



Communication

Getting Started

- *Larger LIFEGroups may consider splitting into same gender groups in order to facilitate more meaningful discussion.*
- *Groups will not have enough time to discuss every question. Leaders are encouraged to skip questions and make substitutions based on what's best for their group.*

Warm Ups (15 Min)

- Everyone go around and share a “High” from the week and a “Low” from the week.
- What is a silly thing you remember fighting about as a couple? Or What is one way you feel loved or respected?

Community Note (1 Min)

- In the midst of a marriage series, some people might ask: “Why should singles care?”
 - a. Studies show that the vast majority of people eventually get married - and a series like this can help prepare people for a future relationship.
 - b. Our health as the body of Christ depends on all people pouring into one another - and leaning into a study on marriage will no doubt give you valuable insight that you can use to support the married couples around you.
 - c. This series contains great info that can be applied beyond the marriage relationship.
- For a great article on leaning into your singleness, visit <https://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/lead-out-of-your-singleness/>

Scripture Study (30 Min)

- Emerson and Sarah Eggerichs (Authors of “Love and Respect”) give us an insightful picture of something that all couples experience at one time or another. The Eggerichs believe that the

symptom of couple's most difficult challenges in marriage can be boiled down to what they call the Crazy Cycle. The following was written by Roy and Devra Wooten:

- "He needs to feel respected. When he feels disrespected, he has a natural tendency to react in ways that feel unloving to his wife. When he acts in unloving ways toward his wife, she is robbed of what she needs: love.
- She needs to feel loved. When she feels unloved, she has a natural tendency to react in ways that feel disrespectful to her husband. When she acts in disrespectful ways toward her husband, he is robbed of what he needs: respect."
- The Eggerich's base their book on Ephesians 5:33: "let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband." Take a moment and reflect upon the wisdom of this verse for your marriage.
- *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you. Romans 12:2 - (NLT)*
- *"So don't sit around on your hands! No more dragging your feet! Clear the path for long-distance runners so no one will trip and fall, so no one will step in a hole and sprain an ankle. Help each other out. And run for it! Work at getting along with each other and with God. Otherwise you'll never get so much as a glimpse of God. Make sure no one gets left out of God's generosity. Keep a sharp eye out for weeds of bitter discontent. A thistle or two gone to seed can ruin a whole garden in no time." Hebrews 12-17 (MSG)*
- Discuss one of these three Myths of Marriage:
 - Myth #1: Everything will get better in time.
 - Myth #2: Marriage will make me happy.
 - Myth #3: A spouse will complete me.
- Discuss one of these three phrases:
 - "Being righteous over being right."
 - Conflict is inevitable; it is simply part of living together.
 - Winning or losing during conflict is not the goal.
- "Breaking the Crazy Cycle In Your Marriage"

- Stepping out of The Crazy Cycle requires courage. It means doing everything you can to meet the needs of your spouse when you are not getting your needs met. Here are some basic steps to take to break The Crazy Cycle in your marriage.
- Pray – Invite God into The Crazy Cycle problem. Ask Him for strength and courage to take action to meet your spouse’s needs.
- Go First – Place the value of your marriage above how you feel at the moment. Humbly take action to meet your spouse’s needs.
- No Expectations – Take action without any quid pro quo. Do not expect anything different from your spouse. Hope for the best but keep your expectations low. Do what you need to do to break the cycle without any guarantee that it will work.
- Consistently Sustain Action – Stay with your approach for a few weeks to break the cycle. Do not try one moment or one day. Instead try a few weeks of sustained action meeting your spouse’s needs.
- Get Help If You Need It – If you cannot break the cycle, do not let it continue until your marriage is dissolved. Instead take decisive action to get professional help.”
- “God’s way of communicating in marriage is to talk with words of unconditional love and respect.
 - The heart of the wise instructs his mouth and adds persuasiveness to his lips. — Proverbs 16:23
- Just about every couple knows what it is like to get into a conflict that escalates into a full-blown argument and they are not sure why it happened. Spouses tend to write off these kinds of arguments, saying, “If only she weren’t so sensitive” or “If only he weren’t so touchy.” But those aren’t the real issues at all.
- Conflict inevitably happens when spouses focus on their own needs and overlook the needs of the other. That’s when the issues arise. The wife needs love; she is not trying to be disrespectful. The husband needs respect; he is not trying to be unloving. And once the Love and Respect couple grasps a basic principle — that the apparent issue is not the real issue at all — they are on their way to cracking the communication code.
- Oneness is, and it is gained when the wife feels loved by her husband and the husband feels respected by his wife. They bond with each other; two, indeed, become one.”
- *James 5:16 says: “Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.” In every conflict one or both (depending on the issue) must go first and confess their sin or apologize for their fault. This is called repentance. This kind of humility brings healing in marriages. Reflect on the wisdom of God with regards to repentance for your marriage.*
- *“A good marriage is the union of two good forgivers.” -Ruth Graham*

- *Ephesians 5:32 says: "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." How does Christ's forgiveness towards you impact your willingness to forgive your spouse?*

Group Prayer (15 Min)

Trios (20 Min)

Same gender groups of three. If numbers are uneven, go to groups of two.

- **Spiritual Velocity:**

- How did you see God at work in your life this week?
- What has God been teaching you in His Word as you've encountered it in this week's Life Journal readings, Sunday message, or LIFEGroup study?
- What's an area of your life in which you know you need to repent or grow? Is there an area of your life in which you'd like a friend to check in on you periodically?

- **Joining Jesus on His Mission:**

- What kind of conversations are you having with non-Christians? How's your 3-2-1 challenge going? Share about connections you're building and spiritual conversations you're having with non-believing neighbors and friends.
- List the names of non-Christians in your life that you can pray for:

- What good can we do around here? (Missional party? Service project?)
- How can we help each other, our neighbors, and our city in prayer?