

RENOVATION CITY CHURCH

MARRIAGE

KIDS (5 Minutes)

Q: Who is someone that you love very much?

Q: How do you show that person that you love him or her?

Q: How do you know that someone loves you?

Let's see what the Bible has to say about love.

“There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.” John 15:13

Jesus says that the greatest way to show love is to lay down your life for someone else.

Q: What do you think that means? Would you lay down your life for someone you love?

----DISMISS CHILDREN TO PLAY!----

ADULTS (20-22 Minutes)

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a very broad topic that could go a lot of different ways. Tonight, we will focus on the purpose of marriage and how to best serve our spouse as a husband or as a wife. Take a moment to write on a notecard **WHY** you think God created marriage. Keep hold of your notecard until the end!

Let's start off with a quote from Timothy Keller, the author of *The Meaning of Marriage*, “*But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God.*”

Q: If you had to describe marriage in one positive word and one negative, what words would you choose? (**Leader: write words down so everyone can see**).

Leader: Ask a few follow-up questions from the list of words such as, “What makes marriage so hard?” or “What makes marriage so rewarding?”

Leader: Ask the group to think if they personally feel or hope to feel fully known and truly loved in their marriages. After a moment of silence, share your own experience, if possible, about being afraid to be fully known and loved by your spouse, how you overcame that fear, and what resulted, if possible. Ask if anyone else would like to share (don't expect a lot).

Q: What holds us back from being fully known or loved?

Q: Do you feel you are worthy of that kind of unconditional love? God says you are!

Romans 5:8 says, “But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

God already knows us fully—flaws, sins, and all! And yet, loved us so deeply that He was willing to save us from ourselves! And God has given us marriage as a way for a husband and wife to share and experience in His kind of love.

Q: We asked the kids a few questions about love. What does God's love look like in a healthy and thriving marriage?

Timothy Keller says it well when he says, *"The gospel can fill our hearts with GOD'S LOVE so that you can handle it when your spouse fails to love you as he or she should. That frees us to see our spouse's sins and flaws to the bottom—and speak to them—and yet still love and accept our spouse fully."*

Q: How can you reflect God's love to your spouse in your marriage this week?

Leader: Earlier, you wrote down the purpose of marriage on a notecard. Write down if your opinion on the purpose of marriage has changed. Would anyone like to share?

PRAYER (2-5 Minutes):

Leader: *Lead Prayer for the group with the prayer below (or something similar).*

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of marriage as a way to live you Your kind of love—a love that is forgiving at its core and a love that extends grace and mercy when it's not warranted. May we reflect You to our spouses when we feel they have "let us down" so that we can be strengthened in our faith, and they can be transformed by You. Give us wisdom to know when to speak and how to say it. May we be slow to anger with our spouses. And for those of us who are not married, may we reflect your love to the family and friends who are closest to us. In the name of Jesus, Amen.