



Two sinful people trying to build a life together seems like a recipe for disaster. Society tells us the work is not worth it. But the Bible shows a different reality.

God designed marriage to be a blessing, not a burden. When we do marriage His way, we'll find that we are most satisfied with our relationships and best reflect His character to the world.

Use this study to understand what the Bible says about marriage and navigate those tricky conversations every married couple faces — from how to love each other when you disagree to what it means to put your spouse before your kids or extended family.

Each day, you'll find questions to think about on your own and few to answer together. As you read, pray, and talk about what you're reading, our hope is you'll begin to see the power of seeking God together.



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Session 1

What it means for two people to become one

Read

[Ephesians 4:17-24](#)

We are told from the outset that in marriage “two become one.” But with all the differences between you and your spouse, how is it possible to be unified in anything?

Think of all the elements working against a married couple. Our differences in preference and personality,



upbringing and experience make chemistry practically impossible. Add to this the temptations and frustrations attacking marriage from every side. It's a miracle that two people, so different, can come together on anything.

Thankfully, God made a way for couples to experience oneness in marriage. We become one flesh when we marry, but God doesn't stop there. He graciously continues to unify our hearts and minds as we each grow in our relationship with Jesus.

As each person seeks to put off their old life and take on the mind and heart of Christ, God aligns our hearts and minds in marriage. Simply put, as we move closer to Jesus individually, we move closer to each other in marriage.



True intimacy in marriage is impossible without Jesus. Without Him, we are locked in a futile battle over preferences and personalities. With Christ at the center, we both change — not to become like our spouse, but to become more like Jesus. The old preferences and personality quirks give way to sacrificial love modeled by Jesus. In short, the path to marital intimacy is paved with the pursuit of our personal relationship with Jesus.

Without Jesus at the center, our differences only serve as a wedge between us. For example, is there a difficulty in your marriage? Before talking about this topic together, take your concerns to the Father through prayer. Watch God pull you together despite your differences. Watch God use your differences to complement one another.

You may still disagree on the issue, but with the proper perspective, the process of wrestling together will improve intimacy, not destroy it.



Question for him:

- Read [Ephesians 5:22-33](#). What are the specific areas in your marriage where you can “give yourself up” for your bride?

Question for her:

- Read [Ephesians 5:22-33](#). What are the specific ways you can show respect to your husband as he follows Jesus?

Questions to talk about together:

- Read [Ephesians 4:21-24](#) together. What does the process of “taking off the old” and “putting on the new” look like for you? How could this affect your marriage?



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Session 2

Tired of feeling misunderstood?

Read

[1 Peter 3:1-8](#)

Remember back before you were married. What did you think it would be like?

We enter into marriage with expectations of the roles we'll play and the kind of spouse our boyfriend or girlfriend will be. But what happens when life doesn't turn out that way? Maybe you wish your husband was more involved with the kids or that your wife wasn't so bossy.



For many couples, marriage looks more like a TV sitcom than the romantic comedy we dreamed about. He tries hard but he still feels like he's the punchline of a joke, instead of her knight in shining armor. When she speaks she cringes because her voice sounds more like the nagging, wicked stepmother than the princess at the ball.

In the Bible, God shows us a picture of marriage unlike anything we see on TV. Couples are called to mutual submission, honoring each other's strengths and showing grace for each other's weaknesses. Rather than competing with each other, they support one another's desires and dreams.

When Peter calls women the "weaker" partners, he's not saying they are morally or intellectually inferior. He's calling men to protect, respect, and serve their wives, to see them as partners in a culture where women were especially vulnerable to attack or abuse.



To women, Peter says, “do not give way to fear” ([1 Peter 3:6](#)). The fear that he’ll leave, or drop the ball, or do something wrong will always lead us to the most controlling versions of ourselves. To cultivate “a gentle and quiet spirit” takes courage. The courage to be vulnerable with your spouse, to listen when the Holy Spirit says, “Hold your tongue,” and to trust God to bring change in His time and His way.

Marriage in the Bible is a picture of mutual submission. Submission is a scary word in our modern world. But submission in the Bible is not abusive or domineering. It’s both partners willingly putting the other first out of love and respect for God and each other. It’s choosing to be united rather than being right.

Questions for him:

- Would your wife describe you as understanding?



- What's one thing you could do to try to better understand her point of view?

Questions for her:

- How much time do you spend focused on how things look rather than how things really are?
- What's one thing your husband complains about regularly? How could you take a step to change that thing today?

Questions to talk about together:

- How is your marriage different than you thought it would be?
- Ask each other, "What's one way I could be a better spouse to you?"



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Session 3

Three steps to better communication

Read

[Colossians 3:1-17](#), [Luke 6:45](#), [Matthew 7:5](#)

Does it ever feel like you and your spouse speak completely different languages? You say one thing, your spouse hears another, and so begins an evening of arguing.

Marriage is a gift, meant to bring us joy, make us more like Jesus, and be a visible example of God's love for His children. Communication is often the biggest obstacle to what marriage is intended to be.



So how do we change how we communicate?

1. It starts with you.

It's easy to point a finger at our spouse. Think about how often you start sentences, "If only you would ..."

The end of that sentence might be an area of weakness for your spouse. But the truth is we can't control our spouse's actions. We can only control our own. Improving communication starts by turning that finger back on ourselves and asking the Lord to show us our own sin ([Matthew 7:5](#)).

2. Examine your heart.

What comes out of our mouths is an overflow of what is in our hearts ([Luke 6:45](#)). Chances are if you don't like what you're saying, or if your spouse doesn't like what they're hearing, the issue is in your heart, not your words.



3. Listen to the Holy Spirit.

When we are in a relationship with God, His Spirit lives in us. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to change the way we communicate with our spouse.

Our conversations don't need to be filled with anger, rage, slander, lies, or foul language ([Colossians 3:8](#)).

Instead, as we follow Jesus and learn to take His attitude toward our spouse, we show grace for each others' faults. We forgive one another, submit to one another, and love one another. It's pretty easy to guess which behaviors will produce better communication between a husband and a wife.

Better communication doesn't happen overnight. It's a daily decision to choose loving God and loving our spouse over loving ourselves. But when we allow God to show us how to communicate, He will strengthen our marriages and be honored through them.

Questions for him:



- Which behaviors from [Colossians 3](#) do you see in yourself?
- What do you want to see more of instead?

Questions for her:

- Which behaviors from [Colossians 3](#) do you see in yourself?
- What do you want to see more of instead?

Question to talk about together:

- What's one thing I could start doing or stop doing to improve how we talk to one another?



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Session 4

Are you winning the arguments in your marriage?

Read

[Matthew 18:21-35](#), [Ephesians 4:31-32](#) ,
[Proverbs 10:12](#)

How often do you look at your spouse and think no one on the planet would agree with his or her point of view?

So many times, what started as a small disagreement quickly spirals into a fight, and neither of you wants to



back down. But as hard as it is to accept, it is more important to be reconciled than to be right.

It is more important to be reconciled than to be right.

As Christians, we are called to forgive those who hurt us, whether that person is a total stranger or the person we sleep beside every night. When Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive someone, Jesus says, "... no not seven times, but 70 times seven." Jesus' point is that there isn't a limit on forgiveness ([Matthew 18:21-22, NLT](#)).

God never put a limit on the number of times He was willing to forgive us, and we are to do the same for others ([Ephesians 4:32](#)).

God forgives us not because we are forgivable, but because He loves us. We are His. Love is the key to



forgiveness. In a marriage, sometimes you have to choose to love your spouse not because they are lovable, but because they are yours.

What does it look like to choose love in marriage? It means not reacting in the moment. It means holding your tongue when you want to speak your mind. It is committing to praying for your spouse. It is elevating your spouse's needs over your own. It means choosing to forgive before your spouse asks for forgiveness.

Winning the argument is never worth losing the marriage. Unity in marriage isn't the result of two perfect people living life. It's what happens when two flawed people learn to forgive.

Question for him:

- Is there anything you're refusing to forgive your wife for?



Question for her:

- Is there anything you're refusing to forgive your husband for?

Questions to talk about together:

- How is winning an argument different from resolving a disagreement?
- What's one way I can love you better when we disagree?
- Finish this sentence: I know you're sorry about _____ and I forgive you.



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Session 5

How to keep the friendship alive

Read

[Proverbs 27:9](#), [Ecclesiastes 4:9-12](#)

“I love you, and I like you.”

When was the last time you heard or said these words to your spouse? Falling in love seems to be the easy part of marriage. Liking each other on a daily basis can be much harder.



One reason couples drift apart is that they stop dating each other and having fun together. Chances are, you knew you were going to marry your spouse because

you realized he or she was more than just another date. When you met your spouse, you found a mate.

Think about the differences between a date and a mate. You impress a date; you ask for help from a mate. You're polite with a date; you're honest with a mate. The friendship you share is part of the reason you fell in love in the first place, and time together keeps that friendship alive.

[Proverbs 27:9](#) says, "Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel." Some of the happiest married couples don't just love each other. They actually like and respect each other. This provides a place for honest, vulnerable conversation, and both spouses grow as a result of the other's earnest counsel.



God did not bless us with a spouse just to have a roommate. He gave us someone to encourage and be encouraged by, someone to enjoy spending time with.

When we invest in our friendship with God and each other, we realize we are able to overcome even more together than we could alone ([Ecclesiastes 4:9-12](#)). This is what Ecclesiastes means when it says, “two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”

Questions for him:

- When was the last time you [planned a date](#) like you did when you first met?
- What’s one thing on your mind that you haven’t talked to your wife about yet?

Questions for her:



- How is your friendship with your husband different from your relationships with your girlfriends or your mother? How should it be different?

Questions to talk about together:

- What are your favorite memories of dating or becoming friends?
- What do you enjoy doing together? Schedule some time this month to make that happen.



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Session 6

How are you serving your spouse?

Read

[Philippians 2:1-4](#), [Ephesians 5:21-33](#)

When was the last time you considered your spouse's feelings and needs first and served them without keeping score? There are many ways to say "I love you," but one of the best is to serve one another.



Serving our spouses puts their interests above our own. This takes humility, patience, and a desire for unity ([Philippians 2:3-4](#)). Between chores, kids, and work, it's easy to forget marriage is our first and most important ministry. In serving one another, we'll find we're moving toward the mutual respect and submission God wants for our marriages.

Marriage is the best representation we have of the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As we willingly and sacrificially put each other first, we show the world what real, sacrificial love looks like.

Marriage shows the world what real, sacrificial love looks like.

Submission in the Trinity is mutual, and the same is true in marriage. Wives are called to trust and respect their husband's guidance and direction. Following his lead, even when we don't agree, is a way of



demonstrating our trust in God. Likewise, husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church, presenting her spotless and radiant, without blame or fault. Jesus loved the church so much that He gave up His life for her.

While Ephesians sets a pretty high standard, serving each other can start small. Serving your husband might mean listening to his day and encouraging him, instead of focusing on why he was wrong. Maybe it means learning to trust your husband's opinions on the family finances.

Men, giving up your life for your wife can be as simple as listening to her vent or not mocking her yoga class. It can also mean taking extra work to provide for the family or making time to complete that never-ending honey-do list.

Selfless love and service reach the deepest crevices of the heart. If we want to show our spouses we love



them, we start by serving and submitting to one another.

Questions for him:

- What are three things you love about your wife?
- How can you show her this week how much you love those things about her?

Questions for her:

- Is there an area of your marriage where you aren't trusting your husband's input?
- Where does that lack of trust come from?

Question to answer together:

- Fill in the blank: One way you could serve me better is to _____.



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Session 7

How to be more romantic

Read

[John 3:16-17](#), [John 3:16-24](#)

"Do you have a reservation?"

"Yes. Do you have a table ready for me and the girl of my dreams?"

Cue butterflies, batting eyelashes, and beaming smiles from my girlfriend.



Romance makes moments like these possible, but real romance requires more than the fleeting feeling you get from holding hands while walking on the beach. Real romance is bigger than the butterflies after your first kiss. It ripens over time as you learn to pursue your spouse the way God pursues you.

What can we learn about romance from the way Jesus pursues us? A lot.

Love is an action.

First, we learn that love is an action. God loves us so much, He sent His one and only Son to pay the ultimate price for our true freedom ([John 3:16](#)). Jesus stepped out of heaven and took the form of a man to make a way for us to experience a perfect relationship with God. Jesus' action stirs our affection for God and models extreme romantic pursuit.



Second, we learn that love involves sacrifice. Jesus willingly offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sin ([1 John 3:16](#)). His example is what inspires us to lay aside our preferences, pride, and selfish desires to pursue another.

As we pursue God's heart and learn that He's been romancing us all along, we find Him waiting, arms opened wide, full of affection, comfort, and sheer delight. As we experience God's love in increasing measure, we can't help but share it with our spouse.

Romantic interest sparks a desire to know more about a person. It's something God designed for so much more than helping your partner feel special. It's the hunger and thirst that tells our heart there's always more to know and experience about each other.



Question for him:

- What romantic things have you stopped doing that you could start doing again?

Question for her:

- What's the most romantic thing you and your spouse have ever done for each other?

Questions to talk about together:

- How is God pursuing you right now? How have you seen Him pursue you in the past?
- What's one way I could show you love today?



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Session 8

The best sex is sacred

Read

[Genesis 2:25](#), [1 Corinthians 7:3-5](#), [Proverbs 5:18-19](#)

God created sex, and it is good!

When God brought Adam and Eve together in the Garden of Eden for the first marriage ceremony, they were naked and had no shame ([Genesis 2:25](#)).

The Bible has a high view of sex in a covenant marriage between husband and wife. [Hebrews 13:4](#) says everything about the marriage bed is pure and



holy. So shame, awkwardness, or inhibitions don't belong there.

The Bible says to enjoy sex and dedicates an entire book, the Song of Solomon, to celebrating the sensual side of marriage — sometimes in explicit detail ([Proverbs 5:18-19](#)).

Sex is so important to a happy marriage that the apostle Paul warns spouses not to withhold sex or use it as a bargaining chip. Sex is so holy and good that only prayer can take its place, for a short, mutually-agreed upon season ([1 Corinthians 7:3-5](#)).

As with all good gifts from God, sex is under constant attack by the enemy. Whether it's the physical demands of our schedules or nighttime routines that kill romance, sex in marriage can become an afterthought — dutiful, selfish, or lazy.



The key to great sex in a great marriage is to hold sex in high honor. God wants us to see sex as a sacred, spiritual act, a way to worship Him for the gift of your spouse. Making time for sex and learning what it takes to make sex more pleasurable for each other is the most basic way to show that it matters to God and it matters to you.

Better sex is not an athletic feat to achieve, but a spiritual connection to be more fully expressed.

Elevating our view of sex requires open communication about each other's expectations, likes and dislikes, discomforts, and struggles. In a culture of sexual brokenness, our attitudes and feelings toward sex are often filled with lies.



Most importantly, sex can't be treated as separate to your marriage. The best sex is a celebration of the trust, intimacy, safety, affection, and service inside your marriage. Better sex is not an athletic feat to achieve, but a spiritual connection to be more fully expressed.

Questions for him:

- Is your attitude toward sex more than just physical? How would your wife see that?

Questions for her:

- What emotional barriers do you have to sex, if any? Where do those barriers come from?

Question to talk about together:

- What's one physical and one emotional way you can improve your sex life?



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Session 9

Why dreaming together is a powerful practice

Read

[Proverbs 16:1-4](#)

We were designed to dream.

According to [psychologists and neuroscientists](#), looking into the future, consciously and unconsciously, is uniquely human and a central function of our brains. While other animals consider the future — ants store food, squirrels bury nuts — no other member of God's creation plans as far out as we do and experiences the joy we get from looking ahead to what could be.



God wired us to plan for the future. He put a longing for eternity in our hearts, like a beacon guiding us toward Him ([Ecclesiastes 3:11](#)). So it shouldn't surprise us that when taking the time to dream, to consider what is and what could be, it draws us closer to God and each other.

God put a longing for eternity in our hearts, like a beacon guiding us toward Him.

We all have our five-year plans. Maybe they aren't written down. And maybe you've never shared your dreams with anyone else. But we all have them. We are dreamers at our core, and when we marry, our spouse's dreams should become ours as well.



Planning for the future is an opportunity to build trust. Sharing our hearts' desires requires vulnerability. It also puts us in a position to trust Jesus with the unknown.

[Proverbs 16:2-3](#) reminds us that, "All a person's ways seem pure to them, but motives are weighed by the Lord. Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans."

If we want our plans to matter for eternity, we need Jesus at the center of them. We get easily distracted by what looks good, but Jesus reveals what is good. When we're tempted to manipulate our spouse into seeing things our way or to put our dreams ahead of theirs, Jesus reminds us that serving each other brings greater joy than getting our own way.

Marriage is a commitment to mutual submission, to helping one another be who God made us to be. Unexpressed expectations will always lead to



resentment. But when we plan together and pray together, we move forward together.

Question for him:

- Where do you see yourself in five years?

Question for her:

- Where do you see yourself in five years?

Questions to talk about together:

- What do you want to be different in your marriage this time next year?
- What are your dreams for your family? Your career? Your relationships with others?



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Session 10

A new way to talk about money

Read

[Matthew 6:19-33](#), [1 Timothy 6:6-10](#), [Mark 3:24-25](#)

Think about the last argument you had with your spouse. If the fight started about money, you're not alone. Money Magazine found that 70 percent of couples argue about money more than household chores, togetherness, sex, snoring, or what's for dinner.



Few things can rile us up or put us on the defensive like someone questioning how we spend our money. That's because how we spend money reveals what matters to us ([Matthew 6:21](#)).

When we question each other's spending, we're usually not arguing over the actual dollars and cents, but about what they represent. For example, one spouse dropping hundreds on a shopping spree might mean the other has to give up a night out or pick up shifts to pay the car note.

You can avoid a lot of resentment and anger if you both agree to submit to Jesus' priorities and expectations. This changes the way you talk about money because it puts you and your spouse on the same team.

The conversation is no longer about who gets more. Instead, it's about how both of you can get behind Jesus' promises for your finances. You're no longer



pursuing two separate agendas, but submitting both of your agendas to the Lord.

You're no longer pursuing two separate agendas, but submitting both of your agendas to the Lord.

Jesus tells us not to worry about keeping up appearances or building our own kingdoms. Instead, Jesus tells us to spend our money on what will last. All the things we buy will one day fall apart or disappear. None of our stuff comes with us into eternity ([1 Timothy 6:7](#)). But our relationships? Our faith? These are forever things worth fighting for.

We can spend our marriage fighting against each other, or we can spend time fighting for unity. A constantly squabbling family disintegrates, but a family pursuing Jesus will grow closer together ([Mark 3:24-25](#)).



Question for him:

- What is most important to you when it comes to your family's budget?
- Is what's important to you important to Jesus? Why?
- If you could change one thing about how your family manages money, what would it be?

Question for her:

- What is most important to you when it comes to your family's budget?
- Is what's important to you important to Jesus? Why?



- If you could change one thing about how your family manages money, what would it be?

Questions to talk about together:

- Share what you wrote with each other. What's one step you can take to rework your family budget to pursue those priorities?

Don't have a family budget? Get free budgeting tools or make an appointment with a financial coach at destinationchurch.cc/finances.



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Session 11

You are a new family who can make new traditions

Read

[Genesis 2:21-24](#), [Deuteronomy 6:5-7](#),
[Proverbs 13:22](#)

One love story, one ceremony, one brand-new life starting from two totally different families.

When you marry, you are gaining a spouse and a new family. One that has its own routines, habits, and traditions that will be undeniably different from your



own. Much of the pressure we face in marriage comes from the task of merging two separate lives into one.

That's why it's important to remember that when we marry, we form a new family with new traditions ([Genesis 2:24](#)). We don't have to do everything the way either of our parents did. Our love for our parents is not measured by how much of our childhoods we replicate in our own families.

You don't have to do everything the way either of your parents did.

In marriage and in parenting, God entrusts you with a responsibility — to love Him and love others. In [Deuteronomy 6:5-7](#), God calls us to love Him with all our heart, soul, and strength, and to pass His commandments on to our kids. God's Word is to be the focus of our hearts, not where we spend the holidays or how we celebrate with our kids.



If we'll seek to please God, rather than trying to appease our in-laws, we'll set up our marriages and our families for success. This might mean building a life that looks totally different than the families you came from — one where you study the Bible and pray together, where church is a priority and your closest relationships are with your spiritual family rather than your biological family.

Through our everyday life, we are to build our family values on loving God with everything we have. When we do, we give our kids a greater gift than the traditions we grew up with. We show them a God who loves them and we pass our faith to the next generation ([Proverbs 13:22](#)).

If we set our sights on something more important than the pressures of extended families and focus on Jesus, our marriage will be fertile soil and our faith will grow into a strong tree. Our children will play in that tree, and



our grandchildren will be able to swing from the branches.

Questions for him:

- What do you want to keep or change from your upbringing?

Questions for her:

- What do you want to keep or change from your upbringing?

Questions to talk about together:

- What are your dreams for your family?
- What is the legacy you want to leave your kids?



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Session 12

Are you forgetting your first love?

Read

[Genesis 1:27-31](#), [Genesis 2:20-25](#),
[Colossians 3:18-21](#)

For many married couples, adding kids to the family is the next “natural” progression in life. The joy you feel when you look into that sweet baby face is met with equal amounts of insecurity, fear, and doubt as they grow and change.

If we’re not intentional, our focus drifts toward our children, and our marriage takes the back seat. Pretty



soon, we only share a room and a busy schedule with our spouses. We start to feel less like lovers and more like ships passing in the night.

Marriage is meant for more. We were designed to experience intimacy with God first and our spouses second, then to invest in our children together.

In [Genesis 2](#), God forms the first family. God created Adam, and Adam's first relationship was with God alone. When God found no helper suitable for Adam, He put Adam to sleep and created Eve. Eve's first relationship was also with God alone. After Adam and Eve are united with each other, they go forth and multiply.

Love each other first, then the kids.

Even in the early church, as men and women grappled with how to follow Jesus, the apostles' instructions to



Christian parents are to love each other first, then the kids.

While wives and husbands are to love and submit to one another, the relationship between parents and kids is different ([Colossians 3:18-21](#)). Our spouses are our lifetime partners, our kids are our legacy.

One day, our kids will start families of their own. The best gift we can give our children is an example of two adults pursuing a personal relationship with Jesus and a deeper love for each other. Seeing this creates a safe environment for our children. It also serves as an example of what their relationship with Jesus and their future marriage can look like.

No family is perfect, but every family can make the choice to be different. We can check our priorities and arrange them to honor God first, our spouse second, and our kids third. When we make this shift, everyone wins.



Question for him:

- What would it look like for you to “go all out in love” for your wife this week? ([Colossians 3:19](#), MSG)

Question for her:

- What would it look like for you to “understand and support your husband” by submitting to him? ([Colossians 3:18](#), MSG)

Question to talk about together:

- Open your calendars and examine where you’re spending your time. What needs to change in order to make God your first priority and your spouse your second priority?



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Session 13

Disappointments don't have to break your marriage

Read

[Psalm 91](#)

We all encounter loss or disappointment at some point in our life. Where do you go when you don't get the job, when your kids decide they no longer believe, or the diagnosis isn't what you thought it would be?

We all react to disappointments differently. Some withdraw, become emotional, or get depressed.



Others make themselves busy. And some obsess about trying to fix everything.

[Psalm 91](#) reminds us that when disappointments come our way, we are not alone. God is right there with us. God can heal our loss, our hurt, and our anxiety.

We need to communicate with our spouses about the turmoil in our lives. But our spouses are our partners, not our saviors. Husbands and wives cannot heal our hurts the way God can. Only God can rescue us, protect us, deliver us, and satisfy us ([Psalm 91:14-16](#)).

Our spouses are our partners, not our saviors.

Maybe your disappointment is your spouse. There might be deep pain and regret in your marriage. You might think your relationship is beyond repair, but nothing is too far gone for God to repair.



When disappointment comes, Satan would love nothing more than to isolate you or convince you no one cares. So as hard as it may be, open up to your spouse and to your heavenly Father about how you feel. You can share your worries with God, knowing that He cares for you ([1 Peter 5:7](#))

Maybe you need to go a step further. Ask another couple to come alongside you and your spouse in this season, to pray for you and encourage you. Marriage counseling can also be helpful when recovering from disappointments and losses.

Do not be afraid to ask for help from God and from others. God is our ultimate healer, and He often works through His people. When we share our pain with each other, we'll find ourselves growing closer to Jesus and closer together.



Questions for him:

- How do you respond to disappointment in your own life? In your wife's life?

Questions for her:

- How do you respond to disappointment in your own life? In your husband's life?

Questions to talk about together:

- What's the biggest disappointment you've faced since getting married?
- What's the best way I can comfort or support you during tough times?



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Session 14

Commit to more than not getting divorced

Read

[Matthew 19:6](#), [Proverbs 18:22](#), [Malachi 2:14-16](#)

When it comes to setting goals, we tend to focus on performance rather than purpose. As a result, we frame goals negatively. We vow, “I’m going to stop eating so much junk food.” Instead of, “I’m going to eat healthier foods to fuel my body.”



In the same way, when we commit to staying together, we can, intentionally or unintentionally, put all of our focus on surviving instead of thriving.

Success in marriage is more than “sticking it out for the kids.” Living with someone who doesn’t speak to you — sharing your house but not your heart — is not what Solomon had in mind when he wrote, “He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord” ([Proverbs 18:22](#)).

Marriage is a gift from God, and like all of God’s gifts, it’s meant for His glory and our joy. God made marriage. We are His in body and Spirit, and our unions are designed to draw people to His extraordinary love for the world ([Malachi 2:15](#)).

Our unions are designed to draw people to God's extraordinary love for the world.



Seeing two people pursue one another, forgive one another, sacrifice for one another, and bring the best out of one another — what better picture is there of the way God loves us? God’s love keeps loving. It’s a love we learn to express by experiencing it ourselves ([1 John 4:19](#)).

Through loving each other, we become less like the person we were and more of the person God made us to be. Marriage is meant to change us, and this, too, is a good gift. Our best selves and our best lives are revealed as we allow God, through marriage, to make us more like Him.

God wants us to stay together, but He also wants us to be in this together. Not divorcing should not be our only goal. Loving each other as Jesus loved us, that’s the goal. And if we pursue that goal, we’ll find that we not only stay together, we’ll become more like Jesus in the process.



Questions for him:

- What part of your marriage most glorifies God?
- What is the biggest challenge in your marriage?
What part do you play?

Questions for her:

- What part of your marriage most glorifies God?
- What is the biggest challenge in your marriage?
What part do you play?

Questions to talk about together:

- Would watching your marriage encourage or discourage someone else thinking about getting married?
- Do you both have a relationship with Jesus? How are you pursuing Him individually and together?