

# *it's complicated!*

## Week 1 Member Guide

### *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.

### *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 because your desires/wishes/dreams have not come to pass?

### *the text: what does it mean for me?*

**READ:**  
Ephesians 5:21-25

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

#### **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?

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- How often do you reflect on what it took for your sins to be forgiven? Why?
  - 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 loved the Church? Why?
- What is your greatest fear as you read the Ephesians text? Describe your marriage if that greatest fear were to come true. How can our group support you through this fear?

#### **Homework Assignment:**

##### **MEN:**

What are 3 practical steps you can take to love your wife as Jesus loved you? Bring your list back next week ready to share with the rest of the men.

##### **WOMEN:**

What are 3 practical steps you can do to help your husband succeed in loving you better? Bring your list back next week ready to share with the rest of the women.

