

LOVE — AND — MARRIAGE

September 23

Learning to Love

Community Group Discussion Guide

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/283049486/cdad302e0e>

WELCOME

At the start of a new series, you may have some new people in the group. Please take a few moments to reemphasize the need for community and how this is a place for us to grow together. This is not a place for perfect people but a place to learn about how Jesus wants to transform our lives and our relationships. Please acknowledge that while love and marriage can sometime be a difficult subject to discuss, as it is personal, we were designed to help each other grow. If you have a lot of new people, take a few moments to make sure everyone knows everyone.

STARTER

In these first two weeks of our new series, what has God been revealing to you about love and marriage?

INTRODUCING THE VIDEO

As we begin to use the videos for discussion at our groups, please take a few moments to introduce them, by acknowledging that while we are discussing marriage there is great truth for those that are single and/or dating as well. If it helps, encourage people to take notes during the video discussion and to “answer” the questions that are being asked in the video.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (from The Meaning of Marriage Study Guide)

Please feel free to use these as necessary as the flow of the conversation unfolds.

What from the video discussion resonated with you as key principles for marriage?

In the discussion Jeff asked the group, “Why is service so important to marriage?” Though counterintuitive, the Christian worldview says the key to building a happy and fulfilling marriage is through mutual sacrifice. How does the idea that it is “not about you” actually help you build a healthy marriage? How has selfishness worked against this idea in your marriage?

In the discussion, Tim said that marriage has both horizontal and vertical dimensions. The purpose of the horizontal dimension — our relationships with other people — is character change and community building. The vertical dimension — our relationship with Jesus — fuels us to serve our horizontal relationships. In what ways has your vertical relationship with Jesus affected your horizontal relationship with others?

What has helped you keep your relationship with God as the primary love relationship in your life? In what ways can your friends, spouse, and those in your community help you, and how can you help them?

Kristin said that if she only had the horizontal dimension and not the vertical in her marriage, she couldn't "hold up under the burden of what Joe needs." What are ways to make sure we are not expecting other people to meet the needs that only God can fulfill?"

Toward the end of the discussion, Sam said he found the Christian approach to marriage to be "enviable." How does the gospel offer an attractive foundation for marriage?

In the concluding remarks, Kathy summed up the Christian approach to marriage as "gospel reenactment." That is, the interactions between the husband and wife are to serve as a dynamic retelling of the story of Christ's love and sacrifice for the church. As you understand this, give an example of what gospel reenactment could look like in the regular rhythms of marriage.

TAKING WHAT YOU ARE LEARNING WITH YOU

Close your discussion time by praying together as a group (or in smaller groups of 3-5) asking for the Holy Spirit to fill us with a Gospel love and to take what we learned with us and to move it from our head to our heart.