

The Questions:

Hard Questions of Faith

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WEEK 4 | What about Relationships, Marriage, and Sex?

PRAYER

"Father God, we thank You that You are the Creator of all things, including our relationships and our deepest desires. Help us to trust in Your wisdom and submit to Your will, knowing that You always know what is best for us. Give us clarity as we explore Your design for marriage, love, and intimacy. Guide our hearts to align with Your truth, and let Your love lead us in all that we do. In Jesus' name, Amen."

OPENING QUESTION (OPTIONAL)

"If you could have dinner with any famous couple from history (fictional or real), who would it be and why? Bonus points if it's a couple that shouldn't have worked but somehow did!"



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WORD

15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, 20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. 25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. 33 However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

[Ephesians 5:15-33 \(ESV\)](#)

In today's world, questions surrounding relationships, marriage, and sex are deeply personal and often challenging. As Christians, we believe that God's design for these areas is not only foundational but also life-giving. The passages in Genesis and Ephesians reveal God's heart for humanity, showing that marriage is not just a human institution but a reflection of Christ's relationship with the Church.

In Genesis 1-3, we see that God creates man and woman in His image and brings them together in marriage to reflect His unity and love. Marriage is designed to be a covenantal bond between a man and a woman that mirrors the relationship between Christ and the Church, as explained in Ephesians 5. Husbands are called to love their wives sacrificially, as Christ loved the Church, and wives are called to respect their husbands in reverence to Christ. This mutual submission is key to understanding God's design for marriage.

God's plan for sex within marriage reflects His desire for intimacy, both physically and spiritually. Sexual intimacy is a gift, but like all gifts from God, it is to be used according to His purpose. Outside of His design, it can bring pain and confusion. This is why it is so important for Christians to submit even their sexual preferences under the lordship of Jesus. As Jackie Hill Perry writes in **Gay Girl, Good God**, "God isn't calling gay people to be straight. He's calling us all to be holy. So when

God saves a person, regardless of their temptations, He empowers them to deny themselves and walk in obedience to Him, no matter the affections or disordered desires they experience" (Perry, 2018).

Our culture often promotes individual expression and freedom, especially in the areas of love and sexuality, but God's Word calls us to something different. It calls us to surrender all our desires—including our sexual preferences and identities—under the Lordship of Christ. Whether single or married, we are all called to live in a way that honours Him. This submission may not always feel easy, but it is where true freedom and joy are found. Jesus invites us to trust that His design is good, even when it conflicts with our personal desires or societal pressures.

As Christians, we also need to approach those who do not share these convictions with grace and humility. While holding firmly to biblical truth, we must show love, patience, and compassion to those who have different views on relationships and sexuality. Our goal is not to win arguments but to win hearts to the love and lordship of Jesus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stands out to you in God's design for marriage and relationships according to Ephesians 5?
2. What do you think about the idea of marriage reflecting the relationship between Christ and the Church? Does this concept make sense to you, even if you aren't familiar with Christian teachings on marriage?
3. How do you feel about the idea of submitting your desires or preferences to something greater, like God's plan? Can you think of examples in life where you've had to give up something for a bigger purpose?
4. Jackie Hill Perry talks about focusing on holiness rather than just trying to "change" someone's behaviour. How does this idea of becoming holy relate to the way we deal with our own struggles and challenges, whatever they may be?
5. How can we respect and care for people who have different beliefs about love and marriage, even if we disagree with them? What does kindness and understanding look like in those situations?

"Lord Jesus, we thank You for Your perfect design for our lives, including our relationships, marriage, and intimacy. Help us to trust in Your will and to submit all of our desires, including our sexual preferences, under Your lordship. Give us the strength to walk in obedience to Your Word and to display Your love and truth to those around us. For anyone here who desires to know You more, may they open their hearts to You, Jesus, as Lord and Saviour. We submit our lives and our relationships to You. Lead us in Your ways, and let us glorify You in everything we do. In Your name, we pray, Amen."