

men
AT GRACE

A MAN & HIS WIFE



facilitator GUIDE

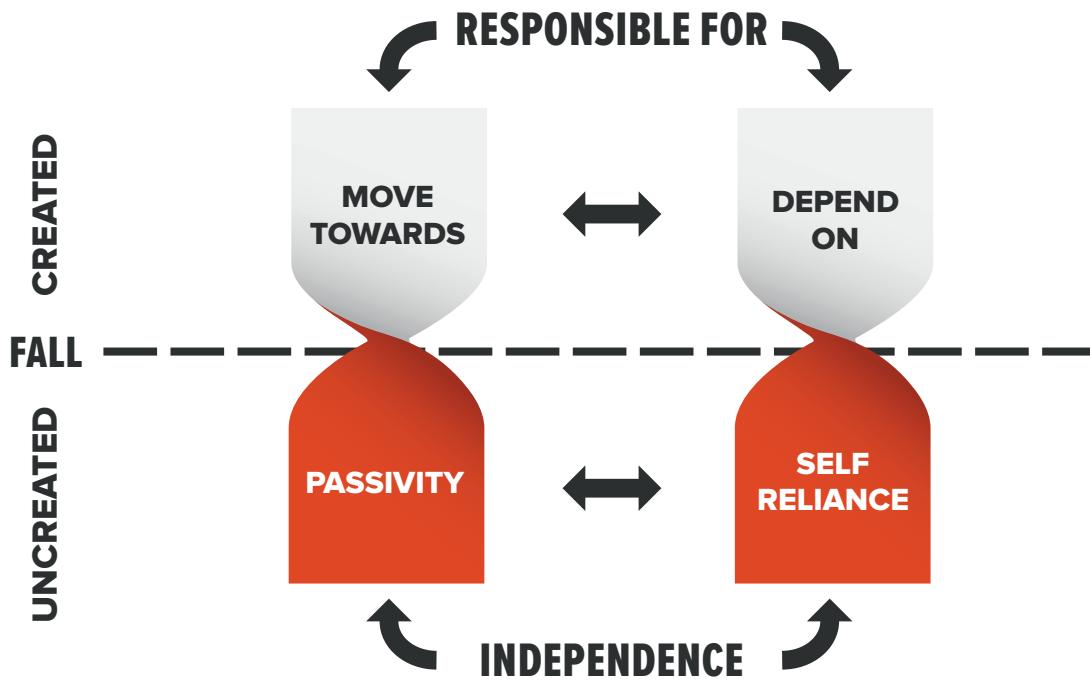
2nd EDITION

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Our goal is to equip men to be responsible for the people and situations that God brings into their lives:



CREATED

As men, we were created and have a Creator. We have a God-given calling to be **“Responsible For.”** This means we **Move Towards** the people and situations God places in our lives and **Depend On** God our Creator. This was God’s perfect plan before the fall.

UNCREATED

After the fall, we no longer live as created beings. We do not position ourselves under our Maker but, instead, want to be like God. We live as though we are **Independent**, uncreated beings. This leads to **Passivity** and **Self-Reliance** in our lives, a complete perversion of the good thing God created.

SESSION ONE

PREPARATION

In order to create the most effective collaborative environment for your first session, review the following checklist:

- Have you secured a location for your sessions?
- Have you created a registration for people so they can sign up to attend the sessions?
- Have you shared the registration link and invited people to attend?
- Have you secured at least six to ten people for your sessions?
- Have you ordered a leader guide for your study?
- Have you ordered participant workbooks for your study?
- Have you sent an email reminder to all registrants seven days before your first session?
- Have you reviewed sessions one through four, and are you prepared to lead your first session?
- Have you shared the content and asked your group to review before session one?

What could be several questions your group could discuss during your first session? Write it out.

What “call to action” will you introduce to your group members at the end of session one and ask them to complete before the start of session two? Write it out.

What icebreaker will you use for your first session?
Write it out.

SESSION ONE: THE CHALLENGE OF MASCULINITY

Spend 20 minutes (icebreaker/reviewing) and 40 minutes collaborating around the content. Remember to review your "call to action." Reference **Facilitating Your Group** in the Men at Grace Leader Handbook if you need ideas.

As you facilitate discussion, write out any insights you discover.

SESSION 1

The Challenge of Masculinity

THE FIRST MAN'S STORY (GENESIS 2-3)

The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. But the Lord God warned him, “You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden—except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.” Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.”

— Genesis 2:15-18

Ezer — one who comes alongside and gives strength.

CORE MATRIX

	Man	Woman
Core Sin	Passivity	Autonomy
Core Responsibility	To Lead	To Partner

FIVE BIG IDEAS



Discussion Questions

1. Make sure everyone in your group has had a chance to meet. Share with the group a little bit about who you are and what you are hoping to learn from this study.
2. Can you see themes from the Genesis story in your marriage? How does it intersect with your life?
3. Look at the Core Matrix. How do the core sins and core responsibilities resonate with you, given your current experience within your marriage?
4. Share one area of your marriage in which you'd like to become less passive and how you hope to make that a reality.

SESSION TWO

PREPARATION

In order to create the most effective collaborative environment for your second session, review the following checklist:

What was the biggest insight you learned from session one?

- Have you sent an email reminder to all registrants three days before your second session?
- Have you reviewed session two content, and are you prepared to lead your second session?
- Have you completed the "call to action?"

Who are two to three individuals you could connect with this week (by phone or text) and encourage and/or ask them to help you lead/participate in your next session?

What icebreaker will you use for your second session?

What could be several questions your group could discuss during your second session?

What “call to action” will you introduce to your group members at the end of session two and ask them to complete before the start of session three?

SESSION TWO: A CALL TO ONENESS

Spend 20 minutes (icebreaker/reviewing) and 40 minutes collaborating around the content. Remember to review your "call to action." Reference **Facilitating Your Group** in the Men at Grace Leader Handbook if you need ideas.

As you facilitate discussion, write out any insights you discover.

SESSION 2

A Call to Oneness

Oneness

Uniqueness

Redemption

Intimacy

Adventure

Oneness: a spiritual truth that we live into reality.

Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.” So the LORD God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one. He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man’s ribs and closed up the opening. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. “At last!” the man exclaimed, “This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called ‘woman,’ because she was taken from ‘man.’” This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.

— Genesis 2:18-25

Some Pharisees came and tried to trap him with this question: “Should a man be allowed to divorce his wife for just any reason?” “Haven’t you read the Scriptures?” Jesus replied. “They record that from the beginning ‘God made them male and female.’” And he said, “This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.”

— Matthew 19:3-5

For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church. And we are members of his body. As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one." This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

— Ephesians 5:25-33

What splits apart oneness?	What builds oneness?
Divorce	Time
Immorality	Getting your wife out of her environment
Abuse	Listening to your wife's opinions and thoughts
Abandonment	Making money "ours"
Neglect	Talking about doing ministry together
Children	Understanding what your wife thinks and values
Escapism	Setting aside time for communication
Accomplishment of tasks	Determining common interests
Tiredness	Thinking proactively for your family
Not including your wife in your life	Talking about spiritual things
Criticism/Lecturing	Praying together
Not adjusting to a new season	Laughing
Not believing the best about each other	Sex
Allowing conflict to be "win/lose"	Giving affirmation
Unresolved conflict	Displaying vulnerability
Not listening or speaking	Initiating conflict

Discussion Questions

1. Where do you find yourself in these two lists? Where have you been able to build oneness, and where have you struggled to build oneness?
2. Share one or two ways you'd like to improve the oneness of your marriage and how you hope to make that a reality.
3. What is one thing you and your wife need to talk about?

SESSION THREE

PREPARATION

In order to create the most effective collaborative environment for your third session, review the following checklist:

What was the biggest insight you learned from session two?

- Have you sent an email reminder to all registrants three days before your third session?
- Have you reviewed session three content, and are you prepared to lead your third session?

Who are two to three individuals you could connect with this week (by phone or text) and encourage and/or ask them to help you lead/participate in your next session?

What icebreaker will you use for your third session?

What could be several questions your group could discuss during your third session?

What “call to action” will you introduce to your group members at the end of session three and ask them to complete before the start of session four?

SESSION THREE: A CALL TO UNIQUENESS

Spend 20 minutes (icebreaker/reviewing) and 40 minutes collaborating around the content. Remember to review your "call to action." Reference **Facilitating Your Group** in the Men at Grace Leader Handbook if you need ideas.

As you facilitate discussion, write out any insights you discover.

SESSION 3

A Call to Uniqueness

Oneness

Uniqueness

Redemption

Intimacy

Adventure

Uniqueness: equal in value but ordained with distinction.

WAYS WE ARE DIFFERENT

- Sexually
- Personality
- Gifts
- History
- Roles & Responsibilities

Our culture tells us that “fairness = sameness”—but that is not God’s idea.

So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

— Genesis 1:27

In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God’s gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered.

— 1 Peter 3:7

**The test of your leadership in the home:
Is my leadership in the home a blessing and a covering for her?**

For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of his body, the church. The church submits to Christ, so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything. For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church. And we are members of his body. As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one." This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

— Ephesians 5:22-33

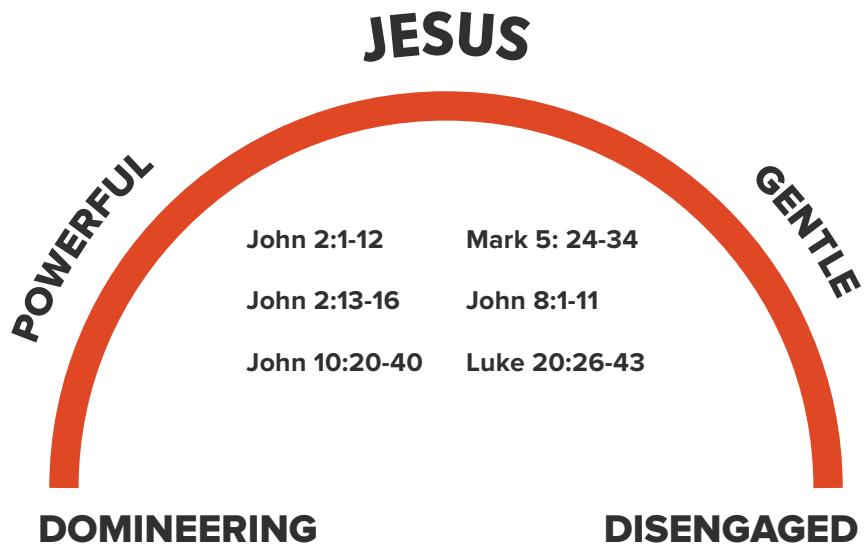
**Her greatest felt need is to be loved.
His greatest felt need is respect.**

But there is one thing I want you to know: The head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

— 1 Corinthians 11:3

Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly."

— Colossians 3:18-19



PROBLEMS WE SEE

1. Neglect
2. Belittling
3. Controlling
4. Pleasing
5. Avoiding conflict
6. Not setting the emotional tone of the home
7. Failing to create mutual accountability
8. Men backing away from sex
9. Wife is the natural leader
10. Wife withdraws her admiration and respect, shows disgust or disapproval

MOVING FORWARD

1. Sit quietly, meditate, and ask God to talk to you.
2. Sit with other men.
3. Sit with your wife.

Discussion Questions

1. What was the most challenging thing you heard in this session? Can you think of any ways in which you feel pressured toward sameness?
2. Where do you find yourself in these two lists (differences, problems)? In what ways do you feel most different from your wife? Which of the problems are you most prone to?
3. Share one or two ways you'd like to improve your marriage based off of what you heard today and how you hope to make that a reality.
4. What is one thing you and your wife need to talk about?

SESSION FOUR

PREPARATION

In order to create the most effective collaborative environment for your fourth session, review the following checklist:

What was the biggest insight you learned from session three?

- Have you sent an email reminder to all registrants three days before your fourth session?
- Have you reviewed session three content, and are you prepared to lead your fourth session?

Who are two to three individuals you could connect with this week (by phone or text) and encourage and/or ask them to help you lead/participate in your next session?

What icebreaker will you use for your fourth session?

What could be several questions your group could discuss during your fourth session?

What is the “call to action” you will ask your group members to complete at the end of session four? Or how could you challenge them to get more involved in your church?

SESSION FOUR: A CALL TO REDEMPTION

Spend 20 minutes (icebreaker/reviewing) and 40 minutes collaborating around the content. Remember to review your "call to action." Reference **Facilitating Your Group** in the Men at Grace Leader Handbook if you need ideas.

As you facilitate discussion, write out any insights you discover.

SESSION 4

A Call to Redemption

Oneness

Uniqueness

Redemption

Intimacy

Adventure

Redemption: restoring what is broken.

Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

— Romans 8:20-23

This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—and I am the worst of them all. But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life.

— 1 Timothy 1:15-16

A woman does not want to be married to a perfect man.

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

— Galatians 2:20

And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

— Ephesians 4:30-32

My pride says I don't have to forgive; the gospel says I'm an agent of redemption.

REDEMPTION MEANS:

1. I am free to lead and free to fail.
2. I must be experiencing change.
3. I must walk in forgiveness and redemption personally.
4. I must forgive my wife.
5. I must call her to forgive me.
6. Move towards her and reconcile.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the gospel free us to personify redemption for others?
2. Is there something you need to forgive your wife for? Is there something you need to ask her to forgive you for? Are you willing to talk to her about it?
3. What do you need to do to create a more redemptive environment in your home?

SESSION FIVE

PREPARATION

In order to create the most effective collaborative environment for your fifth session, review the following checklist:

What was the biggest insight you learned from session four?

- Have you sent an email reminder to all registrants three days before your fifth session?
- Have you reviewed session five content, and are you prepared to lead your fifth session?

Who are two to three individuals you could connect with this week (by phone or text) and encourage and/or ask them to help you lead/participate in your next session?

What icebreaker will you use for your fifth session?

What could be several questions your group could discuss during your fifth session?

What is the “call to action” you will ask your group members to complete at the end of session five? Or how could you challenge them to get more involved in your church?

SESSION FIVE: A CALL TO INTIMACY

Spend 20 minutes (icebreaker/reviewing) and 40 minutes collaborating around the content. Remember to review your "call to action." Reference **Facilitating Your Group** in the Men at Grace Leader Handbook if you need ideas.

As you facilitate discussion, write out any insights you discover.

SESSION 5

A Call to Intimacy

Oneness

Uniqueness

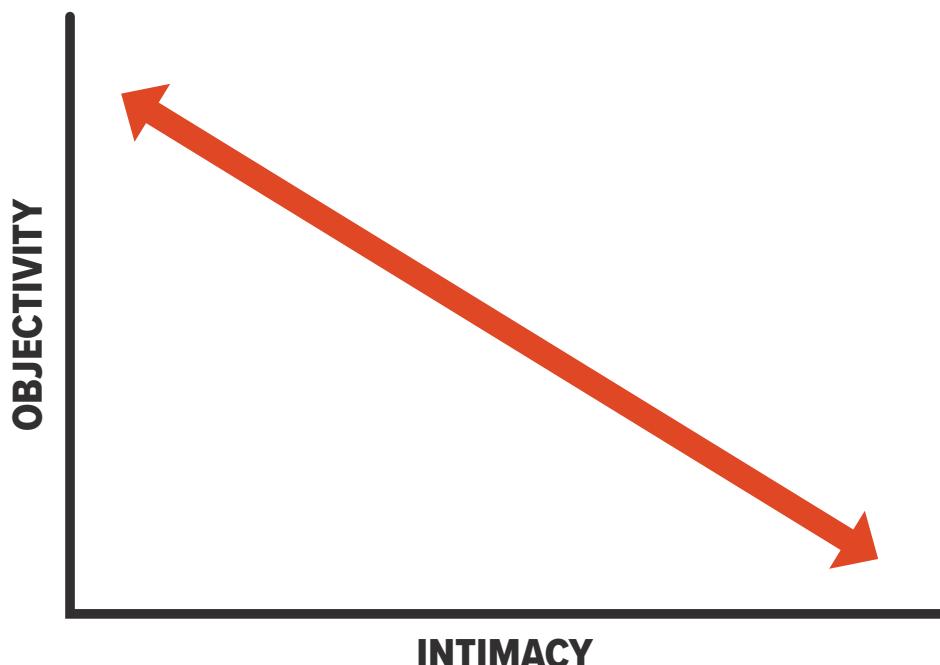
Redemption

Intimacy

Adventure

Intimacy: Cultivating closeness between souls.

- When men hear the word “intimacy,” they tend to think sex. When women hear the word “intimacy,” they tend to think closeness.
- Sex and intimacy are not the same; sex is a subset of intimacy.
- Intimacy only thrives in the context of marriage.



- Counter-intuitive idea: the boundaries of a marriage cause sex to be better and intimacy to thrive.
- Sex is both an overflow of intimacy and a builder of intimacy.

OBSTACLES TO INTIMACY

1. Not creating a safe environment where she can flourish.
2. Making sex about yourself.
3. Stopping the pursuit.
4. Finding gratification outside of your marriage.

Sex is not the greatest need, intimacy is.

WAYS TO CULTIVATE INTIMACY

1. She will not trust you with her body until she trusts you with her heart.
2. Offer verbal declarations of her beauty.
3. Know what your wife cares about and likes.
4. Free her from her job as a mom.
5. Help her solve problems.
6. Write letters, notes, poems, emails, or texts.
7. Give consistent affection that is tied to intimacy and not sex.
8. Give your wife the freedom to talk about her sexual experience.
9. Learn about foreplay.
10. Learn how to give your wife your heart.
11. Learn how to have fun and not take yourself seriously.

Discussion Questions

1. Is the level of intimacy in your marriage moving in a positive or negative direction? Why?
2. Which of the obstacles to intimacy most resonated with you? Which of the ways to build intimacy stuck out to you?
3. What do you need to communicate to your wife in light of this session?

SESSION SIX

PREPARATION

In order to create the most effective collaborative environment for your sixth session, review the following checklist:

What was the biggest insight you learned from session five?

- Have you sent an email reminder to all registrants three days before your sixth session?
- Have you reviewed session six content, and are you prepared to lead your sixth session?

Who are two to three individuals you could connect with this week (by phone or text) and encourage and/or ask them to help you lead/participate in your next session?

For more information, visit www.ams.org.

What icebreaker will you use for your sixth session?

What could be several questions your group could discuss during your sixth session?

What is the “call to action” you will ask your group members to complete at the end of session six? Or how could you challenge them to get more involved in your church?

SESSION SIX: A CALL TO ADVENTURE

Spend 20 minutes (icebreaker/reviewing) and 40 minutes collaborating around the content. Remember to review your "call to action." Reference **Facilitating Your Group** in the Men at Grace Leader Handbook if you need ideas.

As you facilitate discussion, write out any insights you discover.

SESSION 6

A Call to Adventure



Oneness

Uniqueness

Redemption

Intimacy

Adventure

Adventure: a unifying direction for our family.

Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.”

— Genesis 2:18

For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

— 1 Corinthians 11:7-9 (ESV)

ONE MAN'S HEART

Then one day Jonathan son of Saul said to his armor bearer, “Come on, let’s go over to the Philistine garrison that is opposite us.” But he did not let his father know . . . Jonathan said to his armor bearer, “Come on, let’s go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised men. Perhaps the LORD will intervene for us. Nothing can prevent the LORD from delivering, whether by many or by a few.” His armor bearer said to him, “Do everything that is in your heart. Do as you’re inclined. I’m with you all the way!” . . . Jonathan crawled up on his hands and feet, with his armor bearer following behind him. Jonathan struck down the Philistines, while his armor bearer came along behind him and killed them. In this initial skirmish Jonathan and his armor bearer struck down about twenty men in an area that measured half an acre.

— 1 Samuel 14 (NET)

SOME PRACTICAL QUESTIONS

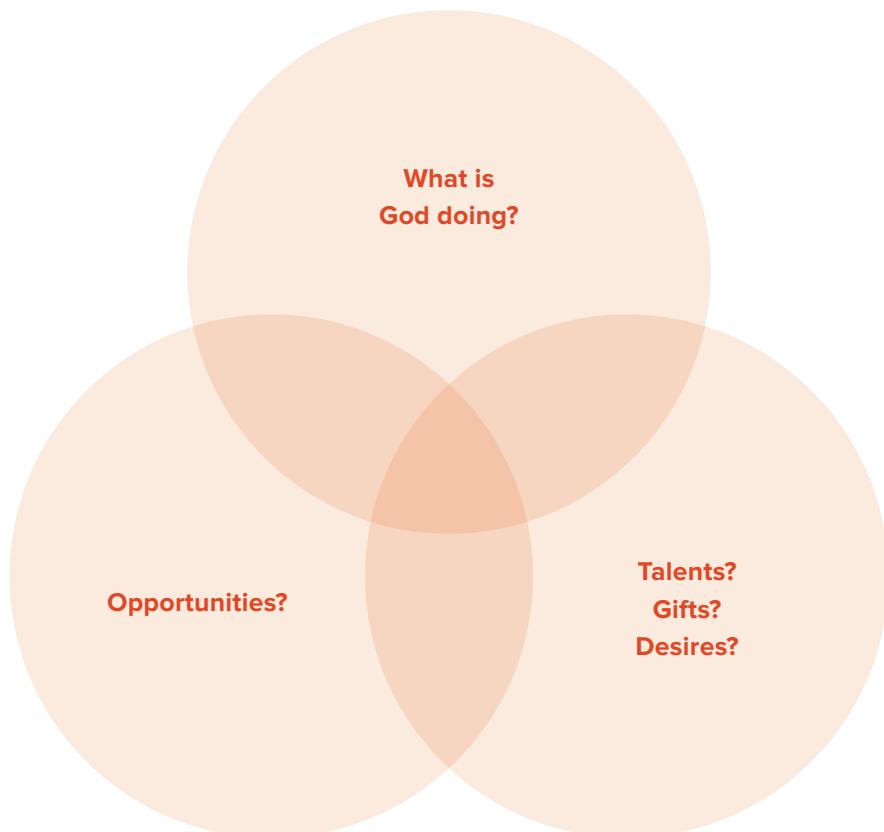
What is it that I am about?

What is most important to me?

What do I bring to this?

What if I only had six months to live?

What if I had a million dollars?



QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR WIFE

What kind of adventure should we be on?

- What is most important to us as a family?
- What is our contribution to make, as a couple, to God's Kingdom?
- What are we trusting God for that only he could make happen?
- What are we willing to sacrifice for?
- What are we dreaming about?
- What do we want life to be like in five years? Ten years? Twenty years?

ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

- Get together with men who are ahead of you and ask them questions.
- Get with men who are different from you and ask them questions.
- Find some guys to dream with.
- Let her know you want to move.

Discussion Questions

1. What is most important to you in life? How do you live that out?
2. If someone asked your wife what is most important to you, what would she say?
3. How would you like life to be different in ten years?
4. How can you and your wife start dreaming about the future?
5. What are some practical things you can do to start bringing more adventure into your family?

