CHRIST CENTERED COMMUNITY (C3) HOMEWORK

“Edifying the body by embracing the grace of the Spirit to live out the love of the Son in fellowship that glorifies the Father”

Red Text = Tips and guides to help use the questions

Blue Text = Sample Answers

Green Text = Additional questions to ask

WARM UP

1. What is one thing about you that no one in your C3 group (besides your spouse) knows?

DIGGING DEEPER

2. A pastor once said, "When culture clashes with Christ, Christ always champions." According to that quote and Acts 4:18-20, what do we do when the authority of Christ conflicts with what society says?

* As Christians, our worldview must be radically God-centered which means it must be radically Bible based. God has revealed his authoritative truth through the words of Christ and the Scriptures. So when what culture tells us about men and women conflicts with what the Bible says, radically God-centered people always cling to the truth of God's word.
* How can what the world tells us (the secular worldview) effect how we view the truth of God's word?

3. Read 1 Cor 7:32-35. Write down any observations you make about how singles serve and glorify God.

* Singles can serve God with less distractions from earthly responsibilities
* The primary focus of singles can be holiness instead of pleasing a spouse
* Singles do not glorify God less than those who are married. In facts, they can do it with better focus and single-mindedness than those who are married.
* Singleness is not a restraint or a handicap but it is actually freeing in regard to serving God whole heartedly.

4. Read the short case study about Monique and Alex:

Monique is the modern strong wife. She lives in corporate America, shoulders the responsibility for the family, and is proud not to be living in the “comfortable concentration camp” of stay-at-home motherhood. As a point of principle, she is reluctant to do anything she considers domestic, and quick to share her opinion for hours on end, while her husband sits expressionless beside her. She balks at the thought of being a helpmate, chafes at the idea of submission. Her favorite Bible verse is Galatians 3:28. With six words (“there is no male and female”), she has become a ferocious advocate of "homofunctional marriage," consisting of two different sexes functioning identically.

Meanwhile, Alex, Monique's gentle husband, lives his life with few complaints and subdued passions. He happily embraces the notion that "more hands make for light work," and thanks God that Monique is willing to shoulder the primary responsibilities in the home. He doesn't expect to have major sway in family decisions — and according to him, he is better off for it. He has decided that when he lets his wife steer, he never gets blamed for ending up in a ditch. He finds the passenger seat very comfortable. More reclining. Less sacrifice and accountability. More opportunity for pleasant pastimes. In fact, he even gets praised by other "Christians" for “laying down his life” and ambitions for his wife. He is appalled by the idea of masculinity that domineers, belittles, and abuses. So he has taken nicely to that emasculinity which occasions less blood and more praise. He lives to defer. It takes less energy.

* This case study opens up a whole range of potentially sensitive topics. Your group discussions may get heated or emotionally charged here, but try to always bring the discussion back to the Bible. We are Bible people and so our worldview must be based on God's word. Also, if you are unsure how to respond, ask lots of questions!
* Be quick to remind your groups that "where the ideal is lacking, grace abounds." When we talk about men and woman Biblically we are talking about how God designed the world to be but since the world is broken that ideal can be lost or disordered. In those situations, God's grace is sufficient to sustain and equip both men and woman.

a) How would our society view Monique?

* Society would applaud Monique. She is the ideal modern woman who has unshackled herself from the traditional weakness of femininity.

b) Does Monique model Biblical womanhood? Why or why not?

* According to Genesis 2, woman are helpers fit for man. Far from indicating weakness, this implies that woman actually fill up what men are lacking in. Just as God is often spoken of as the helper of Israel, the same is said of woman. They enable men to serve and lead in order to reflect the glory of God. But Monique is not doing that.
* According to Eph 5:22, woman are supposed to be submissive to their husbands as the church is to Christ. Again this does not imply weakness but strength to support and help husbands model Christ and his church. But Monique is not doing that either.

c) If you were asked to disciple Monique on how to be a godly woman, how would you approach that?

d) What Bible texts would you use specifically and how?

* Eph 5:22-24, Gen 2:18-25, Proverbs 31 & 12:4, 1 Peter 3:1-6, 1 Cor 11:3, 7-11

e) On the other hand, how would society view Alex?

* Society would approve of Alex as a man who affirms the independent modern woman, who does not hold his wife back by clinging to traditional gender roles, and does not associate masculinity with strength.

f) Does Alex model Biblical manhood? Why or why not?

* Biblical manhood is summarized by headship according to Ephesians 5. Headship is the unique, Christ-like servant leadership of man in the world to take primary responsibility for spiritual direction, provision, and protection. However, Alex takes no responsibility for leading or spiritual direction. On top of that, he has surrendered primary responsibility for provision and protection to his wife. Men were made to work, according to Genesis 2, but Alex is content to play in comfort.

g) If you were asked to disciple Alex on how to be a godly man, how would you approach that?

h) What Bible texts would you use specifically and how?

* Genesis 2-3, Eph 5:22-33, 1 Peter 3:7, Col 3:19, 1 Cor 11:3, 7-11

I) Eph 5:32 says marriage is a symbol, what kind of picture does Monique and Alex's marriage paint to those observing?

* Paul says that marriage represents Christ and the Church, and specifically husbands represent Christ and wives represent the church. The roles of men and women in marriage are no more interchangeable than the role of Christ and the church in that relationship. So when a marriage becomes "homofunctional" the picture that is painted for the world is not the symbol marriage was designed to represent. It God's great drama of marriage, when Romeo and Juliet becomes Juliet and Juliet, God's beautiful design is not displayed. The enemy is happy to let the drama of creation and marriage tell any story but God's.

5. Based on what we've talked about the past two weeks, how has God convicted you in the areas of manhood and womanhood?