



the mystagogue

Finding simple wisdom in scripture as it applies to practical life is less about mining scripture for easy principles to follow than about discovering the deeper framework for understanding the relationships and responsibilities we have in life that are related to what God desires for his people. We will not exhaust all that we might find in scripture as it relates to any given subject,

but we will seek to discover the fundamental basis for understanding those relationships and responsibilities that can guide our actions as we work to live lives faithful to our creator, fulfilling our responsibilities to one another and his kingdom. You are invited to use these frameworks to explore additional ways God calls you to living in fidelity to his invitation to “know what is the hope to which he has called you,” and “to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called” (Ephesians 1.18; 4.1).

Write out your notes and responses to the questions below. Record insights gained in discussion. Consider sharing them with your spouse. Return to them periodically as a reminder of the wisdom God has shared with you, adding to them as he continues to bless you with his wisdom and the grace to grow in your love for your spouse and to face the joys and challenges of life together in his kingdom.

### Experiential reflection

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- What joys I have experienced with my spouse in my marriage?
- How do I describe the marriage covenant and what it implies about responsibilities I have to my spouse, to Jesus, and to his church related to my marriage?
- What challenges do I have or anticipate in my marriage?

### Sources of wisdom

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#### Genesis 1.26-31; 2.18-25

- How is the creation of humankind as male and female connected to the image of God?
- What is the connection between humankind as male and female connected to human vocation? What is that vocation?
- What does it mean that a man is to “cling” to his wife and they are to be one flesh?

#### Song of Solomon 4.9-16

- What is the erotic love described in Song of Solomon?
- How is that erotic love connected to humankind’s relationship with God and our vocation?
- How is that erotic love related specifically to the marriage relationship?

#### Hosea 2.14-20 (see also 1.2-11)

- Why does God use the relationship between man and wife to describe his relationship with Israel?
- What does God do with the unfaithfulness of his wife, Israel? Does Israel’s unfaithfulness (and Gomer’s) mean an end to the marriage covenant?

- What does the way God deals with Israel say about faithfulness in marriage?

**Ephesians 5.21-33 (see also 1.13-14; 2.19-22; 4.1-5.21)**

- Why does Paul use the relationship between man and wife to describe Christ's relationship with his church?
- What does Paul admonish the wife to be and do within the marriage relationship? Why?
- What does Paul admonish the husband to be and do within the marriage relationship? Why?
- How are these roles related to Jesus and his relationship to the church (and what Paul explores about that relationship in the rest of his letter to the Ephesians)?

**Revelation 21.1-5, 9-11 (see also 21.22-22.5)**

- What does God desire for his bride, the church?
- How does God's desire for his bride relate to marriage?

**Living in wisdom**

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- How does the biblical wisdom we explored affirm the joy I have experienced in my marriage relationship?
- How does the biblical wisdom we explored challenge me to look differently at my marriage relationship?
- What does the biblical wisdom we explored tell me about how to face the challenges I am experiencing or anticipating in my marriage?
- What can I commit to do to meet those challenges based on the wisdom gained?