



WORKBOOK
2026-2027



Thrive



Name:

Small Group:

PURPOSE OF THE THRIVE WORKBOOK

Thrive is a marriage ministry with the purpose of helping couples serve and honor God in their marriage. Thrive has two main goals. The aim is to equip married couples to:

1. Grow in spiritual maturity and in Christ-honoring living
2. Cultivate a strong, resilient marriage that brings glory to God

This workbook is intended to help you both grow in your relationship with Christ, and your relationship with your spouse. Throughout this workbook you will find material that, if approached prayerfully and intentionally, will make you more like Christ, make you a better spouse, and strengthen your marriage. Each week is laid out for you in such a way that, with commitment and intentional time dedication, you will begin strengthening your relationship with Christ and your relationship with spouse.

Why is this important?

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”

Titus 2:11-14

As Christians we are called to live a life as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1). Our life is no longer ours, but Christ's (Galatians 2:20). This means that everything we do is subject to Christ and for the glory of Christ. This includes our jobs, hobbies, finances, decisions, interests, entertainment choices, and yes, even our marriages, are to be used to glorify the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This Workbook will serve as a tool to help you accomplish this in your day-to-day life and in your marriage.

FALL

CALENDAR



September

- 9/3 - *Kick Off*
- 9/10 - *Thrive*
- 9/17 - *Thrive*
- 9/24 - *Thrive*

October

- 10/1 - *Thrive*
- 10/8 - *Thrive*
- 10/15 - *Small Group Fellowship*
- 10/22 - *Thrive*
- 10/29 - **OFF (Fall Fest)**

November

- 11/5 - *Thrive*
- 11/12 - *Small Group Fellowship*
- 11/19 - *Thrive*
- 11/26 - **OFF (Thanksgiving)**

December

- 12/3 - *Thrive*
- 12/10 - *Christmas Party*
- 12/17-12/31 - **OFF**

SPRING

CALENDAR



January

- 1/7 - *Thrive*
- 1/14 - *Thrive*
- 1/21 - *Thrive*
- 1/28 - *Small Group Fellowship*

February

- 2/4 - *Thrive*
- 2/11 - *Valentine's Day Party*
- 2/18 - *Thrive*
- 2/25 - *Thrive*

March

- 3/4 - *Thrive*
- 3/11 - *Thrive*
- 3/18 - *Thrive Guys/Wives Night*
- 3/25 - **OFF (Easter)**

April

- 4/1 - *Small Group Fellowship**
- 4/8 - *Thrive*
- 4/15 - *Thrive*
- 4/22 - *Thrive*
- 4/29 - *End of the Year Party*

**AWANA and KBC are OFF*



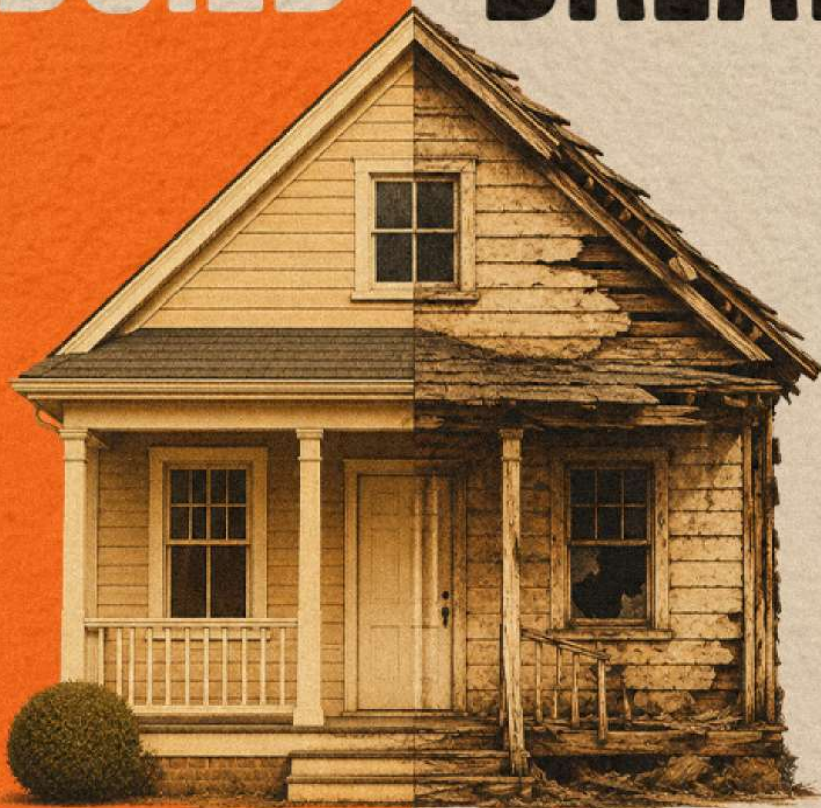
THRIVE WORKBOOK

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WORDS
THAT
BUILD

OR
BREAK



Thrive
NEWLYWEDS AND YOUNG FAMILIES

WORDS THAT BUILD



OR BREAK
THE WEIGHT OF YOUR WORDS

WORDS THAT BUILD OR BREAK

THE WEIGHT OF YOUR WORDS

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- 1 Read **James 3:5-6** and **Proverbs 18:21**. What do we learn from these passages about “the tongue”? Why is it essential for you to care about the things you say?
- 2 Read **Matthew 12:34-37**. Examine yourself. If you were to stand before Christ today, what would he think about your words? Where specifically are you falling short in your speech?
- 3 Read **Proverbs 16:24** and **Proverbs 12:18**. What effect do you think your words can have on your spouse? Discuss some practical steps you can take to better guard your speech.
- 4 Read **Ephesians 4:29** and **Colossians 4:6**. How should passages like these inform the kind of speech you use toward your spouse? What can you start doing practically to build up and speak with grace towards your spouse?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



The Conversation Challenge

Every day this week, commit to having one intentional conversation with your spouse that does not have anything to do with chores, responsibilities, schedule, or children. Topics for conversation can include spiritual growth, Scripture, theology, world issues, hobbies, interests, etc.

Building Godly Habits

Every day this week, take 5 minutes to pray out loud with your spouse. At the end of the week, reflect on this exercise with your spouse.



COMMIT

TO MEMORY



“Death and life are in the power of the tongue and those who love it will eat its fruits.”

Proverbs 18:21

WORDS THAT BUILD



OR BREAK
WHEN YOU FEEL MISUNDERSTOOD

WORDS THAT BUILD OR BREAK

WHEN YOU FEEL MISUNDERSTOOD

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- 1 Read **Psalm 139:1-6**. How does knowing that Christ perfectly understands you shape your response when your spouse misunderstands you? Instead of reacting with frustration or discouragement, what would a Christ-centered response look like the next time you feel misunderstood?
- 2 Read **Philippians 2:3-4**. How might the differences in you and your spouse's communication styles be causing misunderstanding? What can you do here to get on the same page with your spouse?
- 3 Read **Proverbs 18:13** and **1 Corinthians 13:7**. Why is assuming your spouse's thoughts and motives foolish? What can you do instead to ensure you have a clear and accurate interpretation of what they are trying to say?
- 4 Read **James 1:19**. What role does listening play in communication? What specific behaviors do you need to implement to become a better listener? In what ways would these changes improve your communication with your spouse?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Getting on the Same Page

Take turns sharing the situations you feel most misunderstood. Identify any patterns. Take note of what you can change to alleviate these common misunderstandings.

Correct the Communication

Each spouse completes this sentence, “Something I sometimes say that may be true but comes across harshly is...”. After you share, say it more graciously and lovingly. Discuss the differences.



COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“A fool takes no pleasure in understanding,
but only in expressing his opinion.”*

Proverbs 18:2

WORDS THAT BUILD



OR BREAK
WHEN SMALL THINGS TURN INTO BIG FIGHTS

WORDS THAT BUILD OR BREAK

WHEN SMALL THINGS TURN INTO BIG FIGHTS

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- 1 Read **Matthew 20:26-28**. Why will thinking less about yourself and more about your spouse help mitigate conflict, or even avoid it completely? What can you learn from this passage about the example Christ set for us?
- 2 Read **Proverbs 15:1**. In moments of conflict or disagreement, do you tend to use words that alleviate the situation or words that amplify the conflict? What do you need to do differently in those moments of frustration?
- 3 Read **Proverbs 19:11**. How would your marriage benefit if you became quicker to overlook minor offenses? What recurring frustrations do you need to learn to overlook?
- 4 Read **Ephesians 4:32**. How does Christ's forgiveness of your sins shape the way you view and respond to your spouse's sins against you? Are you quick to forgive? What impact would this have on your communication with your spouse if you grew in this virtue?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Evaluating the Irritation

For one week, whenever your spouse does something that irritates you, ask yourself:

- Is this sinful or my preference?
- Will this matter a few days from now?
- Can I simply overlook this?
- Am I putting my desires above my spouses?

At the end of the week, share with each other.

- Which frustrations were easier to overlook and which were harder?
- What did you learn about yourself through the exercise?

Rate Yourself

Individually, rate yourself and your spouse in each category (1 “weak in this category” to 5 “strong in this category”). After, discuss with one another. Encourage each other with how to grow in these categories.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Yourself</u>	<u>Your Spouse</u>
Overlooking Offenses		
Quick to Forgive		
Self-Control		
Humility		
Peacemaking		



COMMIT

TO MEMORY



“The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so quit before the quarrel breaks out.”

Proverbs 17:14

WORDS THAT BUILD



OR BREAK
WHEN YOU ASSUME THE WORST

WORDS THAT BUILD OR BREAK

WHEN YOU ASSUME THE WORST

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- 1 Read **Psalm 139:2-3** and **Psalm 103:10-12**. How does God's knowledge of your thoughts challenge the way you think about assumptions? How should God's gracious treatment of your sins influence the way you think about your spouse?
- 2 Read **Zechariah 7:9-10**. Assuming the worst in your spouse is akin to "devising evil against another in your heart". What assumptions are you most tempted to make about your spouse's motives, and how might those assumptions be harming your relationship?
- 3 Read **Philippians 4:8**. Why is evaluating your thoughts an important part of overcoming sinful assumptions? What difference would it make in your relationship with your spouse if you consistently filtered your thoughts through the standard described in this passage?
- 4 Read **1 Corinthians 13:7**. How does this passage challenge the concept of assuming the thoughts, motives, or emotions of your spouse? What would be the correct and loving way to go about discovering those categories?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Thought Filtering Exercise

Over the next week, filter every assumption you have of your spouse through Philippians 4:8. Ask yourself, “Is this thought true? Honorable? Just? Pure? Lovely? Commendable?”.

The Appreciation Chart

Write down 10 things you appreciate or cherish about your spouse. Place a star next to the top 3 you appreciate or cherish most on that list. Share this list together. Then, share your top 3 with one another. Consider how you can better recognize, affirm, and draw out these qualities in your spouse. Lastly, discuss how an exercise like this is pleasing to God.

A decorative graphic consisting of a central white rectangle with an orange border. From the left and right sides of the rectangle, two horizontal orange lines extend outwards. The word "COMMIT" is written in large, bold, black, sans-serif capital letters inside the rectangle.

COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“Whoever diligently seeks good seeks favor,
but evil comes to him who searches for it.”*

Proverbs 11:27

WORDS THAT BUILD



OR BREAK
WHEN YOU STOP ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER

WORDS THAT BUILD OR BREAK

WHEN YOU STOP ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- 1 Read **Isaiah 41:10**. Where have you experienced God's encouragement and how did that motivate you towards godliness? How does God's care and encouragement of his people influence how you treat your spouse?
- 2 Read **Ephesians 4:29**. How might you be guilty of using speech that tears down your spouse? In what specific ways this week will you encourage, build up, and give grace to your spouse?
- 3 Read **Hebrews 3:13**. What spiritual dangers can result from refraining, or even worse, refusing to encourage your spouse towards godly behavior? How can you partner with your spouse in holding each other accountable?
- 4 Read **Romans 12:10**. In what practical ways can you "outdo (your spouse) in showing honor"? What impact would this have on your marriage?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



The Encouragement Challenge

For the next seven days, intentionally encourage your spouse at least once per day. Be specific and genuine. Try to highlight a quality, service, spiritual strength, or something specific they did that stood out to you.

At the end of the week discuss with your spouse:

- Which piece of encouragement meant the most to you?
- What did you learn about your spouse through this exercise?
- How did this regular encouragement impact your relationship?



COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“Gracious words are like a honeycomb,
sweetness to the soul and health to the
body.”*

Proverbs 16:24

WORDS THAT BUILD



OR BREAK
WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL HEARD

WORDS THAT BUILD OR BREAK

WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL HEARD

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- 1 Read **Hebrews 4:16** and **Matthew 7:7-8**. What comfort do you find knowing that you have a direct line of communication to God and that he always hears you? What does this teach you about the importance of listening to and being available for your spouse?
- 2 Read **Proverbs 18:2**. In what ways have you been guilty of playing the fool this proverb describes? How does this challenge some of your presuppositions on what qualifies as good listening? What can you do better in your communication to ensure you understand what your spouse is trying to say?
- 3 Read **Lamentations 3:40**. When you don't feel heard by your spouse, what sinful responses are you most prone to? What would a godly response look like instead?
- 4 Read **1 John 4:7-11**. What role does love play in listening well? In what ways can love improve the way you communicate with your spouse?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Take Action Against Distractions

Over the next week, intentionally set aside distractions when your spouse wants to have an important conversation. Put your phone down, turn away from screens, and provide your full attention. During the conversation ask at least one follow up question before responding. At the end of the week, discuss how this affected your connection to one another.

Developing Christ-Centered Connection

Each day this week, share with your spouse one takeaway from your personal Bible reading time. After sharing, ask one follow up question before responding to their takeaway. At the end of the week, discuss how this affected your communication.



COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“If one gives an answer before he hears, it
is his folly and shame.”*

Proverbs 18:13

WORDS THAT BUILD



OR BREAK
WHEN TONE BECOMES THE PROBLEM

WORDS THAT BUILD OR BREAK

WHEN TONE BECOMES THE PROBLEM

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- 1 Read **Galatians 5:16** and **5:19-25**. What does your tone toward your spouse reveal about whether you are walking by the Spirit or gratifying the desires of the flesh? How would growing in your relationship with Christ affect the way you speak to your spouse?
- 2 Read **Colossians 4:6**. In what ways have you experienced your tone impact your conversation negatively? How about positively? What difference would it make in your communication with your spouse if you managed your tone better?
- 3 Read **Luke 6:45**. How does your tone of voice expose your real thoughts, intentions, or emotions? If you want to fix your tone of voice, what needs to change first? Identify one way you will commit to improving and discuss.
- 4 Read **Colossians 3:12-14**. How might unresolved bitterness or unforgiveness be affecting the way you speak to your spouse? In what ways would your tone change if you approached your spouse with grace, kindness, and love instead?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Put it to the Test

Read the following sentence in 5 different tones of voice (kind, concerned, sarcastic, irritated, and angry):

“Can we talk for a minute?”

Then discuss with your spouse:

- How did each tone make you feel?
- Which tone made you want to engage in further conversation?

Bring it Before God

Each day this week spend 5 minutes in prayer with your spouse regarding this topic. Pray specifically that the words you say to your spouse and how you communicate them honor God and cultivate love and unity in your marriage. Pray that God would expose any areas in which you need to grow.



COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“A soft answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger.”*

Proverbs 15:1

WORDS THAT BUILD



OR BREAK
WHEN YOU BRING UP THE PAST

WORDS THAT BUILD OR BREAK

WHEN YOU BRING UP THE PAST

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- 1 Read **Matthew 18:21-35**. What do you learn about forgiveness from this passage? What does unforgiveness of your spouse reveal about your heart?
- 2 Read **Psalms 103:12** and **Isaiah 43:25**. How does the way God deals with your sin challenge you when you are tempted to dwell on or bring up sin your spouse has committed in the past? What impact does bringing up past sins during present conflicts have on your marriage?
- 3 Read **Matthew 5:23-24**. What does this passage reveal about the urgency God places on reconciliation? What affect can unresolved conflict have on your unity with your spouse? How can you and your spouse resolve these past offenses in a way that honors God?
- 4 Read **Proverbs 19:11** and **1 Corinthians 13:5-6**. What conflicts in your marriage would be avoided if you chose to overlook minor offenses and stopped keeping track of wrongs?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Discussing the Past Biblically

Think of a recent disagreement. Refrain from rehashing the conflict with your spouse. Simply answer these questions regarding the disagreement:

- Did either of us bring past sins during the disagreement?
- How could we have addressed the conflict without referencing past offenses?
- What would have a loving and forgiving response have looked like?

Spend a moment praying together for the Lord to strengthen this aspect of your communication.



COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“Good sense makes one slow to anger,
and it is his glory to overlook an offense.”*

Proverbs 19:11

WORDS THAT BUILD



OR BREAK
WHEN YOU COMMUNICATE IN ANGER

WORDS THAT BUILD OR BREAK

WHEN YOU COMMUNICATE IN ANGER

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- 1 Read **2 Peter 3:9** and **1 Timothy 1:16**. What about Christ's patience toward you challenges how you respond when your spouse frustrates you or sins against you? In what ways will you start expressing this kind of Christlike patience?
- 2 Read **James 1:19-20**. How does knowing that anger does not produce God's righteousness, either in yourself or in others, change the way you think about anger? What can you do instead in those conversations or conflicts that would produce righteousness?
- 3 Read **James 4:1-2**. What desires or unmet expectations fuel your anger when communicating with your spouse? How would your communication change if you were to align those desires with what pleases Christ?
- 4 Read **Proverbs 15:1**. What affect does a godly response to anger have on a conflict? What changes could you make in how you communicate that would help de-escalate conflict before anger arises?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Learning How to Handle It

Individually, discern and write down what the following verses have to say about the wrong way to handle anger. Ephesians 4:26-27; Proverbs 17:14; Proverbs 29:11; Ephesians 4:31.

Individually, discern and write down what the following verses have to say about the right way to handle anger. Romans 12:19-21; Ephesians 4:32; Proverbs 19:11; James 1:19-20; 1 Corinthians 10:13.

Together, discuss what you learned and wrote down. Discuss how handling anger rightly would affect your communication.

Moving Past the Irritation

Come up with a list of things you and your spouse enjoy doing together and have fun doing together. Be specific and thoughtful about this list. Commit to doing at least 2 of the items from the list over the next week.

COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a
wise man quietly holds it back.”*

Proverbs 29:11

WORDS THAT BUILD



OR BREAK
WHEN COMMUNICATION BECOMES BUSINESS

WORDS THAT BUILD OR BREAK

WHEN COMMUNICATION BECOMES BUSINESS

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- 1 Read **Colossians 4:2** and **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**. What do you think would happen to your relationship with Christ and your spiritual growth if your communication with him became purely transactional? How does this challenge the way you communicate with Christ?
- 2 Read **Song of Solomon 2:15**. If your communication solely revolves around schedules, logistics, responsibilities, etc., how can this damage your connection to your spouse? What are some topics of discussion that you can introduce that you don't typically talk about with your spouse?
- 3 Read **Genesis 2:24**. Does your current communication encourage or hinder oneness with your spouse? How does this verse challenge you to turn your communication into more than business?
- 4 Read **Ecclesiastes 9:9**. What practical change can you implement to cultivate real enjoyment of your spouse? What benefits do you perceive would result from communication that goes beyond the day-to-day logistics?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Finding Joy in Conversation

Every day for the next week take 5-10 minutes talking with your spouse about something you know they enjoy and love. Each of you take a turn. At the end of the week discuss how this affected your connection to each other.

Improving Your Prayer

On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being the weakest, 5 being the strongest) evaluate yourself regarding your communication with God:

Consistency in Prayer	Dependence on Prayer	Depth of Prayer	God-Centeredness of Your Prayer	Intimacy in Your Prayer

Then, answer this question: Which area of your prayer life needs the most growth? What will you do to strengthen this area of your prayer?



COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“Oil and perfume make the heart glad,
and the sweetness of a friend comes from
his earnest counsel.”*

Proverbs 27:9

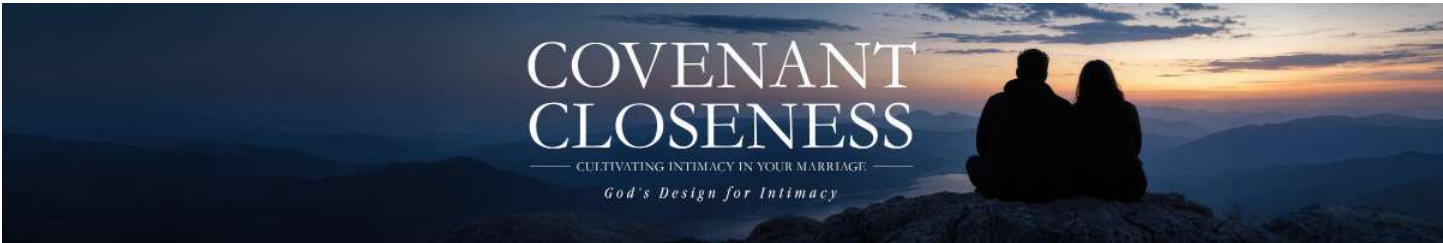
WORDS THAT BUILD OR BREAK

RECOMMENDED READING RESOURCES

- *Resolving Everyday Conflict* by Ken Sande
- *The Peacemaker* by Ken Sande
- *Peacemaking for Families* by Ken Sande
- *Disciplines of a Godly Family* by Kent and Barbara Hughes
- *When Sinners Say “I Do”* by Dave Harvey
- *The Exemplary Husband* by Stuart Scott
- *The Excellent Wife* by Martha Peace
- *Communication and Conflict Resolution* by Stuart Scott
- *What Did You Expect?* by Paul David Tripp
- *War of Words* by Paul David Tripp
- *Your Family God’s Way* by Wayne Mack
- *Sweethearts for a Lifetime* by Wayne Mack
- *Sacred Marriage* by Gary Thomas
- *The Meaning of Marriage* by Tim Keller
- *A Word Fitly Spoken* by Aaron L. Garriott
- *Communication: Key to Your Marriage* by Norman Wright

COVENANT CLOSENESS

— CULTIVATING INTIMACY IN YOUR MARRIAGE —



COVENANT CLOSENESS

— CULTIVATING INTIMACY IN YOUR MARRIAGE —

God's Design for Intimacy

COVENANT CLOSENESS

GOD'S DESIGN FOR INTIMACY

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- ① Read **Genesis 2:24**. What does “become one flesh” mean? Consider your own marital unity. How does this truth about marriage challenge the way you currently approach your relationship with your spouse?
- ② Read **Ephesians 5:25-27, 32**. What does it mean that marriage reflects the relationship between Christ and the church? How should this shape the way you view the purpose and significance of marriage?
- ③ Read **1 John 4:7-11**. How does the way God loves us challenge you in how you love your spouse? What practical changes can you make to show this kind of covenant love towards your spouse?
- ④ Read **Psalms 63:1-8**. What does your pursuit of closeness with God teach you about pursuing closeness with your spouse? What difference would it make in your marriage if both you and your spouse were pursuing each other daily?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Pursuing One Another

Individually, write out 5 specific ways you can intentionally pursue your spouse over the next week. Share and discuss these lists with each other. Have your spouse choose from your list the top 2 and then commit to put those into practice over the next 7 days. At the end of the week, discuss how these efforts affected your relationship.



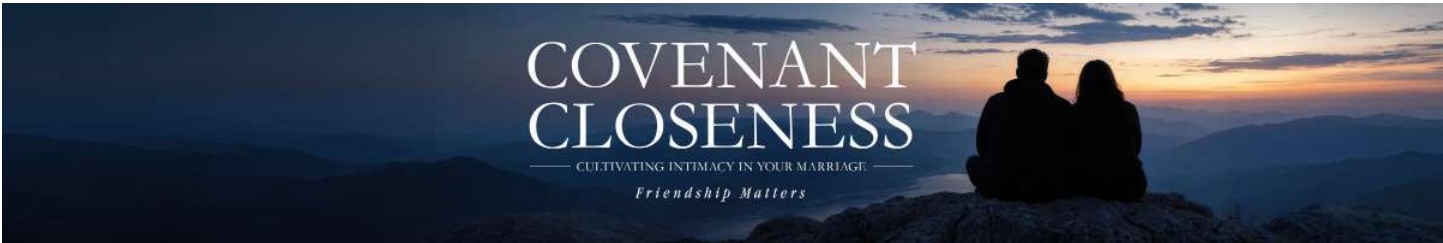
COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“Therefore a man shall leave his father and
his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they
shall become one flesh.”*

Genesis 2:24



COVENANT CLOSENESS

— CULTIVATING INTIMACY IN YOUR MARRIAGE —

Friendship Matters

COVENANT CLOSENESS

FRIENDSHIP MATTERS

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- ① Read **John 15:13-15**. What does Jesus' friendship with you teach you about friendship with your spouse? In what ways do you need to metaphorically lay down your life for your spouse?
- ② Read **Malachi 2:14**. In this passage God says your spouse is your "companion by covenant". What does it mean for your spouse to be your life companion? What specifically can you do to cultivate this kind of companionship?
- ③ Read **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**. How can friendship with your spouse strengthen your marriage during difficult times? In what ways can you better support, encourage, and help your spouse through challenges they face?
- ④ Read **Philippians 2:3-4**. How well do you know what brings your spouse joy, what worries them, what burdens are they bearing, or what goals do they have? What will you start doing to display greater interest in your spouse's life?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Share Your Walk

Each day for the next week, share with your spouse one thing you learned from your daily Bible reading and one prayer request. After sharing, take turns praying for one another. At the end of the week, discuss what you learned about your spouse, how this helped you feel more spiritually connected, and how this affected your overall closeness.

The Friendship Interview

Set aside 30 minutes together. Take turns asking each other questions. The listening spouse can only ask follow-up questions. No correcting, debating, or fixing. Ask questions such as:

- What is something you are looking forward to right now?
- What have you been stressed out about lately?
- What is something God is teaching you right now?
- What is something I've done recently that made you feel loved?
- What is something you'd like us to do together more often?
- What have you really enjoyed doing lately?
- What is one goal you have this year, and how can I help you accomplish that goal?
- What have you been regularly praying about that I can add to my list?

Discuss afterward. What did you learn about one another? What surprised you?



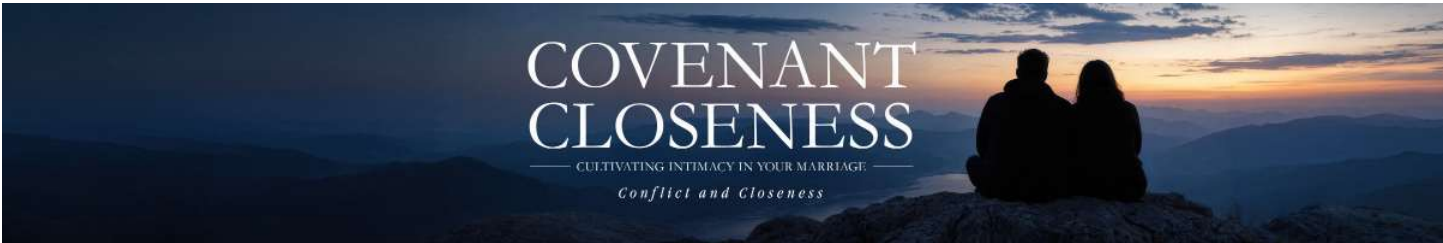
COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“His mouth is most sweet, and he is altogether
desirable. This is my beloved and this is my
friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.”*

Song of Solomon 5:16



COVENANT CLOSENESS

— CULTIVATING INTIMACY IN YOUR MARRIAGE —

Conflict and Closeness

COVENANT CLOSENESS

CONFLICT AND CLOSENESS

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- ① Read **Romans 5:8**. How does this passage challenge the way you respond to conflict? What does Christ's death on the cross for sinners teach you about love through conflict?
- ② Read **Ephesians 4:26-31**. According to this passage, what attitudes and actions during conflict help strengthen a marriage rather than damage it? Which of these do you most need to improve?
- ③ Read **James 4:1-2**. What sinful desires fuel conflict in your marriage? How can you bring those desires into alignment with what pleases Christ?
- ④ Read **Matthew 5:23-24**. Why is it crucial to resolve conflict quickly? How does unresolved conflict hinder closeness? What practical steps can you take to reconcile with your spouse rather than allow conflict to remain unresolved?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Self-Evaluation

Individually, spend some time prayerfully reflecting on how you manage conflict. Set your mind on Psalm 139:23-24. Write out your strengths and your weaknesses of managing conflict. Discuss this list with your spouse. Kindly offer loving encouragement and suggestions for improvement.

COMMIT

TO MEMORY



“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



COVENANT CLOSENESS

— CULTIVATING INTIMACY IN YOUR MARRIAGE —

Pursuing Your Spouse

COVENANT CLOSENESS

PURSUING YOUR SPOUSE

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- ① Read **Psalms 42:1-2**. How are you actively pursuing God? What might be hindering you from a deeper relationship with Christ?
- ② Read **Hebrews 3:12-14**. What would it look like for you to actively seek your spouse's spiritual good this week? What could you implement as a regular practice to encourage one another spiritually?
- ③ Read **Song of Solomon 4:9-10**. In what ways are you currently expressing delight in your spouse? What practical changes could help cultivate greater affection for your spouse?
- ④ Read **John 13:14-15**. What role does selflessness play in pursuing your spouse? What would need to change this week for you to more consistently serve your spouse sacrificially?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Start Dating

Review your weekly and monthly calendar together. Find a block of time where you can schedule a one-on-one date with your spouse as part of your regular schedule. Have a date either weekly or bi-weekly. Prioritize and protect this time. Set a reminder for two months out to spend time reflecting on how these dates impacted your closeness.

The Intentional Pursuit

For the next week, each spouse initiates one intentional act of pursuit every day. Examples include:

- Planning a date
- Starting a meaningful conversation
- Praying together
- Leaving a kind and loving note
- Expressing specific appreciation
- Sending an encouraging text

At the end of the week take time to discuss. What actions made you feel the most loved and cared for? Which actions felt natural? Which actions did you appreciate most?

COMMIT

TO MEMORY

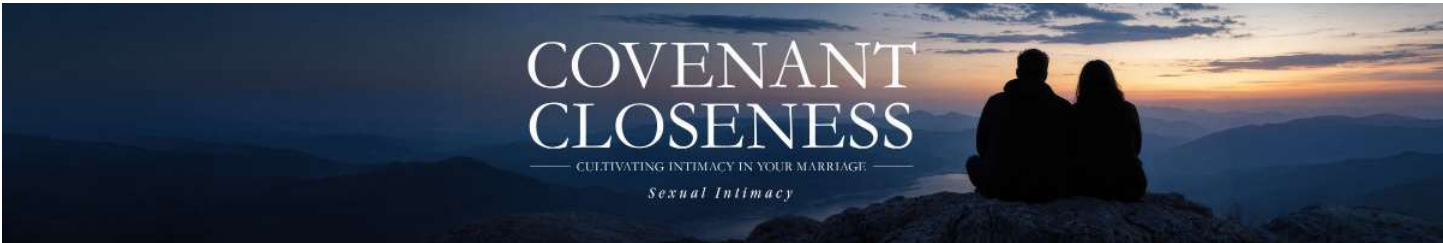


*“The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes,
leaping over the mountains, bounding over the
hills.”*

Song of Solomon 2:8

*“O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the
crannies of the cliff, let me hear your voice, for
your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.”*

Song of Solomon 2:14



COVENANT CLOSENESS

SEXUAL INTIMACY

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- ① Read **Genesis 2:24-25**. The term “one flesh” refers to complete unity in marriage. How does sexual intimacy uniquely strengthen that oneness? What is God’s multi-faceted intention for sex?
- ② Read **1 Corinthians 7:3-5**. How does this passage challenge a selfish view of sexual intimacy? What practical changes could you make to better serve your spouse in this area of your marriage?
- ③ Read **Proverbs 5:15-17** and **Hebrews 13:4**. What do these passages teach you about sexual purity? What negative impact does sexual impurity or sinful sexual desires have on your sex life with your spouse?
- ④ Read **Proverbs 5:18-19**. What can you learn from this passage about experiencing joy and satisfaction in sex? In what ways can cultivating a strong sexual relationship with your spouse strengthen other areas of your marriage?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



The Sex Survey

Take this survey individually. After, discuss your answers with your spouse.

1. What pleases you about your present sexual relations?
2. Is there anything about your sexual relations you do not enjoy?
3. How do you differ from your spouse in your sexual attitudes, feelings, needs, desires?
4. Do you have any fears about sex? If so, what are they?
5. Do you feel comfortable to communicate freely with your spouse about your sex life?
6. How often should you have sexual relations?
7. Should sexual relations be a mutually satisfying experience? What should you do if they are not?
8. What can you do to meet the sexual needs of your spouse more fully?

COMMIT

TO MEMORY



“Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love.”

Proverbs 5:18-19



COVENANT CLOSENESS

— CULTIVATING INTIMACY IN YOUR MARRIAGE —

Spiritual Intimacy

COVENANT CLOSENESS

SPIRITUAL INTIMACY

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- ① Read **Philippians 3:8** and **Galatians 2:20**. How do these passages challenge the way you think about the importance of spiritual growth? How does your personal pursuit of Christ affect your marriage and your spiritual intimacy with your spouse?
- ② Read **Ephesians 5:31-32**. Why did God design marriage to reflect Christ's relationship with the Church? How should that shape your priorities in your marriage?
- ③ Read **Hebrews 3:12-14**. How are you intentionally helping your spouse become more like Christ? What impact would regularly encouraging one another in your walk with Christ have on the strength of your spiritual intimacy?
- ④ Read **Deuteronomy 6:5-9**. How might this passage challenge the prevalence of Scripture in your daily conversations? How often are you discussing God's Word together? What needs to change to make this a more frequent conversation?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Personal Spiritual Growth

Over the next week, spend time each day practicing daily devotion. Each day spend 10-15 minutes in God's Word (consider our Compass Daily Bible Reading plan) and 5-10 minutes in prayer. At the end of each time of devotion write down one specific takeaway from your reading. Additionally, write one specific way you can become a more Christlike husband or wife.

Cultivating Spiritual Intimacy

Every day for the next 7 days intentionally have one spiritual conversation. Here are some examples you can use:

- What God is teaching you currently
- A personal temptation you're facing
- Something you are appreciating about God lately
- How you have observed God's grace toward you recently
- What you are learning about God
- How you have grown closer to Christ recently
- Someone you are trying to reach with the gospel
- Some spiritual goals you have

At the end of the week, discuss how these conversations affected your feeling of spiritual closeness with each other.

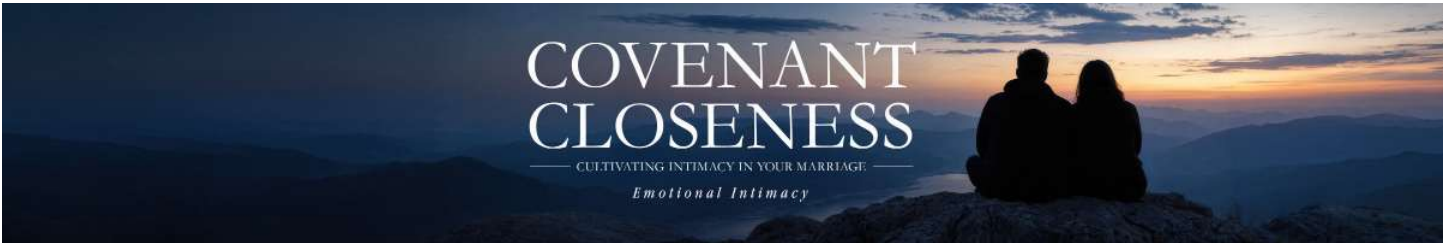
COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
teaching and admonishing one another in all
wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual
songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”*

Colossians 3:16



COVENANT CLOSENESS

EMOTIONAL INTIMACY

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- ① Read **John 11:33-35** and **Romans 12:15**. How does Christ's response to the grief of his friends challenge how you relate to others emotionally? What can this teach you about emotional vulnerability in your marital relationship?
- ② Read **Hosea 6:6**. God desires steadfast love, not just outward acts of obedience. What does this teach you about the importance of genuine love and affection in your marriage rather than merely fulfilling responsibilities?
- ③ Read **Proverbs 20:5**. What does it mean to be a "man (or woman) of understanding"? How can you be more intentional about drawing out your spouse's heart?
- ④ Read **Proverbs 25:28**. How can a lack of self-control in your emotions damage emotional intimacy in your marriage? How would greater self-control in your emotions improve emotional intimacy in your marriage?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Cultivating Connection

Throughout the next 7 days, intentionally do some of the following to cultivate emotional connection:

- Express words of affection towards your spouse
- Talk about one high and one low from your day
- Play a board game or card game together
- Go on a 20-minute walk and intentionally talk about life, not responsibilities

Share one way you have seen God working in your life this week

Building Intimacy Through Prayer

Every day this week spend time praying together. Be sure to pray for each other as well. This can be prompted through request or simply organic. Include prayers of thankfulness for your spouse. At the end of the week discuss how this prayer time impacted your emotional intimacy.



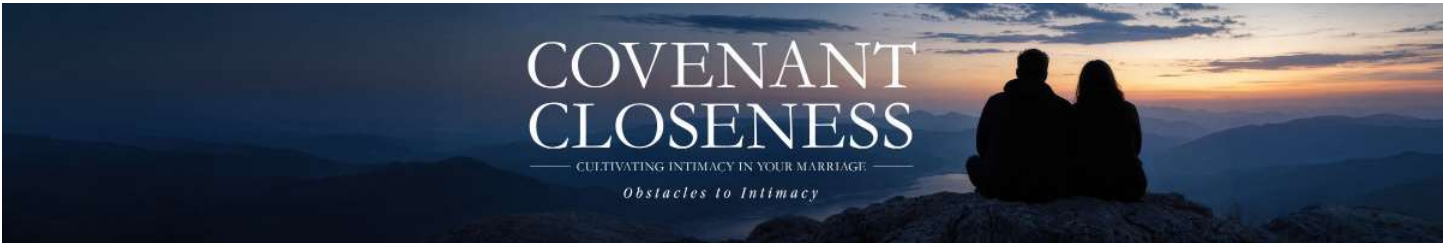
COMMIT

TO MEMORY



“Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.”

Romans 12:15



COVENANT CLOSENESS

OBSTACLES TO INTIMACY

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- ① Read **John 15:4-5**. Why is abiding in Christ essential for maintaining a healthy and intimate marriage?
- ② Read **Ephesians 4:31**. How might bitterness, anger, or unforgiveness be affecting your intimacy? What impact would repentance from these have on your marriage?
- ③ Read **Luke 10:38-42**. How might busyness be affecting your marital intimacy? What changes can you make to your calendar and your day-to-day habits to remove this obstacle?
- ④ Read **Song of Solomon 2:15**. What “little foxes” are damaging your intimacy? What needs to change for you to start intentionally cultivating emotional, spiritual, and sexual intimacy in your marriage?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Put Your Phones Down

For the next 7 days take a time log of your social media use. Using the first two columns, log the amount of time you spend on each platform and write down that time. At the end of each day brainstorm with your spouse alternative uses of that time that could cultivate intimacy with one another. Write that down in the third column. Reflect on your time log at the end of the week.

<u>Platform (e.g.; Facebook, Instagram, etc)</u>	<u>Time Spent</u>	<u>Alternative Use</u>

Identifying the Obstacles

Together, take time to identify what obstacles might be hindering your spiritual, sexual, and emotional intimacy. Discuss practical ways you can improve in each area.



COMMIT

TO MEMORY



*“Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that spoil
the vineyards, for our vineyards are in blossom.”*

Song of Solomon 2:15



COVENANT CLOSENESS

REBUILDING BROKEN CLOSENESS

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- ① Read **Isaiah 59:2** and **2 Corinthians 5:17-20**. How does God's grace to reconcile sinners to himself through Christ challenge how you think about reconciliation with your spouse?
- ② Read **Psalms 51:10-12**. What areas need repentance in your own life that will lead to rebuilding or strengthening closeness with your spouse?
- ③ Read **Lamentations 3:21-24**. Why should the hope we have in God's faithfulness give us hope in rebuilding broken closeness with our spouse? How might this encourage you as you seek to rebuild or strengthen closeness?
- ④ Read **Matthew 18:21-22**. What role does forgiveness play in cultivating and maintaining closeness in marriage? In what ways do you need to become quicker to forgive your spouse?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



A Fresh Start

Individually, take time to think about how you can pursue greater closeness with your spouse over the next month. Write down three specific ways you can accomplish this. Share your lists together and identify one commitment each of you will intentionally practice.

At the end of the month, discuss:

- What strengthened in your relationship?
- How did this draw you closer to Christ?
- What was challenging in the process?

Remembering God's Faithfulness

Sit down together and write out five specific ways God has shown his faithfulness in your marriage. After, discuss how reflecting on God's faithfulness gives you hope for the immediate and long-term future of your marriage. Spend a few minutes praying together thanking God for his faithfulness in your marriage.

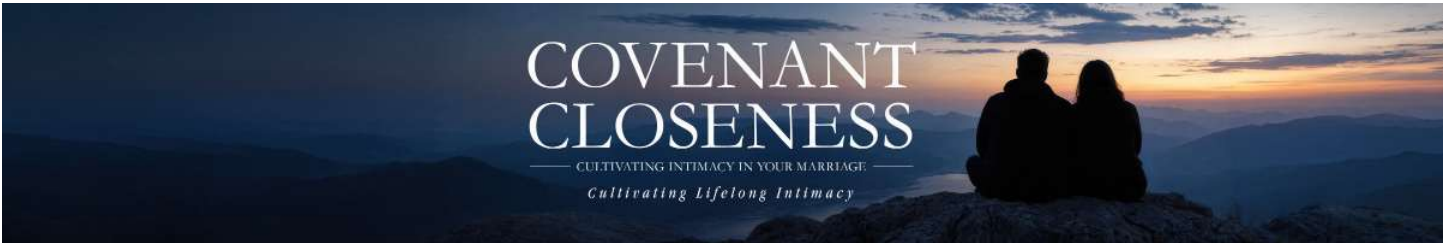
COMMIT

TO MEMORY



“When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’

John 21:15



COVENANT CLOSENESS

— CULTIVATING INTIMACY IN YOUR MARRIAGE —

Cultivating Lifelong Intimacy

COVENANT CLOSENESS

CULTIVATING LIFELONG INTIMACY

DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER

- ① Read **Philippians 3:12-14**. How will you continue to pursue Christ on a daily basis to ensure you finish the Christian life well? What impact does your pursuit of Christ have on lifelong faithfulness to your spouse?
- ② Read **Ecclesiastes 9:9**. How does intentionally enjoying your spouse cultivate lifelong intimacy? What intentional habits will help you continue enjoying your spouse through whatever season of marriage you are in?
- ③ Read **Galatians 6:9-10**. How does the simple daily commitment to do good to your spouse contribute to lifelong faithfulness? What temptations can you identify that might cause you to stop pursuing your spouse?
- ④ Read **Romans 8:38-39** and **John 10:27-28**. How does God's unwavering love for his people encourage you towards enduring love for your spouse? Looking back over this series, what is the most significant lesson God has taught you about how to cultivate lifelong intimacy?

PRACTICE

WITH YOUR SPOUSE



Building a Lifelong Marriage

Set aside 30 minutes together. Discuss what you want your marriage to look like in 5, 10, and 20 years from now.

Together, write down:

- Three qualities you hope will characterize your marriage
- Three habits you want to be in practice consistently
- Three specific areas of spiritual strength you want to have
- Three marital goals you will have accomplished (Lord willing)

Duration	Vision
5 Years	
10 Years	
20 Years	

Reflecting on What God Has Done

Spend one evening simply reflecting on your marriage together. Share how you have grown this year, how you have become closer to your spouse, how you have strengthened your relationship with Christ, and what you are most thankful for. End the discussion with a prayer for God's continued grace in your marriage.

COMMIT

TO MEMORY



“Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun.”

Ecclesiastes 9:9

COVENANT CLOSENESS

RECOMMENDED READING RESOURCES

- *The Intimate Marriage* by RC Sproul
- *Love that Lasts* by Gary & Betsy Ricucci
- *Intended for Pleasure* by Ed Wheat
- *Love Life for Every Married Couple* by Ed Wheat
- *Fierce Marriage* by Ryan & Selena Frederick
- *Sex, Romance, and the Glory of God* by C. J. Mahaney
- *The Meaning of Marriage* by Tim Keller
- *A Lifelong Love* by Gary Thomas
- *This Momentary Marriage* by John Piper
- *Sex and the Supremacy of Christ* by John Piper & Justin Taylor
- *Staying Close* by Dennis Rainey
- *The Christian Lover* by Michael Haykin
- *Marriage and the Family* by Andreas Kostenberger
- *What is a Godly Marriage?* by Mike Fabarez



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

1. How has your walk with Christ been over the past few weeks?
2. What has God been convicting you of lately?
3. How have your spiritual disciplines been over the past few weeks?
4. What sin have you been seeking to put to death lately? What is hindering your repentance?
5. In what area have you experienced the most sanctification lately?
6. How have you been encouraging your spouse towards spiritual growth?
7. Spend time sharing a brief version of your testimony with the group.

Self-Assessment

How are you doing in the following areas (1 = Need Help and 5 = Doing Well):

• Consistency in the Word	1	2	3	4	5
• Time in Prayer	1	2	3	4	5
• Battle with Sin	1	2	3	4	5
• Participation in Evangelism	1	2	3	4	5
• Time in Fellowship and Church	1	2	3	4	5

What is one specific commitment you will make as it relates to your spiritual growth?

Recommended Resources

- *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* by Don Whitney
- *Knowing God* by J.I. Packer
- *The Dangers of a Shallow Faith* by A.W. Tozer
- *The Knowledge of the Holy* by A.W. Tozer
- *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan



COMMUNICATION

1. How has your communication with your spouse been the past few weeks?
2. What have you been working to improve?
3. What do you need to repent of to become a better communicator?
4. How can we hold you accountable in growing in your needed area?
5. How have you contributed to bad communication or even arguments the past few weeks?
6. What are some things you have done well?
7. Would God be pleased overall with how your communication has been with your spouse?

Self-Assessment

How are you doing in the following areas (1 = Need Help and 5 = Doing Well):

• Intentional Communication	1	2	3	4	5
• Self-Control in Speech	1	2	3	4	5
• Quick to Forgive	1	2	3	4	5
• Attentiveness in Conversation	1	2	3	4	5
• Care for Word Choice	1	2	3	4	5

What is one specific commitment you will make as it relates to your communication with your spouse?

Recommended Resources

- *Resolving Everyday Conflict* by Ken Sande
- *War of Words* by Paul David Tripp
- *A Word Fitly Spoken* by Aaron Garriott
- *Peacemaker* by Ken Sande



THRIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

1. How have you been stewarding the resources God has given you recently?
2. Are there any financial habits you need to change?
3. How are you and your spouse doing at communicating about finances?
4. In what ways have spending habits reflected your priorities?
5. Has money been a point of contention with you and your spouse? Why?
6. How have you been at seeking God's wisdom in your financial decisions?
7. Discuss budgeting methods you think would be helpful for the group (budgeting apps, strategies, meetings with spouse, etc.)

Self-Assessment

How are you doing in the following areas (1 = Need Help and 5 = Doing Well):

• Giving to your Church	1	2	3	4	5
• Self-Control in Spending	1	2	3	4	5
• Partnership with Spouse	1	2	3	4	5
• Generosity with Finances	1	2	3	4	5
• Financial Contentment	1	2	3	4	5

What is one specific commitment you will make as it relates to your financial stewardship?

Recommended Resources

- *The Treasure Principle* by Randy Alcorn
- *Money, Debt, and Finances* by Jim Newheiser
- *The Grace of Giving* by Stephen Olford



THRIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

FAMILY LIFE

- 1a. (Husbands) How are you leading the home God has given you to shepherd?
- 1b. (Wives) How have supported your husband in cultivating a Christ-centered home?
2. What priorities are out of order that you need to address?
3. How can you contribute to making your home more grounded in God's Word?
4. What are some ways you have intentionally invested in your family this month?
5. Where do you need to improve when it comes to intentional investment in your family?
6. What conflict is in your home that is harming your peace and unity with your family?
7. How are you intentionally discipling your children?

Self-Assessment

How are you doing in the following areas (1 = Need Help and 5 = Doing Well):

• Intentionality with Family	1	2	3	4	5
• Care for Family Needs	1	2	3	4	5
• Prioritizing Your Spouse	1	2	3	4	5
• Parenting Well	1	2	3	4	5
• Creating a Christ-Centered Home	1	2	3	4	5

What is one specific commitment you will make as it relates to your family life?

Recommended Resources

- *Family Worship* by Don Whitney
- *Disciplines of a Godly Family* by Kent Hughes
- *Shepherding a Child's Heart* by Tedd Tripp
- *The War on Children* by John MacArthur



THRIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

TIME MANAGEMENT

1. How well have you been using your time over the past few weeks?
2. What has been your biggest time challenge lately?
3. Does your calendar reflect your biblical priorities (devotions, small group, serving, worship)? Why or why not?
4. What has been the biggest waste of your time recently?
5. How intentional have you been about making time for your spouse?
6. Where do you need greater wisdom in managing your time?
7. How well have you protected your time for rest?

Self-Assessment

How are you doing in the following areas (1 = Need Help and 5 = Doing Well):

• Using Time Well	1	2	3	4	5
• Managing Commitments Well	1	2	3	4	5
• Intentionally Resting	1	2	3	4	5
• Working With Your Spouse	1	2	3	4	5
• Planning and Scheduling	1	2	3	4	5

What is one specific commitment you will make as it relates to your time management?

Recommended Resources

- *Do More Better* by Tim Challies
- *Reset* by David Murray
- *Crazy Busy* by Kevin DeYoung



SEX AND INTIMACY

1. How have you been at pursuing intimacy with your spouse?
2. How open have you been to your spouse for sexual relations the past few weeks?
3. How often are you showing your spouse affection?
4. Have work, parenting, stress, or busyness affected your sexual intimacy?
5. What are you specifically doing to cultivate intimacy in your marriage (emotional, sexual, and spiritual)?
6. How might you be contributing to any obstacles to intimacy?
7. Are there any personal sins that are damaging your closeness to your spouse?

Self-Assessment

How are you doing in the following areas (1 = Need Help and 5 = Doing Well):

• Pursuit of Your Spouse	1	2	3	4	5
• Openness to Sex	1	2	3	4	5
• Affection Toward Spouse	1	2	3	4	5
• Going on Dates	1	2	3	4	5
• Connecting Spiritually	1	2	3	4	5

What is one specific commitment you will make as it relates to your sex and intimacy?

Recommended Resources

- *Sex, Romance, and the Glory of God* by C.J. Mahaney
- *Love That Lasts* by Gary and Betsy Ricucci
- *The Intimate Marriage* by R.C. Sproul



BIBLICAL ROLES [HUSBANDS]

1. How are you leading your family spiritually?
2. What has been your biggest challenge in loving your wife well?
3. How well have you been modeling Christlike service to your family the past few weeks?
4. In what area do you most need to grow as a husband?
5. How have you nurtured, cared for, and sacrificed for your wife over the last month?
6. What is hindering you from being a better husband and father (if applicable)?
7. Where have you seen God grow you as a husband since the last time we met?

Self-Assessment

How are you doing in the following areas (1 = Need Help and 5 = Doing Well):

• Modeling Christlikeness	1	2	3	4	5
• Leading Your Family	1	2	3	4	5
• Sacrificially Serving	1	2	3	4	5
• Pursuing Your Wife	1	2	3	4	5
• Praying for Your Family	1	2	3	4	5

What is one specific commitment you will make as it relates to your biblical role?

Recommended Resources

- *The Exemplary Husband* by Stuart Scott
- *Disciplines of a Godly Man* by Kent Hughes
- *Family Shepherds* by Voddie Baucham Jr.
- *The Masculine Mandate* by Richard Phillips



BIBLICAL ROLES (WIFE)

1. How well have you submitted to your husband's leadership over the past few weeks?
2. Where have you been tempted to usurp this leadership?
3. What has been the biggest challenge to embracing your God-given role?
4. How have you been at supporting and encouraging your husband?
5. Where have you seen God grow you as a wife since the last time we met?
6. What fears do you have that make it difficult to support your husband?
7. In what ways can you honor your role regardless of your husband's actions?

Self-Assessment

How are you doing in the following areas (1 = Need Help and 5 = Doing Well):

• Modeling Christlikeness	1	2	3	4	5
• Sacrificially Serving	1	2	3	4	5
• Submitting to Husband	1	2	3	4	5
• Managing the Household	1	2	3	4	5
• Pursuing Your Husband	1	2	3	4	5

What is one specific commitment you will make as it relates to your biblical role?

Recommended Resources

- *The Excellent Wife* by Martha Peace
- *Helper by Design* by Elyse Fitzpatrick
- *Treasuring Christ When Your Hands Are Full* by Gloria Furman
- *The Feminist Mistake* by Mary Kassian



THRIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

1. How well have you served your spouse over the past week?
2. In what ways have you intentionally served your spouse this week?
3. Have you become passive in serving your spouse?
4. What is one area your spouse could use more support from you?
5. How well have you prioritized your spouse's needs over your own?
6. Where have you been tempted to put your own desires ahead of your spouse's?
7. What prevents you from sacrificially serving your spouse?

Self-Assessment

How are you doing in the following areas (1 = Need Help and 5 = Doing Well):

• Humility	1	2	3	4	5
• Prioritizing Spouse Over Self	1	2	3	4	5
• Intentional Acts of Service	1	2	3	4	5
• Gladly Sacrificing	1	2	3	4	5
• Serving Joyfully	1	2	3	4	5

What is one specific commitment you will make as it relates to your sacrificial service?

Recommended Resources

- *Humility* by C.J. Mahaney
- *The Freedom of Self-Forgetfulness* by Timothy Keller
- *The Mark of a Christian* by Francis Schaeffer





