

The Meaning of Marriage – February 2-3, 2019
Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: 1 Samuel 20

- What did David do (1)? Summarize his initial conversation with Jonathan (1-4). Describe their plan (5-23). How did it unfold (24-40)? How did David react to what Jonathan did for him (41)? What were Jonathan's parting words to David (42)?
- What does this story reveal about loving your neighbor as yourself? How do you express this value in your marriage and other relationships? Pray for power and bravery to love sacrificially, even when things get messy or hard. What are some specific ways you sense God wants to equip you to do this?
- Re-read Jonathan's words in verses 4 and 42. May your deeds of sacrificial love bless multiple generations. Seem impossible? Remember: you serve a God who loves sacrificially, and he empowers his people to do the same. What encouragement and inspiration does he offer you today?

Day Two: Acts 2:1-13

- Set the scene of this text (1). What "suddenly" happened (2-4)? What role did the Holy Spirit play? And what about the group of believers? What is your response to these sights and sounds?
- Due to the holiday, who else was staying in Jerusalem during this time (5)? What was their reaction to the commotion, and what did they say (6-12)? Why did God choose this day to do this thing?
- Reflect on the words used to describe the pilgrims' response: "bewilderment" and "utterly amazed." How did others react to this event (13)? When you witness something very unexpected, how do you typically respond? Which camp would you be in?
- Meditate on verse 11 alongside Ephesians 5:18-20. By the power of the Holy Spirit these believers "declared the wonders of God" in languages unknown to them. And only by the Holy Spirit can a marriage glorify God and abound in mutual submission. Pray for more of the Holy Spirit in marriages, both yours and others.'

Day Three: Romans 8:31-39

- What questions does Paul pose (31, 33-35)? Since "God is for us," what does this say about his commitment level to us (32)? Where do you see God's commitment at work in your own life? How does marriage express this persevering love? What does this mean for your own marriage? How does the Lord want to use your union to point others toward his committed love?
- While at the right hand of God, what is Jesus doing (34)? Picture this scene in your mind's eye: right now, Jesus is praying for you! His faithfulness transcends dimensions! Respond to the Lord.
- Summarize Paul's assurance of our access to Christ's love (35-39). For any hardship you currently face, what encouragement do his words offer to you? How does it inspire you to live as a person of persevering love, especially within your marriage?

Day Four: Ephesians 4:1-16

- What sort of life does Paul urge us to live (1)? What exactly does that look like (2-3)? Is this what your marriage looks like? Invite the Lord into this reflection. What is he speaking? Paul then writes about several "ones;" describe them and how they are connected (4-6). How does this relate to living humbly, gently and patiently?

- What has been given to us, and how (7-10)? How does this play out specifically for church leaders (11-13)? Where do you see yourself in this story of heaven-sent gifts and grace? How do your spiritual gifts build up the church? How do others' gifts bless and mature you? In your marriage, how do your spiritual gifts bless and sanctify one another? Thank God for this.
- When we use our gifts to bless one another, what will happen (14-16)? What part do you play in people's sanctification? Focus on verse 15. Pray that in your marriage you'd both excel at "speaking the truth in love." How would this impact you?

Day Five: Philippians 2:12-18

- Describe the obedience of Paul's readers (12). What inspires this type of obedience? Where do you see it today? How does Paul want people to "work out their salvation" (12)? Why (13)? This is one way to describe the pursuit of holiness. In your own words, how would you describe such a pursuit?
- How should we "do everything" (14)? What will this yield (15-16)? Notice that action precedes transformation. This week, act so that you too may be transformed: in your marriage and other relationships, what can you do "without grumbling or arguing"? Pray for blessing on these relationships. May they "shine like stars in the sky" and point to God's holiness.
- If Paul's readers faithfully do everything he outlines here, how does he expect to benefit (16-18)? Who in your own life has spurred you on toward holiness? Have they "labored in vain," or can they boast about you? May it be the latter.