

it's complicated!

Week 1 Leader Guide

the win

The male group member will identify principles for loving his wife as Christ loved the Church by watching a brief video and completing a take home assignment.

sermon recap: what did the text mean? what does it mean?

We learned in the message this week that women need their husbands to listen and act on how they can love them unconditionally. Men were challenged to commit to be present, lead strong and well, pursue intimacy, and keep their wife a priority.

3-5
minutes

warm up

- What are 2 desires/wishes/dreams that you and your spouse discussed prior to getting married?
- Have those desires/wishes/dreams come to pass yet?
- If so, what are 2 more desires/wishes/dreams that you have for your life/marriage?
- If not, how does that conversation typically go when you are frustrated your desires/wishes/dreams have not come to pass?

30-35
minutes

the text: what does it mean for me?

READ THIS:
Ephesians 5:21-25

SAY THIS:
Anyone that has been married knows how difficult it can be. There are numerous books on marriage available and many of them have helpful advice. However the Bible is the manual on marriage for the Christ-follower. So, let's take a look at this 8-minute clip of Andy Stanley as he describes our text for today.

WATCH:

Go to Rightnow Media and open *iMarriage* by Andy Stanley. Go to Session 2 and watch minute(s) 14:00 – 22:15

DO THIS:

Have all the men and women group up separately. Men in one room and ladies in a different room. When they are finished with their questions have them read through the homework, pray for one another, and then dismiss for the evening.

Leader Tip: You will want to have 2 copies of the below questions prepared for separate groups.

QUESTIONS FOR MEN:

- In what ways can you relate to Andy's fictional conversation with God?
- What are some of your greatest struggles with the Ephesians text?
- What do you believe is the at the root of that struggle?
- How often do you reflect on what it took for your sins to be forgiven?
- How might reflecting on the cost paid for your sins impact how you love your wife?
- As of this moment what obstacles can you predict if you were to truly put her desires/wishes/dreams AHEAD of yours? In other words are you willing to put her before your long hours in hope of potential promotion at work, commitment to your sports team, love for fishing or hunting etc.?
- Think about this question before you answer right away. There will be days where it's obvious your wife does not deserve your love nor has earned it or is worth the effort. But notice again Ephesians 5:21. It's not about her. Is your love, gratitude and reverence for Christ strong enough to overcome your wife's occasional unlovable qualities AND your objections?
- Bottom line: Can you obey this Scripture?

QUESTIONS FOR WOMEN:

- In what ways can you relate to Andy's fictional conversation with God?
- What do you think are some of the greatest struggles your husband has with the Ephesians text?
- What do you think/feel/believe is at the root of that struggle?
- As of this moment what obstacles can you predict if your husband were to truly put your desires/wishes/dreams AHEAD of his own?
- On a scale of 1-10 how easy would you say you make it for your husband to love you as Christ loves the Church? Why?

