heart; you know I am,” he said.

Jesus said, “Then feed my little sheep.” [Living Bible (TLB)]

Q36. What are the differences between Jesus’ use of “love” in the first two questions He asked Peter, compared to Peter’s use of “friend”?

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