

Weekly Message Study Guide

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Date _____ Speaker _____

SO THIS IS LOVE | Bleeding Love | Week 2 | February 14

Ephesians 5:21-33; Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18; 2:23; 3:16; John 13:12-17

CONTEXT | On Valentine's Day we take a second look at what for many of us is our closest earthly relationship. Jesus speaks directly to marriage as a relationship and weaves it through the story of mankind from Genesis creation to the Pauline letters. But in the Gospels Jesus also has special instructions for the disciples about being good friends, being brothers to each other. Today we'll look across these two sets of instructions and try to understand how they come together.

- What is power in your experience? Where does it come from? What does it look like?
- What is power on the grade school playground? What is it in the boardroom? What is it at the water-cooler?

Culture Defines Power.... | Culture provides us a continuous movie of many attributes. There is a cultural definition of power, of love, of success--almost anything you can think of.

- Talk about a TV series or recent streaming program you have watched. As a group think of the attributes you saw. Was there love, or guile, or Integrity..... you get the Idea. How was it portrayed? Did you notice it as you watched? Did you agree with the representation?
- As a group talk about times you have noticed character traits that you personally disagree with. How do we handle that "cultural lens" In our life?

Power vs. Submission | This is a natural couplet in our cultural lens. Our equality culture has shelved the idea of submission as weak, irresponsible and old fashioned. Yet we find this idea of submission strewn throughout the life of Jesus and His teachings, both in word and deed.

- Read Ephesians 5:21. What is the context? Who is Paul addressing? Look at Ephesians 5:1-2, 15, 20.
- What is submission in this context? Why is it so important to Paul? What is the alternative?

Back to Creation | Last week we looked at the Creation Story, let's go back there again.

- Read Genesis 1:26-27. What attributes are given to mankind? What does it mean to be made in the likeness of God?
- What is submitted to what according to the creation act? Who is ruling, who has the power?
- Read Genesis 2:23-25. What kind of relationship do you envision from these verses?

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The Power Struggle | Pastor Tara Beth explained how the Fall and the subsequent Curse created a new dynamic, a new fixation between the Man and the Woman.

- Read Genesis 3:16-19. What strikes you about this situation?
- How does it compare with the relationship described in Genesis 2:23-25? What has changed? What is the difference in attitudes?

The Cross Reverses the Curse | Read John 13:12-17. Jesus' relationship with His disciples has been growing as He prepares them to live without His physical presence.

- What is Jesus teaching in this scene? Why is it important for the future church?
- Go through the passage as a group and list the actions and the motives that you see?
- What is the definition of power in this scene?

Life in the Spirit | Ephesians 5:21-33 is Paul's instruction for Christian households. It is one of three subset details he gives in Ephesians 5 & 6. It is instruction for living the Christian life under various circumstances, marriage being the first one. Paul is writing the prescription for overcoming the curse, using the resource of the Holy Spirit. This is what it looks like in marriage.

- What is the instruction for the husband? Write down a list.
- What is the instruction for wife? Write down a list.
- Read Ephesians 5:1-2, 15, 20-21 and compare and contrast with John 13:12-17.

Practice of the Week | Power Under in The Way of Jesus. The message in Ephesians is intensely practical. As you come to the end of each day this week, reflect back on interactions you had throughout your day. Ask yourself, "Was I living out of my Christian power (powering under) or my cultural power (powering over)?" How can you more consistently live a power under life in the way of Jesus?