

COMMUNITY GROUP WEEKLY DISCUSSION GUIDE
WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2009

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Marriage: A Call to Glad Submission

"If you treat a man as he is, he will stay as he is. But if you treat him as if he were what he ought to be and could be, he will become the bigger and better man.

-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

"Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."...The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man."

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

-Genesis 2:18-24

THIS WEEK'S TEXT

Ephesians 5:18-33

RELATED TEXTS TO EXPLORE

Gen 2-3; Col 3:18-4:1; 1 Cor 11:3; 1 Pet 3:7; Titus 3:5; Song of Songs; 1 Tim 3; Pr 19:13, 21:9

STUDY GUIDE

- **What observations can be made about:**
 - The relationship between the instructions in v. 21 and v.18
 - The imagery used in v. 22-24. Where else in the NT is that imagery used?
 - The verbs Paul uses in instructing husbands
 - The Jewish theology that this instruction to husbands and wives is rooted in (see v. 31)
 - The symbiosis implied in this passage
 - The stated motive for submission

- **What does each of these things mean? What did they mean for the church at Ephesus then, what do they mean for us now?**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Use any or as many of these questions as will be helpful for your discussion.

- What has God spoken to you about this week regarding the sermon or passage?
- What does this passage reveal to us about Jesus?
- How does this passage enhance our understanding of the Gospel?
- What does this text mean for us as a community? Individually? How does it free us to be the people God intends for us to be?
- How do we need to live out the meaning of this text in our city?
- What marriages have you experienced where the conscientious driving motivator was to “put the gospel on display?” What was unique about those marriages? What did you learn?
- In your experience, is it true that men generally don’t want to “drive” spiritually in a relationship? If yes, why do you think that is?
- If you’re married, how do you need to take up greater responsibility of your role?
- If you’re single now but desire to be married one day, how do you need to prepare to take responsibility of your eventual role in marriage?

“Let the wife make the husband glad to come home, and let him make her sorry to see him leave.”
–Martin Luther

“It is not your love that sustains the marriage, but from now on, the marriage that sustains your love.”
–Dietrich Bonhoeffer

MEMORY VERSES

Last Week: Acts 2:46-47

This Week: Eph 5:25-26

PRAYER FOCUS

For the Vision and Direction of the church (September):

Apostles Church wants to be a people who intentionally connect others to Jesus. We will authentically, compassionately, and intelligently dialogue with the culture about the Gospel of Jesus.

In Response to the Text:

- Praising God for the gift of the Holy Spirit
- Praising God for the beautiful order of his creation
- Confessing our failure, as the church, to continually submit to Christ
- Confessing our self-seeking patterns
- Thanking God for salvation through Jesus Christ
- Thanking God for the way he uses marriage to sanctify His people
- Asking God to make us faithful, Christ-exalting people who display the gospel in our marriages
- Asking God to bless and protect our families

FURTHER RESOURCES FOR STUDY AND PREPARATION

- *The Four Loves* – C.S. Lewis
- *Captivating* – John & Stasi Eldridge
- *Love & Respect* – Emerson Eggerichs
- *Sacred Marriage* – Gary Thomas

NEXT WEEK’S TEXT

Ephesians 5:18-33