

2021 Community Groups

WEEKLY GUIDE

September 26

Pastor Aaron concludes the "Fantasy Marriage" series. A series that reminds us that marriages are designed to point to and honor Christ, the way He loves the Church. This week's message focuses on the theme: "Christ's Love compels us" found in 2 Corinthians 5:14. This is what Paul says is his motivation. Compel=to be taken with, to be kept, constrained, held together. His love compels us...moves us to live out His love and fulfill His mission for our lives. This is to say Christ's love empowers us, influences us, gives us purpose and perspective. This should inform every decision we make: where you live, where you work, where you spend money, how you spend your time.

Community Prayer:

Heavenly Father, this is the day that you have made and we will rejoice and be glad in it. As we conclude this series on marriage let us reflect on what we have learned over the first two weeks and what we will learn today. May we allow Christ's love to compel us to live a life that is honoring to you, our spouses, and children; and for those who have not entered into matrimony, may they be equipped and led by your Spirit for the person they will wed; in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Opening Questions

1. Husbands, what motivates you to love your spouse as Christ loves the church?
 - a. What would your wife say?
2. Wives, what motivates you to respect your husband?
 - a. What would your husband say?

EXPLORATION

Read the passages below...what can you learn about what it means to follow Jesus from these passages? (Have someone read from their bible)

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

1. Why is it essential for you as a follower of Jesus to let the love of Christ control you?
2. What does it mean for you to die to things that seek to control you, other than Christ?



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3. When we live for ourselves only, how does this affect a healthy marriage?

2 Corinthians 5:16

4. Prior to your salvation what did you think about Jesus?
5. As a follower of Jesus how have your feelings changed?
6. Why is it important for Jesus to be Savior and Lord? Explain what each one means to you?

"Marriage requires radical commitment to love our spouses as they are, while longing for them to become what they are not yet. Every marriage moves toward enhancing one another's glory or toward degrading each other."

Dan Allender & Tremper Longman III

2 Corinthians 5:17

7. What are some of the new things God has placed in you since your salvation?
8. What are some of the old things God has taken away?
9. Is it unfair for you to expect a person who is not a new creation to live like they are a new creation? Why?

2 Corinthians 5:18

God has reconciled us to Himself through Christ; and given us the ministry of reconciliation.

10. How do you carry out your ministry of reconciliation as a follower of Jesus?
11. Why is there no reconciliation without repentance? (I'm sorry isn't repentance.....Will you forgive me is.)

"Learning to successfully negotiate conflict will have a direct influence on our relationship with God, for the time will come when we feel we have a bone to pick with Him too."

Gary Thomas Sacred

Marriage

2 Corinthians 5:20-21

12. What does the term "Christ's Ambassador" mean to you?



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13. How can you use verse 21 to explain the Gospel to a family member or friend?

THE TAKEAWAY

A Blueprint for Marriage: You and Me Forever

- We become overwhelmed by Christ's care for us
- So, we shower our spouses with the same love we receive from God
- Then, people are shocked by our extravagant love toward our spouses.
- As a result, we are given an opportunity to tell them about the love of Christ that compels us.

What we should do:

1. **Pray as a first response not a last resort**

Philippians 4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests to God.

2. **Deal with conflict promptly:**

I'm not sure conflict in marriage is any different but it is often more intense.

Ephesians 4:25-27 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor for we are all members of one body. In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

3. **Learn to listen and ask heart level questions:**

James 1:19-20 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.



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4. **Repent:**

Matthew 3:8 Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance.

Parents' Corner

Pastor Aaron mentioned the different ways people try to love others ("How We Love"). Most of these behaviors are unhealthy such as the Controller, Avoider, People Pleaser, or Vacillator. The only healthy person was the "Secure Connector". This person exhibits trust and respect, balances independence and dependence, and knows how/when to say "no", "I'm sorry", or "I need help."

Parents can also exhibit similar styles in their parenting. The "Helicopter Parent" raises kids that can't make decisions on their own, and the "Best Friend" seeks to connect without actually being the parent when needed (won't say hard things, fails to appropriately discipline, etc.).

How can parents find a healthy balance between extremes?
Discuss two or three of the examples below. If you struggle with one, ask your group if they have anything that's worked in their parenting in that area. If you've made progress in an area, share what has worked for you in your parenting context.

1. Being controlling vs. being too permissive?
2. Being a best friend vs. being a distant parent?
3. Allowing students to commit to everything (no time boundaries) vs. not allowing them any real choices with their time?
4. Giving encouragement vs. pointing out faults/frustrations?
5. Forcing church involvement with no discussion vs. no spiritual guidance?

Philippians 4:6 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

How can you apply this personally as a parent? (be specific)

How can you raise your child to trust the Lord through prayer instead of stressing out? How can you encourage them that the way of Christ is better when they are tempted to make decisions that dishonor the Lord?

(Pro Tip: the time invested here is a lot cheaper than counseling in the long run!)



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PRAYER REQUESTS

