

Family Worship Guide – Week 28

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 5:31-32 – “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

READ

Read Ephesians 5:22-33.

Biblical teaching on marriage is essential for us to share with our children, yet so often it is neglected. We prayerfully model it well, but need to emphasize right teaching for them. Within these verses we find a lot we can share about the roles of wives and husbands and how they relate to one another and to God. However, one of the chief understandings we want our children to grasp is that marriage is a reflection of the relationship between Christ and His church. Paul writes here that husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies. The Church is described elsewhere as the body of Christ. Christ loves His church perfectly and God’s plan since the beginning has been to unite the church with Christ just as husbands and wives are united into one flesh.

Questions:

How are wives and husbands to love one another?

Why should a husband love his wife as his own body?

How can a marriage be a picture of Christ’s relationship with His church?

Bottom Line: The marriage relationship is intended to be an active picture of the relationship between Christ and His church.

SING

Horatio G. Spafford lost everything in the great Chicago fire of 1871. About the same time his four-year-old son succumbed to scarlet fever. Two short years later in 1873, Horatio decided to take a trip with his wife, Anna, and his four daughters to visit Europe. Soon before they left, an urgent matter detained Horatio in New York. He decided to send his family ahead of him. As his family sailed across the Atlantic in the luxurious French liner Ville du Havre, it collided with an iron sailing vessel. Within hours the Ville du Havre disappeared beneath the waters. When Anna made it to shore, she cabled to Horatio, “Saved Alone”. Immediately, he set sail to meet his wife in Europe. As he traveled across the sea, the captain of his ship called him aside and said, “I believe we are passing over the place where the Ville du Havre went down.” Horatio went to his cabin and, finding it hard to sleep, said to himself, “It is well; the will of God be done.” He later wrote the well-known hymn, “It Is Well With My Soul” based on those words.

This week, continue in worship by singing, “It Is Well With My Soul.” Words by Horatio G Spafford and music by Philip P. Bliss.

Visit our website for a link to this song: www.brookhills.org/gathering/this_week.html.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God’s word and worship Him together.

Preschool

- Before you begin find a mirror to use to illustrate today’s lesson.
- Read Ephesians 5:31-32.
- Tell your preschooler that this scripture from the Bible is about how God created marriages to be just like a mirror or picture of His relationship with us. Remember that as Christ followers, we are His church. The church is made up of God’s people and it’s not just a building.

- Next, take the mirror out, look into it and say, “When I look into this mirror, I see a picture of myself staring back at me. What do you see when you look into the mirror? Did you see a picture of yourself too?”
- Explain to your preschooler that when God looks at a marriage between two of His people, He wants it to look like His promise to us as members of His church. He wants people to see Christ when they look at our marriages.
- Tell your child that when two people are married, they promise to love each other in the same way that God loves us. God loved us so much that He sent His only son, Jesus, to die on the cross to save us from our sin and bad choices. When we choose to follow God, turn away from our sin, and be really sorry for that sin, then God forgives us from that sin, and we can live forever with Him.
- In a marriage when a Mommy or Daddy mess up or make bad choices, they forgive each other and love each other anyway just like God loves us when we mess up. So you see, marriage is like the reflection we see of ourselves in the mirror. Marriage between two people who love God and choose to follow Him is just like the love Christ has for us. Marriage mirrors God’s love and His relationship with us.
- Pray and thank God for His love for us. Ask God to bless your marriage and the marriages of your children. Pray that their marriages will be a reflection of God’s love.

Children

- Begin by playing a game with your children. Tell them to pretend they are a mirror, and when you stand in front of them, they are to imitate or “mirror” everything you do. Make the game fun by doing silly faces or motions that they have to imitate.
- After playing, ask what they had to do in the game (*they had to imitate or “mirror” what they saw you doing*). Ask if they always got it right? (*Most likely no, it is not always possible to perfectly mirror the person you are trying to imitate.*)
- Explain that, in the same way, God designed marriages to “mirror” Christ’s relationship with the church. But we also don’t always do it perfectly. Let’s read what God has to say about the way He designed marriages.
- Read Ephesians 5:22-33. You may want to stop along the way to explain verses as you read them.
- These verses help us understand how God designed marriages, and how husbands and wives are supposed to love each other.
- According to these verses, how are wives supposed to love their husbands? (*submit to his authority as the head of the household, respect him*)
- How are husbands supposed to love their wives? (*as their own bodies—taking great care of their wives; sacrificially, being willing to give themselves up for their wives; and by leading their wives to grow in their faith*)
- Do wives and husbands always get this right? (*no, we are not perfect; but God helps us grow in our love for each other when we submit our lives to Him*)
- How can marriages be like our mirror game? How can marriage be a picture of Christ’s love for the church? (*Just as Christ loves the church and is the head of the church, husbands are called to be the head of the family, but they lead sacrificially and with great love, care, and concern. Likewise, wives are to submit to their husband’s authority, and to show respect and admiration to their husbands.*)
- Pray and ask for God’s help in understanding and following His design for marriage. Pray that God would help you as parents model His design for biblical marriage. Pray for your child’s future spouse, that God would lead them towards a godly man or woman and that God would lead their future marriage.
- *Note: If you are a single parent, pray that God would help you communicate these truths to your children with grace.*

Students

- What is marriage?
- The Bible defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman in covenant together. How is that different from what our culture says?
- In the book of Genesis, we read that God in the beginning created first a man (Adam) to exercise authority over his creation and then woman (Eve) as the man’s “suitable helper” (Genesis 2:18, 20). Does this mean the father should order everyone around?
- Wrestle with these terms: submission, authority, the man’s role, the woman’s role.
- Read and discuss Ephesians 5 & 6.
- Ask your student if it is important for your friends to see a biblical picture of marriage? Why?
- Remind your students that marriage is a reflection of the relationship between Christ and His church. And when your parents proclaim their love for each other in marriage, they also proclaim the love of Christ and the Church.