



Week 1 – Real Life Purpose

Announcements

401 Small Group Training – Get equipped to lead a small group. 401 Small Group Training will take place on Sunday, April 26 at 5:00PM at the Little Creek Campus. Sign up at churchoftheking.com/register.

Warm-up

When you were growing up, what were some of your favorite books or stories that you liked to read (or have read to you)?

Word and Application

When it comes to love and marriage, we often look for a fairy-tale romance. Just like the books we used to read when we were young, we want to believe that after someone gets married, “they lived happily ever after.”

The truth is that while marriage is one of God’s greatest blessings, it is rarely easy, and often entails quite a bit of conflict. Often, we enter into marriage with high expectations, only to have them dashed when the first few challenges start to emerge.

Having the proper mindset towards marriage can help you be prepared for the challenges as they come, and can allow you to see the blessing of marriage even in the midst of difficult times.

Five “Fairy Tale Busters” that can take the steam out of your marriage include:

1. *Difficult adjustments* – when you and your spouse come from different backgrounds and have different perspectives on things.
2. *Inability to resolve conflict* – conflict resolution doesn’t come naturally. It is a skill, and without it, your marriage can be bogged down in constant fighting.

3. *Performance-driven mindsets* – when we criticize our spouse, or ourselves we create significant tension in the marriage relationship.
4. *Self-absorption* – focusing too much on your own issues can make the marriage relationship get out of balance.
5. *Extramarital affairs* – these can be utterly devastating. Affairs are not just physical in nature; they can be emotional as well. You can also be guilty of having an affair with your career or material things, not just another person.

The key to overcoming these **Fairy Tale Busters** is to recognize that marriage is a sacred partnership. You and your spouse are working together to make the marriage successful. Here are three aspects of the marriage partnership that are essential components of a healthy marriage:

1. Partners in life.

Read Genesis 2:18. What God is talking about is the concept of relationship, intimacy, and oneness. The word comparable in this verse speaks of a **complementary** relationship; what he lacked – she supplies, and vice versa. Both of them shared and reflected the image of God. We are different but completely complementary.

What are some ways that you and your spouse (or another married couple you know) have complementary qualities? How do these qualities create a successful partnership?

2. Partners in love.

Read Genesis 2:22-23. Adam had God and the animals, yet he was still incomplete. God said there was someone else he needed – who was it? It was someone that he could love and have intimacy with. The animals could not meet his emotional needs.

The world's understanding of love is based on performance, "I will love you if..." Love and marriage in the kingdom is based on the unending, unconditional, immeasurable, agape love of God. What do you think it means to love your spouse in this way? What does that look like?

3. Partners in light.

Read Genesis 2:25. There was **openness and transparency** between Adam and Eve – they had total and open communication. Remember, infidelity begins with a secret – that's why we must walk in the light with our spouse. How could they have all this? Because they were in right relationship with God *and* with one another.

What are some practical ways that you can make your marriage open and free from the pain of hidden secrets?

How has this small group lesson impacted you?

Prayer

Close in prayer by asking God to give us deeper revelations about His plan for marriage. Pray for those who are married, as well as for those who are not yet married.