

“Does Marriage Still Matter?”

*Remember: The goal of small group is 100% participation. Everyone talks.



OPEN IT

- Disney Expectations vs. Reality: What is the most memorable "expectation vs. reality" moment you've experienced—whether at a theme park, on a family vacation, or at a high-stakes event?
- Ride Comparison: Looking at the "Disney ride photo" analogy from the message (ranging from pure joy to physical pain), which emotion best represents your current season of life, and why?

READ IT:

- Genesis 2:24
- Mark 10:6–9
- Ephesians 5:21–33
- Psalm 34:3
- Revelation 19:7, 9

EXPLORE IT:

- **Ephesians 5:21** (Reverence for Christ): Verse 21 commands believers to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." Why is this foundational verse essential before diving into the specific roles for wives and husbands?
- **Genesis 2:24 & Mark 10:6–9** (One Flesh): In **Mark 10**, Jesus quotes Genesis to emphasize that God joins two people into "one flesh." What does becoming "one

flesh" mean practically, and why does Jesus warn against letting anyone separate what God joined?

- **Ephesians 5:22–24** (Radical Support): Paul asks wives to submit to their husbands "as to the Lord." How does viewing this through the lens of Christ-like dignity help us distinguish healthy, mutual support from toxic ideas like silent endurance or loss of value?
- **Ephesians 5:25–30** (Radical Sacrifice): Husbands are called to love their wives "just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." What does this kind of sacrificial, self-giving leadership look like in everyday, modern scenarios?
- **Ephesians 5:31–32** (The Profound Mystery): Paul calls marriage a "profound mystery" because it points directly to Christ and the church. How does viewing marriage as a living picture of Jesus change the way we support and care for married couples in our church?
- **Ephesians 5:33** (Love and Respect): Verse 33 highlights a husband loving his wife as himself and a wife respecting her husband. Why do you think love and respect are so uniquely highlighted here, and what happens when one is missing?
- **Psalms 34:3 & Revelation 19:7, 9** (The Ultimate Goal): **Psalms 34:3** says "Glorify the Lord with me," while **Revelation 19** looks ahead to the ultimate "wedding supper of the Lamb." How does keeping our eyes on Jesus as our ultimate fulfillment keep us from putting unfair pressure on human relationships to "complete" us?
- **Reframing Purpose:** Modern culture often asks, "What can this relationship do for me?" How does shifting to "What did God create this relationship to do in and through me?" change how both single and married people approach relationships?
- **The Whole-Church Calling:** The sermon emphasized that marriage belongs to the whole church, not just married couples. How can single, widowed, or divorced believers actively champion married couples—and how can married couples better support single friends?
- **Grace for Imperfection:** No spouse models Christ or the church perfectly. Where do you find it hardest to extend grace when a loved one or partner fails to meet your expectations?

DO IT:

- **The Daily Prayer Reset:** Partner/Friend Prayer Challenge. Take 2 minutes each day this week to pray Psalm 34:3 ("Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together") over your spouse, a close friend, or your future relationship.

- **Radical Service Swap:** The Shadow Task. Identify one task or burden that your spouse (or a close friend/roommate) typically carries alone, and take care of it this week without being asked or expecting credit.
- **Champion a Couple:** Support the Frontlines. Send an encouraging text, write a handwritten note, or gift a night out (like offering free babysitting) to a married couple you know to help strengthen their covenant.
- **Preference Check Inventory:** Journal & Reflect. Write down your top three current frustrations in a core relationship. Next to each, evaluate whether it stems from an unmet personal preference or a missed spiritual purpose, and ask God for perspective.
- **Submit the Scripture Questions:** Roundtable Prep. Write down your honest, unfiltered questions about singleness, dating, sex, or marriage to submit for the upcoming series roundtable session.

PRAY IT:

Father, thank You for placing Your ultimate, promise-keeping love on display through the gospel and giving us relationships to reflect Your character to the world. Help us this week to trade our self-centered preferences for Your greater kingdom purpose, whether we are single, married, or navigating relational heartache. Pour out Your grace on our group so we can support one another with mutual reverence, sacrificial service, and a shared desire to exalt Your name together. Amen.