





# THE ULTIMATE REALITY OF MARRIAGE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

EPHESIANS 5:22-33

We are focusing this week on a significant theme in the storyline of scripture--marriage. But, this isn't just a discussion for married people, this is important for everyone. As we will discuss in question 2, the Bible begins and ends with a wedding, and in between, God uses the theme of marriage to show us much about Himself and his people's relationship to Him.

- 1 What is the best and longest marriage that you've seen close up?** Why are they still together? What have you learned from watching how they have related to each other?
  
- 2 Discuss the significance of the following quote:** *"The Bible begins with a wedding (of Adam and Eve) and ends in the book of Revelation with a wedding (of Christ and the church). Marriage is God's idea...The concept and roots of human marriage are in God's own action, and therefore what the Bible says about God's design for marriage is crucial."* (Tim Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*)  
  
 *Pursuing a Biblical understanding of marriage isn't just for married couples. It should be a pursuit for every Christian. How can that pursuit be enriching to all Christians (not just those who are married) in their relationship with God? Consider Revelation 19:6-9, Malachi 2:14-16, Is 54:5, 2 Corinthians 11:2, Hosea 2:19-20, John 3:29.*  
  
 *How were you encouraged or challenged this weekend by the intentional focus on God's plan for marriage?*
  
- 3 In Ephesians 5:31-32, Paul refers to marriage as a great mystery, literally a "mega-mysterion."** That means that hidden within marriage is a profound truth that God is revealing through His Spirit. Through marriage God is displaying the dynamics of the relationship that He has with His people through Jesus Christ. This is not how our culture would describe the purpose or essence of marriage. Discuss some of the things that our culture views as the essence of marriage.  
  
 *A predominant view in our culture about the essence of marriage (and the pursuit of it as well) is that it is primarily about personal fulfillment. In what ways do you see this being lived out?*  
  
 *Marriage, like all things, isn't ultimately about us. It is about God. (1 Cor. 10:31) How is Paul's description of the essence of marriage better than what our culture offers?*

⚙️ *The Bible portrays marriage as mutual fulfillment through mutual sacrifice.<sup>1</sup> How can God's paradigm of mutual fulfillment through mutual sacrifice be seen as a pattern for all of life?*

4 **There is a parallel between the sacrificial love God intends husbands and wives to have for each other and Christ's self-giving love for the church.** Read Romans 15:1-7, Phil. 2:5-11, Mark 10:45, Romans 5:6-8. How do these passages encourage and challenge you in how you interact in relationships with others?

🗨️ *Romans 5 describes God as loving in the face of our flaws and sins. In the gospel, we are deeply flawed and yet profoundly loved. For those transformed by that gospel, what implications should that have on how we relate to each other?*

♥️ *Where are you most in need of growth right now in selfless sacrificial love? What practical, actionable steps can you take to grow in Christ-like love this week?*

5 **Christians are saved into a family of brothers and sisters--some married and some single.** What implications do verses like 1 Peter 4:9, 1 Tim. 5:1-2 and Romans 12:10 have on those family dynamics?

🗨️ *Single people and married people need each other. Single people need married people to show the type of love Jesus offers. (Ephesians 5:22-33) Married people need single people to show that his love is more than enough for true and lasting joy. (1 Cor. 7:7-8, 7:35) Sam Allberry says that "if marriage shows us the shape of the gospel, singleness shows us its sufficiency."*

🗨️ *What does that look like practically in Christian community? How can married couples show singles both the hard and glorious aspects of marriage? How can singles show married couples satisfaction in Jesus that is not dependent on circumstances?*

💡 *What can you do to pursue those kinds of relationships?*