

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 1: LOVE

### WHY IS IT SO HARD TO LOVE?

- We have different definitions and expectations about what love is.
- We have a hard time \_\_\_\_\_ love to others as much as we try to get love for ourselves.

### “I LOVE YOU” – GETTING ON THE SAME PAGE

*“We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” - 1 John 3:16*

- Love is laying down your life for someone else’s \_\_\_\_\_.

*“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” - Romans 5:8*

- Love is not based on the \_\_\_\_\_ of the other person.

*“Love covers a multitude of sins.” - 1 Peter 4:8*

- Love is not transactional.

Philippians 2:5-8 spells it out clearly by showing us the attitude of Jesus towards us:

- “Emptied himself” – Jesus let go of what was important to Him.
- “To the point of death” – Jesus has no \_\_\_\_\_ to His generosity.

**So, love is the laying down of your life for the benefit of a sinner who is more \_\_\_\_\_ than you.**

### APPLICATION:

1. We can only \_\_\_\_\_ love that we have received.  
(In other words, you can’t love a sinner until you know you are loved as a sinner.)
2. The best covering for the sins of your spouse is your \_\_\_\_\_ – not your wrath.
3. Fight for oneness by clinging to \_\_\_\_\_ instead of grading performance.

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 2: BROKENNESS

*“For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, <sup>44</sup> for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. <sup>45</sup> The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.” - Luke 6:43-45*

### THE PROBLEM OF MY BROKENNESS

1. Think about what’s broken in your marriage as a lens that \_\_\_\_\_ what is broken in your heart. (See Jeremiah 17:5-10; Hebrews 12:5-6; James 1:2-4)

How to get from the PERCEIVED problem to the REAL problem:

Situation

Response

Thoughts

Motives

2. Force yourself to \_\_\_\_\_ on your sin, not your spouse’s.

*Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? <sup>4</sup> Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? <sup>5</sup> You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye. - Matthew 7:3-5*

- a. Ask God for His perspective regarding your sin.
  - b. Agree with God that your sin is the primary issue.
  - c. Aim to see your sin as even more alarming and offensive than your spouse’s
3. Deal with your brokenness (sin) before \_\_\_\_\_, **then** humble yourself before your spouse. (See John 15:5; James 4:6-10; 1 Peter 5:6)

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 3: GRACE

...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified by his **grace** as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. - **Romans 3:23-24** (emphasis added)

Grace = \_\_\_\_\_ love/favor

*In marriage, where do we need to put grace into action?*

### WE NEED TO SHOW GRACE ...

1. where we \_\_\_\_\_ differently by God (Genesis 2:18)

*Ways God made us different:*

2. where we \_\_\_\_\_ and approach \_\_\_\_\_ differently

*Ways our upbringing and experiences make us different:*

#### How to show grace where you are simply... DIFFERENT

1. \_\_\_\_\_ your Creator.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ to see these differences as right or wrong.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ to respond with appreciation and respect.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ where your differences create difficulty and call yourself to unification work.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ where these differences challenge you to grow.

Paul Tripp, *What Did You Expect? Redeeming the Realities of Marriage*, pages 210-212.

3. where we struggle with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ differently (Romans 2:1; Galatians 6:1)

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 4: HUMILITY

**God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.**  
(James 4:6 & 1 Peter 5:5)

**Pride:** a hunger for \_\_\_\_\_; a persistent need for respect and assurance that I matter.

**Humility:** having an accurate estimate of one's \_\_\_\_\_.

- A humble person honestly discerns their own emotions, interests, values, strengths, and weaknesses and acts accordingly.
- The Greek term for humility simply means gentle, modest and deferential.
- “The only thing that can destroy you eternally is a lack of humility.” - Tim Keller

PRIDE	HUMILITY
<b>Puts _____ first</b> <i>Zechariah 7:6; 2 Timothy 3:1-5</i>	<b>Puts _____ first</b> <i>Mark 10:45; 1 Corinthians 10:24; Philippians 2:3-4</i>
<b>Quick to _____; slow to listen</b> <i>Proverbs 10:19; 18:2</i>	<b>Quick to _____; slow to talk</b> <i>James 1:19; Proverbs 15:31-32</i>
<b>Self-_____ and insecure</b> <i>Proverbs 12:15</i>	<b>Vulnerable and courageous</b> <i>Ephesians 5:25</i>
<b>Focused on _____ sin</b> <i>Matthew 6:14-15; 7:1; 1 Corinthians 13:5</i>	<b>Focused on _____ sin</b> <i>Matthew 7:1-5</i>
_____ <i>Psalm 106:7; Romans 1:21</i>	_____ <i>1 Thessalonians 5:18; James 1:17; Ecclesiastes 9:9a</i>
_____ <i>1 Corinthians 13:4-5; Galatians 5:15; Philippians 2:14</i>	_____ <i>Colossians 4:6; Galatians 5:22-23</i>
<b>Puffed up or self-deprecating</b> <i>1 Corinthians 4:6</i>	<b>Self-aware and yet self-_____</b> <i>Psalm 32:5; Romans 12:3</i>

*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. - **Philippians 2:3-4***

### HOW TO BECOME HUMBLE

- Look to \_\_\_\_\_ and adopt His mindset. (Philippians 2:5-8)
  - o He humbled himself so that we would not live out of selfish ambition or vain conceit.
  - o He humbled himself so that we would count others more significant than ourselves.
  - o He humbled himself so that we would think of others' needs and interests, not just our own.
- Remember God loves to \_\_\_\_\_ the humble. (Philippians 2:9-11; James 4:10)

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 5: COMMUNICATION

*Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.*  
- **Proverbs 18:21**

*There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.*  
- **Proverbs 12:18**

### OUR COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS ARE REALLY \_\_\_\_\_ PROBLEMS.

*The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, **for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.***  
- Luke 6:45

- Words have the power of life when rooted in hearts that love God and love others.
- Words have the power of death when rooted in hearts that love self (i.e., selfish desires, self-protection, etc.).

### In order for our communication to be an expression of love, we must learn to speak...

\_\_\_\_\_ words

*Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.* - **Ephesians 4:25**

\_\_\_\_\_ words

*Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, <sup>27</sup> and give no opportunity to the devil.* - **Ephesians 4:26-27**

\_\_\_\_\_ words

*Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.* - **Ephesians 4:29**

\_\_\_\_\_ words

*Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.* - **Ephesians 4:31-32**

\_\_\_\_\_ words

*Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.* - **Ephesians 5:4**

\_\_\_\_\_ words

*...addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart...* - **Ephesians 5:19**

**Life-giving words don't come from your mouth;  
they come from your \_\_\_\_\_.**

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 6: FORGIVENESS

*Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. - Ephesians 4:31-32*

**When we are sinned against, we tend to either \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ our anger.**  
(Ephesians 4:31)

- Anger, when stuffed, leads to resentment and bitterness.
- Anger, when unleashed, leads to clamor, slander, fits of rage, etc.

Both responses inevitably damage and ultimately destroy both you and your marriage.

*“Resentment is like eating poison and hoping someone else will die.”  
- Augustine*

*How do you tend to respond to being sinned against?*

**God’s clear prescription for us is to \_\_\_\_\_.**  
(Ephesians 4:32; Matthew 6:12-15; 18:21-35; Luke 6:37; 17:3-4; Colossians 3:12-13)

**for-give-ness** – releasing another from the penalty of sin so the relationship can be restored

### FORGIVENESS IS ...

1. canceling a debt owed to you.
2. both a one-time event and an ongoing process.
3. removing the control the wrongdoer has over you.
4. wanting good for the wrongdoer and seeking reconciliation when possible.

#### Four Promises of Forgiveness

1. I will not dwell on this incident.
2. I will not bring this incident up and use it against you.
3. I will not talk to others about this incident.
4. I will not allow this incident to stand between us or hinder our personal relationship.

*The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict* by Ken Sande.

When we forgive, God turns the \_\_\_\_\_ in our marriages into \_\_\_\_\_.

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 7: MAKING AMENDS

*Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy. - Proverbs 28:13*

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. - 1 John 1:9*

**for-give-ness**

releasing another from the penalty of sin so the relationship can be restored

**con-fess-ion** (of sin)

a formal statement admitting one's guilt to the one(s) wronged; acknowledgement ("to confess" literally means to say the same thing)

### THE EIGHT A'S OF EFFECTIVE CONFESSION

(Adapted from Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker*)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ everyone involved.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ if, but, and maybe.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ specifically.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ the hurt.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ the consequences.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ your behavior.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ for forgiveness.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ time to heal.

**You will NOT be able to confess this way unless you start by confessing to \_\_\_\_\_.**

*Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. - Psalm 51:4*

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 8: RECONCILIATION

*What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? <sup>2</sup> You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. <sup>4</sup> You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. <sup>5</sup> Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? <sup>6</sup> But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." <sup>7</sup> Submit yourselves therefore to God ... <sup>10</sup> Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. - **James 4:1-7, 10***

**Conflicts reveal a deeper problem that is always \_\_\_\_\_ than you think. (vv. 1-2)**

- Our perspective allows us to view conflict however we want.
- God's perspective gives a much more sobering and devastating reality.  
(See also Matthew 5:21; Proverbs 12:18; 18:21)

**The fundamental issue in conflict is always \_\_\_\_\_ than you think. (vv. 1-3)**

### Diagnosing the Main Issue in Conflict

Q: Where should you look?      A: \_\_\_\_\_

Q: What are you looking for?      A: \_\_\_\_\_

Conflicts don't create the problem; they \_\_\_\_\_ the problem.

How do you discover your cravings?

- Ask yourself, "What am I defending? ...afraid of? ...fighting for?" (see next page for some common cravings)
- Ask yourself, "Is my main desire to honor God and be a blessing?"

**The solution to conflict is \_\_\_\_\_ than you think. (vv. 6-10)**

To solve conflict, you must \_\_\_\_\_ yourself before God and *then* your spouse.

- Before God = submit to God (v. 7), draw near (v. 8), confess and repent
- Before your spouse = confess in a way that is sincere, specific and brief





## COMMON CRAVINGS OF THE HEART

### I “need” to be/feel...

- worthy, acceptable
- desired/desirable
- secure (e.g. in the relationship, financially, in my job, etc.)
- in control
- needed
- connected (to my spouse)
- valued, prioritized
- comfortable, rested
- right, vindicated
- righteous
- successful, accomplished
- liked
- recognized (not taken for granted)
- respected
- approved of (by spouse, boss, neighbors, or \_\_\_\_\_)

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 9: COMMITMENT

*“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”<sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.<sup>33</sup> However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. - Ephesians 5:31-33*

### TRUE COMMITMENT IS ROOTED IN DIVINE \_\_\_\_\_.

- God’s love for us is rooted in who He is, not who we are. (Psalm 117)
- Therefore, our love for our spouse is not to be rooted in who our spouse is (nor in who we are), but in who God is.

### THE MARRIAGE COVENANT COMMITMENT

The marriage covenant is designed by God to be a lifelong fruitful relationship between a man and a woman. Marriage is a public vow to God and to one another to remain steadfast in unconditional love, reconciliation and sexual purity, while purposefully growing in the covenant marriage relationship.

#### Commitment is bigger, stronger and better than:

Commitment > \_\_\_\_\_

Commitment > \_\_\_\_\_ seasons

Commitment > \_\_\_\_\_

Commitment > Personal \_\_\_\_\_

**Commitment doesn’t just apply to the highs & lows of marriage. It must exist in the \_\_\_\_\_, everyday ways we demonstrate love.**

#### Three Practical Ways to be Committed

1. Protect your marriage through self-control (Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 7:1-5).
2. Pursue your spouse in all seasons (Song of Solomon 8:6-7; 1 Corinthians 13:5).
3. Focus on the shared goal of knowing Jesus (Ephesians 5:25-27).

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 10: EXPECTATIONS

*Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life. - Proverbs 13:12*

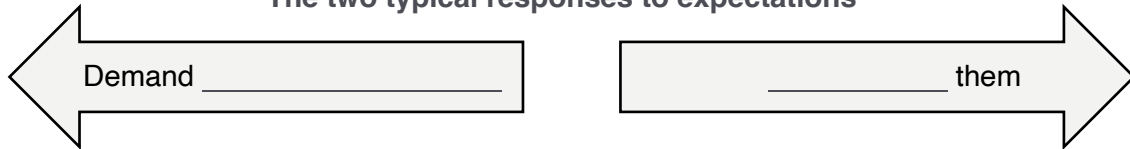
**Expectations are beliefs about the way things will or \_\_\_\_\_ be.**

- They show up everywhere, ranging from what marriage should be like to what you plan on doing when you get home tonight.
- Are you aware of your expectations? What comes to mind?

**Left unchecked, your expectations will \_\_\_\_\_ your marriage.**

- Unchecked expectations make a healthy, happy (i.e. godly) marriage an impossibility.

### The two typical responses to expectations



### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WITH YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

*Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. - Psalm 37:4*

Instead of asking... "What do \_\_\_\_\_?"

Try asking yourself... "Am I wanting \_\_\_\_\_?"

#### When I disappoint my spouse's (or anyone's) expectations:

*Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men. - Colossians 3:23*

*The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me? - Hebrews 13:6*

Before asking... "What does my spouse want from me?"

Ask.... "What does God want from me?"

#### When your spouse (or anyone) disappoints your expectations:

\_\_\_\_\_ your heart (Psalm 139:23-24)

- Prayerfully evaluate your expectations, attitude and motivation.
- Confess to God (e.g. your failure to hope in Him, forgive, etc.).

\_\_\_\_\_ your spouse (Colossians 3:8, 12-13)

\_\_\_\_\_ your hopes (Ephesians 4:15)

- Lovingly communicate your hopes and desires, not as a condition to love, but as a way to deepen your love.

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 11: EMOTIONAL INTIMACY

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.*

- **Genesis 2:24-25**

### GOD'S INTENTION FOR MARRIAGE IS FOR THE TWO TO BECOME ONE.

#### Oneness involves:

- Commitment
- Companionship
- Sexual Intimacy
- Emotional Intimacy

### EMOTIONAL INTIMACY IS TO TRULY \_\_\_\_\_ & BE TRULY \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Characteristics of emotional intimacy:

1. Transparency
2. Honesty
3. Vulnerability
4. Safety
5. Presence

### BECAUSE OF SIN, WE ALL HAVE SOMETHING TO HIDE.

*Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. <sup>8</sup> ...and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. - **Genesis 3:7-8***

**Sin works against you  
fully knowing your spouse.**

**Sin works against you  
letting your spouse fully know you.**

### Emotional intimacy with your \_\_\_\_\_ grows as you grow in your emotional intimacy with the \_\_\_\_\_.

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. - **Ephesians 5:31-32***

### HOW DO YOU PURSUE EMOTIONAL INTIMACY?

#### 1. Start with God

- o Confession is vital to fellowship (Ps. 32:1-4; 51:1-4; 1 John 1:9)
- o Abide in Him (John 15:5)
- o Pray = Ask for emotional intimacy

#### 2. Then, humbly go to your spouse

- o Be intentional (pursue, listen, love)
- o Show grace and humility (Colossians 3:12-15)

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 12: SEXUAL INTIMACY

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.*

**- Genesis 2:24-25**

### COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS AND OBSTACLES TO SEXUAL INTIMACY

- \_\_\_\_\_ sex
- \_\_\_\_\_ sex
- Assuming intimacy problems start in the \_\_\_\_\_
- Allowing our \_\_\_\_\_ to be shaped by things other than God's Word
- Others:

### GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUAL INTIMACY

- God designed sexual intimacy to be a loving expression of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Genesis 2:24-25)
- Sex is also a uniting act. (1 Corinthians 6:15-16)
- Sex allows a husband and wife to experience a \_\_\_\_\_ renewal ceremony.

*"Once you have given yourself in marriage, sex is God's way for you to maintain and deepen that union as the years go by."*

*- The Meaning of Marriage, Timothy Keller*

### CHARACTERISTICS OF TRUE SEXUAL INTIMACY

- True sexual intimacy is about \_\_\_\_\_, not \_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 20:35)
- True sexual intimacy involves \_\_\_\_\_ pleasure. (Proverbs 5:19; 1 Corinthians 7:3-5)
- True sexual intimacy is \_\_\_\_\_ and considerate. (Song of Solomon 4:5)
- True sexual intimacy is about much more than \_\_\_\_\_. (Ephesians 5:31-32)

### APPLICATION ...

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 13: SPIRITUAL INTIMACY

*“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”<sup>32</sup> This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.*  
- **Ephesians 5:31-32**

### YOU COMPLETE EACH OTHER WHEN YOU...

**1. Embrace your \_\_\_\_\_.** (Ephesians 5:21-23, 25)

In other words... Strive to have one heart and one mind.

*Application examples:*

As you learn to live in oneness with your spouse, you're more able to live out your oneness with Christ.

**2. Learn how to lovingly deal with each other's \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. Allow your spouse to speak to you about your sin.
  - i. If you can't seriously consider your spouse's perspective, you will be stuck in denial.
  - ii. Remind yourself that you stand before God, not your spouse.
  
- b. Be careful to only address your spouse's sin with humility and gentleness.
  - i. If you don't know who you are serving, stop and check your motives (Romans 8:29a; Ephesians 5:25-26)
  - ii. If it's not in love, don't address it. (Galatians 6:1)
  - iii. Talk to God before you talk to your spouse.

**3. Carefully speak only \_\_\_\_\_ words to your spouse.**

*Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.*  
- **Proverbs 18:21**

*There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.*  
- **Proverbs 12:18**

## SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON 14: INVEST

*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. <sup>13</sup> Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. <sup>14</sup> And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. - **Colossians 3:12-14***

**dil-i-gence** /'diləjəns/ *noun* – careful and persistent work or effort

### TO REMAIN DILIGENT IN MARRIAGE IN SEASON AND OUT OF SEASON, YOU MUST:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ **who you are. (Colossians 3:12a)**
  - a. You are dearly loved by God (Romans 5:8)
  - b. You are wholly known by God (Psalm 139)
  - c. You are chosen by God (Ephesians 1:4-5)
  - d. You are holy to God (Isaiah 61:10; Romans 8:1; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
  
2. **Remember who your \_\_\_\_\_ is.**
  - a. Your spouse is dearly loved by God
  - b. Your spouse is wholly known by God
  - c. Your spouse is chosen by God
  - d. Your spouse is holy to God
  
3. **Live \_\_\_\_\_ . (Colossians 3:12b-14)**
  - a. Compassion
  - b. Kindness
  - c. Humility
  - d. Gentleness
  - e. Patience
  - f. Forbearance
  - g. Forgiveness