

SUNDAY'S MAIN POINT

People are valuable. Sexual activity outside of marriage devalues people. We need to trust the designer of sex and pursue purity.

Suggested Bible reading for this week:

EPHESIANS 5 :: Whether you are married or not, there has been no better time to invest in your relationship than right now. In Ephesians 5, the apostle Paul outlines what it looks like to invest in a God-honoring marriage. Read this chapter and consider what steps you can take today to invest in your (future) spouse.

NOTES + PRAYER REQUESTS:

LIFE groups



Begin by watching the "Info for the Group" portion of the DVD and then here are a few questions to get you going:

- ___ What was your high and low from the past week?
- ___ To get your conversation started this week, answer this question: What is one feature you really like about yourself? (A personality trait that makes you, YOU!)

PLEASE WATCH THE DVD'S "MAIN SESSION"

INTRODUCTION

Does it ever seem like every couple around you has it all together, while you can't even agree on what's for dinner? What's their secret? Whether you are in a relationship or you would like to be in a relationship, this series will attempt to uncover "What Happy Couples Know". For this week's teaching, we hear an interview between Dustin and Eldon Pullman from Cornerstone Counselling in Winnipeg.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about a relationship that makes your life better. What are some things about that relationship that you value or appreciate?
2. Take a moment to discuss your hopes, dreams, and desires for your life. To what extent do you think a marriage relationship can fulfill them?

In the teaching, Eldon Pullman shared the perspective that we are driven by one of two factors in our relationships, the desire for intimacy and the desire for functionality. In functionality, we are energized from helping others and accomplishments; whereas in intimacy, we find that relational energy from conversations and vulnerability.

3. Do you agree with Eldon's perspective? Do you find yourself trending more towards being functional or intimate in your relationships? Why is this important or helpful in your relationships?
4. Considering how Eldon explained this theory, how do you think intimate vs. functional plays itself out in the everyday life of a relationship?
5. Think about the busyness of life, the way you invest your time, or even different types of sin. What are the things that interfere with your ability to achieve deeper intimacy within your relationships?

6. If we are going to develop intimacy, we need to find compromise in every relationship. Read **Ephesians 5:1–2**. Does the idea of "giving yourself up" to another person, without the expectation they will fulfill your hopes, dreams, and desires seem reasonable? Explain.
7. Christianity isn't about getting what we deserve or giving others what they deserve. It's about getting what we don't deserve and doing for others what was done for us. That elevates relationships (especially marriages) to an opportunity to outserve each other. Does that sound like a realistic approach to marriage? Why or why not?
8. In the book, *The Five Love Languages*, Dr. Gary Chapman lists **acts of service, gifts, quality time, physical touch, and words of affirmation** as being our main "love languages." Which of these most resonates with you? Discuss the importance of understanding the role of these elements in your relationships.
9. What is one simple step you can take to invest in your relationship (or future relationship) this week? How can the group help?

MOVING FORWARD

What does your spouse (or future spouse) owe you? Nothing. Happy couples know they owe each other everything and are owed nothing in return. So, take your cue from Jesus' all-encompassing command: "As I have loved you, you are to love one another." (**John 13:34**)

BE SURE TO PRAY TOGETHER AS A GROUP...

— What are some things going on in your life that need prayer?