

Checking In

1. Take a few minutes to check in with everyone, see how they are doing, and open with prayer.

Learning

Knowing God

Key Doctrines

- *Man* – God has made men for intimate relationship with women within the covenant union of marriage. The primary physical expression of this union is sex.
- *Sin* – All sin is a warping of a good thing that God has made, sexual sin takes a God-given grace of sexual union in marriage, and distorts it by its abuse outside of marriage.
- *Salvation* – One of the primary metaphors the Bible uses to talk about our salvation is that of “marriage” and of our “union with Christ” like that of a husband and wife.

Key Observations

- *Read:* Proverbs 5:15-19; Genesis 2:19-25.

How does the passage in Genesis describe both the meaning and dynamic of Adam and Eve’s relationship? *What we see right from the outset is God’s intention for male-female relationships. First we see that the relationship is a gift, God gives Eve to Adam. Second we see that the relationship given to meet a deep need, “it is not good for man to be alone.” Third we see that this relationship is originally one of nearness, romance, and joy. Adam*

finds someone who is near and like him “bone of my bones,” someone whom he finds worthy of composing the world’s first poem for “bone of my bones/flesh of my flesh” is a poem or song of rejoicing. And it is a relationship of openness, they were “naked and unashamed.”

- How does the passage in proverbs help the young man the father is talking to direct his desires? *The father/sage in Proverbs is no prude. He is not uncomfortable talking to his son/student about sex, in fact it is quite the opposite. The father intentionally provokes his son’s sexual desire, using highly charged and descriptive language to describe sex. But then he directs and channels that desire toward its life-giving and fulfilling end, telling him to “rejoice in the wife of your youth.”*
- *Read:* Genesis 3:1-13; Proverbs 5:1-14, 7:1-27.
 - What are some of the distortions that we see in Adam and Eve’s marriage as a result of their sin? *We see their intimacy broken as both Adam and Eve “cover” themselves up, not wanting to be seen or known by each other. We see their communication warp into blaming, accusing, and harshness. We see their relationship devolve into opposition and harm. This is, in human to human terms, what we mean when we call this event “the fall” because these patterns are what their relationship falls into.*

Proverbs 7 narrates the further devolving of marital relationships into adultery, manipulation, brutality, and ultimately death. How do we see this corruption particularly of the sexual relationship in marriage, show up in our culture? *We live now in a culture that*

- *has dramatically amplified the cries of the adulteress. In this passage the adulteress is “now at the street, now in the market, and at every corner she lies in wait.” This points to her accessibility, you don’t have to look hard for her, and in our culture the availability of pornography has reached not only to “every corner” but into our homes, our pockets, and our places of work. This passage also notes her “seductive speech/smooth talk” which entices, tempts, and ultimately woos the man “without sense” into her clutches. Our culture has embraced this “smooth talk” as a way to sell things, a way to get things done, a way to life. But as the Proverbs remind us “Her house is the way to Sheol.”*
- *Read: Matthew 12:42; Ephesians 5:25-33*
 - Jesus tells us that his wisdom is greater than Solomon’s. One of the ways we see that is Jesus knew of the resurrection of the dead, where Solomon did not. How does Jesus’ wisdom about resurrection give hope to those who have sinned sexually (or any other way)? *The Proverbs recount for us that the “wage” of sexual sin is death, its picture is bleak and unbending. Indeed all who sin sexually have found themselves dwelling in the realm of death and despair. But only Jesus can promise that those who “dwell in a land of deep darkness, on them a light has shone (Isaiah 9:2).” Only Jesus can promise new life to those who have been dead in their trespasses and sins. Even for the adulterer who has gone as an “ox to the slaughter.”*
 - What does Ephesians promise is the true fulfilment of sexual union, and how does that bring hope? *Ephesians tells us that resurrection life is found*

through union with Christ, and that the one who sins sexually (or any other way) can be brought into a new marital union with Christ, where they are washed and cleansed by his word. That all the pleasures they sought in sin, ultimately are found in relationship with the church to Jesus.

- What was anything additional that stood out to you about this week’s sermon on faith alone?

Listening

Responding to God

- In light of hearing this week’s sermon, our study together, and listening to God’s Word, how might God be inviting you to take a step of obedience?

Loving

Obeying God

- What is happening in my own life right now that I need to share and for which I need prayer?
- This week I am committed to praying for _____ about:

Checking Out

- What was most meaningful about this group session for you (*Give each person 1-2 sentences to share*)?
- Close in Prayer and Read Colossians 2:1-3.