



Small Group Discussion Guide

Relationship Science Series: Week 4

S.T.R.O.N.G.

Building a strong marriage requires intentional effort and a commitment to embodying principles that foster a healthy, Christ-centered relationship. The S.T.R.O.N.G. framework outlines six key components:

1. **Submitted**

Mutual submission is foundational in marriage. Ephesians 5:21 instructs couples to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." This means both spouses prioritize each other's needs, emulating Christ's humility and service. Jesus demonstrated this by washing His disciples' feet, showing that true leadership involves serving others.

2. **Trust**

Trust is the bedrock of any relationship. 1 Corinthians 13:6-7 reminds us that love "always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." Building trust involves choosing to believe the best about your spouse and addressing misunderstandings with grace and open communication.

3. **Relentless Pursuit**

A thriving marriage requires continuous effort. Genesis 2:24 emphasizes the importance of leaving one's parents and being united with one's spouse, indicating an ongoing, passionate pursuit of each other. Love is an action; as Jesus commanded in John 13:34, we are to love one another as He has loved us, which involves intentional acts of kindness and affection.

4. **Oneness**

Marriage is designed to unite two individuals into one. Mark 10:6-8 speaks to this divine union, highlighting the importance of unity in all aspects of life, including finances, intimacy, beliefs, and parenting. Achieving oneness requires open dialogue, shared goals, and a commitment to work together as a team.

5. **Naked Marriage**

Transparency and vulnerability are crucial. Ephesians 4:25 encourages us to "put off falsehood and speak truthfully," fostering an environment where both partners feel safe to share their thoughts and feelings without fear of judgment. This openness strengthens the marital bond and builds deeper intimacy.

6. **God First**

Prioritizing your relationship with God lays the foundation for a strong marriage. Matthew 22:36-37 calls us to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind. When both spouses are committed to their spiritual growth, it positively influences their relationship, guiding them to love each other selflessly and sacrificially.

Reflect on these components and consider which area(s) may need more focus in your marriage. By intentionally cultivating these principles, you can build a resilient and fulfilling partnership that honors God and each other.