

Ephesians 5:21-33

Happily Ever After

Scripture: Ephesians 5:21-33

Memory Verse: Ephesians 5:33 "Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."

Lesson Focus: Our text covers God's plan for husbands and wives in marriage. While these kids are a long way off from that, we hope this lesson will help them better understand that the "how" of marriage is just as important as the "who"!

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd - 5th.
Craft for 1st/2nd Grade: Marriage under God Craft

Starter Activity: Disney Prince/Princess Matching Challenge

Consider getting the lesson started with a simple quiz that will test the kids' knowledge of several Disney Princes and Princesses. We will leave you with a few pictures of Disney princes. Show the picture to the kids and have them tell you which princess he ends up marrying. We will write the name of the correct princess on the back of the sheet. *

Afterwards, mention how at the end of many of these movies there is this phrase, "and they lived happily ever after."

Q: What does that phrase mean? A: It means that both husband and wife experienced tremendous joy and gladness being married together.

The Disney movies may tell us **THAT** they lived happily ever after, but they don't tell us **HOW**. You might get the idea from these movies that it just sorta happens automatically. But that's not how it works!

But guess what! God is the one who gave marriage to humanity and He desires that husband and wife would indeed live together with joy and gladness! But He has also told us **HOW**! Indeed, if God is the designer and author of marriage, we better be sure to follow His instructions on it! And that is exactly where we find ourselves as we continue in the book of Ephesians today. Let's open our Bibles and learn God's way towards "happily ever after" in marriage!

Bible Study:

Ephesians 5:21: The last several lessons have been all about our "walk" or how we live and behave as Christians. Before we get into God's instructions for marriage, we must be reminded about how all Christians are to walk humbly and submissively before God and one another.

Q: What does it mean to be submissive? A: You resist being a "self-aholic". Instead, you consider giving way to others. * This is not only important for daily Christian living, but also for a marriage to experience "happily ever after"! *

Ephesians 5:22: The Bible first speaks to the wives, or the ladies. Having first established the general principle of submission for the Christian, the Bible now applies this specifically to the wife towards her husband. While this idea is not popular in our day and age, it is what God has commanded!

It is also deeply misunderstood. It does not mean that the wife is less important or less valuable than the husband. * Rather, if we look at how Jesus treated girls and women, we see how deeply precious they are to Him!

Ephesians 5:23a: Even though husbands and wives are equals before God, God has given them different roles that they are to play in marriage. It's kind of like how a football team works. *

Q: What are some different positions or roles on a football team? A: Quarterback, running back, linebacker, cornerback, etc. For a football team to be good, each player needs to accept their role and play it well. I think you could say God has placed the husband as the "quarterback" of the family. Both the quarterback and the husband call the shots for their teams and the others are to follow his lead.

Ephesians 5:23b-24: Indeed, even Jesus is like the quarterback of the church! He calls the shots and believers are to follow His lead! So, the wife's role in marriage is one of support and submission to her husband. This might sound hard for the wife, but the Bible has arguably even harder commands for the husband!

Ephesians 5:25: Husbands are commanded to love their wives in the same way that Jesus Christ loved believers like you and me. That might not sound like a big deal at first glance, but let's talk about how Jesus loved us.

Q: What did Jesus do for us to show His love for us? A: He GAVE Himself for us! He DIED for us! He laid His own life down for us! This is not just cutesy, gushy Disney movie love, but self-sacrificing, heroic, agape love!

Read Matthew 20:28. Jesus came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life for the church! That is the role the husband is to play toward his wife! *

Ephesians 5:26-27: This is describing how Jesus so cherishes and treasures His people, the church. Note that His love for believers like you and me is not limited to just His dying for them, but also that they grow in purity and goodness. Just as Jesus wants and helps believers to grow and become the best version of themselves, the husband is to promote the same for his wife!

Ephesians 5:28-29a: These verses speak to the tremendous unity that is to be between the husband and wife. (**Teachers:** If you are married and wearing your wedding ring, consider talking about how the ring symbolizes this unity) The husband and the wife are to be so united that the husband's love and care for his wife is merely an extension of his natural love and care that he has for himself.

Ephesians 5:29b-30: In the same way, believers are all tremendously united in Christ who loves and cares for each one of us, who make up His "body". *

Ephesians 5:31: This is quoting all the way back to *Genesis* when God created Adam and Eve. Let's pause for a second and talk about what marriage is. It is a lifetime commitment **only between a man and a woman.** *

Ephesians 5:32: There is something wonderfully mysterious about all of this! * God's plan has always been for the love between a husband and wife to be a reflection of the love between Jesus and His people, the church.

Ephesians 5:33: This is a summary of God's game plan for "happily ever after" in marriage. The husband's role is to love sacrificially. The wife's role is to respect him and come under his leadership. When each person is committed to doing it God's way, that marriage will be well on its way to "happily ever after"! *

Key Point: Marriage is a long way off for all of you. Maybe some of you have already started to think about "who". * But I hope you learned it is even more important to think about the "how". "*Happily ever after*" in marriage is not automatic but takes a lot of work! Thankfully God has given believers His Holy Spirit to help both husband and wife walk faithfully in their roles. *

In the last book of the Bible there is the description of a marvelous wedding feast. * It is after Jesus returns to gather His church to Himself as His bride.

Read Revelation 19:9. This begins the true "happily ever after" that will last for all eternity! All believers have this to look forward to!

Q: Are you a believer in Jesus? A: Know that He loves you, cares for you, and is coming back for you. Be submissive and walk in His ways today and every day!

Q: Are you not a believer in Jesus? A: Make today the day that you come under His leadership and accept His invitation into true "*happily ever after*"! *

Bring It Home

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,

To the saints who are faithful in Christ Jesus:

*Greetings! Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

First

Read Ephesians 5:21. What does it mean to "submit to one another" and why do you think this is important for a marriage to work?

Second

Read Revelation 19:7. Who is the wife of the Lamb?

Parent Challenge

Read Ephesians 5:33. Which role in marriage do you think is harder? Why?

By His Grace,

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