



## Marriage in Christ

### Josh Morris

**Focus** Relationship with God is based on Jesus' total sacrifice. We are created in God's image, and we are the body connected to Christ. We're brought together like a marriage relationship—through unselfish love and sacrifice.

**Fun** What major sports event do you look forward to? The Super Bowl, the World Series, the Olympics, the World Cup?

**Review** Key Scriptures: Hosea 2:16; Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:32–33; John 13:34

#### 1. **Selfishness destroys relationships.**

The root of sin is selfishness. Love sacrifices and is unselfish. It picks up the burdens for someone else. Selfishness brings distrust and dissatisfaction without joy, which leads to bondage.

#### 2. **Love keeps relationships.**

Jesus loved us by sacrificing His life for us. We are His treasure, and He paid the ultimate price for us to be His bride. We bear the image of Jesus the most when we are joined together in love.

**\*Group Dynamics Idea\*** Find out what sports or hobbies everyone participates in. Your group could go cheer for a member who plays on a team or maybe view paintings or crafts made by a member.

### Discuss

1. Genesis 2:24 talks about a husband and wife becoming “one flesh.” Read Ephesians 5:32–33. How does Christ's relationship with the Church parallel a

pure marriage relationship? In what ways does a personal relationship with Christ reflect marriage?

2. Explain how being joined together in love bears God's image. Name some ways that love for another person mirrors Christ's relationship with us.
3. Why must love be unselfish? How is selfishness rooted in sin? Why does it lead to bondage?
4. Read Hosea 2:16. Explain why God wants us to know Him as our husband rather than our master.
5. Read John 13:34. Jesus loved us by sacrificing His life. How important is it for us to love one another? How can we love others as He loves us?
6. Read Matthew 13:44–46. Jesus loved us so much that He did everything to buy us back. Why does love involve sacrifice?

**Take Home** As we conclude, remember the following:

- Jesus paid the highest price to buy us back from our own selfish desires and bondage.
- There is a connection between our relationship with each other and with God.
- Christ purchased us to be His bride and to be one with Him.
- Our relationship with God and others is kept by unselfish love.

**Prayer** Jesus, You have purchased us with Your blood to be Your bride. It is through Your sacrificial love that we connect with You and others. Thank You for freeing us from the bondage of our selfish desires. We want to grow more in love with You every day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

**\*New Leader Tip\*** Recognize the different ways your members relate during the meeting. Pray for wisdom to know how to encourage quieter members to share. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you with tactfulness for any member who may need to understand boundaries. Your group will respond with compassion for each other as you lead with love.