

# L O V E

## l n c o r r u p t i b l e

### **Introduction:**

Last week's passage in Ephesians described our new identity as imitators of God, walking in light. This week, Paul gives instruction on how to live out this new identity. The primary areas he focuses on to display our new identity in Christ are the everyday relationships of marriage, parenting, and the workplace.

Paul gives instruction for every part of the Christian household because the home is the foundation for all of society; he helps the Ephesians to fulfill all their roles according to God's design. Similarly, he is aware that the work of the Spirit can be hindered by rejecting their God-honoring roles, and *not* "submitting to one another in the fear of Christ." (5:21) All of the relationships mentioned point to Christ and the church: our submission to his authority. Our acknowledgement that he is God, and we are not.

### **This Week's Main Focus:**

***The church's submission to Jesus Christ as Lord is the model for all Christian relationships.***

However, this passage challenges our culture and our sinful nature. Wives are not always eager to cheerfully submit, husbands are not prone to love sacrificially, children are not quick to obey, and masters and their servants don't always live in harmony; all this is because our hearts struggle to submit to Christ. In order to shape our hearts, Paul follows every instruction in this passage with *gospel motivation*. Wives are called to submit in the same way that the church submits to Christ, husbands are called to love and sacrifice as Christ did for his bride, etc. Even when it is not easy or natural, our submission to Christ's authority (including the authority he's temporarily placed over us) is our calling!

Remember that the gospel enables us to live out this calling. Ephesians has taught us that God has made us alive with Christ, broken down walls of hostility, reconciled us to himself and each other, and given us a new identity. Ephesians 5:22-6:9 applies this new identity to family and work life. God's will is that our day-to-day relationships and struggles proclaim the greatness of the gospel to the dark world around us.

### **This Week's:**

- Scripture Passage: [Ephesians 5:21-6:9](#)
- RightNow Media Video: [Session 8](#)

### **RightNow Media Video Recap:**

1) Think of a family that exhibits a Christ-likeness in everything they do. What is it about them that points you to Christ?

### **Bible Study Questions: (Read Ephesians 5:21-6:9)**

2) This passage makes specific commands for everyone in the home, and gives the New Testament's longest instruction on marriage. Break your group into three smaller groups. Have one group list all the instruction for wives and husbands, another for children and parents, the last for servants/workers and masters.

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- 3) How is the relationship of Christ & the church the ultimate model for all our relationships?
- 4) If you are a wife, when do you find it hardest to submit to your husband / God? Why?  
If you are a husband, when do you find it hardest to love, lead, and lay your life down for your wife? Why?
- 5) If you are happily / unhappily married / unmarried, how does the “profound mystery” of verses 31-32 help you not make too much of human marriage?
- 6) What should (and should not) motivate our hard work as employees in verses 5-8?
- 7) What does verse 9 tell us explicitly about God’s character? How does knowing this impact the way we interpret the instruction in this passage?

### **Group Application Questions:**

- 8) Paul has shown us that our everyday relationships reflect Christ to a dark world. How can your group support each other in their respective roles?
- 9) Reflecting on this passage, how does the gospel (what God has done for you in Christ by salvation) help you cope with the difficulties you experience or remain humble in the successes you enjoy as a spouse, parent, child, or worker during the week?

### **Prayer:**

- This passage outlines how Christians are to display the gospel in various roles.
- Break into groups of 3-4.
- Confess ways you fail in these roles.
- Pray for one another to be a faithful witness to Christ as you submit to God in your various roles.