



## B REVEALING WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

# Men, women, love and submission



## Why use this Bible study?

This Bible study helps us explore what the Bible says about love and submission between men and women within marriage.



## Life in all its fullness

**Read Ephesians 5: 21-28** These verses have often been misinterpreted to justify men committing all kinds of abuse towards their wives, including marital rape. However, properly understood, these verses describe God's intention for the relationship between a husband and wife, which is wonderfully compared to the loving and sacrificial relationship between Christ and his church. This relationship is one of mutual submission and love, respect and honour.



## Key points

- Jesus came to give life in all its fullness to all people – men and women, boys and girls.
- Loving one another like Christ loved us means caring for and respecting one another. It means seeking to serve one another, and being uplifting, gracious, supporting and encouraging. It involves putting each other first.
- Husbands and wives are to submit to one another. This is a mutual act of love, like the act of love we choose in submitting to Christ. It is not an act of defeat, weakness or inferiority.



## Questions for discussion

**Read John 10:10 and John 13: 34**

- What does a life of abundance look like? For women and men, girls and boys, and for communities?
- What does it mean to love like Christ loved?
- What does it look like to love your wife or husband like Christ loved?
- What needs to change?

Awareness-raising

Children &amp; youth

Climate &amp; environment

Conflict &amp; peace-building

Corruption &amp; governance

Disaster risk management

Discrimination &amp; inclusion

Food &amp; livelihoods

Gender &amp; sexual violence

Health &amp; HIV

Influencing decision-makers

Migration &amp; trafficking

Water, sanitation &amp; hygiene

**Read Ephesians 5: 21-28**

- What is submission? Is it an act of love or compulsion? Is it a mutual act of respect or just reserved for women? (See verse 21)
- What does 'loving your wife like Christ loved the Church' mean? What does it mean in relation to 'submission'?
- How should this love and submission be reflected in our relationships? Is it reflected right now? What needs to change?
- How can husbands support their wives to enjoy life in all its fullness, and to make decisions over their lives, their bodies and their finances?

**Reflection**

Ask for God's help as you consider how your own attitudes and actions need to change. What will you do differently from now on?

**Notes**

This Bible study is adapted from an activity written by Prabu Deepan and first published in Tearfund (2015) *Transforming Masculinities: a training manual for gender champions (draft)*

**Related tools –**

- A1 – Revealing violence against women and girls: information for facilitators [A1: Gender & sexual violence-1]
- A1 – Revealing female genital mutilation: information for facilitators [A1: Gender & sexual violence-2]
- A1 – Revealing inequality between men and women: information for facilitators [A1: Gender & sexual violence-3]
- A2 – Understanding how men and women use their time [A2: Gender & sexual violence-1]
- A2 – Exploring men and women's control over resources [A2: Gender & sexual violence-2]
- A2 – Why address violence against women and girls [A2: Gender & sexual violence-3]
- A2 – What are the root causes of violence against women and girls? [A2: Gender & sexual violence-4]
- A2 – Exploring gender roles and power [A2: Gender & sexual violence-5]
- A2 – Men and women: listening to one another [A2: Gender & sexual violence-6]
- A2 – Self-discovery tool (Violence against women and girls) [A2: Gender & sexual violence-7]
- B – Gender and restoring relationships (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-1]
- B – God's view of men (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-4]
- B – Men, women and God [B: Gender & sexual violence-5]
- B – Protecting those vulnerable to sexual violence (Bible study) [B: Sexual violence-1]
- B – Sexual violence in the Bible: the story of Tamar (Bible study) [B: Sexual violence-2]