

Fall 2025 Marriage Study | Week 10

Married with Children

**Opening Icebreaker (5 minutes)**

**Prompt:**  
“What’s a funny, G-rated ‘kid changed everything’ moment you’ve experienced or witnessed—sleep schedules, car seats, snack explosions, toddler theology?”  
*Leader note:* Keep it light. Tie the laugh to the lesson: kids don’t just enter a marriage; they *reshape* it.

**2) Scripture Reflection (12–15 minutes)**

**Read Genesis 1:28 & Malachi 2:15 (aloud)**

“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it…”  
“Did he not make them one? … And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring.”

**Discussion Questions:**

1. How do these passages shape the *purpose* of marriage beyond companionship and romance?
2. What does “Godly offspring” mean in practical terms for your home this week? (habits, priorities, pace)

**Read Deuteronomy 6:6–7 (aloud)**

“These words… shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children…”

**Discussion Questions:**  
3) Where in your ordinary rhythms (sit, walk, lie down, rise) could Scripture and prayer be woven in more naturally?  
4) What gets in the way—hurry, screens, fatigue—and what’s one micro-habit that could help (2–3 minutes at breakfast, verse-of-the-day on the way to school, prayer at bedtime)?

**Read Psalm 127:3–5 (aloud)**

“Children are a heritage from the LORD… Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them.”

**Discussion Questions:**  
5) When did children feel least like a “heritage” to you? What helped reframe them as a blessing?  
6) How can the group pray for you to receive children (biological, adopted, spiritual) as a *gift* in your current season?

**3) Marriage Tools Across Stages (12–15 minutes)**

**Leader recap (30 seconds):**  
Kids *fuse* a marriage and also *pressurize* it. God’s three tools for oneness—**roles, communication, intimacy**—must adapt across stages (little, school-age, teen).

**A. Roles (4–5 minutes)**

* **Prompt:** Genesis 2 patterns (husband leads/provides; wife helps/nurtures) intensify with children.  
  **Questions:**
* In your current stage, what does *encouraging leadership* look like for husbands (spiritual initiative, decision-sharing, emotional presence)?
* What does *faith-filled help* look like for wives (pointing kids to dad’s shepherding, trusting God amid loss of control, naming needs clearly)?
* Where are you tempted toward bitterness, and what’s one grace-filled practice to resist it?

**B. Communication (4–5 minutes)**

* **Prompt:** “Scheduled talkers” may struggle in the little years; “running talkers” may struggle in teen years.  
  **Questions:**
* Which style are you? How is your current stage exposing its limits?
* Where do your parenting *values* clash (safety vs. risk, structure vs. flexibility, protection vs. independence)?
* Can each spouse articulate one strength and one risk in their own default value?

**C. Intimacy (4–5 minutes)**

* **Prompt:** Intimacy = emotional + spiritual + physical union; each stage affects it differently.  
  **Questions:**
* Little years: What restores romance without adding pressure (non-logistics dates, affection without an agenda, creative rest)?
* School years: What would “rebuild friendship” look like beyond survival?
* Teen years: How will you invest now so friendship remains when kids launch?

**4) Practicals Lab (7–8 minutes)**

**Choose ONE lab (leader’s pick or let pairs choose):**

**Lab 1: Deut. 6 Micro-Rhythms (pairs, 4 minutes; share-out 2 minutes)**

Design a *2–3 minute* daily rhythm for each slot:

* **Sit** (meals): short Scripture + 1 question.
* **Walk** (commute/errands): gratitude or prayer.
* **Lie down/Rise** (bedtime/morning): blessing or verse repeat.  
  Write it down. Start *one* rhythm this week.

**Lab 2: Values Clash** → **Appreciation (pairs, 4 minutes; share-out 2 minutes)**

Each spouse names one parenting value they bring (e.g., “safety,” “adventure”). Then each states:

* One **strength** of their spouse’s value,
* One **risk** if that value dominates,
* One **shared guardrail** (e.g., curfew + planned risk).

**Lab 3: Friendship Sprint (pairs, 4 minutes; share-out 2 minutes)**

Plan a 14-day “friendship sprint”:

* Two no-logistics touchpoints (20 minutes each).
* One screen-free walk.
* One simple date (home counts).
* One prayer together (3 minutes).  
  Put times on calendars now.

**5) Adoption & Spiritual Parenting (3–4 minutes)**

**Leader note (brief):**  
Parenting is ultimately about passing on the **gospel**, not genes. Adoption and spiritual parenting (discipling kids/teens in the church) are “Plan A” ways to make worshippers.

**Questions:**

* How might your home (or calendar) reflect openness to adoption/foster/spiritual parenting in this season?
* What’s one next step (info meeting, supporting a foster family, mentoring a teen, serving in children’s ministry)?

**6) Closing Scripture & Prayer (3–5 minutes)**

**Read Song of Songs 8:6–7 (aloud)**

“Set me as a seal upon your heart… for love is strong as death… Its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the LORD…”

**Pray:**

* For love to deepen as kids arrive, grow, and launch.
* For husbands to lead with courage and tenderness; for wives to help with faith and wisdom.
* For homes marked by Scripture, prayer, laughter, and repentance.
* For children (biological, adopted, spiritual) to become worshippers who love Jesus.

**Optional Homework (15–30 minutes this week)**

1. **Stage Plan (1 page):** Name your family’s current stage (little, school-age, teen, mixed). For **roles, communication, intimacy**, write one pressure + one practice for the next 30 days.
2. **Deut. 6 Card:** On an index card, write your one daily micro-rhythm (time/place/what you’ll do). Tape it where you’ll use it.
3. **Parenting Values Exchange:** Each spouse writes their top two parenting values with one fear underneath. Exchange, discuss, pray.
4. **Friendship Sprint Start:** Put the two touchpoints and one walk on the calendar. Protect them.
5. **Adoption/Spiritual Parenting Step:** Choose one tangible act (attend info session, sign up to serve with kids/teens, deliver a meal to a foster family, host a student for lunch).

**Leader Tips**

* Keep tone hopeful and grace-filled; celebrate small wins.
* Stay concrete: “When will you do that?” “What’s the *first* step?”
* Normalize seasons. Remind couples: success = **portrayal** (seeing and showing God’s goodness), not production or perfection.
* End on prayer every time.