

Facilitator

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Read Genesis 2:18-25 and give a five-minute review of the sermon using Peppy's sermon notes.

Facilitator: Please don't feel you have to cover every question. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

CONNECT Group study questions, Genesis 2:18-25

September 13, 2015

Title: Why Marriage?

August 21, 1970, the song "We've only just begun" was released by The Carpenters. Paul Williams' lyrics put into verse the hopes and dreams of so many about to embark on a lifelong journey "together." Those of you who remember a time like "We've only just begun" may wish to reminisce a bit about what it was like to begin with a "kiss for luck." You may want to sing it—if you dare.

*We've only just begun to live
White lace and promises
A kiss for luck and we're on our way
(We've only begun)*

*Before the risin' sun, we fly
So many roads to choose
We'll start out walkin' and learn to run
And yes, we've just begun*

*Sharing horizons that are new to us
Watching the signs along the way
Talkin' it over, just the two of us
Workin' together day to day
Together*

*And when the evening comes, we smile
So much of life ahead
We'll find a place where there's room to grow
And yes, we've just begun
Sharing horizons that are new to us*

*Watching the signs along the way
Talkin' it over, just the two of us
Workin' together day to day
Together
Together*

*And when the evening comes, we smile
So much of life ahead
We'll find a place where there's room to grow
And yes, we've just begun*

Question: There's a lot to like in "We've only just begun," which is why it found a place in many a wedding "back in the day." It's gauzy optimism includes a dose of reality, but it leaves out a lot. In light of Peppy's lesson about marriage from Genesis 2:18-25, where does the song offer good advice for a couple about to embark on their journey together? Where is it off track? What does it leave out?

Question: The 15,000-piece puzzle is starting to come together. It's looking good around the edges, but there's muddle in the middle. Isn't that the way it is with marriages that begin with little more than a "kiss for luck?" Peppy uses the puzzle metaphor to urge us to look at the picture on the cover and get a clue about how to fit the rest of the pieces. How complete a picture of marriage did you have when you married? Was it the Genesis 2:18-25 picture or was it a big brown paper bag with 14,999 pieces in it?

Question: According to Genesis 2:18, God determined to make a "helper" suitable for Adam. We learned that "helper" could be rendered "corresponding part." How does "corresponding part" shade the meaning of "helper" to give you a better understanding of the husband-wife relationship?

Question: Not everyone is married. Not everyone is called to be married. Yet God said it is not good for man—and presumably woman—to be alone. What provision has God made for the called-to-be-single Christian man or woman with a desire to walk by faith in the will of God? **Facilitator:** Ask a group member to read I Corinthians 7:6-9, another to read 7:25-28 and a third to read 7:32-38. How did Paul see singleness? He looked at marriage as a difficulty, that it would be better to not have to engage in. He saw singleness as the better way. Note too, that he instructed Timothy in I Timothy 5:14 to let the younger women marry, have children and manage their affairs. Paul was not anti-marriage, just a realist about the difficulties. He also saw advantages.

Question: Peppy's triangle illustration of husband and wife at opposite corners at the base and God at the top is a simple and accurate picture of how drawing near to God brings a couple closer to each other. But that takes work, and it takes building on a spiritual foundation. My guess is that most of us—even as Christians before we married—paid more attention to each other's body (or even whether we were Republican or Democrat) than we did to our spiritual oneness in Christ. If sexual oneness is first in a relationship, how can the couple put an upside-down, off-balance marriage back on a solid foundation of oneness in spirit?

Facilitator: Guide the group through Peppy's "timeless truths" and let them discover how to build a foundation of oneness in spirit, soul and body. Helpful scriptures may include Proverbs 3:5-6 (We all must trust the Lord, married or not, each day), James 4:6-10 (our necessary attitude when coming to Christ), Matthew 6:14-15 (forgiveness), and Matthew 7:12 (treating your spouse as you would want to be treated).