

## **Lesson Six – Peace in Marriage**

Text: Ephesians 5:21-33

### Introduction

Peace in marriage is something most couples want to achieve but struggle to do so. The Bible has wisdom and truths to impart when it comes to the struggle for peaceful relationships, and it reveals that peace in marriage begins with the individual.

It's important to reflect on the verses and lessons taught in the Bible to understand how peace can be obtained in a marriage.

Humility, gentleness, patience, and bearing with one another in love are precursors to peace.

- Ephesians 4:2-3 states “With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

### **Practical ways to practice peace in marriage:**

#### **1. Carry the load of the other partner when things are heavy (picking up the slack).**

- Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 says “Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.” This verse serves to remind us of the importance of being each other’s support, and to lift each other up in times of trial and difficulty.
  - Discussion: What are heavy things you can carry for your partner?

#### **2. Mutually submit to one another.**

- Ephesians 5:21-33 in the Message translation provides a blueprint for mutual submission:

<sup>21</sup> Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

<sup>22-24</sup> Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ. The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to his church, not by domineering but by cherishing. So just as the church submits to Christ as he exercises such leadership, wives should likewise submit to their husbands.

<sup>25-28</sup> Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting. Christ’s love makes the church whole. His words evoke her beauty. Everything he does and says is designed to bring the best out of her, dressing her in dazzling white silk, radiant with holiness. And that is how husbands ought to love their wives. They’re really doing themselves a favor—since they’re already “one” in marriage.

<sup>29-33</sup> No one abuses his own body, does he? No, he feeds and pampers it. That’s how Christ treats us, the church, since we are part of his body. And this is why a man leaves father and mother and cherishes his wife. No longer two, they become “one flesh.” This

is a huge mystery, and I don't pretend to understand it all. What is clearest to me is the way Christ treats the church. And this provides a good picture of how each husband is to treat his wife, loving himself in loving her, and how each wife is to honor her husband.

- Discussion: Practically speaking, what would mutual submission look like for you?

### **3. The Importance of Timing and Managing Emotions During Conflict**

- Discuss major issues (e.g., childrearing, finances, in-laws) with each other before making decisions.
- Be patient and actively listen to each other in times of conflict.
  - James 1:19-20 states, "Be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger; For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God."
- Watch your words and manage your emotions.
  - Ephesians 4:26 "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,
  - Ephesians 4:31-32 "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."
  - Romans 12:17-18 "Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men."
    - Discussion: What would actively listening and managing your emotions look like in your marriage?

### **4. Praying For Each Other and With Each Other**

- Prayer is an essential element to creating a peaceful marriage.
- Let your partner know you are praying for them, and remind them of this more frequently when he/she is facing trials.
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:17 states, "pray without ceasing."
  - 1 Peter 3:7 states, "Likewise, husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered."
    - Discussion: How has prayer impacted your marriage?

### **5. Conflict in Marriage**

- Recognize that conflict is not always caused by sin, but simply differences in personality, ways of processing, temperament, etc.
- Let the "little annoyances" go. Don't try to confront every little thing. Pick your battles.
- Have realistic expectations in marriage. Unrealistic expectations can cause conflict. Things cannot always be *great* in a marriage. Shoot for having a *good* marriage.
  - Proverbs 15:1 "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

- This verse serves to remind us to answer each other in a gentle and kind manner to avoid conflict.
- Proverbs 17:14 “The beginning of strife is like releasing water; Therefore, stop contention before a quarrel starts.”
- Proverbs 15:18 “A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger allays contention.”

Note: When conflicts start well, they most often end well. That is, be calm, not out of control, and plan what you want to say without attacking. If possible, let your partner know in advance when you need to discuss something that is difficult, so they can be prepared emotionally, and they ready to listen. If these guidelines are followed, there is a much better chance of your spouse receiving what you are saying.

- Discussion: At the beginning of a conflict, why is it important to start well?

#### **6. Encourage and validate your spouse. Try to outdo the other in this regard.**

- Practice this both privately and in public.
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:11 “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”
  - Hebrews 10:24 “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.”
    - Discussion: It is important to build your spouse up. What are ways you can validate your spouse?

#### **7. Conclusion**

- It cannot be overstated how much peace and unity are important to God.
  - Christ teaches and begins the Sermon on the Mount with the Beatitudes and an emphasis on peace.
    - Matthew 5:9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”
  - The following verse speaks of the power of love and how it can create peace in marriage.
    - 1 Corinthians 13: 4-7 “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.”

**There is no better display of Christ’s love to the world than peace and unity in marriage.**