

## The Meaning of Marriage *Discussion Guide*

### CHAPTER 6: EMBRACING THE OTHER

#### Introduction

Gender has always been a hot topic—not just in modern times, but across ages and cultures. For centuries, the differences between the sexes have been a source of conflict, abuse, and oppression. That history and our own personal experiences can make it difficult to be fully transparent and vulnerable in marriage. To make matters worse, many people assume the Bible has old-fashioned and even dangerous views on gender relations. So, what is the real story? How does God want us to behave as married men and women?

#### Icebreaker

Have each person describe his or her spouse's perfect date.

#### Discussion Questions

1. As you read the chapter, what stood out most?
2. As you began marriage, what roles did you expect to take on? What roles did you assume your spouse would take on?
3. Ephesians 5:21 calls us to submit to one another out of reverence for Jesus. What is one area of your marriage in which your spouse has voluntarily submitted to you? What did that do for your relationship?
4. In the chapter, Kathy Keller asserts that husbands and wives are equal but that husbands have the unique role of “servant leader” and wives have the unique role of “strong helper.” Do you agree with that assertion? Why or why not?
5. Each day, you and your spouse are faced with decisions—some large, some small. How might clarity around your roles and giftedness help you make better decisions together?

#### For the Ride Home

Talk about these questions on your way home:

1. *What are your thoughts about group discussion?*
2. *Which characteristics of your role in your marriage and family are most important to you?*

#### Exercise

Answer these questions on your own, and then discuss them with your spouse:

1. *How are you uniquely gifted to serve your spouse?*
2. *What are some practical ways you can leverage those gifts to serve your spouse?*

Based on your answers and your discussion with your spouse, decide on one thing you can do this week to better serve your spouse . . . and then do it.

### **Moving Forward**

Your spouse is utterly different from you. He or she acts, thinks, and operates differently. Those differences can be frustrating and confusing. Sometimes they can even be scary. But when managed in a healthy way, your differences can teach you a lot about yourself. That's because you and your spouse are one flesh; he or she is the other half of you.

When a married couple learns to submit to one another—to put the other first—fear and anxiety are replaced with transparency and vulnerability.

### **Changing Your Mind**

*Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

**Ephesians 5:21**

