



Fall 2025 Marriage Study | Week 1

The Purpose, Power, and Paradox of Marriage

Opening (5 minutes)

Icebreaker Question:

"If your picture of marriage when you were younger came from a TV show or movie, which one would it be? Why do you think that picture stuck with you? How has your understanding of marriage changed over time?"

Leader Notes:

- *Transition tip:* After everyone shares, point out how powerful cultural pictures of marriage are, even if we didn't realize they were shaping us. "Tonight we'll look at what God says marriage is meant to be, and how His design is better than any script Hollywood could write."
- *If stuck:* Offer an example (e.g., *Leave It to Beaver* for an idealized family or *The Office* for awkward relationships).

Scripture Focus (5 minutes)

Read aloud together:

- **Genesis 1:26-28**
- **Genesis 2:18-24**
- **Ephesians 5:31-32**

Prompt:

Ask someone to summarize: "What do these passages teach us about why marriage exists?"

Leader Notes:

- Expect answers like: "to be fruitful," "companionship," or "to picture Christ." Affirm, then connect: "All of those flow out of one big truth—marriage exists to display God's image and glory."

- If quiet: Re-read one verse and ask, "What word or phrase stands out? Why?"

Discussion - The Purpose of Marriage (10 minutes)

Key Principle: Marriage exists primarily to reflect God's image and portray His glory.

Questions:

- How do you see culture's definition of marriage (romance, happiness, fulfillment) shaping our expectations—even in the church?
- Where have you seen disappointment when those expectations weren't met?
- How does Scripture challenge or redirect those expectations (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17)?
- If the ultimate purpose of marriage is to reflect God's glory, what practical difference does that make in:
 - the way you love your spouse?
 - the way you view singleness?
 - the way you talk about marriage to kids or friends?

Application Challenge:

Identify one specific moment this week in your marriage (or friendships, if single) where you can intentionally reflect God's character—patience, sacrificial love, forgiveness, encouragement.

Leader Notes:

- *Transition tip:* "If marriage is about God's glory, not just our happiness, then it also means our differences have a purpose. Let's talk about that."

Discussion - The Power of Marriage (10 minutes)

Key Principle: The power of marriage is in the God-designed differences between man and woman.

Questions:

- Genesis 2:18 calls Eve a “helper fit for” Adam. What does that phrase mean? How does it push back against culture’s idea of sameness or competition?
- In marriages you’ve seen, how have differences been both a challenge and a blessing?
- How might these differences reflect the complementary nature of Christ and the church (Eph. 5:22–33)?
- How could our relationships look different if we saw differences as God’s design instead of obstacles?

Application Challenge:

If married, pick one difference between you and your spouse and discuss this week how God might use it for His glory. If single, affirm a difference in a friendship/family relationship instead of resisting it.

Leader Notes:

- *Watch out for pushback:* Some may hear “helper” as demeaning. Clarify: the same Hebrew word is used for God helping His people—it’s a word of strength, not weakness.
- *If conversation goes long:* Bring it back by asking, “So what’s one way you could celebrate—not resent—a difference in your relationship this week?”

Discussion - The Paradox of Marriage (7 minutes)

Key Principle: Marriage is the paradox of two different people becoming “one flesh.”

Questions:

- Genesis 2:24 says a man must “leave” and “hold fast.” What does that look like today in priorities, family boundaries, or rhythms?

- What are common barriers to oneness in marriage (busyness, selfishness, technology, conflict)?
- How does the gospel specifically help overcome those barriers?
- For singles: What does the “one flesh” reality teach us about the deeper oneness we’re meant to have with Christ (John 17:21-23; Eph. 5:32)?

Application Challenge:

Name one barrier to deeper unity in your marriage (or walk with Christ if single). Pray daily this week for grace to take one concrete step toward oneness.

Leader Notes:

- *If stuck:* Share one example: “Some couples struggle with unity because of different schedules or unresolved conflict. Where do you see that tension?”
- *Transition tip:* “So whether married or single, God calls us to pursue oneness—either with a spouse or ultimately with Christ Himself.”

Closing (3 minutes)

Re-read **Matthew 6:33**.

Prayer Focus:

- For marriages in the group to reflect God’s glory.
- For singles to trust God’s good design.
- For all of us to keep God—not happiness, kids, or success—at the center of our relationships.

Leader Notes:

- Consider asking group members to pray aloud in pairs (spouses together, singles paired up). Keeps everyone engaged and practicing application immediately.