



Our culture puts a lot of emphasis on picking wisely when it comes to marriage, but couples quickly learn that marriage is a lifetime of choices that determine health and happiness. This series will explore the big decisions that followers of Jesus must regularly make to build a marriage that thrives.

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 Rick mentioned that the emphasis of this series will not include much “how to” material, but instead is “*focusing on some of the most important decisions we will make when we bring a kingdom agenda to our marriage.*” With that in mind, in what ways might a kingdom agenda impact the counsel we would give a couple considering marriage?

2 MARRIAGE IS... a submission competition. Read Ephesians 5:21-33. What are 1-2 things that stand out to you from this passage? What value does a passage like this have for you if you aren’t married? Follow up: **Married Christians will choose we over me.** What does mutual submission look like in the context of marriage? What is one practical way you try to live this out daily?

3 EPHESIANS 5... assumes commitment to Christ and submission to the Spirit. *Paul understands that he is giving marital advice that nonbelievers do not have the desire or power to obey.* Why is it so important to consider Christ first when deciding how to deal with your spouse? Follow up: **Read Ephesians 5:18-21.** Share an example of how being “filled” with the Spirit and pursuing intimacy with Christ has blessed your marriage.

4 EPHESIANS 5... assigns to each mate the responsibility to surrender “me.” *Spirit-filled people do not focus on their rights, but on their responsibilities.* Why is it significant to realize that our responsibility to others never depends on the other’s deservedness or

capacity to reciprocate? What does it depend on? Follow up: How has that been a challenge for you recently?

5 Rick went on to say that “*Paul expects husbands and wives to surrender ‘me’ in ways that are unique and concrete.*” **Read Ephesians 5:33.** Why do you believe Paul assigns wives the responsibility to *respect their husbands*? What does that look like in practical terms? Follow up: Why do you believe Paul assigns husbands the responsibility to *love their wives* (see **5:25** too)? What does that look like in practical terms?

6 EPHESIANS 5... asserts that Christian marriage has an agenda bigger than its own health. *Not all are called to marriage, but every marriage has a calling.* **Read Ephesians 5:31-32.** What primary agenda should marriages have? How have you seen this lived out in the example of another marriage? Follow up: What connection does this have on how Satan often attacks marriages? Homework: **Read Ephesians 6:10-20** this week and focus on ways you can stand up against Satan’s schemes to attack your marriage.

7 WE OVER ME needs He over us. *The way we view marriage determines the way we do marriage.* Do you view your marriage as a way to display the lordship of Christ? If so, how do you do that on a regular basis? Follow up: How can you and your spouse keep these ideas from this message as a common part of your marriage?

