

Transition: Biblical marriage is a mutual, Christlike partnership where the wife respects and supports her husband's leadership as unto the Lord, and the husband loves his wife sacrificially. Both are called to give love and respect (**v.33**), seeking one another's good with honor, affection, and self-giving service—not control or hierarchy.

Tell the story: Tell the story (with passion!) the best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story. Perhaps leave some parts out or make a mistake, just to see if your group catches it!

Rebuild the story: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story. Then have someone else tell the story the best they can – just like you modeled the first time.

Discussion Questions:

1. How is the "mutual submission" described in Ephesians 5:21-33 different from worldly ideas about authority or control?
2. What does it look like for a wife to "respect" her husband? How can a husband honor his wife in return?
3. Where have you seen "partnership and respect" produce unity and peace in a home? What practices helped?

Fundamental: Ephesians 5:22–24 calls wives to a willing, Christ-centered respect that supports their husbands' leadership in the shared mission of the marriage. This respect:

- Flows from being filled with the Spirit (**v.18**) and mutually submitted hearts (**v. 21**).
 - Is offered "as to the Lord," making Jesus the reference point and safeguard.
 - Functions within a complementary partnership where the husband's charge is sacrificial love and servant-leadership (**v.25–28**).
 - Aims at unity, holiness, and flourishing, not control or silencing.
- Practical expressions of respect include: honest communication, assuming goodwill, affirming strengths, offering counsel with humility, praying for and with one another, and aligning decisions after sincere, prayerful dialogue.

Homework/Challenge:

1. Think about a woman of faith you respect—whether in your family, church, or in Scripture. What about her life reveals Christlike partnership and respect?
2. Read Ephesians 5:21–33 and Galatians 3:26–28 each day this week; jot down practical ways you can show respect (for women and men) in your circle.
3. Pray for opportunities to affirm and empower the women around you—in your home, workplace, and church. If you are a woman, ask God to show you new ways to walk in your calling.

Discipleship Tip: Submission does not include coercion or emotional, verbal, sexual, or physical abuse. If you suspect or are told someone is enduring any type of abuse, you **MUST** bring this to the attention the Small Group Pastor and the Director of Safety and Risk Management.
The National Domestic Abuse Hotline at **1-800-799-7233**.

Prayer: God, please grant me the divine humility to put your desires and my spouse's needs above my own.