

SESSION 5

Gathered as Jesus' Loving Bride

TRUTH: *What is God saying?*

Read Ephesians 5:25-32. In verses 25-27, what are some of the things that Jesus does to and for the church out of love for her?

In verse 32, Paul says that the mystery of marriage is a picture of Christ and the church. In other words, Jesus and the Church is the ultimate love story that every other love story point us to. What does this tell us about the importance of the church to Jesus?

EQUIPPING: *How do we live this out?*

Donnie said that because the church is Jesus' bride, it is impossible to love Jesus and hate the church. What would it look like practically for a Christian to hate the church? What would it look like practically to love the church that Jesus loves?

Jesus' bride is often tempted to look longingly to other lovers besides Jesus. What are some of the ways historically that Jesus' church has taken her eyes off of her faithful bridegroom?



ACCOUNTABILITY: *How am I personally doing in this area?*

For guys, it can be especially challenging and uncomfortable to think of themselves as “the bride of Christ,” but the calling for every Christian, male or female, is to make Jesus their first love. Do you have a hard time personally with the concept of loving Jesus as his bride?

What in your life have you noticed tends to diminish your love for Jesus?

What practices tend to fan the flames of your love for Jesus?

MISSION: *Going out with the Gospel*

If being a Christian is being a part of Jesus’ bride, then the call of the Gospel is a call into a love story, welcoming people into experiencing the love of Jesus. What are some ways you can show Jesus’ love this week to someone?

SUPPLICATION: *Praying for what only God can do*

Ask God to help your church community be passionately in love with Jesus as his bride, and ask him to help you be faithful to your first love.