

This weekly guide has been created as a tool to help you study individually and/or in a small group and live what you are learning from the Bible and weekend services here at RiverGlen.

In Acts 2:42 we are told that the people in the first church were living out what they were learning from the apostles' teaching. **The purpose of this guide is to equip you to put into practice what you learn.**



Suburban Legends

This is our 6th week in a relationship series called "Suburban Legends" that continues through Father's Day. Suburban legends are things we are told about relationships and sometimes it is really hard to tell if it's a legend or if it's true. This weekend we look at the legend that a good marriage is just due to choosing the right person or having good luck.

Week 5: "Good Marriages Just Happen"

Ice Breaker: Women, list some things a spouse might say or do that would feel unloving to you. Men, give your reactions. Next, men, list some ways you would feel disrespected by your spouse. Women, give your reactions. Did you discover things that you wouldn't have thought would matter?

Those of you who have heard/read Emerson Eggerich's Love and Respect book/seminar may remember him encouraging wives of unloving husbands and husbands of disrespectful wives to base their reactions to that unloving/disrespectful spouse on Christ- to give love and respect as unto the Lord. He tells us that the way we treat each other is out of reverence for Christ—not because of what another person did or didn't do for us. Just as Christ saved us whether we "deserve" it or not, we should treat our spouse the way the Bible teaches- whether he or she "deserves" it or not. When we do this, we can break that "crazy cycle".

Read Ephesians 5:21

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Read Colossians 3:13-17

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. 15Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. 16Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. 17And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

1. What do these verses tell us about the way we should treat other people?
2. These verses do not specifically address husbands and wives. Do you think they can/should be applied to marriage? Why or why not?

Read Ephesians 5:22-33

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. 23For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. 25Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—30for we are members of his body. 31”For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh”. 32This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Read Colossians 3:18-19

Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

1. Why do you think husbands and wives are addressed immediately following the earlier verses?
2. Does reading these verses change your answer to question #2 above?

Read 1 Peter 3

1. Based on this chapter, is having an unbelieving (i.e., non-Christian) spouse an acceptable reason not to show love and respect as ordered in Ephesians?
2. How does this verse de-bunk the myth that a good marriage is based on choosing the right person?

Reflection & Prayer

Think back to the ice breaker activity. Did this open your eyes to something you have been saying/doing that may be making your spouse feel unloved or disrespected? If so, tell your spouse- let him/her know that it was unintentional and apologize. You will likely be pleasantly surprised by the response you get! Pray that God would make you conscious of how your words or actions will affect your spouse, so that you can give them the love and respect they need.

For Further Study:

Read Esther 1. How does this story illustrate “The Crazy Cycle”? (i.e., in what way(s) did King Xerxes fail to show love to Queen Vashti? How did she fail to show him respect? What was the result?)

Read 1 Corinthians 7. What stands out to you in this chapter? How can being married hinder your Christian life? How can it contribute to your Christian life?