

SESSION 1: REDEEMING YOUR MARRIAGE

Overview

In the first session, we'll be digging into what a godly marriage looks like in a fallen world, how our sin impacts the marriage relationship, and the resources God gives us to grow our marriage so that it glorifies Him. We'll be learning to practically apply Christ-centered truth that will challenge you to think biblically about submitting to God's overarching purpose for your marriage.

You'll be reading and learning things that may (or may not!) seem basic, but can be absolutely transformative as you head into marriage. There is a lot of material for this session - take some time to work through it and soak it in, answer the questions, talk with each other, and spend time with God asking Him what He wants to change in your heart through your marriage.

Before Mentoring Session

- Your mentor couple will contact you to set up a time and location for your first mentoring session. It will take about 2 hours total.
- Read "What Did You Expect?" (by Paul David Tripp)
- You will have received an email copy of the Personal History Form prior to your first session. Please fill it out individually and hand deliver a "paper copy" of it to your mentor during Session one (in consideration of your privacy, do not email this document). Please feel free to share your finished document with your partner before Session two.
- You will also receive information on taking the Prepare/Enrich assessment. Please complete it individually online. Your mentor couple will receive your results and give you a copy at the beginning of Session two. This assessment must be completed at least 1 week in advance of your second session.

Homework Questions

Before you read, answer the question: What DO you expect from marriage?

Write out the answers to the following questions as you read through the book. We'll use these during the mentoring meeting discussion.

Why does God care about the little moments in life?

Is romance the main ingredient for a good marriage? Why or why not?

What are you most tempted to attach your identity to?

What does it look like to find your identity in created things?

Why do conflicts arise in marriage?

What desires often battle within you?

What are the treasures God desires us to live for?

Why should we not live for earth-bound treasures or anxiety-bound needs?

What does it mean when Dr. Tripp says the kingdom of self-masquerades as the kingdom of God?

What is God's purpose in marriage?

Why is sanctification so difficult?

What is the Kingdom of Self vs. the Kingdom of God?

What is the connection between your love for God and the love you show to others?

Why is real love willing, sacrificial, and unconditional?

How can we possibly love those who can be so difficult to love?

How is worship of God the root of bringing love, unity and understanding into our marriage?

How does worshipping God as Creator help me love others?

What is God's purpose in making us different?

How does worshipping God as Sovereign help me love others?

What is God's purpose in placing us with our spouses?

What aspects of your spouse's "hard wiring" have you been critical of that you need to accept as God's creation?

How are we God's instrument in our spouse's life?

How can we show grace to our spouse as God shows grace?

Who are some people in your life God has used to make you more like Christ? How were they used by God?

What practical things can be done to help us focus on our own hearts when moments of conflict arise? In light of all you have heard and learned, explain why a marriage of unity, understanding and love is not rooted in romance but is rooted in worship.

Mentoring Meeting

- We'll spend some time getting to know each other.
- Open in prayer
- We'll talk through your homework questions and any sections of the book that stood out to you.

SESSION 2: PERSONAL HISTORY AND PREPARE/ENRICH

Overview

In the second Mentoring Session, you will go over your Personal History and the Prepare/Enrich assessment. You'll identify strengths and weaknesses in your relationship and areas to focus on in your upcoming meetings together.

Before Mentoring Session

- See "Before Mentoring Session" for Session One above for instructions.

Mentoring Meeting

- Open in prayer.
- Review personal history assignment with mentor couple, focusing on any potential areas of challenge or growth.
- Review Prepare/Enrich, focusing on any potential areas of challenge or growth.

SESSION 3: MONEY AND MARRIAGE

Overview

In Sessions 3 and 4, we'll talk about two huge issues in marriage - money and sex. They are both ultimately issues of worship and share some common problems and principles. The Reading in Session 3 discusses both money and sex. Discussion in Session 3 will focus mainly around money, and Session 4 will focus primarily on sex.

Before Mentoring Session

- Read "Sex and Money" (by Paul David Tripp) chapters 1-4; 10-14
- Prepare a budget. "The Family Financial Workbook" (Larry Burkett) is very helpful and practical if you've never set up a budget before or would like assistance in setting up your first one as a couple. Be sure to bring this with you to this mentoring session.

Homework Questions

How does culture define sex and money? In other words, what purpose do they serve, what influence do they have, and how are they evaluated?

Where have you seen sex and money abused? What results from sexual and financial insanity?

Why, and how, do people get addicted to "Sign Glories", specifically sex and money?

How do I fill in the following: "If I only had _____, then I would be happy;" or "If only I didn't have _____, then I would be happy."

What is deceptively attractive about living an autonomous and self-sufficient lifestyle?

What are some horizontal "solutions" that we ask to cure our sex and money problems?

Have you tried to use any horizontal solutions that did not lead to lasting change in your life?

Why does money reveal our heart so effectively and accurately?

Why is the struggle of money not about the amount of money that you have?

Think about the things that make your daily life “pleasurable”. How much of those things are bought with money?

Think about the things that make your life “pleasurable”. How do you react when these things are taken away from you?

Where do you experience your biggest joys, your biggest disappointments, and your biggest moments of envy? Are they related to things that money does or does not provide you?

What does your culture tell you that you need, when in fact, the Bible probably wouldn’t name it as a need?

Write down at least 10 blessings for which you are thankful.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Mentoring Meeting

- Open in prayer
- We’ll discuss your homework questions and anything from the reading that stood out to you.
- We’ll review your budget together and talk through any areas of challenge.

SESSION 4: SEXUAL INTIMACY IN MARRIAGE

Overview

Session 4's reading and discussion will focus on Sex. Like money, sex is a blessing that can become our identity and ultimately, a worship issue. Sexual realities are first and foremost spiritual realities. Sex is a created thing and therefore connects us with our Creator. As a created thing, sex is a servant of God's purposes.

Before Mentoring Session

- Read "Sex & Money" (Paul David Tripp) chapters 5-9
- Read "Sheet Music" (Kevin Leman) ONLY chapters 1-4 and 8-9 before marriage. Because this material is explicit, we strongly recommend reading the balance of this book together after you are married.

Assignment Questions

How should Christians view the available pleasures of this created world?

Why are boundaries necessary when it comes to enjoying pleasure?

If pleasures have the ability to enslave and destroy us, would we be better off without them?

Discuss other areas of life where freedom is found by staying within God's boundaries. To ask it another way, what are some pleasurable aspects of life that can easily enslave?

Romans 1:25 accurately diagnoses the source of our sexual and financial struggles. What is the diagnosis, and where can the cure be found?

How is sex not about you?

What are some specific examples of sexual immorality that you faced this week - or even today - and how can you flee from them next time?

Share specific examples of where your culture is individualizing sex and money. You will probably find that these examples are the same things you should be fleeing from.

Mentoring Meeting

- Open in prayer
- We'll be discussing the homework questions and anything from the reading that stood out to you.
- If desired or your mentor feels it is needed, we may split up into individual male/female discussions on this topic. This may be during the last ½ of this mentoring meeting or a different meeting time arranged.