

## LOVE AND RESPECT

Ephesians 5:21–33

Key Verse: 5:33

**“However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.”**

- In this lesson we want to learn about building unity between a husband and a wife. In the Book of Ephesians, a major theme is unity. The mystery of God’s will is to one day bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ (1:9–10). Through the cross of Christ, God made peace between himself and sinful humanity, as well as between people who had formerly lived behind barriers and in hostility (2:14–16). This unity is being built in the church (2:21–22). In 5:21–33 Paul explains how this unity also exists between Christian husbands and wives, and how they can build up their marriage unity through imitating the relationship between Christ and his church. To do so, husbands need to learn how to love their wives, and wives, how to respect their husbands.
1. What is the motivation for submitting to one another? (21) Read verse 22. How should wives relate to their husbands? What does “submit” mean? Why should wives submit to their husbands? (23–24) How do the phrases “as you do to the Lord” and “in everything”<sup>1</sup> illustrate reverence for Christ?
  2. Read verse 25. How should husbands relate to their wives? What is the character of Christ’s love? (25b) How did Christ love the church practically? (26) What can husbands do to love their lives in this way? What is Christ’s goal in loving his church? (27) In light of this, what goal should husbands have in loving their wives?
  3. How should a husband take care of his wife, and what can he learn from Christ’s care for the church? (28–29) How does our experience of being members of Christ’s body help husbands love their wives? (30)
  4. Read verse 31. What was God’s original plan for marriage? (cf. Ge2:24) How does the unity between a husband and wife reflect the profound mystery of the unity of Christ and his church? (32)
  5. Read verse 33. What did Paul conclude about the marriage relationship? How does practicing love and respect build unity in a marriage, and why is this so important in house church ministry?

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<sup>1</sup> The words “in everything” imply that a husband is already in submission to Christ as his Head.