

**Deane Parish Church Home Groups
w/b Sunday 21st May 2017**

**Marriage: A Picture
Ephesians 5:21-33**

1. How does the Bible's teaching on leadership in the home differ with how the world sees leadership?
2. Why does submission not mean subjugation (i.e. conquering and controlling)?
3. Why is Jesus a perfect example of submission? How does this help us today?
4. What does it mean for husbands to love their wives "just as Christ loved the church"? What will this look like from day to day?
5. How do you think our churches can help nurture strong marriages? Is there anything we should be doing, or stop doing to help our families?
6. If we are not married, or no longer married, how does verses 32-33 help us understand the true purpose of marriage?

Marriage and the Gospel

“The gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ, than we ever dared hope. This is the kind of love that will really transform us. Love without truth is sentimentality; it supports and affirms us but keeps us in denial about our flaws. Truth without love is harshness; it gives us information, but in such a way that we cannot really hear it. God’s saving love in Christ, however, is marked by both radical truthfulness about who we are and yet also radical, unconditional commitment to us. The merciful commitment strengthens us to see the truth about ourselves and repent. The conviction and repentance moves us to cling to and rest in God’s mercy and grace”

Tim and Kathy Keller – The Meaning of Marriage

Submission for the Whole Church

“... a mentality of submission is to sweeten the entire Christian community (v.21). The glorious presence of Christ among us flavours all true Christian relationships with a voluntary spirit of servanthood...The gospel of freedom never creates an ethos of swagger and self-assertion but the opposite: “through love serve one another.” (Galatians 5:13)

Ray Ourlund – Marriage and the Mystery of the Gospel

4 ways in which God's pattern for marriage is distorted

- The *tyrannical* husband = failure to *love* his wife like Jesus loves the Church
- The *abdicator* husband = failure to *serve* his wife by *leading* in the home
- The *bossy* wife = failure to *respect* God-given differences between husbands and wives
- The *willing-doormat* wife = failure to *think* and *support* her husband

Adapted from *Christopher Ash – Married for God*

True Love, Honour not Manipulation

“Sometimes even when we think we’re loving our spouses, we’re manipulating them.”

Attitudes of Honour	Attitudes of manipulation
You belong to God	You exist to serve me
You're made in God's image	You're an object
I give without expecting a return	I give to get what I want from you
I want you to be successful	I need you to make me happy
God is using you to make me grow spiritually	You're the problem
I'll love you, even if you don't respond with love	I'll love you as long as it "works" (i.e. as long as you become what I need)

Adapted from Winston Smith – Marriage Matters