

A P P L I E D

These questions are for Small Groups and families who want to discuss these truths together.

1. **Did you have a good model for marriage growing up? If applicable, whose example have you sought to follow in your own marriage?**
2. **What do you think most people believe is the primary purpose of marriage?**
3. **Read through Ephesians 5:22-33. List the specific commands given to wives and the specific commands given to husbands.**
4. **How are these commands rooted in the relationship of God to His people?**
5. **How does thinking about marriage in these terms redefine how you might approach your own marriage?**
6. **Revelation 21:1-5 describes the culmination of history as a moment when the Bride of Christ is presented to her Divine Groom. How does this picture complete Paul's teaching in Ephesians 5?**
7. **This study has focused on more clearly defining what we believe as a church. How has thinking about these doctrines over the last few months helped you grow in Christ?**

LIVING HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

SERMON SERIES: ReNew Your Belief

Sermon Message: Who Are Those People at My House?

October 16, 2011

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Public Reading: Romans 16:17-19

Next Week's Text: Nehemiah 8-10

**A PERMISSIVE CULTURE THAT ABANDONS GOD'S
SOCIETAL _____ WILL SELF-DESTRUCT.**

SOLID FAMILIES BUILDING A SOLID SOCIETY ARE...

_____ ON THE GOSPEL

Matthew 19:3 (Pew Bible page 824)

_____ WITH GODLY MARRIAGES

Matthew 19:4-5 (Pew Bible page 824)

_____ THE NEXT GENERATION

Matthew 19:5a (Pew Bible page 824)

_____ IN BUILDING GOD'S KINGDOM

Matthew 19:6 (Pew Bible page 824)

NOTE: You can check out Pastor Jason's thoughts at pastorjasonpettus.blogspot.com or on Twitter at www.Twitter.com/pastorjpettus.

A copy of today's message is available at the kiosk in the lobby immediately following the service. Suggested donation for CDs is \$2. First time guests get today's CD free by turning in your guest card at the Welcome Center.

THE FAMILY ...

We believe that God has ordained marriage to be the union of one man and one woman in a life-long covenant, as they submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Husbands are called to love and lead their wives as Christ loved the Church. Wives are called to respect and submit to their husbands as the Church submits to Jesus. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing from God and parents bear the primary responsibility of training them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

U N P A C K E D

A biblical view of marriage begins with an accurate understanding of its purpose. It may sound odd to say but the Bible's central point on this issue is that marriage is not ultimately about the husband or the wife. Marriage is about God. That is, marriage is meant to illustrate particular truths about God as it uniquely displays the Gospel through the relationship of a husband and wife.

In Ephesians 5:22-33, the Apostle Paul encourages husbands to love their wives "as Christ loved the Church" and tells wives to submit to their own husbands "as the Church submits to Christ." Paul's point is that the roles in a marriage relationship do not exist in a vacuum. They have a particular model to follow: the loving relationship between God and His people. Husbands are to follow the example of Christ, consistently loving and leading their wives with faithful provision and protection. Wives are to follow the example of the Church by lovingly submitting to their husbands with honor and respect. As Paul says in v32, "this mystery is profound."

This mystery—that marriage is meant to illustrate the loving relationship between God and His people—is unfolded throughout Scripture. In the Old Testament, God frequently refers to his covenant relationship with Israel using the metaphor of husband and wife. When Israel began to stray from God and worship false Gods, the Lord accused His people of being like an "adulterous wife" who had turned to strangers (Ezekiel 16:32). When the Lord graciously restored Israel, he used this same kind of language to express his commitment to His people (Hosea 2:14-23). The prophet Isaiah portrays God as approaching Israel like a wayward wife who says, "Fear not...for your Maker is your husband" (Isaiah 54:4-5). The promise of restoration is built on God's delight in His people. Again Isaiah uses the language of marriage to express this divine reality, saying, "As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you" (Isaiah 62:5).

In the New Testament, Jesus and His followers apply this language to the Son of God Himself (Matthew 9:15, John 3:29). In the letter to the Corinthians, Paul makes the connection explicit by stating, "I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:2). All of this is the backdrop for Paul's instructions to husbands and wives in Ephesians 5.

Understanding God's plan for marriage ought to radically transform how we live out our marriage commitments. Marriage is not ultimately about the husband or the wife. It is about God illustrating His great love for His people. It is designed to be a divine drama unfolding the character of God to the world. Can you imagine what marriages would look like if we sought to live out this calling each day?