
CONNECT BREAK THE ICE AND GET PEOPLE TALKING

- Are there any married couples whose relationship you really admire?
- When you think of marriage or romance, what do you think of?
- Discipleship check-in (at the bottom of this guide!)

INTRODUCTION

Family matters. Families are a good gift, but they're hard as well. Precisely because they can be the place of so much blessing, it hurts even more deeply when they are a place of brokenness instead. But God has a vision for our families, one that he wants to share with us: that by following Him, the stories of our families can be redeemed.

This week, we'll be talking about being husbands and wives. What does a good marriage look like? Whether we're single or married, this is an important question for us to ask; as we'll learn this week, *marriage is a living, breathing metaphor for Christ and the Church.*

READ & DISCUSS

READ: Ephesians 5:14-33

DISCUSS:

- What initial observations do you have about the passage?
- In what way is marriage a living metaphor for Christ and the Church?
- What do you think it means that Christ "gave himself up" for the Church? What does that mean for earthly marriages?

REFLECT & APPLY

DISCUSS:

- Marriage is a good gift, Scripture tells us—so good, it's the chief metaphor used for our relationship with Jesus. Do you think of marriage that way? What might Scripture be seeing that you are not?
- Healthy marriages are the result of healthy communities. It doesn't just take a village to raise a child; it takes a village to make a marriage! If you're married, how can you invite others to be blessed by your relationship? If you're single, how can you bless the married couples in your church?

PRAY

Ask Jesus to give you his eyes to see the beauty of marriage, both heavenly and earthly. Ask him to draw you more deeply into loving union with him. Ask him to fill you with his love for his Church.

Discipleship Check-In

- Have you prayed and read your Bible consistently the past week?
- Who is someone you're praying to share Jesus with this week, and what's one way you can love them well?