

men
AT GRACE

A MAN & HIS WIFE



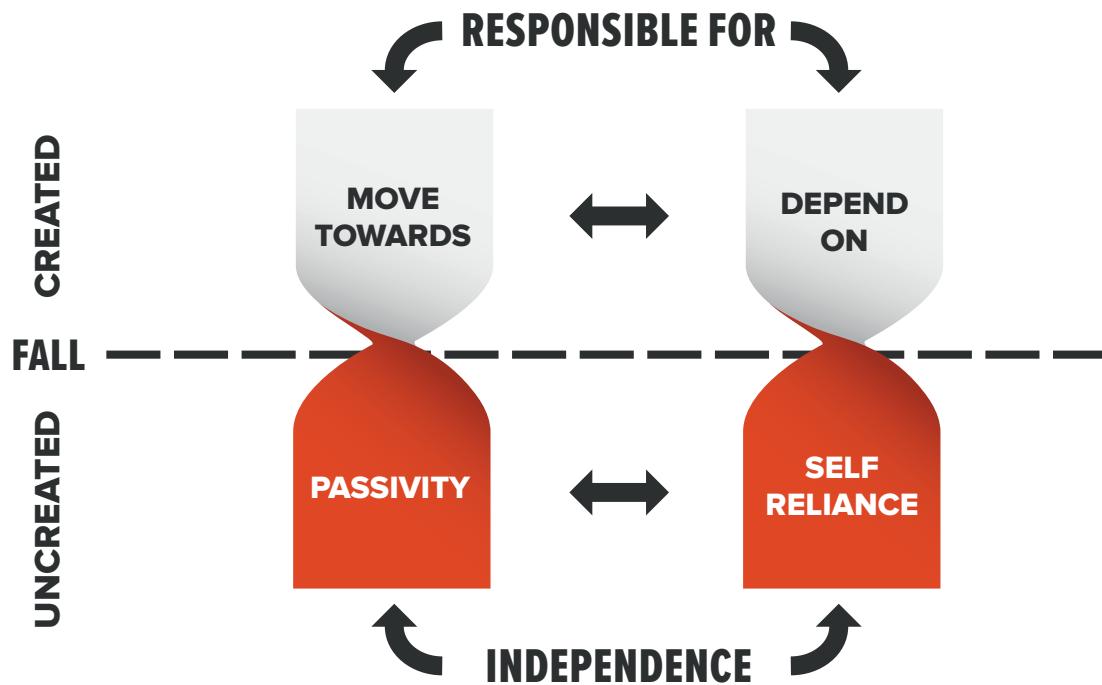
participant GUIDE

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 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 _____.

CORE MATRIX

	Man	Woman
Core Sin		
Core Responsibility		

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 2

A Call to Oneness

Uniqueness

Redemption

Intimacy

Adventure

Oneness: a _____ truth that we _____ 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?

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 3

A Call to Uniqueness

Oneness

Redemption

Intimacy

Adventure

Uniqueness: equal in _____ but ordained with

_____.

WAYS WE ARE DIFFERENT

- Sexually
- Personality
- _____
- History
- _____ & _____

Our culture tells us that “fairness = _____”—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 _____
and a _____ 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

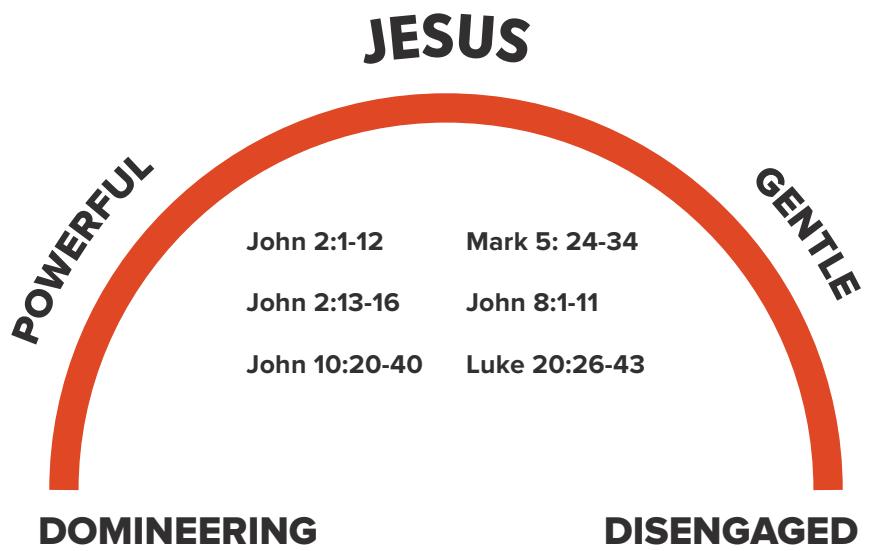
**Her greatest felt need is to be _____.
His greatest felt need is _____.**

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

MOVING FORWARD

1. Sit quietly, meditate, and ask God to talk to you.
2. Sit with _____.
3. Sit with _____.

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 4

A Call to Redemption

Oneness

Uniqueness

Intimacy

Adventure

Redemption: _____ what is _____.

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 _____ 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 _____; the gospel says I'm an agent of _____.

REDEMPTION MEANS:

1. I am free to _____ and free to _____.
2. I must be experiencing _____.
3. I must walk in _____ and redemption personally.
4. I must _____ my wife.
5. I must call her to _____ me.
6. Move _____ and _____.

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 5

A Call to Intimacy

Oneness

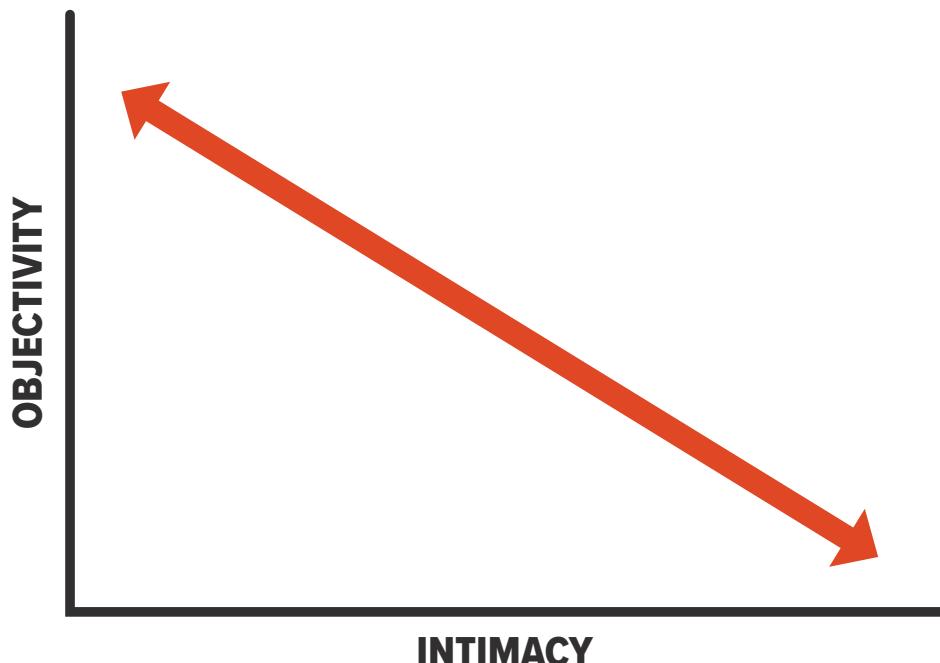
Uniqueness

Redemption

Adventure

Intimacy: Cultivating _____ between _____.

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



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

OBSTACLES TO INTIMACY

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

Sex is not the greatest need, _____ is.

WAYS TO CULTIVATE INTIMACY

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 6

A Call to Adventure



Oneness

Uniqueness

Redemption

Intimacy

Adventure: a _____ 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.

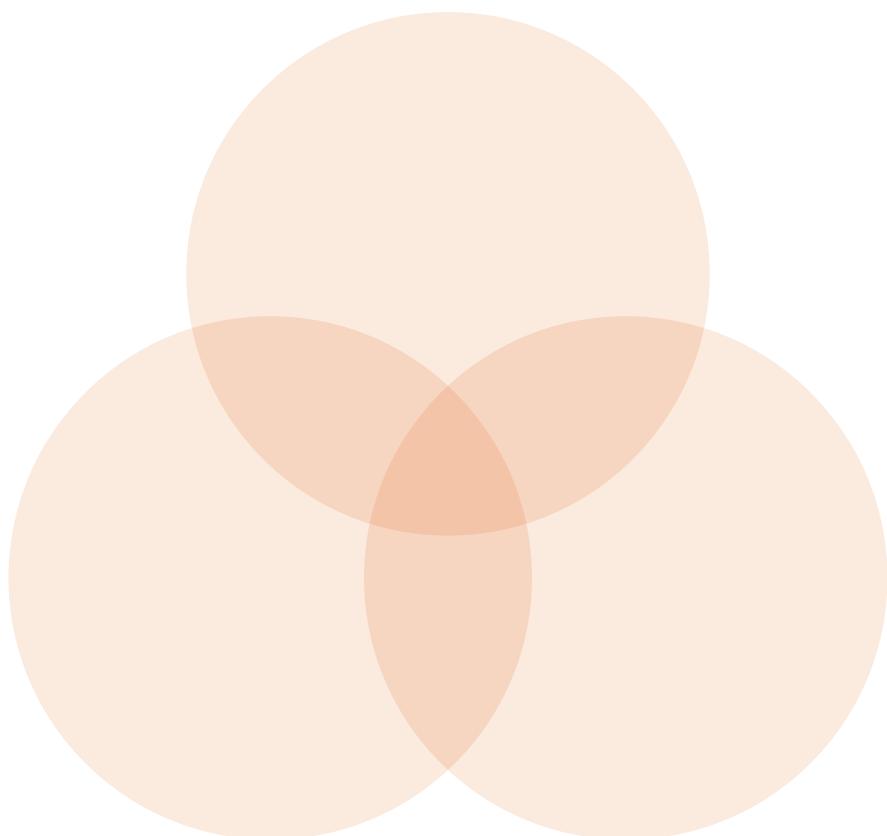
— 1 Corinthians 11:7-9 (ESV)

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



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 _____ of you and ask them questions.
- Get with men who are _____ from you and ask them questions.
- Find some guys to _____ with.
- Let her know you want to _____.

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?

Answer Key

Session 1 - The Challenge of Masculinity

Ezer – one who comes alongside and gives _____ (strength).

- Core Sin:
 - » Man: **Passivity**
 - » Woman: **Autonomy**
- Core Responsibility:
 - » Man: **To Lead**
 - » Woman: **To Partner**

• Our culture tells us that “fairness = _____ (**sameness**)”—but that is not God’s idea.

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

Her greatest felt need is to be _____ (**loved**).

His greatest felt need is _____ (**respect**).

PROBLEMS WE SEE

- Neglect, Belittling, Controlling, Pleasing, Avoiding conflict, Not setting the emotional tone of the home, Failing to create mutual accountability, Men backing away from sex, Wife is the natural leader, Wife withdraws her admiration and respect, shows disgust or disapproval

MOVING FORWARD

2. Sit with _____ (**other men**).
3. Sit with _____ (**your wife**).

Session 4 - A Call to Redemption

- **Redemption**

Redemption: _____ (**restoring**) what is _____ (**broken**).

A woman does not want to be married to a _____ (**perfect**) man.

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 _____ (**fall**).
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**).

Session 2 - A Call to Oneness

- **Oneness**

Oneness: a _____ (**spiritual**) truth that we _____ (**live**) into reality.

What splits apart oneness?

- Divorce, Immorality, Abuse, Abandonment, Neglect, Children, Escapism, Accomplishment of tasks, Tiredness, Not including your wife in your life, Criticism/Lecturing, Not adjusting to a new season, Not believing the best about each other, Allowing conflict to be “win/lose,” Unresolved conflict, Not listening or speaking

What builds oneness?

- Time, Getting your wife out of her environment, Listening to your wife’s opinions and thoughts, Making money “ours,” Talking about doing ministry together, Understanding what your wife thinks and values, Setting aside time for communication, Determining common interests, Thinking proactively for your family, Talking about spiritual things, Praying together, Laughing, Sex, Giving affirmation, Displaying vulnerability, Initiating conflict

Session 3 - A Call to Uniqueness

- **Uniqueness**

Uniqueness: equal in _____ (**value**) but ordained with _____ (**distinction**).

WAYS WE ARE DIFFERENT

- **Gifts**
- **Roles & Responsibilities**

Session 5 - A Call to Intimacy

- **Intimacy**

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).
- 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

- Not creating a safe environment where she can _____ (flourish).
- Stopping the _____ (pursuit).
- Finding gratification _____ (outside) of your marriage.

Sex is not the greatest need, _____ (intimacy) is.

WAYS TO CULTIVATE INTIMACY

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

Session 6 - A Call to Adventure

- Adventure

Adventure: a _____ _____ (unifying direction) for our family.

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?

Circle Diagram:

- What is God doing?
- Opportunities?
- Talents? Gifts? Desires?

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).

