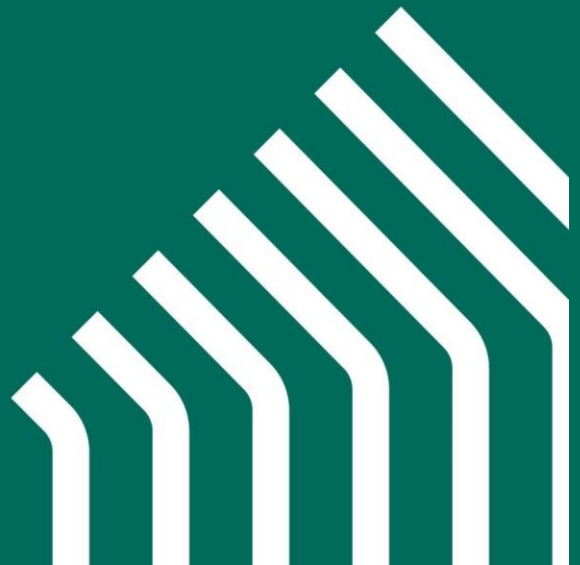


Weekend to Remember®

Prayer Guide



Weekend to Remember® Prayer Guide

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Friday evening is an introduction to the weekend. You will meet the weekend's speakers who will show you exactly how to pursue a marriage that really works through stories of their own breakthroughs and blunders.

INTRODUCTION

Praise the Lord! We praise God that you have been called to take “*the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God*” (Ephesians 6:17b ~ NIV) and pray for those attending the Weekend to Remember®. You will need your Bible in order to pray effectively for these couples.

This Prayer Guide is filled with the Word of God for you to declare as you intercede for those attending this conference. When you pray Scripture for these couples, you are imparting the life and power of God. As you enter the world of intercession, you place yourselves on the front battle line for God. In order to combat spiritual attack, one MUST be prepared. Begin now by reading Ephesians 6:10-18 and by taking up the armor of God.¹

Each day you will be using the acrostic **PRAY**.

You will begin each day or session (depending on how the prayer team is scheduled) with **Praising** God, **Repentance** from sin, **Asking** God anything according to His will, and **Yielding** yourself to all that God will speak to you. You may then use the specific message guides to target your prayers.²

Praise: Praise is acknowledging God for who He is. You may even choose to praise through song. Included in praise are prayers of thanksgiving for what He has done.³

Repentance: It is necessary to approach God in an attitude of repentance. *None of us is without sin* (1 Kings 8:46). *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* (1 John 1:9 ~ NASB)

Asking: *“This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.”* (1 John 5:14-15 ~ NASB)

Yield yourself to God: Spend time quietly sitting at His feet and listening for His voice. He will guide and direct your prayers.

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.
Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.
Know that the LORD is God.
It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, the sheep of his
pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name.
For the LORD is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

—Psalm 100 ~ NIV

Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!

I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps

faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.

—Psalm 146:1-2,5-8 ~ ESV

Additional praise Scriptures include Psalm 103, 145:1-7, 147:1-11, 148 149, and 150.

REPENTANCE AND CLEANSING

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD! O Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to

the voice of my pleas for mercy! I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope.

—Psalm 130:1-2,5 ~ ESV

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

—Psalm 51:10 ~ ESV

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

—Matthew 5:8 ~ NIV

- Is there anyone you have not forgiven?
- Did you fight with your spouse or a family member or anyone else today?
- Is your life self-controlled or God-controlled?

ASKING

The following subjects are general areas to “ask” God for each time you begin to pray.

INVITATION: Invite the Holy Spirit into the conference, the hotel, ballroom, guest rooms, hallways, elevators, couples, and hotel staff (John 14:25-26 and John 16:5-11). Ask the Spirit of Unity to be among all those attending and working (Psalm 133 and

Ephesians 4:3-6).

SPEAKERS: Declare speaker-couple's names. Pray that the speakers would be refreshed and filled with His Holy Spirit and anointing. Also pray that they will be sensitive when teaching and sharing life applications (Romans 12:1-21; Colossians 1:9-12a).

My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power. ... This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

GOD'S PURPOSE: Pray that God's purpose will be accomplished in each person attending. Pray that God will direct couples of His choice to be in attendance.

THE COUPLES: Pray that couples would ask the question, "What does God have for us?" Pray that they begin to investigate what God is saying to them through 1 John 1:7—to walk in the light of Jesus, so that we may have unbroken fellowship with Him and with one another. Pray that His kingdom will come to their hearts and to their homes! Pray for safety in traveling. Pray for peace and protection for children at home.

TEACHING TRUTHS: Pray that the teaching truths will be clear and that the Word of God will penetrate deep into their hearts. Pray confidently that it will accomplish the work that God intends and will not return void. 1 Corinthians 2:4-5,13 ~ NIV

MAKING IT PERSONAL: Pray that each individual will approach these 'One Minute to Oneness' and Projects with humility, integrity and honesty.

A prayer for yourself and those attending might look like this:

Lord, enable all of us to honor you by submitting to each other (Ephesians 5:21). Give us patience, faithfulness, and encouragement; and help us to live in complete harmony with the attitude of Christ toward each other (Romans 15:5). Keep us vigilant to guard against any separation of spirit between us.⁴

YIELDING

I trust you, Lord, from the bottom of my heart; I will not attempt to figure out everything on my own. I am listening for your voice in everything I do and everywhere I go; you're the one who keeps me on track (Proverbs 3:5-6).

ATTITUDES (Philippians 2:2-5): Pray for those with a rebellious attitude—those who don't want to be there—that the strongholds would be taken away (broken) and replaced with a willingness to listen. Pray that God's Holy Spirit would be allowed to minister to their hearts throughout the conference. Pray that the deeds of the flesh will be broken and that the fruit of the Spirit will prevail (Galatians 5:16-26).

TRANSITION FROM THE WORLD TO LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

(1 Peter 5:6-7; Psalm 51:16-17): Pray that the men and women would be able to cast all of their cares and concerns unto the Lord (Matthew 6:25,33). Pray as they walk into the hotel that they will feel the peace of the Holy Spirit. Pray that hearts will be tender and eager to learn and apply the biblical principles to be presented.

COMMITMENT TO THE APPLICATION PROJECTS (Hebrews 13:17): Pray that couples will be committed to complete each **Application Project**.

UNDERSTANDING: Pray that the couples would understand the lessons and desire to know how to apply them to their lives. Pray for protection of their minds from distractions and from fleshly thoughts (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). Pray: "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17 -NASB). Pray that they will have ears to hear the Word of God.

This manual is designed so that you, our Prayer Team, have a copy of the FamilyLife Weekend to Remember® current sessions to review/reference and/or focus on the Prayer Directives and Scripture that are after each sessions notes and pray the scriptures there.

You are a cherished gift to the ministry of this Weekend to Remember® and this FamilyLife Ministry Team! You are battling for each, and every person, couple, and family represented here as guests this weekend.

Please re-read the Introduction and prepare yourself and your heart for the battle that you are fighting on behalf of each of our guests this weekend.

You are interceding on behalf of countless families and future families!

We are so thankful for your partnership in the ministry of prayer for this Weekend to Remember®! You are interceding on behalf of countless families and future families!

Since, then, I heard of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus and the practical way in which you are expressing it towards fellow-Christians, I thank God continually for you and I never give up praying for you; and this is my prayer. That God, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ and the all-glorious Father, will give you spiritual wisdom and the insight to know more of him: that you may receive that inner illumination of the spirit which will make you realise how great is the hope to which he is calling you—the magnificence and splendour of the inheritance promised to Christians—and how tremendous is the power available to us who believe in God.

Ephesians 1:15-19 ~ PHILLIPS

You are being lifted up by FamilyLife's ministry team just as you are interceding for your guests

And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you^l to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:9-14 ~ ESV

**WEEKEND TO REMEMBER
GUIDEBOOK
and
PRAYER GUIDE FOR EACH
CONFERENCE SESSION**



Gray shaded areas
denote guest
workbook text

Friday Evening:

Part I: The Dream for Marriage

Part I Session 1: Are You Living the Dream?

We all come into marriage with a picture of what “happily ever after” looks like.

One Minute to Oneness:

- ❖ What attracted you to each other?
 - ❖ What were your original dreams for marriage?
- | | | |
|--------|----------|-----|
| Fun | Travel | Sex |
| Friend | Children | |

We long to Experience Oneness, but we find it easy to drift towards Isolation.

- **Oneness: Moving through life as a team**
- vs
- **Isolation: Moving through life married, but not together.**

What causes the drift towards isolation?

1. Our spouse doesn't always cooperate with our expectations, hopes, or dreams for marriage. Over time it can feel like they have "changed" from the person we first married.
2. We tend to be at the center of our dreams.
3. We say "for better or worse," but we are rarely prepared or know how to handle the worse.

Money fights

50/50 Relationship

Role Conflict

Exhaustion

Family Drama

Affairs in All Forms

Health/Sickness

Lust

4. Sexual Expectations

Trust Issues

Loss of a Job

Wayward Kids

Blended Family
Challenges

Personal Baggage
from Past

Loss of a Child

Dealing with a
Former Spouse

Depression

Self-centered Spouse

Couples, as individuals, will rate their "Scale of Isolation...to Oneness"

When our Dreams are challenged, we can do one of three things:

1. Give up on our dreams
2. Get out and find a new dream
3. Grab hold of a better dream

We believe there is a God who has a bigger vision for our marriage than we probably had for ourselves.

What if...

- You could learn how to move closer together when you feel isolated in marriage?
- You could have the marriage you will want your kids and grandkids to have?
- Your marriage could make a difference in the world?

Remember: No Marriage is static. You are either drifting toward isolation or moving toward oneness.

Prayer Guide for Prayer Team Members

Session 1: Are You Living The Dream?

We all come into marriage with a picture of what “happily ever after” looks like

Main Teaching Truths:

- Why did you fall in love with each other?
- When did your fantasies about marriage hit reality?
- What three options comfort us when our dreams don't match reality?

Prayer Directives and Scripture

- **Pray for the couples who have not arrived yet—for peace and protection from the enemy. Pray against discouragement and for them to persevere through any obstacles the enemy has put in their way to arrive at the conference.**
- **Pray that the Lord will break down the walls in their hearts and that there will be much laughter.**

A cheerful heart is good medicine. Proverbs 17:22a ~ NLT

- **Pray that each individual will not harden his/her heart to the Holy Spirit and will receive correction through the conference speaker's teaching.**

Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.

Psalm 95:7b-8a ~ NIV

Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil on my head. My head will not refuse it.

Psalm 141:5a ~ NIV

- **Pray that God would peel away the layers of deception and that each person would see themselves honestly.**

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Hebrews 4:12-13 ~ NIV

Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

Psalm 139:23-24 ~ ESV

- **Pray for each couple to recognize and confess the threats affecting their marriage—adjustments, our culture’s pattern, difficulties, extramarital affairs, and selfishness.**

Therefore, confess your sins to one another [your false steps, your offenses], and pray for one another, that you may be healed and restored. The heartfelt and persistent prayer of a righteous man (believer) can accomplish much [when put into action and made effective by God— is dynamic and can have tremendous power]

James 5:16 ~AMP

- **Ask God to stir their hearts so that oneness would be the desire of their souls.**

Jesus knew their thoughts and replied, “Any kingdom divided by civil war is doomed. A town or family splintered by feuding will fall apart.”

Matthew 12:25 ~ NLT

- **Pray for couples struggling with depression to seek counsel. Also, pray for understanding if anger turned inward is the root cause of the depression.**

How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will the enemy triumph over me? Look on me and answer, O LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death. But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.

Psalms 13:2-5 ~ NIV

- **Pray that couples can share their original dreams of marriage expectations, hopes, and desires without fear.**

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

2 Timothy 1:7 ~ KJV

- **Pray that couples will see the things that cause marriages to drift towards isolation and see what oneness look like.**

...and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

John 8:32 ~ESV

- **Ask God to stir their hearts so that oneness would be the desire of their souls.**

Jesus knew their thoughts and replied, "Any kingdom divided by civil war is doomed. A town or family splintered by feuding will fall apart.

Matthew 12:25 ~ NLT

Remember: No Marriage is static. You are either drifting toward isolation or moving toward oneness.

Part I Session 2: Let's Talk

***Good communication is necessary
if we want to stay on the path toward oneness***

**Goal of communication: Build oneness by sharing
who you are**

Level 1: Cliché: Non-sharing

Level 2: Fact: Sharing what you know

Level 3: Opinion: Sharing what you think

Level 4: Emotion: Sharing what you feel

Level 5: Transparency: Sharing who you are

**When we feel safe to share who we are, we have a better
chance of experiencing oneness.**

Why Does Communication Get Difficult Over Time?

1. Some of us grew up watching communication habits that weren't healthy.

Bad Communication Habits:

- a. Stuffer
 - b. Shouter
 - c. Interrupter
 - d. Rambler
 - e. Arguer
2. Many of us have different communication styles than our spouse.
 - a. Land the Plane vs. Enjoy the Ride
 - b. Let's Take Turns vs. Thinking Out Loud
 - c. Share Your Feelings vs. Just the Facts
 3. We tend to discount the role that stress plays in communication.
 4. We often have unhealthy ways of dealing with anger.

5. We don't intentionally pursue training to help grow our communication skills.

CREATE A SAFE PLACE TO FOSTER TRANSPARENCY

(Are we practicing the two key communication habits that lead to understanding?)

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

James 1:19 ~ NIV

First, work to listen carefully so you can understand your spouse's heart

1. Give focused attention: put away distractions

... listen to me, and be attentive to the words of my mouth

Proverbs 7:24

2. Avoid trying to fix the problem/person
3. Try to feel what they are feeling
4. Suspend judgment: don't defend yourself
5. Summarize what you are hearing
 - a. "Are you telling me...?"
 - b. "Can you tell me more about what you meant when you said...?"

A person's thoughts are like water in a deep well, but someone with insight can draw them out. Proverbs 20:5 ~ GNT

Second, work to express clearly so your spouse can understand your heart

1. **Think** before you speak

If you want to stay out of trouble, be careful what you say.
Proverbs 21:23 ~ GNT

2. **Ask** if now is a good time and place: create the right environment

3. **Share** your heart: pains, fears, hopes, desires, disappointments

4. **Beware**: Anger can sabotage vulnerability

The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. Proverbs 12:18 ~ NIV

Anger tips:

- i. Pay attention to tone and body language
- ii. Refuse to use mean and insulting words
- iii. Avoid trigger words like “always” and “never”
- iv. Equip yourself with “I feel” when “you fact” language

5. **Ask** them what they heard

One Minute to Oneness:

- ❖ Which of the five listening tips and five expressing tips will you commit to working on this weekend?

The Path Toward Oneness

Pursue God's three purposes for marriage

Align against three major threats

Trust God's three sources of help

Honor one another on life's journey

Remember: True vulnerability requires a safe place where your spouse can share their heart.

Prayer Guide for Prayer Team Members

Session 2: Let's Talk

Good communication is necessary if we want to stay on the path toward oneness

Main Teaching Truths:

- What did God intend for the first couple to experience in marriage?
- How can each couple make the world a better place?
- What are the keys to experiencing real companionship in marriage?

Prayer Directives and Scripture

- **Pray that couples would see their poor communication habits, and how and why communication can become difficult over time.**

Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit —you choose.

Proverbs 18:21~MSG

- **Pray that couples would create a safe place to foster transparency and share who they really are without the fear of anger.**

My dear brothers and sister, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

James 1:19-20 ~ NIV

- **Pray that couples would work to listen carefully so they can understand each other and understand their spouse's heart first.**

...turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

Proverbs 2:2-5 ~ESV

The one who talks much will for sure sin, but he who is careful, what he says is wise.

Proverbs 10:19 ~NLV

...listen to me and be attentive to the words of my mouth.

Proverbs 7:24 ~CSB

A person's thoughts are like water in a deep well, but someone with insight can draw them out.

Proverbs 20:5 ~GNT

- **Pray couples would work to express themselves clearly so that their spouse can understand their heart and that anger would not sabotage vulnerability.**

If you want to stay out of trouble, be careful what you say.

Proverbs 21:23 ~ GNT

There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Proverbs 12:18 ~ RSV

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Romans 12:10 ~ ESV

Project 1:

Communicating Oneness: Our Communication Toolbox

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

Romans 15:5-7 ~ NIV

- **Pray for understanding of how communication has caused isolation and for open communication about these during the application time.**

The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit

Proverbs 18:21 ~ NIV

- **Pray for honesty with one another and gentleness in their communication.**

A man has joy in an apt answer, and how delightful is a timely word!

Proverbs 15:23 ~ NASB

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Ephesians 4:29 ~ ESV

- **Pray that the Lord would give them ears to hear each other.**

There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven ... a time to be silent, and a time to speak.

Ecclesiastes 3:1,7b ~ NASB

Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.

James 1:19b ~ ESV

- **Pray against anger disrupting their communication.**

But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander and obscene talk from your mouth. Put on compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Colossians 3:8,12 ~ ESV

- **Pray that they will be discussing their hopes for the weekend. Please pray that the Lord would bring hope to their hearts.**

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you.

2 Thessalonians 2:16,17a ~ NIV

- **Pray that there would be vulnerability in expressing their hope. Pray that they would dare to hope for His purposes for their marriages.**

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:11 ~ NIV

Remember: True vulnerability requires a safe place where your spouse can share their heart.

Saturday Morning:

Part I: The Dream for Marriage (*continued*)

Part I Session 3: The Forgotten Dream.

God's original design for marriage is better than our best dreams for marriage

Where did the idea of oneness in marriage originate?

"Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Genesis 2:24 ~ KJV

Fast Fact: The Bible starts with a marriage (Genesis), dedicates an entire book in the middle to marriage (Song of Solomon), and ends with a marriage (Revelation)

Path to Oneness: Pursue God's Three Purposes for Marriage:

The first purpose is to model the unity of God to those around you.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them Genesis 1:27

- 1. God created human beings uniquely— “*in His own image*”—to reflect some of His character qualities: i.e. His truth, wisdom, love, kindness, ability to think, feel, and know right from wrong.**
- 2. Marriage is God's original and unique context to reflect something about God that you can't do on your own.**
- 3. Marriage brings two distinct beings (a man and a woman) together so that we may “image” or reflect a God who is three (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) and yet one.**
- 4. When marriages model His unity, though mysterious, people are more apt to believe that Jesus Himself is God.**

The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one. I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. John 17:22-23

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. Ephesians 5:31-32

How can we Model His Unity?

1. We imitate His Love.

- a. Throughout the Bible, God says when we love one another like He loves us, they become one and He becomes visible.**

No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. I John 4:12

2. What does love look like?

- a. Is patient**
- b. Is not irritable or resentful**
- c. Hopes all things**
- d. Bears all things**

- e. Is not arrogant or rude
- f. Does not rejoice in wrongdoing
- g. Never ends
- h. Is kind
- i. Does not insist on its own way
- j. Endures all things
- k. Does not envy or boast
- l. Rejoices with the truth

One Minute to Oneness:

- ❖ Which traits of love in this passage are most difficult for you to imitate?

3. We imitate his Promise

- a. God intended marital unity to be expressed within a *covenant* relationship—not a *contract*.

b. God’s love is not based on our performance or affections for Him. He doesn’t make a contract with His people, but a covenant—a permanent vow—to love unconditionally for a lifetime. In the same way, God designed marriage to reflect the same kind of commitment.

Couples who pursue unity with one another will move toward oneness.

The second purpose is to make an IMPACT on the next generation.

And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Genesis 1:28 ~ MSG

1. Impact your world through generations that out live you: your children, grandchildren, stepchildren, adopted, foster, and children who need the most help.

a. Marriage is the original and unique context for children to be shaped in their thinking about critical areas of life:

- i. Who is God? What is He like?**
- ii. How do relationships work? How does marriage work?**
- iii. What does it mean to be a woman or a man?**
- iv. Who am I/ How should I think about myself?**
- v. Why am I here? What matters in life?**

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. Deuteronomy 6:5-7

b. Children do best with family stability.

2. Impact your world by tending the “garden” God placed you in with all that He has given you.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. Genesis 2:15

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:17

Couples who pursue impact in the world will move toward oneness.

The third purpose is to move into the world with a life-long Companion.

It's not good for a man to be alone, I'll make him a helper, a companion.

Genesis 2:1 ~ MSG

We discover five choices from the first couple that are essential for life-long companionship.

1. Believe God brought you together for His purposes

- **God created Adam with a need for companionship.**

The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.

Genesis 2:20

- **God provided for Adam's need with Eve.**

So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

Genesis 2:21-22

- **Marriage is God’s original and unique context for life-long companionship. Regardless of how you got married or the state of your marriage, God can transform where you are and move you to oneness.**

2. Receive your spouse as God’s companion for you

- **Adam enthusiastically received Eve because He trusted God, not because of Eve’s performance.**

Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be call Woman because she was taken out of Man.

Genesis 2:23

- **That’s easy on a wedding day, but like Adam and Eve, we soon discover our spouse isn’t always who we imagined them to be.**

WHAT MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO KEEP RECEIVING YOUR SPOUSE AS YOUR LIFE-LONG COMPANION?

a. I never imagined how different they would be:

- i. Gender**
- ii. Perspectives**
- iii. Temperaments**
- iv. Background**
- v. Preferences**
- vi. Roles**

b. I never imagined how selfish they would be

c. I never imagined I would be mistreated in my marriage

While God can redeem even the hardest of marriages, mistreatment to the point of abuse is never acceptable. The most loving thing we can do for an abusive spouse is hold them accountable for their actions. Seek counsel and protection for you and your children.

3. Leave behind old ways of life (especially parents and family of origin)

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. Genesis 2:24 ~ KJV

“Leave” means to “break dependence” on other things.

When frustrations creep into marriage, we often turn back to someone or something other than our spouse.

- i. Parents**
- ii. Friends**
- iii. Old habits and patterns**
- iv. Children**
- v. Other**

4. Cleave to your spouse

Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. Genesis 2:24 ~ KJV

- **“Cleave” means to “cling to, bind, form a permanent bond.”**

You are not called to cleave to your work or your children, to your friends or your hobbies. Cleave reinforces the idea of making a permanent covenant with your spouse.

❖ **One Minute to Oneness:**

- ❖ **What is your spouse competing with for your time and attention?**

Work demands

Hobbies

Unhealthy pursuits of wealth, career, renown

Other family or friends

Social or digital media

Baggage from the past

Unresolved personal issues/mental health

5. Weave together as one flesh

Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they will become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Genesis 2:24-25 ~ KJV

- **“One flesh” is not just about sex.**
- **God designed marriage so that there could be one person in the world with whom you are “naked”—fully known and fully accepted—just like you can be with Him.**
- **God wants us to be “naked and unashamed”—but that can change?**

Couples who pursue life-long companionship will move toward oneness.

CONTRACT RELATIONSHIP vs COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

A choice to.....

- **Believe**

**We came together to make each other happy. vs
God brought us together for His purpose**

- **Receive**

**My spouse as long as they live up to my
expectations. vs
My spouse with all their imperfections.**

- **Leave**

**My options open in case something goes wrong. vs
The security of family/past relationships.**

- **Cleave**

**To each other as long as we “feel love” for one
another. vs
To each other until death do us part.**

- **Weave**

**With sex as fuel for our “love.” vs
With sex as an expression of our covenant.**

GOD ASKED THE FIRST COUPLE TO GRAB HOLD OF A BIG DREAM FOR MARRIAGE:

- 1. Model the unity of God to those around you.**
- 2. Make an impact on the next generation.**
- 3. Move into the world with a life-long companion.**

So what happened? It didn't take long before that dream came crashing down.

Remember: Receive your spouse as God's companion for you.

Prayer Guide for Prayer Team Members

Session 3: The Forgotten Dream

God's original design for marriage is better than our best dreams for marriage

Main Teaching Truths:

- What did God intend for the first couple to experience in marriage?
- How can each couple make the world a better place?
- What are the keys to experiencing real companionship in marriage?

Prayer Directives and Scripture

- **Pray for each couple to have the right picture of a godly marriage and have the intention of producing oneness.**

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife and they become one flesh.

Genesis 2:24 ~ NIV

- **Pray that couples understand they are a mirror reflection of the invisible God to the visible world.**

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27 ~ NIV

I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. John 17:22-23 ~ NIV

Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church

Ephesians 5:31-32 ~ ESV

No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. I John 4:12 ~ ESV

- **Pray that each couple would embrace the traits of love from I Corinthians 13:4-8, even those that they find may be difficult to imitate.**

Love endures with patience and serenity, love is kind and thoughtful, and is not jealous or envious; loves does not brag and is not proud or arrogant. It is not rude; it is not self-seeking, it is not provoked (nor overly sensitive and easily angered); it does not take into account a wrong endured. It does not rejoice at injustice, but rejoices with the

truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. I Corinthians 13:4-8 ~ AMP

- **Pray that they will receive God's purposes for marriage as truth and begin to make an impact on the next generation.**

... And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Genesis 1:28 ~ NASB

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. Deuteronomy 6:5-7 ~ ESV

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. Genesis 2:15 ~ ESV

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:17 ~ ESV

- **Pray that the couples purpose would be to ^{move} into the world with a life-long companion.**

It's not good for a man to be alone, I'll make him a helper, a companion. Genesis 2:18 ~ MSG

Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate.

Mark 10:9 ~ NIV

- **Pray couples will believe God brought them together for His purposes**

So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

Genesis 2:20-22 ~ NIV

- **Pray couples would receive their spouse as God's companion for each other.**

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: if either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?

Ecclesiastes 4:9 ~ NIV

- **Pray that couples understand that oneness doesn't mean sameness.**

God has given each of you a gift from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.

1 Peter 4:10 ~ NLT

- **Pray that individuals will leave behind previous ways of single life, and cleave to their spouse, and weave together as one flesh.**

For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

Genesis 2:24 ~ NASB

“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female,” and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.”

Matthew 19:4-6 ~ NIV

Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

Ephesians 5:31 ~ ESV

- **Pray that couples will understand the difference between a Contract Relationship versus a Covenant Relationship.**

You ask, “Why?” It is because the Lord is the witness between you and the wife of your youth. You have been unfaithful to her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. Has not the one God made you? You belong to him in body and spirit. And what does the one God seek? Godly offspring. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful to the wife of your youth.

Malachi 2:14-15 ~ NIV

Remember: Receive your spouse as God’s companion for you.

Part II The Fall of Marriage

Part II Session 4: How the Dream Comes Crashing Down.

***Every marriage will encounter
three major threats to oneness.***

Path to Oneness:

Align against three major threats

**Beware: *We have an unseen enemy who doesn't
want us to be one with our spouses***

The Invisible Threat:

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field

Genesis 3:1

Satan's first target was a marriage

- **Since Satan couldn't harm God, he threatened God's three purpose for oneness:**
 - 1. He seeks to distort God's unity in us**
 - 2. He seeks to destroy God's impact on future generations**
 - 3. He seeks to disrupt companionship between God and people**

Stand together against a common foe

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12

Your spouse is not your enemy

The Internal Threat:

God created the first couple with the capacity to choose between God's desires and their own desires—His way or their own way.

This attitude, trusting self over God, led to what the Bible calls sin.

Sin is missing the mark of God's perfect standard.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way. Isaiah 53:6

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23

When Adam and Eve trusted their own way, it created spiritual separation from God and relational separation from each other, producing:

Shame *They sewed fig leaves together.* (Gen. 3:7)

Guilt *The man and his wife hid themselves* (Gen. 3.8)

Fear *I was afraid...so I hid.* (Gen.3.9-10)

Blame-shifting *The woman whom you gave me...the serpent deceived me.* (Gen 3.11-14)

Battle for control *Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.* (Gen 3. 7-16)

The problem in marriage isn't something specific or unique to your relationship. It's that sin and selfishness go hand in hand. When there's broken connection to God and spouse, instead of trying to meet the needs of our spouse, we become fixated on meeting our own—often through counterfeits or “affairs.”

- **Another person physically or emotionally**
- **Your career and ambitions**
- **Your favorite activities and pursuits**
- **Other relationships you prioritize over your spouse**
- **Fantasy or pornographic material.**

Beware: We underestimate our own contribution to what threatens our oneness.

Fast Fact: “Affairs” are simply an escape from reality or a search for fulfillment outside your marriage.

The External Threat:

Beware: We live in a broken world that devalues God's original design for oneness

Competing Philosophies

The world offers deceptive alternatives to God's design for our marriage

- **Marriage is outdated and/or unnecessary**
- **Marriage is a contract**
- **Marriage is primarily about me**
- **Marriage is a form of control**

Compelling Influencers

The world uses influential platforms to produce and promote images, ideas, and thoughts about oneness that often contradict God's design for our marriage

- **Pop culture (movies/music/entertainment)**
- **Education system**

- **Print and mass media (magazines, TV talk shows, radio programs)**
- **Social media**

In this world you will have trouble... John 16:33

Challenging Struggles

The world produces unexpected and unwanted trails that challenge God's design for our marriage

- **Loss of a child**
- **Unemployment**
- **Deployment**
- **Health/mental issues**
- **Family challenges**

One Minute to Oneness:

❖ **Take a moment to reflect on how these three threats are impacting your marriage today**

- **Satan**
- **The World**
- **Selfishness**

Remember: Your spouse is not your enemy!

Prayer Guide for Prayer Team Members

Session 4: How the Dream Comes Crashing Down

Every marriage will encounter three major threats to oneness

Main Teaching Truths:

- How did God's original dream go off track?
- What are the common threats that every marriage faces?
- What role do I play as a possible saboteur to oneness?

Prayer Directives and Scripture

- **Pray that couples will see the invisible threat: an unseen enemy who does not want them to be 'one' with their spouse.**

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12 ~ ESV

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.

Genesis 3:1 ~ ESV

- **Pray couples will accept one another recognizing his/her mate is not the enemy.**

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God

Romans 15:5-7 ~ NIV

- **Pray for each couple that they would have recognize the Internal Threat to marriage and have God's desires and not their own desires.**

All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way.

Isaiah 53:6a ~ NASB

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:23 ~ NIV

- **Pray against the enemy and that each person will be released from strongholds of shame, guilt, fear, blame shifting and the battle for control.**

I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.

Psalms 34:4-5 ~ NIV

Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear

1 John 4:18a ~ NLT

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 6:12 ~ NIV

Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And they heard the sounds of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said...I was afraid...and I hid myself."

Genesis 3:7-10 ~ ESV

- **Pray against the External Threats of: Competing Philosophies, Compelling Influencers and Challenging Struggles.**

"...In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

John 16:33 ~ NIV

- **Pray for the Lord's comfort for those who have lost children or who are unable to have children.**

The LORD will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; he will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing.

Isaiah 51:3 ~ NIV

As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.

Isaiah 66:13 ~ NIV

*To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes,
The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of
heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting
of the LORD, that He may be glorified.*

Isaiah 61:3 ~ NKJV

Many of these couples are facing significant obstacles to oneness due to unemployment, deployment, health issues, mental health issues, abuse issues in the past or present, unfaithfulness, infidelity, or addictions. Pray against every effort of Satan to defeat oneness and every human excuse to reject God's plan.

We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ

2 Corinthians 10:5 ~ ESV

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

John 16: :33 ~ NKJV

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Philippians 4:13 ~ NKJV

One Minute to Oneness:

- **Pray for the couples as they do the *One Minute to Oneness* exercise on the threats to their marriage: *The World, Satan, Selfishness.***

For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ... 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 ~ ESV

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:5-6 ~ RSV

Remember: Your spouse is not your enemy!

Part III: The Hope for Marriage

Part III Session 5: God's Power for Oneness

God never intended you to face life or marriage alone

Path to Oneness: Trust God's three sources of help

FIRST, GOD HELPS BY RESTORING OUR COMPANIONSHIP WITH HIM

1. God desires to restore companionship with his most prized creation

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

Genesis 3:8-9

2. We have chosen to live independently from God

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23

For the wages of sin is death...

Romans 6:23

3. God sent his son Jesus to restore our companionship with God. He lived. He died. He rose again.

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

That he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures I Corinthians 15:4

4. We all have an opportunity to receive God's gift of oneness with Him.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12

Receive God's Good News (the Gospel)

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Believe God loves you and sent his son Jesus to live, die, and rise again on your behalf.

Leave or repent of your independence (sin) from God.

Cleave to God and connect with others who follow Jesus.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. John 10:10

And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I John 5:11-12

Warning: Oneness with God should not be motivated primarily by a desire for personal happiness, a trouble-free life, or a great marriage.

Good news for your marriage

- **When oneness in your marriage feels threatened, go to God first.**
- **Oneness with your spouse is possible; there's no such thing as a hopeless marriage.**
- **Oneness grows as we live out the example of sacrificial love daily.**
- **Jesus has given us power to love imperfect people unconditionally.**

SECOND, GOD HELPS BY EMPOWERING US WITH HIS SPIRIT

So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves.

Galatians 5:16 ~ NLT

1. God asks us to love our spouse (and others) in ways that don't come naturally:

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths. Ephesians 4:29

Do not repay evil for evil...but on the contrary, bless. 1 Peter 3:9

Be angry and do not sin. Ephesians 4:26

...forgiving each other, as the Lord has forgiven you. Colossians 3:13

2. God sent the Holy Spirit to help us

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name...

John 14:26

- **Follow Jesus wherever He leads us.**
- **See the sin in our own life.**
- **Forgive the sin in others.**
- **Love imperfect people like He does**
- **Do the right thing in the right way.**

3. God wants us to develop new habits to help us be more conscious of the Spirit's presence in our life.

Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

I Timothy 4:7-8

Prayer	Bible Study	Solitude
Fasting	Fellowship	Giving
Simplicity	Gratitude	

4. As we learn to depend more on the Holy Spirit, He will help us love our spouse and others supernaturally

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths. Ephesians 4:29

- **Help me speak kindly even though I want to scream.**

Do not repay evil for evil...but on the contrary, bless. 1 Peter 3:9

- **Help me show love to this person who doesn't deserve it.**

Be angry and do not sin. Ephesians 4:26

- **Help me tame my anger, be patient, and listen right now.**

...forgiving each other, as the Lord has forgiven you. Colossians 3:13

- **Help me forgive even though I want to be bitter over what they did to me.**

Do not get drunk with wine, which will only ruin you; instead, be filled with the Spirit Ephesians 5:18 ~ GNT

One Minute to Oneness:

- ❖ **What's one area in your marriage where you sense a need for more help from the Spirit?**

THIRD, GOD HELPS BY ENCOURAGING US THROUGH OTHERS WHO FOLLOW JESUS

1. Jesus, the Son of God, started His journey with others

And he appointed twelve (who he also named apostles) so that they might be with him...

Mark 3:14

2. One reason God created the church was so that we wouldn't journey alone

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 10:24-25

3. Join other couples on the journey to oneness

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

I Thessalonians 5:11

4. Trained counselors can help us figure out what's going on in our hearts.

The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.

Proverbs 20:5

5. FamilyLife wants to walk with you.

DO YOU NEED TO RESET WITH GOD?

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Matthew 11:28-30

Path to Oneness: Honor one another on life's journey

Remember: Experiencing oneness with your spouse flows out of your oneness with God.

Prayer Guide for Prayer Team Members

Session 5: God's Power for Oneness

God never intended you to face life or marriage alone

Main Teaching Truths:

- How does God restore companionship with His creation?
- How does God help you to love your spouse like He loves us?
- Who else has God put around you to help you on this journey to oneness?

Prayer Directives and Scripture

- **Pray that couples hear the speakers recap about oneness with God, and how God desires to restore companionship with imperfect people.**

The Lord does not delay [as though He were unable to act] and is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is [extraordinarily] patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9 ~ AMP

- **Pray the couples will be restored in their companionship with God.**

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

Genesis 3:8-9 ~ NASB

- **Pray they will choose not to live independently from God.**

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:23 ~ NASB

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23 ~ NIV

- **Pray they will believe that God sent his son Jesus to restore their companionship with God. He lived. He died. He rose again.**

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8 ~ NASB

That he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

I Corinthians 15:4 ~ ESV

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

John 1:12 ~ ESV

- **Pray for those who have not received Christ in their lives, that they will be drawn to God's gift of oneness with Him.**

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23 ~ NIV

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

John 1:12 ~ ESV

Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:7-8 ~ NIV

- **Pray they would Receive God's Good News (the Gospel)**

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

John 1:12 ~ ESV

- **Pray for couples to love their spouse (and others) in ways that don't come naturally:**

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths

Ephesians 4:29 ~ ESV

Do not repay evil for evil...but on the contrary, bless.

I Peter 3:9 ~ ESV

...forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Colossians 3:13 ~ ESV

- **Pray they will receive the Holy Spirit's help and develop new habits**

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name. John 14:26 ~ ESV

Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. I Timothy 4:7-8 ~ ESV

- **Pray the couples will depend more on the Holy Spirit to love their spouse and others supernaturally.**

Do not get drunk with wine, which will only ruin you; instead, be filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 ~ GNT

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths. Ephesians 4:29 ~ ESV

Do not repay evil for evil...but on the contrary, bless. I Peter 3:9 ~ ESV

Be angry and do not sin. Ephesians 4:26 ~ ESV

...forgiving each other, as the Lord has forgiven you. Colossians 3:13 ~ ESV

One Minute to Oneness:

- **Pray for couples to be able to share an area in their marriage where they need more help from the Holy Spirit, as they do the *One Minute to Oneness* exercise.**

The Spirit of God not only maintains this hope within us, but helps us in our present limitations. For example, we do not know how to pray worthily as sons of God, but his Spirit within us is actually praying for us in those agonizing longings which never find words. And God who knows the heart's secrets understands, of course, the Spirit's intention as he prays for those who love God.

Romans 8:26-27 ~ Phillips

- **Pray that the couples would be encouraged through others who follow Jesus.**

And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him Mark 3:14 ~ ESV
And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. Hebrews 10:24-25 ~ ESV

- **Pray that couples will not do this journey alone, pray that they can find friends, church, and other couples.**

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. I Thessalonians 5:11 ~ NIV

Without guidance, people fall, but with many counselors there is deliverance. Proverbs 11:14 ~ HCSB

- **Pray that couples who need the specific or greater help will contact trained counselors**

The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out. Proverbs 20:5 ~ ESV

Where there is no guidance the people fall, but in abundance of counselors there is victory. Proverbs 11:14 ~ NASB

- **Pray that couples will discern if they need to 'reset' with God**

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Matthew 11:28-30 ~ ESV

Remember: Experiencing oneness with your spouse flows out of your oneness with God.

Saturday afternoon:

Part III Session 6: Let's Fight

*Through the power of the Spirit,
you can actually build oneness through conflict.*

What are some Unhealthy Ways You Respond to Conflict:

• Blow up	• Avoid	• Hold Grudges
• Stuff	• Ramble	• Blame
• Argue	• Shout	• Shame
• Threaten	• Curse	• Taunt
• Hurt	• Interrupt	• Retaliate
• Exasperate	• Gossip	• Hide
• Destroy	• Scheme	•

The Bible calls this “Insult for Insult.”

Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. I Peter 3:9 ~ NIV

When it comes to anger, we often don’t...

IDENTIFY the real source of our anger

DETERMINE the depth of our anger

PREDICT the triggers of our anger

PROCESS our anger in healthy ways.

*Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger;
and give no opportunity to the devil.* Ephesians 4:26-27

There’s a better way.

BUILD ONENESS...THROUGH CONFLICT

*Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to
this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.* I Peter 3:9

Next Time You Get Angry

- 1. Don't react; instead respond with help from the Spirit.**
- 2. Assess whether it's the right time and place for a conflict.**
- 3. Watch you "start-up."**
- 4. Speak the truth in love.**

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ...

Ephesians 4:15

FIGHT FAIR

Are you speaking truth in love, or just trying to win a fight?

Focus on the right things, and don't let a small disagreement

Create distance between you.

FAIR	NOT FAIR
One issue	Many issues
Behavior	Character
Specifics	Generalizations
Facts	Judgement of motives
Oneness	Victory

Ask for Forgiveness: Learn to Apologize

1. NAME IT

Discover your attitude behind the action.

2. OWN IT

Take responsibility.

3. FEEL IT

See the offense from their perspective.

4. SAY IT

**Say “I’m sorry” (with no buts!) and
Ask them to forgive you.**

5. CHANGE IT

Suggest a few ways you will change (repent).

Daring question: Where do I need the most work?

Grant Forgiveness: Learn to Set Free

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Ephesians 4:32

Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.”

Matthew 18:21-22

FORGIVENESS IS NOT:

- **Pretending something didn't happen**
- **Forgetting**
- **An automatic cure for the hurt**
- **Conditional**

FORGIVENESS MEANS: CHOOSING TO LET IT GO

- **Free your spouse from the debt of their offense.**
- **Free your spouse from your attitude of resentment and vengeance.**
- **Free you both from the past—the first step to rebuilding trust.**
- **Free yourself from doing it on your own—trust the Spirit.**

THE SPECTRUM OF CONFLICT

❖ Overlook

❖ Remove Immediately

Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense. Proverbs 19:11

❖ Resolve Quickly

- 1. If they apologize, express gratitude and move toward forgiveness.**
- 2. You bring it up.**
- 3. Approach with humility.**
- 4. Be generous—no stingy forgivers.**
- 5. Box it up and move on.**

❖ Deal With

❖ Restore Patiently

1. Trust isn't restored automatically.
2. Both spouses are involved in healing.
3. There's wisdom in seeking help.
4. Some offenses require more than an apology. They require accountability.
5. There is hope—take a step at a time.

❖ Rebuild Trust

Warning:

- Your partner won't always apologize.
- Your toughest and most frequent arguments will be when both of you are right.
- • Your emotions don't always follow the script.

One Minute to Oneness:

- ❖ **Picture a box with a lid. The box is an apology, and the lid is forgiveness. *Pick one issue that can be dealt with and resolved this weekend.***

Bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Colossians 3:13

Remember: Through the power of the Spirit, you can build oneness through conflict.

Prayer Guide for Prayer Team Members

Session 6: Let's Fight

Through the Power of the Spirit you can actually build oneness through conflict

Main Teaching Truths:

- What's your default pattern for dealing with conflict?
- We get angry then what?
- How can we use conflict as a way to build oneness?

Prayer Directives and Scripture

- **Pray the couples will respond to conflict in a healthy way.**

Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. I Peter 3:9 ~ NIV

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger; and give no opportunity to the devil... Ephesians 4:26-27 ~ ESV

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ. Ephesians 4:15 ~ ESV

- **Pray that couples can see what their default pattern is for dealing with conflict.**

Don't repay evil for evil. Don't snap back at those who say unkind things about you. Instead, pray for God's help for them, for we are to be kind to others, and God will bless us for it. 1 Peter 3:9 ~ TLB

- **Pray that couples will have clearer understanding of what fighting fair is and what it is not.**

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ. Ephesians 4:15 ~ ESV

A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention. Proverbs 15:18 ~ ESV

- **Pray that couples will learn to ask for forgiveness and grant forgiveness.**

Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:32 ~ ESV

Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times." Matthew 18:21-22 ~ ESV

Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense. Proverbs 19:11 ~ ESV

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3:13 ~ NIV

One Minute to Oneness:

- **Pray for couples to be able to pick one issue (apology and/or forgiveness) that can be dealt with this weekend when doing this exercise.**

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 4:31-32 ~ NIV

Remember: Through the power of the Spirit, you can build oneness through conflict.

- **Pray that each spouse will make time to pray and be real when it comes to identifying their true feelings for their spouse.**

But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger.

James 1:19b ~ NASB

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Ephesians 4:31-32 ~ ESV

- **Pray for the Lord to begin the process of rebuilding trust in hurting couples. Pray for individuals to put trust in the Lord and His ability to “make all things new”.**

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

John 1:9 ~ NASB

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Colossians 1:17 ~ ESV

Remember: Through the power of the Spirit, you can build oneness through conflict.

Part III Session 7: Let's Talk About Sex

***Sexual intimacy between husband and wife
is a reflection of a couple's oneness***

GOD DREAMED UP THE IDEA OF SEX

- **For mutual Pleasure**
- **For Procreation**
- **As a Sacred Bond between a man and a woman**
- **As a physical picture of a Spiritual Reality**

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the Church

Ephesians 5:31-32

OUR VIEWS ABOUT SEX ARE OFTEN INFORMED BY A VARIETY OF MYTHS

- 1. Both spouses think the same about sex.**
- 2. If things are off in the relationship, you should heat up the bedroom.**
- 3. Sex should be natural, easy, and spontaneous.**

SEX WILL BE AFFECTED THROUGHOUT YOUR MARRIED LIFE BY A VARIETY OF FACTORS

- 1. Physical conditions**
- 2. Mental well-being**
- 3. Emotional health**
- 4. Spiritual condition**

BE A LOVER BY UNDERSTANDING YOUR SPOUSE

Men	Women
Attitude	
Physical Compartmentalized Body-centered Sight	Relational Holistic Person-centered Touch
Stimulation	
Fragrance, actions	Attitudes, words
Needs	
Respect, To be physically needed	Security, To be emotionally needed
Sexual Response	
Acyclical, Quick excitement Difficult to distract	Cyclical Slower excitement Easily distracted

A SATISFYING LOVE LIFE IS MADE UP OF FOUR INGREDIENTS:

1. Companionship: Are we pursuing one another?

*When companionship is lacking,
sex often loses its depth.*

COMMUNICATION:

share openly, listen carefully

TENDERNESS:

*give creative expression of affection, show your
love through non-sexual touch*

SPEND TIME TOGETHER:

share mutual interests, revive the lost art of dating

2. Commitment: Are we instilling trust? *When commitment is lacking, sex can seem risky and can leave a spouse feeling vulnerable*

FAITHFULNESS:

regularly affirm your commitment, build or rebuild trust, develop a healthy attitude toward your spouse

RESPECT:

be a good listener, validate each other's perspectives and opinions, never condescend or talk down to each other, be open to each other's desires

FORGIVENESS:

keep short accounts with each other, choose to live in the power of blessing, remember: "love covers a multitude of sins," give grace when needed

3. Passion: Are we romancing each other?

*When passion is lacking,
sex can become routine and stale.*

PLANNING:

*make it a priority, schedule it for the best part of
your day*

CREATIVITY:

enhance the setting, vary the approach

4. Spiritual Intimacy: Are we pursuing God together?

*When spiritual intimacy is lacking,
sex can become shallow and self-focused.*

PRAYER:

*pray together as a couple, pray for each other
regularly*

THE BIBLE:

*spend time reading the bible together, find verses
or passages you can memorize together*

GOD WANTS US TO PROTECT HIS GIFT OF SEX

Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure....

Hebrews 13:4 ~ NIV

1. Agree on wise Boundaries

- **Guard your eyes** (Job 31:1)
- **Flee temptation** (I Corinthians 6:18)
- **Refuse to “cheat” on your spouse** (Hebrews 13:4)
- **Confess to the right people** (James 5:16)
- **Do whatever it takes to stay faithful** (Matthew 5:28-20)

2. Don't settle for Counterfeits

3. Trust the Spirit to lead you in Conversations

Remember: Sexual intimacy between husband and wife is a reflection of a couple's oneness.

Prayer Guide for Prayer Team Members

Session 7: Let's Talk About Sex

*Sexual intimacy between husband and wife
is a reflection of a couple's oneness*

Main Teaching Truths:

- Whose idea was this anyway?
- What are the myths we believe about sex?
- How can a couple have a love life that lasts a lifetime?

Prayer Directive and Scripture

- **Pray that couples will hear that God created the idea of sex in marriage.**

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the Church.

Ephesians 5:31-32 ~ ESV

My beloved is mine, and I am his...

Song of Solomon 2:16 ~ ESV

- **Pray that couples will see that their views of sex are often informed by a variety of myths.**

Lead me in your truth and teach me....

Psalm 25:5 ~ ESV

- **Pray that couples will see how sex can be affected throughout their marriage by a variety of issues.**

- **Physical Conditions**

- **Mental well-being**

- **Emotional health**

- **Spiritual condition**

- **Pray that couples will understand that being a *Better Lover* is accomplished by *understanding their spouse*.**

Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life, and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 9:9 ~ NASB

- **Pray for couples to develop a satisfying love life by engaging in companionship, commitment, passion, and spiritual intimacy.**

I am my beloved's and his desire is for me. Come, my beloved, let us go out into the country, let us spend the night in the villages. Let us rise early and go to the vineyards ... there I will give you my love

Song of Solomon 7:10-12 ~ NASB

Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm. For love is as strong as death, its jealousy as enduring as the grave. Love flashes like fire, the brightest kind of flame. Song of Solomon 8:6 ~ NLT

- **Pray for couples to surrender their sex life to the Lord, and align it with God's thoughts and purposes.**

Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure.

Hebrews 13:4 ~ NIV

- **Pray that couples will protect the gift of sex in their marriage.**

I have made a covenant (agreement) with my eyes; How then could I gaze (lustfully) at a virgin:

Job 31:1 ~AMP

Run away from sexual immorality [in any form, whether thought or behavior, whether visual or written]. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the one who is sexually immoral sins against his own body.

I Corinthians 6:18 ~ AMP

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.

Hebrews 13:4 ~ ESV

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

James 5:16 ~ ESV

But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

Matthew 5:28-30 ~ ESV

- **Pray that couples won't settle for Counterfeits.**

Do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, "The two shall be one flesh." But the one who is united and joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Run away from sexual immorality [in any form, whether thought or behavior, whether visual or written]. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the one who is sexually immoral sins against his own body.

I Corinthians 6:16-18 ~ AMP

But a man who commits adultery has no sense; whoever does so destroys himself.

Proverbs 6:32 ~ NIV

- **Pray for the Spirit to lead their *Conversation*.**

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:2-3 ~ NIV

Remember: Sexual intimacy between husband and wife is a reflection of a couple's oneness.

Project 2:

Let's talk about sex: Intimacy from God's perspective

- **Pray for the couples as they reflect personally on their attitudes toward sexual intimacy and evaluate the health of their *companionship, commitment, passion, and spiritual intimacy*.**

- **Pray the couples will interact with an attitude of grace and understanding, as they share what they learned.**

Be happy in your hope. Do not give up when trouble comes. Do not let anything stop you from praying. Romans 12:12 ~ NLV

Date Night

- **Pray for the couples:**
 - ❖ **Who have a good relationship...
that this will be full of refreshment**
 - ❖ **Who have a difficult relationship...
that healing may occur**
 - ❖ **Who may not be able to be intimate**
 - ❖ **Who may need to seek counseling**

Sunday Morning:

Session 8: Man to Man

***Every husband is called to love his wife
like Jesus loves the church***

LOVE YOUR WIFE BY FOLLOWING JESUS

It's not about *being* a perfect man, but *following* a perfect man

If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Matthew 16:24

Jesus gives us power to be like him when we depend on the Spirit

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

Ephesians 3:14-17

LOVE YOUR WIFE BY SUBMITTING TO GOD'S ROLE

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.

Ephesians 5:21-23

While created with equal value, husbands and wives have different roles in marriage.

- The Bible speaks about two unique roles in marriage: **Headship** (Eph. 5:23) and **Submission** (Gen. 2:18)
- We often misunderstand or even abuse the biblical concepts of headship and submission. Think of headship as *stewardship* and a willing choice to *sacrificially serve*. Think of submission as a willing choice to *support* someone's leadership.
- Men: Jesus modeled that leading has more to do with serving than dominance or priority (Mark 10:42-45)
- Women: Helper is a title of worth. God refers to himself as a Helper (Psalms 33:20)

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

Ephesians.5:25

Biblical headship does not mean:

- Your wife is inferior or has a loss of identity
- Your wife blindly obeys or submits to any mistreatment
- Your wife follows you into sin

Biblical headship means:

- Submitting yourself to God's leadership in your home
- Sacrificially serving your wife like Jesus served the Church
- Seeking unity with your wife on decisions and direction

PRACTICAL WAYS TO DEMONSTRATE SERVING

- Needs
- Conflict
- Finances
- Spiritual growth
- Chores
- Trust

You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. Mark 10:42-45

LOVE YOUR WIFE BY NOURISHING AND CHERISHING HER

In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church. Ephesians 5:28-29

- Die to yourself
- Show her and tell her you love her
- Continue pursuing her
- Pray with her
- Be faithful in every area (guard your eyes!)
- Never mistreat her in any way

LOVE YOUR WIFE BY BEING A STUDENT OF HER

...Be good husbands to your wives. Honor them, delight in them. As women they lack some of your advantages. But in the new life of God's grace, you're equals. Treat your wives, then, as equals so your prayers don't run aground.

I Peter 3:7 ~ MSG

- What does she think about?
- What does she love? What are her gifts and abilities?
- What does she dream of accomplishing?
- How does she feel love?
- What bothers her?
- How does she want to resolve conflict?
- How does she want to follow God together with you?

**LOVE YOUR WIFE BY
PARTNERING TOGETHER
TO IMPACT THE NEXT GENERATION**

Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching. Proverbs 1:8

- Become what you want your legacy to be
- Intentionally partner with your wife to raise your kids
- Work together to create an environment for God to shape their heart

One Minute to Oneness:

- ❖ What are 1-2 things you are asking the Spirit to help you apply immediately?

Remember: It's not about *being* a better man, it's about *following* a better man.

Prayer Guide for Prayer Team Members

Session 8: Man to Man

***Every husband is called to love his wife
like Jesus loves the church***

Main Teaching Truths:

What is my role model as a husband?

- How do I love my wife like Jesus Christ?
- What impact can a godly husband have on the next generation?

Prayer Directive and Scripture

- **Pray that men would love their wife by following Jesus.**

... If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Matthew 16:24 ~ ESV

- **Pray that men come to understand, that they have power in the Holy Spirit to be like Jesus.**

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith...

Ephesians 3:14-17 ~ ESV

- **Pray that men would view headship biblically.**

You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Mark 10:42-45 ~ ESV

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her.

Ephesians 5:25 ~ AMP

- **Pray that men will love their wife by *SUBMITTING* to God's role.**

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ... Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...

Ephesians 5:21, 25 ~ NIV

- **Pray that men will know God created husbands and wives with equal value, but different roles in marriage.**

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female. Genesis 1:27 ~ NASB

For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church... Ephesians 5:23 ~ NIV

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him. Genesis 2:18 ~ NIV

- **Pray that men will serve in practical ways.**

- Needs
- Conflict
- Finances
- Spiritual growth
- Chores
- Trust

Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Colossians 3:19 ~ ESV

- **Pray men would love their wives by nourishing, cherishing, and by being a student of them.**

The same goes for you husbands: Be good husbands to your wives. Honor them, delight in them. As women they lack some of your advantages. But in the new life of God's grace, you're equals. Treat your wives, then, as equals so your prayers don't run aground. 1 Peter 3:7 ~ MSG

So husbands also ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church...

Ephesians 5:28-29 ~ NASB

- **Pray men will *PARTNER* with their wife to impact the next generation.**

My child, listen when your father corrects you. Don't neglect your mother's instruction. Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching. Proverbs 1:8 ~ NLT

Behold, children are a gift of the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth.

Psalms 127:3-4 ~ NASB

Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. Don't lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own good example. And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never-ending glory and honor.

1 Peter 5:2-4 ~ NLT

One Minute to Oneness:

- **Pray the Spirit will help men act like men of God and depend on His strength.**

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Philippians 4:13 ~ ESV

**Remember: It's not about *being* a better man,
it's about *following* a better man.**

Session 8: Woman to Woman

*Every woman is called to help
and support her husband*

*Who can find a wife of noble character? She is far more precious
than jewels.*

Proverbs 31:10 ESB

LOVE YOUR HUSBAND BY PUTTING GOD FIRST

- She intentionally pursues her relationship with God

You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 29:13

- She invests in her community of faith

*...not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging
one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing nears.*

Hebrews 10:25

- She properly orders her priorities

Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children. Titus 2:3-4

LOVE YOUR HUSBAND BY BEING HIS FRIEND

This is my beloved and this is my friend. O daughters of Jerusalem.

Song of Solomon 5:16 ~ KJV

A strong wife:

- Is loyal and faithful to this exclusive friendship
- Is a good listener
- Cheers him on in his hopes and dreams
- Does not expect her husband to satisfy all her needs

A soulmate isn't someone you find; it's someone your intentionally and prayerfully become.

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Genesis 2:18

LOVE YOUR HUSBAND BY **RESPECTING HIM**

Respect is a choice to receive your husband in spite of his weaknesses

However, let each of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Ephesians 5:33

Respect looks like:

- A heart attitude of unconditional respect
- Noticing the good things he does and saying, “*Thank you*”
- Showing appreciation for his desire to provide for you and your family

Respect does not look like:

- Excusing sinful behavior
- Criticizing or correcting your husband in public
- Feeling you can't disagree or have differing opinions with him

LOVE YOUR HUSBAND BY SUPPORTING HIM

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.

Ephesians 5:21-21

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ. Galatians 3:28

While created with equal value, husbands and wives have different roles in marriage

- The Bible speaks about two unique roles in marriage: **Headship** (Eph. 5:23) and **Submission**. (Gen. 2:18)
- We often misunderstand or even abuse the biblical concepts of headship and submission. Think of headship as *stewardship* and a willing choice to *sacrificially serve*. Think of submission as a willing choice to *support* someone's leadership.
- Men: Jesus modeled that leading has more to do with serving than dominance or priority. (Mark 10:42-45)
- Women: Helper is a title of worth. God refers to himself as a Helper. (Psalms 33:20)

Biblical submission does not mean:

- You are inferior or lose your identity
- You blindly obey or submit to verbal or physical mistreatment
- You follow your husband into sin

Biblical submission does mean:

- Giving up your desire to control
- Viewing support as a complimentary and not competitive way of relating to your husband
- Cooperating with your husband as he seeks to lead your marriage and family

PRACTICAL WAYS TO DEMONSTRATE SUPPORT

- Help
- Faith
- Trust
- Positivity
- Affirmation

But God is my helper. The Lord keeps me alive!

Psalm 54:5 ~ NLT

LOVE YOUR HUSBAND BY **PARTNERING TOGETHER** TO IMPACT THE NEXT GENERATION

- Become what you want your legacy to be
- Internationally partner with your husband to raise your kids
- Work together to create an environment for God to shape their heart

Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching.

Proverbs 1:8

One Minute to Oneness:

- ❖ **What are 1-2 things you are asking the Spirit to help you apply immediately?**

Remember: A strong wife has faith that God is in control of her marriage, children, present circumstances, and future.

Prayer Guide for Prayer Team Members

Session 8: Woman to Woman

*Every woman is called to
help and support her husband*

Main Teaching Truths:

- The Holy Spirit and a wife are called the same thing in the Bible. What does that look like in daily life?
- What does friendship look like for a man?
- How does a man feel love?

Prayer Directives and Scriptures

- Pray that each woman will love her husband by putting God first.

You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 29:13 ~ ESV

Behold, God is my helper; The Lord is the sustainer of my soul.

Psalm 54:4 ~ NASB

- **Pray each woman intentionally pursues her relationship with God.**

You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 29:13 ~ ESV

Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:5 ~ CSB

- **Pray each woman invests in her community of faith.**

... not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 10:25 ~ ESV

- **Pray each woman properly orders her priorities.**

Older women similarly are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor addicted to much wine, teaching what is right and good, so that they may encourage the young women to tenderly love their husbands and their children.

Titus 2:3-4 ~ AMP

Who can find a wife of noble character? She is far more precious than jewels.

Proverbs 31:10 ~ CSB

- **Pray that each woman understands a strong wife loves her husband by being his friend.**

This is my beloved and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

Song of Solomon 5:16 ~ NIV

- **Pray each woman will love their husband by respecting them in spite of his weaknesses.**

And let the wife see to it that she respects and reverences her husband [that she notices him, regards him, honors him, prefers him, venerates, and esteems him; and that she defers to him, praises him, and loves and admires him exceedingly].

Ephesians 5:33 ~ AMP

- **Pray that each woman understand what respect looks like and does not look like.**

Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a disgrace to any people.

Proverbs 14:34 ~ NASB

- **Pray that each woman will love their husband by supporting him.**

But remember that in God's plan men and women need each other.

1 Corinthians 11:11 ~ TLB

If you can find a truly good wife, she is worth more than precious gems! Her husband can trust her, and she will richly satisfy his needs. She will not hinder him but help him all her life.

Proverbs 31:10-12 ~ TLB

- **Pray that woman will understand what biblical submission is and is not.**

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

Ephesians 5:21-23 ~ NIV

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ.

Galatians 3:28 ~ NASB

- **Pray that each woman will demonstrate support in practical ways.**

- Help
- Faith
- Trust
- Positivity
- Affirmation

The Lord is the sustainer of my life. Psalm 54:5 ~ HCSB

- **Pray that each woman will partner with her husband to impact the next generation.**

*Behold, children are a heritage and gift from the Lord,
The fruit of the womb a reward.*

Psalms 127:3 ~ AMP

My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not reject the teaching of your mother. Proverbs 1:8 ~ AMP

One Minute to Oneness:

- **Pray that woman will ask the Spirit to help them implement one or two truths immediately.**

Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

Proverbs 31:30 ~ ESV

An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life.

Proverbs 31:10-12 ~ ESV

Remember: A strong wife has faith that God is in control of her marriage, children, present circumstances, and future.

Part IV: The Mission of Marriage

Part IV Session 9: Make the Dream a Reality

Godly oneness propels me into a mission greater than just “happily ever after”

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Remember, the secret to “happily ever after” is far bigger than just pursuing your own happiness. “Happily ever after” requires our involvement in a broader mission. And “Weekend to Remember” means something more than just a great conference for your own marriage. It’s joining a *movement* of people just like yourself—committed to help change the world one home at a time!

- Keep the conversation going with FamilyLife.
- Any couple can impact another couple.
- Be the conference.

Connect with FamilyLife

- Podcasts
- Books
- Online Courses
- Newsletters
- Events
- Cruise
- Conferences
- Radio Shows
- Small Group Curriculums

Visit FamilyLife.com for more information.

One Minute to Explain Oneness

- The Dream, The Fall, The Hope, The Mission
- Pursue, Align, Trust, Honor

THE DREAM

(Genesis. 2:18)

THE FALL

We naturally drift towards isolation.

(Isaiah. 53:6; Romans. 3:23)

THE HOPE

Invite God into your journey.

- **Pursue God's three purposes for marriage.**

(Genesis 1-2)

- **Align against the three threats.**

(Genesis. 3; Ephesians. 2:1-3)

We all desire to be one, to be connected.

- **Trust God's three sources of help.**

(John 3:16; John 14:16; I Thessalonians 5:1)

- **Honor one another along the way.**

(Romans 12:10; Philippians 2:3-4)

THE MISSION

Move as one into your world.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

WHAT WILL YOU REMEMBER FROM THIS WEEKEND?



1. What if you could learn how to move closer together when you feel isolated in marriage?

- Act on a few key habits and you can change your legacy.
- Calendar your companionship:
When is your next date night?
- Do what God has called you to do and don't wait for your spouse to act.
- Stand firm in the face of reality. Be persistent.
- Live out your vows daily.
- You have some enemies, but your spouse is not one of them.

But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.:"
(Matthew 19:26)

2. What if you could have the marriage you will want your kids to have?

- **Be what you want your kids to become.**

3. What if your marriage could make a difference in the world?

❖ **GROW: Start where you are.**

❖ **GATHER: Spend time with others heading in the same direction.**

❖ **GUIDE: Pass on what you have learned.**

❖ **GIVE: Invest your time, talent, treasure in building strong families.**

One Minute to Oneness

- What has been one of the big “aha” moments for you in the last three days?
- What commitment are you making to your spouse as a result of the last session or this weekend?

Remember: You are not alone!

Project 3:

God’s Plan For The Dream (LOVE LETTER)

Prayer Guide for Prayer Team Members

Session 9: Make the Dream a Reality

Godly oneness propels me into a mission greater than just “happily ever after”.

Main Teaching Truths:

- How can your marriage change the world one home at a time?
- What will you remember from this weekend?
- What will you commit to God, your spouse, and yourself?

Prayer Directives and Scriptures

- **Pray that couples will see that this “Weekend to Remember” is not about their own happiness. It is about joining a movement to help change the world.**

Now to Him who is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly more than all that we dare ask or think [infinitely beyond our greatest prayers, hopes, or dreams], according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever.

Ephesians 3:21-21 ~ AMP

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Matthew 28:19-20 ~ ESV

One Minute to Explain Oneness:

- **Pray for couples to desire to be one and to be connected.**

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Genesis 2:18 ~ NIV

- **Pray they will not drift towards isolation.**

All of us like sheep have gone astray, We have turned, each one, to his own way; But the Lord has caused the wickedness of us all [our sin, our injustice, our wrongdoing] To fall on Him [instead of us].

Isaiah 53:6 ~ AMP

- **Pray for each couple to explain the four aspects of the Path Toward Oneness (Pursue, Align, Honor, and Trust).**

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him: male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27 ~ ESV

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. John 14:6 ~ NIV

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.

Ephesians 2:1-3 ~ NIV

Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves

Romans 12:10 ~ NIV

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10 ~ ESV

- **Pray that couples will move closer together even amidst difficulties.**

But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Matthew 19:26 ~ ESV

- **Pray that couples will strive to model the marriage they would want for their children.**

Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

Philippians 4:8 ~ NLT

- **Pray for personal pursuit of growth in Christ for both individuals and couples.**

... We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better. We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy.

Colossians 1:9-1 ~ NLT

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Romans 12:1-2 ~ NLT

- **Pray that couples will see how their marriage could make a difference in this world.**

Now to Him who is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly more than all that we dare ask or think [infinitely beyond our greatest prayers, hopes, or dreams], according to His power that is at work within us, 21 to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever

Ephesians 3:20-21 ~ AMP

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations [help the people to learn of Me, believe in Me, and obey My words], baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always [remaining with you perpetually—regardless of circumstance, and on every occasion], even to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20 ~ AMP

One Minute to Oneness:

- **Pray that couples can share openly with each other what the “Weekend to Remember” meant to them and what they learned.**
- **Pray that before couples leave the conference that they know what type of commitment they will make to each other.**

But Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” Matthew 19:26 ~ ESV

Remember: You are not alone!

Project 3: God's Plan for the Dream (Love Letter)

- **Pray for each one to spend time praying confessing and forgiving one another.**
- **Pray as they each answer the question in the form of a Love Letter.**
- **Pray as they get back together and share their feelings and commitment with each other.**

INTERCESSION

The greatest intercessor is Jesus. He lives to intercede.

All believers are called to pray and intercede. Regarding prayer, we are to follow Christ's character. Christ would go away and pray for an entire night. He would intercede for everyone. "He [Christ] always lives to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25 NASB).

Not all prayer is intercession. Most people offer prayers of petition. True intercession includes seeking the heart of God in particular situations, listening for discernment from the Holy Spirit about how to pray, asking God for divine intervention, and for destroying the works of Satan.

Definitions for Intercede/Intercession:

- Intercede (from Webster) is "to go or pass between; to act between parties with a view to reconcile those who differ or contend; to interpose; to mediate or make intercession; mediation."¹
- A summarization of this definition by Dutch Sheets is "mediating, going between, pleading for another, representing one party to another for, but not limited to, legal situations."²
- The Hebrew word used for intercession is "*paga*." "*Paga*" means to meet. Intercessors meet with God; they also meet the powers of darkness. We meet with Him asking Him to meet with someone else. We become the go-between: "Heavenly Father, I come to you today (a meeting) asking you to touch Tom (another meeting)." On the opposite end of the spectrum, as Christ did through spiritual warfare, our meeting with the enemy is to undo a meeting—breaking, a severing, a disuniting" (Sheets, p.50).

When we think of interceding for others, we can use the Scriptures to "weep with those who weep" and "bear one another's burdens" (Romans 12:15; Galatians 6:2 NASB). Two Greek words used for bearing are "*anechomai*" and "*bastazo*." "*Anechomai*" means to sustain, bear, or hold up against a thing. (Think of a tomato plant staked to sustain its weight.) "*Bastazo*" means to bear, lift, or carry with the idea being to carry away or remove it. So intercession is "*paga*": He "lays on" us

someone else's need. "*Anechomai*": We "stake" ourselves to that person. "*Bastazo*": We "carry away" the weakness or burden (Sheets, p.70).

Humanity needs Christ's intercession, which is to go between God and us and reconcile us to God. We need Christ to go between Satan and us and to separate us from him. Our prayers of intercession are an extension of Jesus' work of intercession.

Endnotes:

1. *The Consolidated Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary* (Chicago: Consolidated Book Publisher, 1954), p. 384.
2. Dutch Sheets, *Intercessory Prayer* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 1996), p.37.