

# “Sent Into Your Closest Relationships”

## Session 6: Ephesians 5:22-6:9

**Movement:** Going

**Theme:** Mission doesn’t begin overseas. It begins in your closest relationships.



### Check-In | *DO IT follow-up from Session 5* • ~3 minutes

1. Last week you chose a Do It option. Did anyone try theirs? What happened . . . or what got in the way?

### OPEN IT | *Icebreaker* • ~5 minutes

2. Who in your life has required the most patience from you . . . and what have they taught you about yourself in the process?

### READ IT | *Scripture* • ~4 minutes

#### Say it:

Paul is about to describe what it looks like when the gospel enters the most intimate relationships we have. This passage has been misread and misused in a lot of contexts — so read it carefully and we’ll talk about what Paul is actually saying.

- Ephesians 5:22-33

## EXPLORE IT | Discussion • ~12 minutes

★3. Verse 25 says husbands are to love their wives “as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” That’s not a posture of authority. It’s a posture of sacrifice. “In your most important relationships — marriage, family, close friendship — what does self-giving love actually look like compared to self-protecting love? And honestly, which one shows up more often in yours?”

4. Verse 31 quotes Genesis: “A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife.” Paul uses a marriage to describe the relationship between Christ and the church. If your closest relationships are meant to be a picture of something larger — of love, sacrifice, and faithfulness — what does the picture your relationships currently paint actually look like?

## READ IT | Scripture • ~3 minutes

Say it:

Paul now moves from marriage into the other relationships that define our closest world — parents and children, employers and employees.

- Ephesians 6:1-9

## EXPLORE IT | Discussion • ~16 minutes

★5. Verse 7 says to “serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people.” Paul is describing a way of working — at a job, in a home, in any context of responsibility — that is fundamentally different from just doing what’s required. What would change about how you approach your work, your roles, or your responsibilities this week if you genuinely treated them as service to God rather than obligation to people?

★6. Paul’s instructions in this passage are almost entirely directed at the person with more power in each relationship — husbands, parents, masters. He’s not asking the powerful to

maintain their position. He's asking them to use their power differently. **Where in your life do you hold more power or influence than others . . . and are you using it the way Paul describes?**

★7. Looking across all the relationships Paul describes — marriage, family, work — which one feels most like a mission field to you right now? Not a burden . . . but a genuine place where you sense God might want to do something through you?

## SAY IT | Leader Teaching • ~3 minutes

Here's what most people think being sent means: going somewhere. A mission trip. A ministry role. A dramatic moment where you do something significant for God in front of other people. Paul has a different picture. He says: go home. Go to work. Go back to the relationships you were already in. And do them differently.

The household codes aren't a detour from the mission of Ephesians. They are the mission. Christ didn't redeem you so you could go perform Christianity somewhere else. He sent you back into the most ordinary, most challenging, most revealing relationships of your life — and said: let what I've done in you show up there first.

Your marriage. Your family. Your workplace. Those aren't obstacles to your calling. They are your calling. And the person whose identity is grounded in Christ, has grown in community, and is now learning to go . . . starts right where they already are.

**Do NOT skip this:**

## SG Mission Statement Framework | Application • ~4 minutes

**Say it:**

Take out your Mission Framework handout. Last session we discussed the first two questions in the mission framework. This week we will consider the next two questions. Let's spend 3-4 minutes on this:

3. Who are we being sent to? Be specific!

4. What is the one thing we want to commit together going forward?

We're going to use what surfaces here next week in Session 7 to land on a short group mission statement together. So... take a minute. What has God been using us (our group) to do/accomplish?

## DO IT | *Optional Application • ~6 minutes*

Choose one of the following this week:

- **Go First.** In the relationship you named in Question 7, do one act of self-giving this week that you wouldn't normally do — something that costs you something. Not a grand gesture. Just one move that puts the other person's needs ahead of your own preferences.
- **Change Your Why.** Pick one responsibility or role in your life that you've been approaching as obligation. This week, do it as an act of worship. Same task. Different posture. At the end of the week, notice whether anything changed — in you, or in the people around you.
- **Use Your Influence.** From Question 6 — the relationship where you have more power or influence. Do one thing this week to use that influence in service rather than self-protection. A conversation you've been avoiding. A need you've been ignoring. One move toward the person rather than away.
- **Tell Someone They're Sent.** Think of someone in your closest circle who doesn't yet know they're loved by God . . . someone who hasn't stepped over the line of faith. This week, do one thing to show them what that love looks like. Not a speech. Just one act that points somewhere beyond yourself.
- **Reflect On It.** Read Ephesians 5:22–6:9 slowly. Write honestly about this: Which relationship in my life most needs the Gospel to show up differently? What would that actually look like starting this week?

## PRAY IT | *Closing Prayer • ~3 minutes*

Father, you didn't send us somewhere dramatic. You sent us home. You sent us to work. You sent us back into the most ordinary, most challenging relationships of our lives and said: let what I've done in you show up there. We confess that we often treat our closest relationships as the hardest part of following you rather than the first part. Tonight we

heard that the mission begins right where we already are. Give us the courage to go first in our homes. To serve as though we're serving you in our work. To use whatever influence we have in service of the people around us rather than in protection of ourselves. May the people closest to us be the first to see the difference you've made. In Jesus' name, Amen.