

—— Marriage Ministry ——

Marriage Reflection Guide



Peninsula Community Chapel

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The Purpose of Marriage

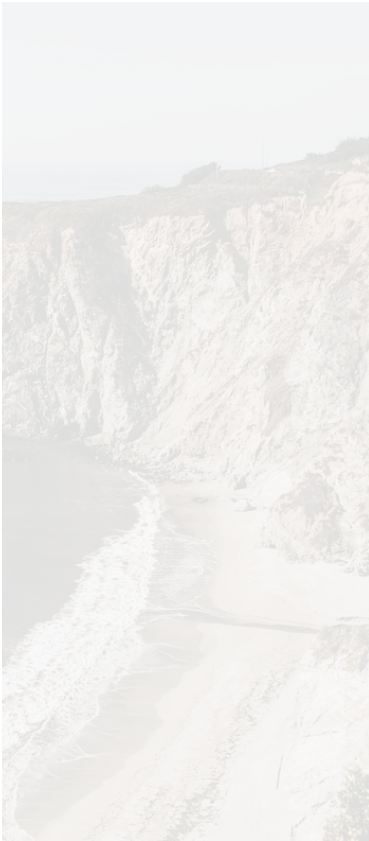
& THE PURPOSE OF THIS REFLECTION GUIDE



When God joins a couple together in marriage, the one flesh union is the enduring root from which the marriage vine grows and regrows in every season of life together. For in this earthly union, we reflect the love of God and stand as a sign of his love in the world. *– Aaron Sironi*

The purpose of marriage is to portray the gospel of Christ by mirroring his covenant love for the Church in the union of husband and wife. Our marriages have a purpose bigger than ourselves and living out this purpose is one of life's greatest gifts - we are married for God!

Although God's design for marriage is good, our sin affects every aspect of this relationship, and therefore, we struggle to live out the grand purpose and uphold this covenantal commitment. We need his grace and must depend on his help to live out our marriage covenant in the way God intended us to. As Aaron Sironi mentions above, the covenant commitment of marriage is the context in which our marriage grows in every season of life. So, as faithful stewards of this covenant and as followers of Christ, we must work to strengthen, prune, and grow our marriages. The two reflection guides below can serve as a "tool" to do just that. May these questions provide aid, direction, and grace as you do the worthy work of strengthening your marriage for his glory!



How to Use

The **Shorter Guide** consists of the core questions from each section of the longer guide. The **Longer Guide** can be used as a tool for each individual to prayerfully work through on your own and then with your spouse.

Use this as a tool for pruning and growth in your marriage, not as an assignment to complete.

When discussing the Shorter Guide: Use this in the context of a date, a longer car ride, an evening after the kids go to bed, or a long walk. This is meant to provide some questions to encourage your marriage, bring up areas for growth, and strengthen oneness. Feel free to use the longer guide to supplement questions in sections which need more attention.

When discussing the Longer Guide: Complete this guide individually, then work through section by section with your spouse over the course of several meetings. Try and work through the same sections simultaneously. If you sense potential conflict or hurt when working through some sensitive areas of your relationship, consider discussing with a marriage mentor couple, trusted friends, or with a counselor.

Exercise the fruits of the Spirit, listen attentively, avoid interrupting, and don't hesitate to take breaks throughout.

Shorter Reflection Guide

1. What are some things you would like to build up or cultivate in your marriage to make it stronger?
 - a. What is one habit you are already doing each day to build up your marriage? Brainstorm with your spouse one habit you could add to help each of you feel loved.
2. How does your understanding of God's purpose for marriage - to put the covenantal picture of Christ and his Church on display - shape your relationship in this season?
3. What is one difference between you and your spouse that has changed you for the better? Or, what is one that could change you for the better if you let it?
4. Think about the ways you share your emotions and resolve disagreements in your marriage. What would it look like to bring grace and truth, partnered with love (Eph. 4:15) into those moments?
5. Do you listen to one another with patience and understanding? Are you quick to defend yourself?
6. How can you remind yourselves of the Gospel truth of Jesus' forgiveness together?

Shorter Reflection Guide

7. Are you intentional about nurturing your emotional and physical intimacy, alongside your friendship?
8. What would it look to like to honor one another's families in this current season of life?
9. Where do you see some signs of drought in your marriage: disunity, misunderstanding, separation, physical dysfunction, or conflict? How can you work to refresh that area of connection?
10. When you meditate on God's grace and the possibilities of what he can do in your life and circumstances, what are the hopes you have for your marriage?

Notes:

Longer Reflection Guide

ONENESS

1. In this season of life, how would you describe your relationship with God?
2. How are your functional idols—those things you look to for meaning or you worship with your time and treasure—affecting your spouse?
3. What would it look like to grow closer to God as a couple?
4. What are some things you would like to build up or cultivate in your marriage to make it stronger?
5. What is one habit you are already doing each day to build up your marriage? Brainstorm with your spouse one habit you could add to help each of you feel loved.
6. What are some things you would like to tear down or dig up in your marriage to make it stronger?
7. Identify a current habit that is tearing down your marriage. What new patterns or systems of accountability could you put in place to correct the problem?
8. When you meditate on God's grace and the possibilities of what he can do in your life and circumstances, what are the hopes you have for your marriage?

Longer Reflection Guide

INTIMACY

1. Where do you see some signs of drought in your marriage: disunity, misunderstanding, separation, physical dysfunction, or conflict? Which ones might you be headed toward and how can you work to refresh that area of connection?
2. How often do you pray for your spouse? For your marriage? When was the last time you prayed with your spouse? Are you satisfied with those answers, and if not, how might you work together to change that pattern?
3. How do you see physical intimacy as a gift from God that reflects the marriage covenant and your love for one another?
4. Are you intentional about nurturing your emotional intimacy and friendship? What does that look like?
5. What would it look like to better honor one another's needs, desires, and vulnerabilities in these areas?
6. If you had one suggestion for improving the way you as a couple express affection, what would that be?

Longer Reflection Guide

CONFLICT & COMMUNICATION

1. Does your marriage exhibit these two essential qualities: the humility of approachability & the courage of loving honesty? When was the last time you and your spouse had a conversation that displayed these characteristics? How can you cultivate them?
2. What are the benefits of forgiveness in your marriage? How have you seen these play out in your own marriage?
3. What would it look like to bring grace and truth, with love (Eph. 4:15) into the way you share your emotions and resolve disagreements in your relationship?
4. Do you listen to one another with patience and understanding? Are you quick to defend yourself?
5. How might building your trust in God help you be a better marriage partner?
6. How would your marriage change if you viewed the troubles you face as tools of God's grace to shape you into the person and couple he wants you to be?
7. How does the Gospel of Jesus Christ contain the key to our forgiveness in marriage? And, how can you remind yourself of this Gospel Truth together?

Longer Reflection Guide

EVERYDAY LIFE

1. What is the number-one thing that first attracted you to your spouse?
2. What fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) does your marriage need the most right now? What is one practical thing you will do this week to serve your spouse in love?
3. Are you sharing everyday responsibilities in a way that honors the Lord and one another?
4. Are you united in your spiritual goals for your family, and do your daily choices reflect those goals?
5. How does the way you spend or don't spend money reflect your priorities? Are you in agreement with how you manage your finances?
6. Do we make time for meaningful conversations beyond schedules, chores, and responsibilities?
7. What is one way you can celebrate the differences between you and your spouse this week?
8. What is one difference between you and your spouse that has changed you for the better? Or, what is one that could change you for the better if you let it?
9. Are you carving out quality time with one another regularly, even in the busyness of daily life? If not, what would it look like to take steps toward that?

Longer Reflection Guide

FAMILY

1. What would it look to like to honor one another's families in this current season of life?
2. Do you have healthy boundaries with extended family that protect and strengthen your marriage?
3. Are there areas that you need to talk through when it comes to holidays, visits, childcare, or relational dynamics?
4. How are you modeling Christ-like love, patience, and consistency in parenting?
5. How would you describe your parenting roles? Are you in agreement with how this plays out in the everyday?
6. Is disciplining your children an area of unity between the two of you? And if not, what would steps of unity look like in this area?
7. What's a personal area of growth you would like to take in this season of parenting?



Notes: