

LEADER GUIDE – SESSION 4

About this session: MARRIAGE

Marriage can be a joyful or a painful topic for people. Perhaps, even both at the same time. As the discussion takes place, it could be beneficial to remind your group of the points from "Making the Most of Your Time Together" on Week 1 or your group agreement. If something painful does come up during the discussion, simply keep a safe group environment by listening well, and if appropriate, encourage and pray for them. If something seems like it may need more pastoral care, let your Coach or the Groups Pastor know, or direct them to the Care Request form (Appendix #7).

"Wait! What about the singles in my group?"

Great question. In fact, maybe there are ONLY singles in your group -- if that's the case and you want to skip this week, that's okay... But I hope you don't make that decision too quickly.

While people in your group may not be married, everyone has personal experience observing or being affected by marriage in one way or another. Like most relationships, it not only affects those who are in it but also those who are around it -- *for better or for worse*.

As the Body of Christ, we are a community --a network of relationships-- that supports and is impacted by each other in more ways than one. For that reason, both healthy and struggling marriages have an impact on and are impacted by the community they are in. Even the Apostle Paul (who encouraged people to be single in his letter to Corinth) wrote deliberately to the churches about the importance of healthy marriages in their community. So whether single, married, or other, as members of the Body of Christ, we all have the opportunity to build up the Body by adding value to the lives and relationships around us, including marriages.

Getting Started

If you haven't yet, let your group know that you will be talking about marriage. If your group has people who are single, acknowledge that it might not seem like it applies directly to them and encourage them to engage in talking about God's heart for marriage in the Church.

**Ice Breaker Idea: Who is one of your favorite TV Show married couples and why?
(If your group is large, you can answer this question in groups of 2-3)**

Some questions may be best discussed in "sub-groups" (i.e. 2-4) because it gives everyone a chance to share while keeping the time frame shorter. This is great for icebreakers, and it can also be used throughout the rest of the discussion as needed.

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Take It In (Watch the Video):

- *write out your notes*

Pray Together
 Play Together
 Lay Together
 Getaway Together
 Belay Each Other
 Slay Together
 Stay Together

Talk About it!

Remember... This is just a tool to facilitate discussion. Feel no pressure to answer all of them.

1. Read **Hebrews 13:4** and discuss

- From what you have experienced or observed: what are some of the great things about being married when a marriage is going well? What are some of the pitfalls that can happen to a marriage?
- Share about a couple you see that has a healthy marriage - maybe not perfect, but healthy. What makes it that way, as far as you can tell?

2. Read **Matthew 19:4-6** and discuss

- How do these words of Jesus regarding marriage affect you or resonate with you?

3. Read **Matthew 19:5-6** and discuss

- Pastor John shared about the value of 'the pursuit' in marriage; Why is it so vital to continue the pursuit? What does that look like for both a husband and for a wife? What is the relationship between what you pursue, and what you become, especially as pertains to marriage?

4. Read **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** and discuss

- What could a married couple do to become closer friends?

5. Read **1 Corinthians 7:3** and discuss

- Why is 'the porcupine principle' (engaging in frequent, fulfilling physical intimacy) so important in marriage? What makes it difficult to become better lovers? What are some choices a husband and wife could make to move in that direction?

6. Read **1 Peter 3:7** & **Ephesians 5:33** and discuss

- How can a husband and a wife grow to become stronger supporters of each other and what kind of good could this lead to?