**Love and Marriage**

Marriage is a hotly debated subject because some people believe that it should be between one man and one woman. Others believe marriage should be for any two people that are in love regardless of their gender. Still others believe it’s an old-fashioned tradition that’s no longer beneficial. In this lesson we’ll study God’s definition and purpose for marriage.

**Genesis 2:4-17**

1. Most of us are familiar with the Ten Commandments, but when God created the world, what was the one commandment that he gave to Adam?
2. What do you think was God’s ultimate purpose for giving Adam this commandment? (See 1 John 5:3-4.)

**Genesis 2:18-25**

1. According to these verses, what is God’s definition of marriage? Does his definition agree or disagree with our current societal norms?
2. Since God established, designed, and commanded marriage, whose definition is correct: The Supreme Court’s or God Almighty’s?
3. What are some of God’s intended blessings for marriage?
4. Read Genesis 1:28. What is another intended blessing of marriage?

**Small Group Discussion**

**Ephesians 5:21-24, 33**

1. What is the woman called to do by God in a Christian relationship?
2. Why do you think some woman have a hard time with this command?

**Ephesians 5:25-33**

1. What is the man called to do by God in a Christian relationship?
2. How would a man, fulfilling his God-given role in the marriage, help his wife fulfill hers?
3. In order to have a godly relationship, what kind of person should you be looking for?
4. One way to describe an ideal marriage is to think of marriage as a ship. Every ship needs a captain to direct its course. If it had two captains, there would always be mutiny. There would never be harmony, and the ship would never make it to its destination. That’s why there’s one captain, but that captain can’t pilot the ship by himself. He needs his first mate. His first mate helps him plot the best course. He can bounce ideas off her and get her opinion. The best kind of captain tries not to make a decision without first consulting his first mate. But at the end of the day, the captain has to make a decision, even if it’s not the one the first mate recommends. At the same time, the first mate trusts her captain, because she understands that he’s making decisions to benefit everyone on board. Ultimately, the captain of the ship is accountable to God. **DISCUSS.**

**1 Corinthians 7:32-35**

1. The apostle Paul was a single man (see verse 8). What does he say are some of the benefits of being single?
2. Whether you’re single, dating, married, or divorced, Paul’s words help you find the strength to be content in every situation. He says in Philippians 4:11-13, “I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength.”
3. Each person, pray a prayer thanking God for your current status as single, dating or married and ask God to help you thrive in that state.

**Memory Verses:**

**Matthew 19:5-6 -** “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” So, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate.