



# Fall 2025 Marriage Study | Week 3

## Marriage & Sin

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### Opening (5 minutes)

#### Icebreaker Question:

"Think about the first argument you can remember in your marriage (or in a close friendship if you're single). Don't share the details – just the category. Was it about money? Time? Chores? Miscommunication? Something else?"

#### Leader Notes:

- Keep this lighthearted at first—laughter helps lower defenses.
- *Transition:* "Isn't it interesting how quickly sin shows up in even our closest relationships? Tonight we're going to look at how Genesis 3 helps us understand why that happens—and how the gospel brings hope."
- If singles feel excluded, reframe as: "Think about the first conflict in a close friendship, sibling relationship, or roommate situation."

### Scripture Focus (5 minutes)

Read aloud together:

- **Genesis 3:1-7** – Sin's arrival.
- **Genesis 3:8-13** – Hiding and blame-shifting.
- **Genesis 3:14-19** – The curse.

#### Group Prompt:

Ask: "What stands out about how sin changes relationships with God and with each other?"

#### Leader Notes:

- If group stalls: ask, "What did Adam and Eve do differently after sin than before? How did their relationship with God shift?"

- Reinforce: Sin fractures both our vertical (God) and horizontal (each other) relationships.

### **Discussion - Sin's Arrival (10 minutes)**

**Key Principle:** Sin disputes God's goodness and God's truth.

#### **Questions:**

- Satan's first tactic was: *"Did God really say...?"* What are some modern *"Did God really say...?"* lies couples (or singles) face today? (e.g., "Marriage should always make me happy," "Sex outside marriage is no big deal," "You'll never change.")
- How does sin show up as distrust of God's goodness in marriage? (Think: control, selfishness, resentment, bitterness.)
- Why is regular time in God's Word so crucial for protecting a marriage (or any close relationship) against lies?

#### **Application Challenge:**

This week, identify one "lie" that creeps into your thinking about marriage or singleness. Write it down. Then counter it with a specific truth from Scripture (e.g., lie: *"I'll never be satisfied."* truth: *Psalm 16:11 – In His presence is fullness of joy.*).

#### **Leader Notes:**

- If answers are shallow, push gently: *"What's a lie you've personally been tempted to believe?"*
- Consider giving one concrete example yourself to model vulnerability.

### **Discussion - Sin's Effect (10 minutes)**

**Key Principle:** Sin damages our relationship with God and with others.

#### **Questions:**

- Why do we tend to hide sin instead of bringing it into the light? (fear, shame, pride)

- In marriage, why is it so tempting to blame your spouse instead of owning your own sin?
- What's the difference between compassionately addressing a spouse's sin and condemning them for it? What role does the gospel play in that?

### **Application Challenge:**

Practice gospel honesty this week. Share one area of weakness or struggle with your spouse (or a trusted friend if single). Invite prayer and encouragement instead of hiding.

### **Leader Notes:**

- If discussion gets tense: remind the group this is not about airing marital grievances publicly. Encourage personal reflection and safe accountability.
- Key transition: *"Genesis 3 doesn't end with blame—it moves to God's judgment and His promise of hope. Let's talk about that."*

### **Discussion - Sin's Curse (7 minutes)**

**Key Principle:** The Fall turned joyful submission and loving leadership into power struggles – but the gospel gives hope.

### **Questions:**

- Where do you see the "battle of the sexes" today (control vs. passivity, superiority vs. resentment)?
- Genesis 3:15 promises the serpent's defeat through Christ. How does that promise give us hope when we feel stuck in weakness or conflict?
- Why must we view marriage not primarily by what it *produces* (kids, companionship, stability) but by what it *portrays* (the gospel story of Christ and His church)?

### **Application Challenge:**

Instead of resenting a weakness in your spouse (or a close friend/family member if single), ask: *"How might God use this weakness to shape me into Christlikeness?"*

**Leader Notes:**

- Anticipate pushback: People may want to vent about frustrations. Redirect toward: *"Yes, but how could God use that frustration for your growth in humility, patience, or grace?"*

**Closing (3 minutes)**

Re-read **Psalm 51:4**:

*"Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight."*

**Prayer Points:**

- Confess where you've hidden sin or shifted blame.
- Ask for courage to face sin honestly and compassion to respond graciously to others' sin.
- Thank God for Christ, who crushed the serpent's head and makes real healing possible.

**Leader Notes:**

- Suggested prayer format: short time of silent confession, then close with a spoken prayer of thanksgiving for the gospel. This balances honesty with hope.