

Water of Life Community Church  
MARRIAGE  
STAYING IN WHEN WE WANT OUT  
WEEK 2  
EPHESIANS 5:25-33

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

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## ICE BREAKER

## PRAYER

## WORSHIP

## INTRODUCTION

Though Ephesians 5 doesn't specifically refer to friendship, Paul's language and illustration of the body points to relationships bound by and progressing toward a common cause. This is the essence of friendship, and the essence of marriage. To continue relating to each other in that way, we must learn to measure our relationships not on each other's behavior, but on God's behavior toward us.

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### 1. READ EPHESIANS 5:25-29.

- a. In your own words, how are husbands to relate to their wives?
- b. What does it mean to love a person the way you love your own body? If you are a single person, what does it mean to be intentional in caring for your relationship with God as one cares for his or her own body?
- c. Where in this passage do you see the idea of progression toward a common cause? Constancy? Transparency? Trust of good intention?
- d. What if a person doesn't have a strong friendship with their spouse? Is it too late? How would you counsel that person?
- e. What about a person who is not yet married? Based on this passage, how would you counsel a single person in his or her relationships, present and future?
- e. Why does Paul use Christ's love for the church as the illustration here? What does the gospel have to do with our earthly relationships?
- f. Knowing that Satan is the deceiver and his design is to counterfeit God's gifts with worldly seduction, what dangers are there for relationships where friendship is not cultivated?

g. How can a person guard against Satan's schemes to wreck his or her marriage? For singles, how can you guard against Satan's schemes to bring a wedge between you and God?

h. How can a single person, looking to marry, guard now against Satan's schemes to wreck any future marriage they might have?

2. READ EPHESIANS 5:30-33.

a. What did Paul say was the mystery of marriage? How does marriage symbolize Christ and the church?

b. What do these verses tell you about the ultimate purpose of marriage?

c. What does it look like when we take God's good gift of marriage, or if you are looking to marry, your desire for marriage, and let it replace God Himself?

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## PRAYER/MINISTRY TIME

In this week's message, we learned that communication is an important part of staying in when we want out. Specifically, the manner in which we communicate can be life-giving or demeaning.

- Read Matthew 12:34. What does this teach you about how to correct the problem of harmful communication in relationships?
- We also learned that it is equally harmful to avoid conflict altogether. Why is that tact incongruent with friendship?
- If you are married, how can you make friendship a priority in your marriage?
- What can a single person do to make friendship a priority in the dating process or in their own relationship with God?

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## GOING DEEPER/WEEKLY CHALLENGE

### REFLECT

- When you reflect on your past relationships, how have you often responded to conflict?

### RESPOND

- This week, commit to doing one tangible act of LOVE and RESPECT to a loved one.

*Also ... Subscribe to our e-devotionals by texting "edevotional" to 67076; or go to [wolgroups.com](http://wolgroups.com) and click on the eDevotional button for daily testimonies relating to this week's theme.*

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## MEMORY VERSE

Ephesians 5:33, New International Version (NIV)

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

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## NOTES