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**About to
enter**

MARRIAGE



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**About to get
married ?**

**Does it still
work ?**

**Just Got
Married.
What now ?**

Instructions:

This is more a manual than a book. Work through it with your spouse or future spouse. Read more about it below.

MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this course / booklet is to help you to have the correct expectations for marriage, by showing God's purpose for this awesome union. The questions are to expose yours and your partners preconceived idea's and help to bring to the surface, that which could become issues later on.

This is slightly different to a marriage course, as you will only really get to know one another after the big party. For that reason there are some aspects of marriage which aren't covered comprehensively, like

communication and conflict which will be more applicable once you find your groove in marriage and start to irritate each other (yip it will happen). So don't disappear once you married.

This is not a book on marriage, but rather a point form booklet to generate discussion on real issues that are relevant for a couple who are planning on getting married. Best to go through it with someone you are accountable to / walking a road with.

Principles are timeless and unchanging but methods may vary from one marriage to another and person to person. Many marriage books / courses focus heavily on methods that worked for one couple's marriage, but because you and your spouse are unique, those methods may not work for you and your marriage. So, don't confuse principles and methods. We will look at some basic biblical as well as common sensical principles and truths, but it is up to you as a couple to work out how you will apply it in your marriage.

The great adventure

Many of us will Testify to the fact that marriage, when lived out as it was intended, can be one of the most exhilarating experiences of a lifetime - a white-water adventure of unspeakable proportions, and something that intensifies the pleasure of the daily business of living on this planet.



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Which one of these two couples do you want to be in 50 years time?

Make good decisions now!!



OR



I. What is Marriage ?

Answer the questions and then continue

 Describe what marriage is in one line ?



I guess there are two aspects to this question. The first is an understanding of what we perceive marriage to be, and secondly it would be what the original purpose and plan for marriage was and still is.

Hollywood and experience has taught us to view (even if it is subconsciously) marriage as an *attempt* at a traditional custom. The pursuit of premarital love is shown as far more romantic and exciting than the eventual union. We are made to believe that when you meet '*the one*' there will be magic, love at first sight, you will be compatible, drift through life on a cloud of mutual love and desire for one another and live happily ever after. But we know better than this. We know life is a lot messier and the outcome often a lot uglier. But what then is the right view?

The original biblical view and purpose found in scripture is the only one worth consulting. Scripture wasn't written for

the purpose of isolating and boxing up a set of rules and principles.

Scripture shows us our evil hearts, shows up our need for a savior, salvation for man, and introduces the kingdom of God as an alternative way of living. And all of this only being possible because of the good news of the Gospel.

So ... God was the designer of marriage in his studio called Eden, and we see in Genesis 2 that he lays out some of his reasoning for it and the purpose:



Genesis 2

¹⁸Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." ¹⁹So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its

name. ²⁰The 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. ²¹So 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. ²²And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the

man. ²³Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." ²⁴Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

God creates Man & Women

Gen2:7 *Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*



Gen2:18 *Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."*



Gen 2:22 *And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."*

What is Marriage? continued . . .

The union of a husband and wife is meant to mirror the relationship between Christ and His church. Ephesians 5 links with Genesis 2 and gives us some insight into the roles, purposes and ways of marriage, but this is about it. There are a couple of verses scattered through the bible that deal directly with marriage but other than that nothing much about how to deal with everyday married life. But you see, that is kinda the point, we are not meant to find some kind of pattern for marriage or a couple of principles and try and keep to them for a 'happy ever after'.

So in short; To gain a clear picture of what marriage should look like we need to understand the gospel!! Know what it means to you today, in your real life

God, the best maker of all marriages, Combine your hearts into one.
- William Shakespeare

situation.

Know that the Gospel can be applied every day in every situation for anyone. What this means is that in the kingdom of God, an opposite spirit to this world can reign in your heart and in your marriage. Marriage is not working according to the ways of the world. I dare to say that many 'Christian' marriages are just importing their philosophy of marriage from tv and past exposure. The kingdom of God as introduced through the Beatitudes in Matthew 5 is completely otherly, opposite to this world and so should the marriage of christians be.

MARRIAGE
:PUTTING JESUS
ON DISPLAY

2. Why do you want to get married?



Why do you want to get married ?



Not why do you want a spouse, why do you want to marry this person! You need to be able to answer this.

Do you love the idea of marriage more than the person you want to marry?

John Mayer has a song with these lyrics:

Who do you love?

Girl I see through, through your love

Who do you love, me or the thought of me? me or the thought of me?

Don't only get lost in the romance, let romance infiltrate your cold blooded decision to love one person for the rest of your life. Decide now why you love this person and realize the reality of the decision you are about to make. Your reason for marriage will determine what you will expect from it and be looking for from it.

WHAT IF GOD DESIGNED MARRIAGE TO MAKE US HOLY MORE THAN TO MAKE US HAPPY!

- Mark Driscoll

While marriage is many things, it is anything but sentimental. Marriage is glorious but hard, its a burning joy and strength and yet it is also blood, sweat, and tears, humbling defeats and exhausting victories. No marriage i know more than a week-old could be described as a fairy tale come true. Therefore, it is not surprising that the only phrase in Paul's famous discourse on Marriage in Eph 5 that many people can relate to is verse 32. Sometimes you fall into bed, after a long, hard day of trying to understand each other, and you can only sigh: "this is all a profound Mystery!"

by Tim Kellar

Eph 5 vs 31-32 A man shall leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery. . .

3. Roles



What area do you think your Wife will disappoint you first ?



What area do you think your Husband will disappoint you first ?



What is the role of the Wife ?



What is the role of the Husband ?



Husband

Headship – There is an over emphasis of this in some more traditional cultures, and a disregard for it in some western pluralistic cultures.

This does not make the wife inferior or lesser, it just regulates the relationship.

Authority – This never comes without responsibility.

The husband is called to take responsibility for his family and their actions. Not like Adam; *“it was this wife that you gave me”*.

The first **responsibility** of the husband is to love his wife the way Christ loves the church. This means you can't say you love your wife if you don't love the church, because God's measuring tape is His love for the church. So unless you know how He loves His imperfect and sometimes wayward bride with unconditional love, you cant know how to love your wife the way He commands you to. God tells the husband to love his wife, and doest make it firstly the wife's responsibility to love the husband. That seems unfair . . . nope, you love your wife the way God loves the church and then see whether it is still necessary to tell the wife to love her husband. Women are made to reciprocate love. They cant help but to respond well to true love. So men, its your responsibility to get that ball rolling.

EPHESIANS 5

25Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having

cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she

might be holy and without blemish. 28In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Wives

Submission – Yes the “S” word! It doesn’t really seem to matter what your cultural background is, most women kick against this as a result of not understanding the original meaning of it.

The kingdom of God is all about Authority and submission.

We are saved and come into this new kingdom, we lay our lives down and He has authority over our lives, we submit to Him, knowing that His plans for us are far better than our own and we don’t always understand His ways. Now Wives:

22Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. Note that it doesn’t say submit when it makes sense or when you agree with with him. By submitting to him you are submitting to God and what His desires are.

Wives submit to your husbands thereby leaving God to sort your husband out, cause He is better at it than you.

Helper - Genesis and Ephesians refers to the wife as the *helper*. You only need a helper when you can not do something alone or need help.

'Helper' is not a weak role, but the exact opposite. Your husband needs your help, cause he is not capable of leading your family and making decisions alone.

Helpful hint– he will listen better when he asks for your input.

In the same way that in the Gospel, God is the initiator and we are those who respond to His wooing, its the Husband’s role to pursue, lead and love, while the wife is called to respond, submit and follow.

Neither of the roles are more important or superior. They are not positions!



There are too many guys who turn marriage into a job description. He does his responsibility, she does hers, and there no emotional connection whatsoever. This is a sin of omission. "I didn't hit her; I didn't yell at her." But you didn't love her. You didn't connect with her. You didn't encourage her. You didn't pursue her. So ultimately, you failed her.

4. What Marriage cant give you



What do you think you will enjoy most about marriage ?





- SEX

Sex can't satisfy your lust. Sex is an act of love and satisfies your love. Don't think it will dispose of lust. It is beautiful and one of the most important aspects of marriage.

- MEANING IN LIFE

You find people using phrases like; 'you complete me' or 'I'm lost without my wife' which is all cute and all, but you are still an individual and your personal meaning in life must come from your sonship or daughter-ship in Christ, not one another.

- YOUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH

You might of married a 'Hulk' of a man, or your wife could make Mother Theresa look like an insensitive individualist, but no matter how great they are, they can not give you what you need to run to God for.

- WHO DO YOU WORSHIP

In the book 'Real Marriage' Mark shares the following:

"Friendship with our spouse, like everything else, exists to glorify God and serve his kingdom. I had often idolized Grace as a functional savior and marriage and family as a functional heaven"

Discuss:

What this will mean's to you as a couple, and how you will not commit idolatry in this way?

&

How will you practically Priorities God in your Married lives?

Unless you are able to look at marriage through the lens of scripture, instead of through your own fears or romanticism, through your particular experience, or through your cultural narrow perspectives, you wont be able to make intelligent decisions about your own marital future. - Tim Kellar

5. daddy & mommy



Do you think your partner's parents might intentionally or unintentionally interfere in your marriage? If so, in what area's?



The relationship that a spouse has with his / her parents is one of the, if not the biggest, external influence on a marriage.

The role of your's and your future spouse's parents in your marriage.

Decide this before hand, but be willing to adjust your views. I'm not saying you should compromise on the decisions you have already made, just be willing to learn the best way of handling situations with your parents-in-law.

WHAT YOU NEED TO REALIZE NOW: You both grew up in different environments with different sets of ideologies, and world views. Neither is right or wrong in itself! Something that seems '*obviously wrong*' to one of you could just be a stylistic difference. For example:

Her family has a tradition of doing December holidays together every year at the same place and everyone is expected to be there, where you on the other-hand come from a family that is less traditional and likes to explore by doing something different ever holiday and there is no expectation for you to join.

Neither family's way of holidaying is right or wrong, thats just the way they choose to do it. What would be wrong is if one of those families tried to enforce you as a new family to adopt their ideology. Once you are married, you are a new family and should develop your own beliefs and groove around certain issues, while still respecting that your spouse did not grow up within your environment and set of social 'rules'.



Discuss the following

- Respect your spouses parents even when you stand against their view.
- Always choose your spouse over your family.
- You two must become your own new family with your own unique ways of doing things.
- Can you be yourself around your spouse's parents, if not why?
- What specific things will need to change in your relationship with your parents?
- Do you think your fiancé / spouse is too influenced by their parents?

6. Talking, fighting and all that fun stuff



What is your love language, and what do you think your spouse's love language is?



(1 Peter 3:7) *“Likewise you husbands, live with your wives with understanding. ..”*

Like we said earlier; you are two individuals who grew up in different environments with different sets of ideologies and world views. You don't necessarily know yet what issues you are going to deal with in your marriage. Its going to take time and a lot of effort to see things from each-other's perspectives, so stay flexible over the next couple of years, as you learn his / her strange ways.

- Now is not the time to figure it all out. You need to first live together (once you are married) and only then will you realize what your touchy topics are. It will cause conflict, and then you must learn to handle it well.
- There is going to be conflict in your marriage and you must realize that it's NOT wrong.
- Conflict is needed in order for you to learn how to live together and respect one another in the process.

You can tell your spouse a million times that you love them, but until you start trying find a million ways of expressing your love, its just words. Its not always what you communicate, but the way you communicate to your partner that determines the response.

“The unexamined life is not worth living.” The unexamined emotional profile perpetuates strife. (Your emotional profile is the way you generally react to life, your feelings and interactions with people). Our greatest asset in marriage will be your ability to step back and examine the issues before reacting. - *Plato*

Take the 'Love Language' test at: www.5lovelanguages.com and then discuss it.

We may have more than one love language, or see our love language change in different seasons of our life. For example, a wife who used to enjoy touch may find that with a newborn baby, her body needs a break, and what she would really appreciate from her husband is some service in the form of help with the baby. The problem is that most of us give and receive love according to our own love language without considering the love language our spouse Esc prefer and loving them in their language. For husbands this means we must pay attention to our wives and also ask them how we can honor them emotionally, even if it doesn't come naturally to us. - Mark Driscoll

Communication . .If you are not good at it, get good at it - QUICKLY!

7. Money Money Money . . .

Q: Was your family wealthy growing up, and was your spouse's family wealthy growing up?



A new study, by Jeffrey Dew at Utah State University, attempts to quantify the risk of financial pressure in marriage.

His finding: *Couples who reported disagreeing about finance once a week were over 30 percent more likely to get divorced than couples who reported disagreeing about finances a few times a month.*

Of all these common things couples fight about, money disputes were the best harbingers of divorce. For wives, disagreements over finances and sex were good predictors of divorce, but finance disputes were much stronger predictors. For husbands, financial disagreements were the only type of common disagreement that predicted whether they would get a divorce.

But it doesn't have to be the case

Tim 6:¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

Money is not evil in itself, but the love of it is deceptive and causes us to forsake the very things / people we love for it. We must see it as a common tool of the enemy, and resist his ploys to destroy our marriage with it.

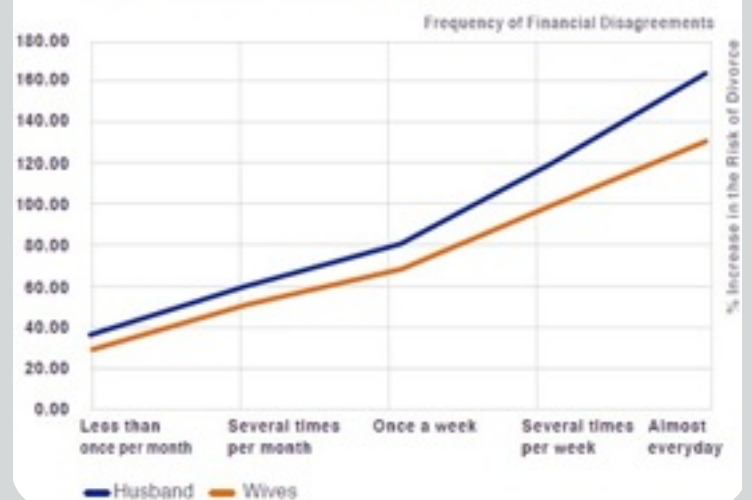
Ephesians 5 must be applied to money too; **Husbands** - Love your wives with the way you spend it, and plan. **Wives** - Submit to your husbands in the way that you spend it, and be a helper in the way that you both plan for the future.

While you discuss the following, keep in mind that in marriage you become 'One Flesh'

- Will you have separate accounts or a joint account?
- Have you spoken & come to a agreement on how much you will spend on the wedding?
- Do you know what kind of debt the other has? Specifics?
- What do you believe about tithing / Giving offerings? Are you generous now?

- If you marry where will you live? Why?
- Do you (individually) have a budget that you live by now? Describe it.
- Which one of you is better with finances?
- Did your parent fight about money while you were growing up?

FIGURE 3. THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN FINANCIAL DISAGREEMENTS AND DIVORCE



8. intimacy



Does your partner know all your deepest darkest secrets?



Intimacy in marriage is so much more than just sex, but it also included hot passionate sex. Your spouse must be your best friend for you to truly connect intimately in the way you need to. Your spouse must know that they know you in a way no-one else can or does.

Men & women relate to their friends differently, but you will have to learn how your spouse relates and make the effort.

Wives, to be a good friend, learn to spend time with your husband while he does activities he enjoys. He wants you with him, even if you don't talk while watching sport, doing a project, fishing etc. Inter his world for time alongside him.

Husbands, to be a good friend to your wife, learn to have deeper and more intimate conversations. Open up to her, by telling her how you are doing and asking her how she is doing. Listen without being distracted by technology or a task.

Discuss the following

- Women love to be seduced.
- Men love sex.
- What is sexually permissible in marriage?
- Intimacy, whether physical or emotional, is the climax of your marriage bond.
- Intimacy is good, and desperately needed for a successful marriage.
- Have you openly exposed and dealt with your sexual pasts with your partner (including abuse)?
- Have you spoken about your marriage night?



“ The road to the heart is the ear ”

9. practically

“*Its the thought that counts.*” is one of the worst saying ever! You can have the greatest intentions, but if the execution is not thought through, and executed well, then its a flop!! Gods intention is to change the heart of man, but the results of our hearts being consecrated to him should be that we get practical about what we believe. God is keenly interested in what we practically do.

Pre-Nuptial Agreement

Discuss whether you will sign a Pre-Nuptial, and remember its up to you, not anyone else. If you decide to get one, then speak to a lawyer or some one who can help you. Some banks also offer this service, but it would be helpful to gain some knowledge around it from someone you trust.

Contraception

Unless you planning on having a honeymoon baby, make sure you are sorted in this department. Include your husband in this decision. Don't limit yourself to options that your Mom had back in the 50's, things have developed since then, so become informed.

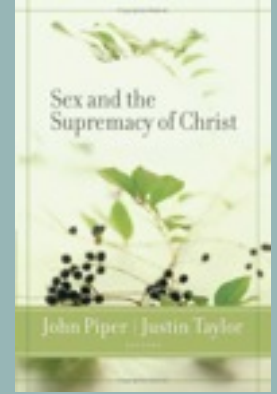
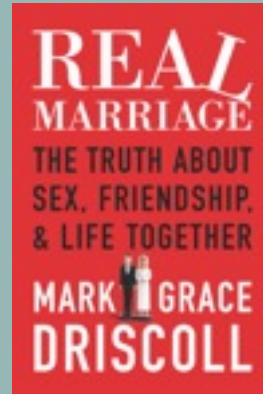
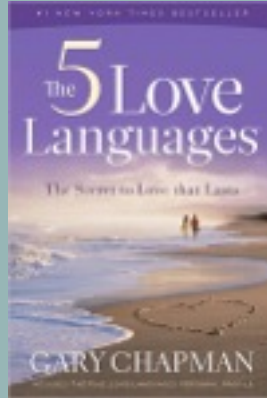
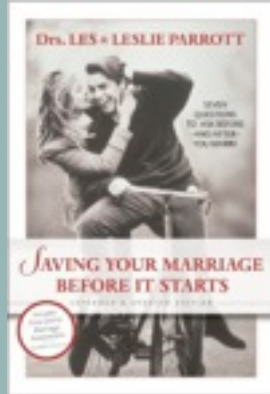
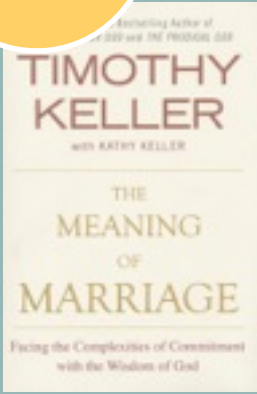
Medical Aid / Insurance etc.

Take into consideration that most medical aid companies require you to be on their program for a minimum of 3 months before falling pregnant before they will cover you. Think through the logistics of insurance, postal addresses , debit orders, etc, with your move.

Honeymoon

Some couples testify to their Honeymoon being their worst holiday they ever had together. Most of the time it was because they fought over petty little logistics that weren't thought through. Guys, for once think about your lady before yourself. Think what she would like, and try get the inside scoop from one of her friends or family members. For example, a lady with fair skin wont be able to handle 7 days on the beach or a long boat ride and a city girl might not enjoy camping. Realize that practical challenges that you might have seen as adventure when were single could be fuel for your first fight as a married couple. Don't spend so much on your wedding that you don't have anything left for honeymoon.

Recommended Reading



Celebrating Events

Most of us 'Go Big' with our wedding celebration, but what about all the other events over the next 50 years. Which ones will justify a big budget, months of planning or special thought? When will you expect a touch of romance and how often is often enough to receive flowers? Your love language will determine your answer for some of these, but the problem is that your spouses love language might be different to yours.

You will have to discuss this and learn to serve one another. Don't just assume it, but ask your spouse how much value they place on celebrations.

The Big Day

Decide who will be your best men and ladies, dependent not only who you have been close to in the past, but think who you are going to build your lives with. Make your wedding day about the future.

Decide who you want to marry you ('preach' at your wedding) and who will do the legal stuff. Remember that your wedding day is only the beginning of your lives together. Don't go bankrupt over it, you have nothing to prove to anyone.

Marriage was God's invention, and he is more committed to our marriage than we sometimes are. He will give us grace fore any trial, and will always be willing to help when you need him. Enjoy your spouse and this incredible union, while you pursue the great adventure God has for you as a couple.



Prov 4:16 b – 5:1

Let my beloved come to his garden, and eat its choicest fruits. I come to my garden, my sister, my bride, I gathered my myrrh with my spice, I ate my honeycomb with my honey, I drank my wine with my