

**Seventh Relationship Story:  
Relational Service: Marriage is a Picture of Christ and the Church**

First Third:

Express joy in Christ together

Cast Vision

Questions:

How are you doing?

How did you obey last week's teaching?

Who are you witnessing to?

Who has come to faith? Are they witnessing to those in their circle?

Who are you training to become a reproducing disciple? Are they training others?

Second Third:

Pray briefly for God to open up His message to us.

DO stick to the story.

DON'T talk about politics; DON'T chase rabbit trails; DON'T focus on minor points in the passage.

DON'T talk about religion. DON'T dominate the conversation.

*The Apostle Paul tells us that marriage serves as an important picture:*

**Ephesians 5:25, 31-33** Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. . . .<sup>31</sup> "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."<sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.<sup>33</sup> However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

*Now let's consider this true story from the Bible about Jesus and His disciples:*

**John 13:1-17** Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.<sup>2</sup> During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,<sup>3</sup> Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God,<sup>4</sup> rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist.<sup>5</sup> Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.<sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?"<sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand."<sup>8</sup> Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me."<sup>9</sup> Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!"<sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you."<sup>11</sup> For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."<sup>12</sup> When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you?<sup>13</sup> You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am.<sup>14</sup> If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.<sup>15</sup> For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.<sup>16</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.<sup>17</sup> If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

Why was there a custom in Jesus' day of having a servant wash the feet of everyone who came into the room? With no servants at hand, who should have washed the feet of Jesus and His disciples? Is Jesus upset that no one does this?

What does this story tell us about Peter? About Judas? About Jesus?

What does this story tell us about God? About man?

What are the implications of this story for marriage? Why does Paul command the husband to love his wife, and the wife to respect her husband?

Is there a sin to avoid? A command to obey? An example to follow? A promise to claim?

Who do you identify with in this story?

Last Third:

Practice telling the story

What will you do differently this week because of this story?

Who will you witness to or share this story with next week?