

CREATING A

COVENANT MARRIAGE

Pinedale Christian Church Workbook

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SESSION 1

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Orientation

Welcome to the Course

How to use this workbook:

Each session follows the same pattern: Teaching Notes, Individual Reflection, Couple Discussion, and a Practice Exercise.

> The Teaching Notes section is a guided-notes page. Blanks are provided so you can fill in the key words and phrases as you watch each video. There are no hidden tricks. Everything you need is spoken in the session itself.

Work through the Individual Reflection questions privately before sharing with your spouse.

There are no correct answer; only honest ones.

Give each other open space to write before you begin talking.

Resources

These two resources will greatly contribute to your knowledge and understanding of your marriage. They serve as the foundation on which we will build over the next six weeks.

Relationship Blueprint Quiz

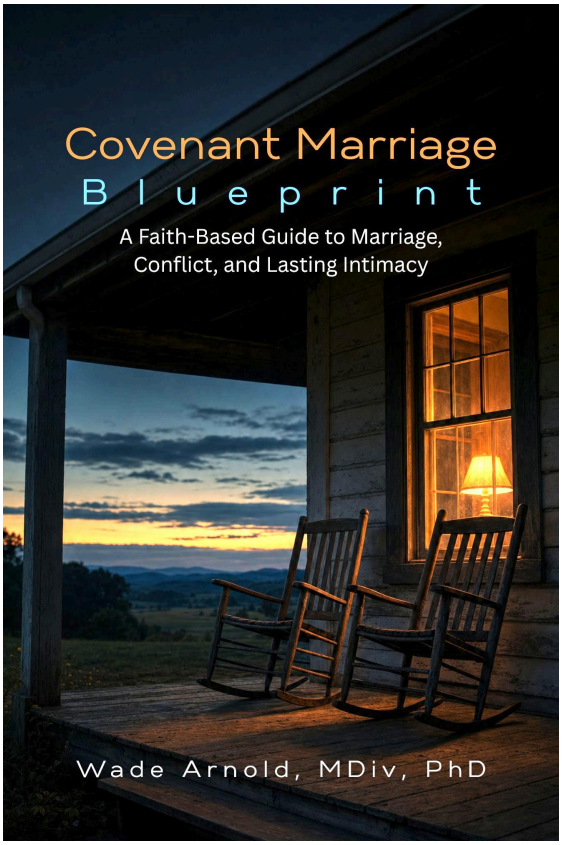
Use this QR code to take the Relationship Blueprint Quiz. When you get your quiz results (e.g. Closeness Seeker & Distance Keeper), scan the code below for the Covenant Marriage Blueprint Guide.

Covenant Marriage Blueprint Guide

Scan the QR code to the left. You will be taken to my online bookstore. Search for your combination of Relationship Blueprints on the page. Add your Blueprint Guide to the Cart. Click Checkout. On the Checkout page, use the code PCC for a 100% discount.

Books By Wade

Covenant Marriage Blueprint



This book pulls back the curtain on what is happening beneath the surface of your marriage that keeps the cycles of conflict and disconnecion.

You followed the steps. You showed up, tried hard, prayed for change. But the distance grew, the patterns kept repeating, and you started to wonder if this is just what marriage is now.

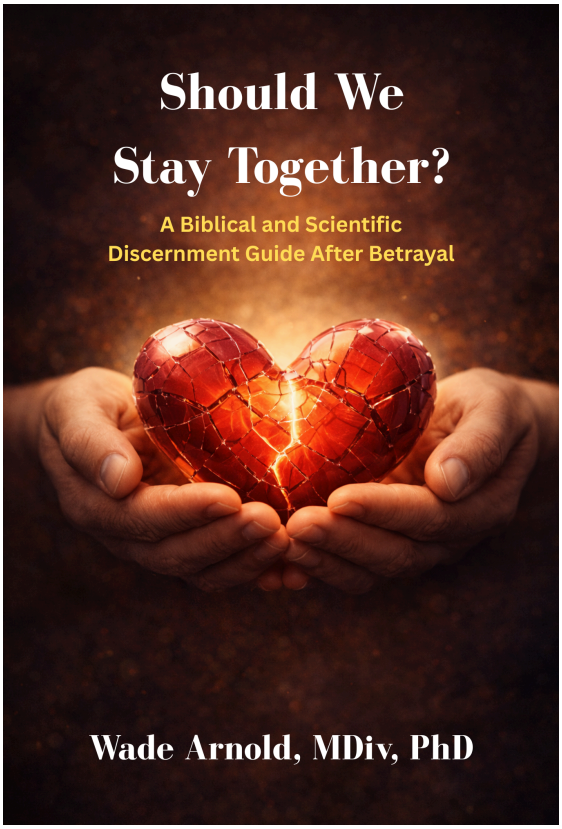
It doesn't have to be.

Covenant Marriage Blueprint is a faith-based guide to what's really happening beneath your conflicts, your distance, and your disconnection, and what God designed marriage to become.

You'll learn to understand the patterns driving your conflict and withdrawal, see how God uses marriage as a place spiritual formation, and take practical steps toward closeness, trust, and lasting change.

This book doesn't promise a perfect marriage. It points to something better: a marriage shaped by Christ, rooted in security, and place of becoming.

Should We Stay Together?



You never expected to be asking this question.

After betrayal, broken trust, or deep relational harm, everything feels uncertain: your marriage, your faith, and even your sense of direction. You're left wondering what faithfulness looks like now.

Should we stay together… or not?

This book will not pressure you to save your marriage.

It will not rush you toward divorce.

And it will not offer shallow spiritual answers that ignore real pain.

Should We Stay Together? is a biblically grounded, trauma-aware guide designed to help you regain clarity and discern your next step with wisdom and integrity.

Inside, you'll learn how to:

• Understand why betrayal affects your emotions, body, and faith so deeply

• Distinguish normal marital struggles from covenant-threatening harm

• Clarify what Scripture actually teaches about adultery, abandonment, abuse, and repentance

• Discern when restoration may be possible, and when release may be wise

• Move forward without fear, pressure, or spiritual guilt

This book doesn't promise a specific outcome for your marriage.

It promises something better.

Clarity without pressure.

Wisdom without shame.

A path forward rooted in God's compassion and truth.

If you're standing at a crossroads and don't know what to do next, this is a safe place to begin.

Teaching Notes

Use this section to capture key ideas from the video as you watch.

✦ *What This Course Is*

The Covenant Marriage Blueprint Mini-Course is built on a simple but demanding premise: marriage was designed not primarily for your comfort, but for your formation. The difficulty in your marriage is not evidence that something has gone wrong. It is, more often, evidence that something is being made.

This course gives you three things:

1. A name for your relational blueprint: the pattern you bring into marriage, shaped long before your wedding day
2. A vocabulary for your cycle: what happens when two blueprints meet under pressure
3. A set of practice disciplines: not steps in a program, but ongoing practices for the long arc of formation

✦ *What This Course Is Not*

This course is not a substitute for counseling or therapy. If your marriage is in active crisis, this material can be a helpful companion to professional support, but it is not a replacement for it.

This course is not a quick fix. The patterns described here formed over years. They change over years. What changes first is not the pattern itself; it is the space between the trigger and the response.

This course does not start with your spouse. It starts with you. The most useful question is not 'what is wrong with my partner?' It's, 'what am I carrying, and what does it cost the person I married?'

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"This course does not start with your spouse. It starts with you."

SESSION 1

The Discipleship of Marriage

Guided Notes: fill in each blank as you hear it in the video.

✦ *What You Were Told Marriage Was For*

Most people enter marriage carrying an inherited picture of what it's supposed to feel like organized around a common center: love, companionship, happiness, and _____.

When a marriage stops delivering those things consistently, the conclusion is that something has _____. That conclusion is a product of the wrong _____.

✦ *What Scripture Says Marriage Is For*

Scripture does not present marriage primarily as a _____ delivery system. It presents marriage as a _____ relationship-one of the primary instruments God uses to make _____.

> *"God does not primarily use marriage to make you _____. He uses it to make you _____."*

✦ *Genesis 2: Naked and Not Ashamed*

Genesis 2:25, "And the man and his wife were both _____ and were not _____."

This describes the original condition of marriage before _____ entered and the _____ began.

It describes a relationship where the fear of being fully known has been _____ where two people can be seen entirely and remain.

✦ *Yada: The Knowing That Costs Something*

The Hebrew word for “know” is _____. It is not primarily cognitive; it is not knowing about someone, but knowing someone through sustained, _____ proximity.

This same word appears in Psalm ___ (“O Lord, you have searched me and known me”).

Yada is not a feeling. It is a _____. Being fully known requires giving up the protection of being _____ known.

✦ *Ephesians 5: The Imaging Relationship*

Ephesians 5:25–27, “Husbands, love your wives, as _____ loved the _____ and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her...”

The husband-wife relationship is designed to _____ the Christ-church covenant, to participate in the same dynamic: self-giving love that moves toward, that sanctifies, that does not abandon when the cost becomes apparent.

The moments in your marriage when self-emptying is most required are not _____ to the Christian life. They are the Christian life, practiced in the most _____ arena available.

✦ *Marriage Is the Primary Discipleship Relationship*

A disciple is someone who is with Jesus, learning to be like Jesus, for the sake of others. Marriage operationalizes all three:

Being with, sustained, daily, _____ proximity. A covenant marriage has no managed distance.

Learning to be like Jesus. The specific _____ of self-giving love that your spouse reveals in you are the curriculum.

For the sake of others. A marriage that is being genuinely formed does not turn _____. It becomes a _____.

✦ *Difficulty Is the Curriculum*

Romans 5:3–4, "We rejoice in our _____, knowing that suffering produces _____, and endurance produces _____, and character produces _____."

The difficulty in your marriage is not evidence that something has gone wrong. It is the _____ for the person you are becoming.

✦ *The Four Couples*

Four composite couples appear throughout this course. Fill in each pairing and its blueprint match as it is introduced.

Couple	**Blueprint Pairing**
_____ & _____	Distance Keeper meets Closeness Seeker. Thirty-one years of marriage.
_____ & _____	Closeness Seeker meets Distance Keeper. Earlier in the work.
_____ & _____	Mixed Signals meets Confidently Connected.
_____ & _____	A Confidently Connected pairing. Twelve years in.

Notice which story feels most familiar. That recognition is usually significant.

Individual Reflection

Work through these questions privately before sharing with your spouse. Write what is actually true for you, not what you wish were true, or what you think your spouse wants to hear. You will have an opportunity to share in the Couple Discussion section.

1 This session opens with the claim that God uses marriage not primarily to make you happy, but to make you holy. What is your honest gut reaction to that? Where do you feel resistance, and where does it resonate?

2 Think about the picture of marriage you carried into your wedding day. Where did that picture come from? How does it compare to what the session describes as Scripture's account of what marriage is for?

3 Genesis 2:25 describes two people fully known, fully exposed, and not ashamed. On a scale of 1 to 10, how far does your marriage currently feel from that description? What is the primary thing standing in the distance?

4 The session says the person God uses most consistently to form you is your spouse, and that the areas where your spouse most consistently frustrates you are the leading edge of your formation, not problems with the marriage. Name one specific frustration. What might it be forming in you?

5 Of the four couples introduced in this session, Marcus & Diane, Angela & Joel, Rafael & Simone, James & Naomi, which story produced the most recognition in you, and why?

Couple Discussion

Put your phones away. Give each other at least 30 uninterrupted minutes. Take turns sharing: one person speaks while the other listens. No problem-solving, no rebuttal. If a question opens something tender, slow down. You do not have to resolve it tonight. The goal of this conversation is understanding, not agreement.

1 Share your answers to Individual Reflection question 1. Where did you each feel resistance to the idea that marriage is primarily for formation? Where did it land differently for each of you? Listen for the differences without trying to convince each other.

2 Share the picture of marriage you each carried into your wedding day. Where it came from, what it promised, what it assumed. After you have both shared, ask each other: how has that picture held up? Where has it most clearly failed to account for what marriage actually requires?

3 The session names a specific claim: the person who most reveals where you are not yet formed is your spouse. Share your answer to Individual Reflection question 4; the frustration and what it might be forming. Listen to your spouse's answer without explaining yourself or defending your behavior. Simply receive it.

4 Which couple's story felt most familiar to you, and why? Share your answers and notice whether you identified with the same couple or different ones. If different, what does that tell you about how each of you is experiencing the marriage?

5 Complete this sentence together, out loud, taking turns: "One thing I am hoping this course will change about our marriage is..." Then: "One thing I am afraid this course will ask of me is..."

Solo Attenders: The Discipleship of Marriage

Marriage Is for Formation, Not Comfort

> *This session asks where your picture of marriage came from, and proposes that difficulty in marriage is not a sign something has gone wrong. It is curriculum. You do not need to be married for that claim to apply to you. The relationships that have shaped and challenged you so far- family, friendship, past dating relationships-have already been doing some of this work. Use them as your material.*

Individual Reflection: Solo Version

1. Where did your picture of a good marriage come from? Whose marriage did you watch most closely growing up, and what did it teach you, accurately or not, about what marriage is supposed to feel like?
2. This session teaches that difficulty in a relationship is not evidence that something has gone wrong, it is the curriculum for the person you are becoming. Think of the closest relationship you have had, in your family, a friendship, or a past dating relationship. What difficulty in that relationship revealed something in you that you needed to see?
3. Finish this sentence honestly: “The version of marriage I have been promised by culture, church, family, or my own imagination, and what I now suspect marriage actually requires are different in this specific way…”
4. If God is already forming you before you are in a covenant, what do you think this season, whether single, dating, or waiting, is currently forming in you?

Peer Activity: Together Time Replacement

Pair with another solo attendee. Give each other at least 10 uninterrupted minutes. Take turns sharing your answers to questions 1 and 3 only: the listener’s only job is to understand, not to respond, explain, or fix.

After you have both shared, discuss together: Where are our pictures of what marriage is for most alike, and where are they most different? What does that tell you about how each of you was formed?

Before the Next Session

Before Session 2: Take the CMB Assessment individually, at the same link given to couples: go.wadearnoldcoaching.com/rbq-quiz or the QR code on page 3. Naming your own blueprint matters as much for you as it does for anyone already married. It is information you will carry into every close relationship you have, including a future marriage.

Practice Exercise

Complete this exercise before Session 2. It takes approximately 20 minutes, individually, then together.

The Formation Inventory

Every person enters marriage with an inherited theology of marriage-a set of mostly unexamined beliefs about what marriage is for, what it should feel like, and what it means when it doesn't. Most of those beliefs were absorbed before we could evaluate them. This exercise surfaces them.

✦ *Step 1: Individual (10 minutes, done separately)*

Answer the following questions in writing. Be specific. Vague answers produce vague insight.

1 When you got married, what did you believe a good marriage would feel like most of the time? Describe it in concrete terms, not just the feeling, but what daily life would look like.

2 Looking back, where do you think that belief came from? Name the specific source (e.g. a parent's marriage, a church teaching, a romantic ideal, a prior relationship).

3 This session proposes that the difficulty in your marriage is not evidence that something has gone wrong;it is the curriculum for the person you are becoming. Name one specific area of difficulty in your marriage. Then finish this sentence: the person this difficulty might be forming me into is…

4 Finish this sentence honestly: the version of marriage I was promised and the marriage I actually have are different in this specific way…

✦ *Step 2: Together (10 minutes)*

Sit together with your individual responses. Take turns reading your answers to questions 1 and 3 only. The listener's only job is to understand, not to respond, explain, or defend.

Where are our pictures of what marriage is for most different from each other, and where are they most the same?

Write what you notice from that conversation below.

✦ *Step 3: Before Session 2*

Take the CMB Assessment individually before the next session, if either of you has not already done so. This is the foundation for Session 2, which introduces the four relational blueprints in depth.

Assessment link: use the QR code on page 3

Do not discuss your results with your spouse until you have watched Session 2 together. The session will give you the language you need to have that conversation well.

Session Notes

Use this space for anything else from the session you want to capture: questions that came up, things that surprised you, or observations about yourself or your marriage that you want to return to.