

7. What Is Love?

“A good marriage is a good marriage because people say “No!” - not to one another - but “No!” to themselves.”

OPENING DISCUSSION:

Share your definitions from Assignment #6 BEFORE watching Session 7:

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE 1

Galatians 5:13-15

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE 2

1 John 4:7-11

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

KEY IDEAS:

1. Indulging the sinful nature is destructive to your marriage.
2. You have the ability to say “No!” to sin because the Holy Spirit resides inside of you.
3. Marriage problems are always fixed vertically before they are ever fixed horizontally.
4. When we don’t love God enough, we insert ourselves in his place and fail to love our spouse in the way we should.
5. Love is willing self-sacrifice for the good of another that does not demand reciprocation or that the person being loved is deserving (*a cruciform definition of love*).

**INDULGING THE
SINFUL NATURE**

**A CRUCIFORM
DEFINITION
OF LOVE**

Below is intentionally left blank for additional notes on cruciform love:

REVIEW:

1. How is indulgence destructive in marriage, and, in all areas of life?
2. Why are marriages fixed vertically before they are ever fixed horizontally?
3. Review each of the elements from the cruciform definition of love, rephrasing it, if necessary, in a way that has personal application and meaning for you. Share one element with the group:
 - 1) **Willing:**
 - 2) **Self-sacrifice:**
 - 3) **For the good of another:**
 - 4) **Reciprocation / Deserving:**

DISCUSSION:

1. If it's true that "love best grows out of the soil of gratitude," how can you find practical ways to "water the soil" of gratitude and celebrate the love of God in your life?

APPLYING WHAT YOU LEARNED:

ASSIGNMENT #7 - A Cruciform Definition of Love

“Love is willing self-sacrifice for the good of another that does not demand reciprocation or that the person being loved is deserving.”

Use this definition to intentionally look for ways to love and serve your spouse. Journal or take notes below about how you did or did not serve, how you struggled, and how the Holy Spirit gave you victory, even just once, to become a person of cruciform love.

1) Willing:

2) Self-sacrifice:

3) For the good of another:

4) Reciprocation / Deserving:

Supplemental Reading:

WDYE Chapters 11-12,16
Luke 7:36-50



END OF SESSION

PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Am I humble enough to confess that I don't love God as much as I claim I do?

How can I grow in my love for God? How can I remember his love for me and water the soil of gratitude?

What elements of my schedule do I need to give up in order to deepen my relationship with God and my spouse?