

Growth Group Leader Guide

This “growth group leader guide” is meant to be just that, a guide. Please feel free as the leader of your group to add questions or comments as you feel necessary to fit your group’s dynamics.

Also, don’t feel pressured to cover every question.

Ephesians – “The depth of God’s grace lived out in love.”

Ephesians 5:25-6:4

- What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain.

2 foundational truths about the family

- **The Family Images God**
- **The Family Points to the Gospel**

Read Eph. 5:21-33

I. The Family Images God

- **Read Genesis 2:18** Why was it not good that man was alone?
- How was Eve a suitable helpmate to Adam?
- Marriage is the first human relationship that God established. What is significant about this truth?
- **Read Genesis 2:18-23** How were man and woman made differently? What is significant about the fact that men and women were made differently? How are men and women different biblically? What do men and women share in common?
- What do we learn about marriage in verse 24?
- How does verse 24 prove that the marriage relationship takes priority over every other human relationship, including the parent-child relationship?
- **Read Genesis 1:26** Why are the personal pronouns of this verse plural? How does verse 27 help answer this question?

- In what ways does man image God? In what ways does the family image God?
 - **Read 1 Corinthians 11:3** to help answer this question.
- How is the image of God reflected in the authority structure within the family (husband, wife, child)?
- **Read Genesis 3:1-7** and discuss what went wrong. What are some ways Adam and Eve failed to image God in Genesis 3?
- **Read Genesis 3:16** The word “desire” in Hebrew is used only one other time in the Bible - Gen. 4:7. How does the use of the word “desire” in Gen. 4:7 help us interpret what Gen. 3:16 is saying?
 - **Leaders Cheat:** the Hebrew word “desire” has a negative connotation connected to it.
- How does this curse on Eve explain the struggle we see in marriages today?
- How do failing marriages help explain the problems we see in our society today?

II. The Family Points to the Gospel

- **Read Eph. 5:31-32** What does the word “mystery” typically mean in the New Testament?
 - **Leaders Cheat:** It typically points to something that was hidden in the Old Testament that is now revealed in the New.
- What do you think the word “mystery” is referring to in verse 32?
- Why do you think Paul says this mystery is profound?
- Read the following verses and discuss how the church is a gift from the Father to the Son.
 - John 6:37-40
 - John 10:27-29
 - John 17:1-2
 - John 17:6
 - John 17:9
 - John 17:24

- **Read Eph. 1:22.** How is Christ a gift to the church in this passage?
- **Read and discuss Rev. 19:6-7 and Rev. 21:1-2.** How do these passages shed light on the mystery talked about in Eph. 5:32? How do they help us understand the word “profound” in Eph. 5:32?
- Read and discuss the following prayer on Rev. 21:1-4

Kindness flows from you, Lord, pure and continual. You had cast us off, as was only just, but mercifully you forgave us; you hated us and you were reconciled to us, you cursed us and you blessed us; you banished us from paradise, and you called us back again; you took from us the fig leaves that had made us so unseemly a garment, and you put on us a cloak of great value; you opened the prison gates and gave the condemned a pardon; you sprinkled us with clean water and washed away the dirt.

Never again, after all this, will Adam blush when you call him, never will he try to hide because his conscience reproaches him, never will he seek concealment under the trees of the garden. The flaming sword will nevermore whirl about the walls of paradise and cut off the entrance from those who approach it.

For us that were heirs to his sin, all has been changed to rejoicing; for man now has access to paradise and even to heaven itself. The whole creation, heaven and earth, is at one again in friendship, its former differences forgotten: men join their voices with the angels and echo the angels' praise of God...

There is no doubt who it is that dresses the bride in her finery. It is, of course, Christ – he that is and was and will be. Blessed is he, now and throughout the ages. – **Gregory of Nyssa 335-394**