

SESSION

1

BEING CHRISTIAN AT HOME

Focus Scriptures: Ephesians 5:21-6:9

Session Goal: To help group members understand what it means to be a everyday Christian at home.

OPENING OUR MINDS

Option 1

Invite your group to take a few moments to reflect on what family life was like for them growing up. Then ask,

- **In what ways has the family unit changed over the last 10 years?**
- **Do you think issues the family faces today are different than they were 10 years ago? If so, why?**
- **What are some of the main stresses on families?**
- **Do you think family units are stronger or weaker than they were 10 years ago? Explain.**
- **If you were to create the perfect family, what would it include?**

Option 2

Find a picture of a family. This picture should include parents and children. You may even consider finding one that pictures extended family members and pets. Be sure this image is a positive one.

Show the picture to everyone, then ask,

- **If you were to describe the ideal family, what words would you use?**
- **What are the characteristics of a strong family?**
- **What are things that disrupt family harmony?**
- **How would you define the role of parents within a family?**
- **How would you define the role of children within a family?**

Imaginative Option

Before you group meets, find a clip from a 1950's or 60's television show that centered on a family (i.e.; *Brady Bunch*, *Donna Reed Show*, *Leave It to Beaver*). Show the clip. Then ask,

- **Is this a realistic portrayal of family life? Why or why not?**
- **If this episode was created for today's family, how would it be different?**
- **Does television do an accurate job of portraying real families?**
- **Do you think sitcoms and reality television shows contribute positively or negatively to the ways family members interact with each other?**

OPENING THE WORD

Understanding Ephesians 5:21-6:9

Household codes were normal within the Jewish and Greek communities. Paul, in these verses, gives the framework for how Christians are to behave within the home. Right from the beginning we find the word “submit.” As we submit to God we are more open to submitting to others. We submit by making our own rights secondary to the rights of others. This submission is a Spirit-filled choice a believer makes out of reverence for Christ. Paul goes on to lay the foundation for a strong family.

Wives submit to husbands. This does not mean the husband is lord over the wife. It does mean that the wife submits to the husband as an act of service to the Lord. *Husbands love your wives.* Husbands are to love their wives with same self-sacrificing love Christ had for the church. A married couple that follows the words of Paul in verses 21-33 will have a relationship built on love, respect, and honor.

Children are to obey their parents. Children are to respect the authority and wisdom of parents. *Fathers do not provoke your children.* Fathers (and mothers) are not to go beyond what is right, decent, and humane. Parents are to treat their children with a Christlike attitude where discipline and teaching are done in the context of the parents’ relationship to God. A family that follows the words of Paul in Ephesians 6:1-4 will have a family built on godly love.

Option 1

Share with the group that it was very common for Jewish communities to have “household codes.” In light of Christianity’s new beginnings, Paul gives believers an outline for how they should live within the family.

Read Ephesians 5:21.

- **Why would Paul begin with the word submit?**
- **What does it mean to submit to someone “out of reverence for Christ”?**

Read vv. 22-24.

- **Why are wives to submit to their husbands?**
- **What does this type of submission require?**
- **Does this mean a wife must do everything her husband says? If not, what does it mean?**

Read vv. 25-33.

- **How are husbands to love their wives?**
- **What does it mean that husbands are “to love their wives like their own bodies”?**
- **How would you summarize these verses in your own words?**

Read Ephesians 6:1-4.

- **Why are children to obey their parents?**
- **In what ways should children show honor to their parents?**
- **What do you think the word “exasperate” means in verse 4?**
- **How would you summarize these verses in your own words?**

Option 2

Divide everyone into three groups. Assign group one Ephesians 5:21-24, group two Ephesians 5:25-33, and group three Ephesians 6:1-4. Instruct each group to read their passage and discuss its meaning. After sufficient time, bring everyone together. Ask,

- **What is the role of wives in the family according to Ephesians 5:21-24?**
- **What is the role of husbands in the family according to Ephesians 5:25-33?**
- **What is the role of children in the family according to Ephesians 6:1-4?**
- **How are parents to treat their children according to Ephesians 6:1-4?**
- **How would you summarize these verses in your own words?**

OPENING OUR HEARTS

The author shares four characteristics of a new way of living and being Christian at home. Share with your group.

- *Marital fidelity.* Christian marriages are characterized by husbands and wives who model the faithfulness between Christ and the church by their faithfulness to one another physically, spiritually, and emotionally.
- *Godly speech.* Godly speech is more than just telling the truth. It is telling the truth in love with the purpose of building up rather than tearing down.
- *Attitudes and acts of generosity and mercy.* The Christian home can be one of the fertile fields for planting, watering, and harvesting the fruits of generosity and mercy.
- *Fruit of the Spirit* (Galatians 5:22-23). If we were to “cut into” the character of a Christian home, no matter where we chose to take a slice, we should find love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Close by inviting your group to get quiet before God. Ask them to silently reflect on their family. Then lead your group in prayer, asking God to help them in their role within their families.

Imaginative Option

There may be painful family situations represented in your group. Rather than ending with a time of discussion, close with a time of silence before God. Play worship music quietly in the background as group members spend time bringing their needs to God.

Connect

WEEK 1

Being Christian at Home

THIS WEEK: This week we will discover what it means to be Christlike within the home. Read Ephesians 5:21—6:1-4 in preparation for our time together.

THINK ABOUT THIS: In what ways are you being a Christlike example in your home?

PRAYER CONCERNS: