

# THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS



## 10. Godly Relationships (1)

### Introduction

One of the most important things in our lives is our relationships. In Ephesians 4 and 5 Paul has been speaking about our walk as believers in Jesus Christ. He speaks about the old life we are to 'put off' and the new life we are to 'put on'. Now, however, he goes on and deals with our relationships.

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 5:21-33

### 1. Our relationships with one another 5:21

- † In verse 21 it gives us a guideline for all our relationships. What do you think it means to submit to one another? Discuss.
- † Go through all the verses and see how many times it mentions Christ, Lord or God. What does this show us about our relationships?

*(The different names for God are mentioned 12 times. This shows us how important it is for Jesus to be central in all our relationships, if they are to be as God intends.)*

### 2. The relationships between husbands and wives 5:22-33

Although not everyone is married, there are some wonderful truths we can all learn from these verses about the relationship between Christ and the Church.

- † What can we learn about the relationship between Christ and the Church that marriage demonstrates? Fill in the chart below.

	<b>Christ and the Church</b>	<b>Husband and wife</b>
V23	Christ is the head of the Church	The husband is the head of the wife
V24	The Church is subject to Christ	The wife is subject to her husband
V25	Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it	A husband is to love his wife
V28-30	Christ nourishes and cherishes the Church, His Body	A husband is to nourish and cherish his wife as himself
V31-32	Christ and the Church are one Body	A husband is to leave his parents and become one with his wife

- † Why did Christ give his life for us according to v25-27?

*(To sanctify and cleanse us, and to make us holy and without blemish.)*

The questions below can be done in one group or you could divide into 2 groups.

### **Questions for the men**

- † What is the key word for you to remember in a marriage relationship and why do you think men need to be reminded three times? See v25, 28, 33

*(The key word is love. It is important for a woman to know she is loved and it is easy for a man to forget she needs this assurance.)*

- † The worlds' idea of love is different to what the Bible teaches. Look at the following verses and discuss what love really means. See v25, 26-27, 28-29, 31

*(Love is sacrificial v25 – a husband is to give himself for his wife, just as Jesus gave himself for the church.*

*Love is purifying v26-27 – a husband is to want the best for his wife and set her an example.*

*Love cares v28-29 – A husband is to care for his wife just as he would care for himself.*

*Love is unbreakable v31 – a husband becomes one with his wife. It is a lifetime commitment.)*

- † If you are not married yet, what qualities would you look for in your future wife, if you are going to follow Christ's example to love her? Share your thoughts.

### **Questions for the women**

- † What are the key words for you to remember in your marriage relationship and why do you think women need to be reminded three times? V22, 24, 33

*(The key words are submit and respect. It is important for men to be respected, and perhaps it is repeated three times because women find this difficult to do!)*

- † Many women (and men) have a wrong understanding of what submission is and struggle with this idea. What does submission mean according to v22-24, 1 Corinthians 15:28.

*(Submission doesn't mean a wife is subservient to her husband. They become one. However God placed the responsibility of leadership on the man in a marriage. Just as Jesus submitted to his Father while here on earth, a wife is to submit to her husband. It is an attitude in the heart of choosing to place yourself under the other because you honor God.)*

- † If you are not married yet, what qualities would you look for in a future husband if you are going to respect and submit to him? Share your thoughts.

If you divided into two groups for this discussion it would be good to come together and share the answers that were given for the last question.

### **Conclusion**

Whether we are married or not, the Bible tells us all to submit to one another. It is easy for us to want to have our own way or prove we are more important than others. However that is not the attitude we see in the Lord Jesus Christ. Although he knew who he was, he always had an attitude of humility – to his Father in Heaven, and to the people around him. Let's follow his example.

