



We *love* because he first *loved* us.

— 1 JOHN 4:19 —

Our Schedule

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| 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. | Check-in |
| 9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. | Worship and Introductions |
| 9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. | Session 1: <i>Are you there? Are you with me?</i> |
| 10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. | Break-out into small groups with facilitator couples |
| 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. | Session 2: <i>Traps</i> |
| 11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | Break-out into time as couples |
| 12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m. | Catered Lunch |
| 1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. | Session 3: <i>Triumph</i> |
| 2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. | Break-out into small groups with facilitator couples |
| 2:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. | Q&A with Marla Delong |
| 3:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. | Panel of Cedar Springs couples with Q&A |



OUR SPEAKER

Marla Delong

Marla is a licensed marriage and family therapist and has been counseling individuals, married couples, families and groups for more than 20 years. She specializes in helping others find healing and transformation in their relationships with God, others and themselves.

Her passion is to see men and women discover what is holding them back from being all they were created to be. She then walks with them on the journey of discovering better and more practical ways to live in a new level of freedom and purpose.

Marla has worked locally and internationally as a conference speaker, retreat leader and corporate trainer on many diverse topics such as relationship development, boundaries, marriage enrichment and discipleship.

She and her husband Keith have been married for 25 years and have three children. Marla works at Restoration Counseling Associates (restorationcounselingassociates.com) and can be contacted at (865) 357-4673.



Selfishness: Not being willing to grow up

1 Giving to Get

2 Booger Looking

3 The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (*Gottman*)

A Criticism

B Contempt

C Defensiveness

D Stonewalling

4 Unspoken Expectations

5 Bitterness and Unforgiveness

6 Junior Holy Spirit Disease

7 Comparison

8 Avoidance (*turning towards, turning away, turning against*)

9 Trying to Get Pizza at McDonald's

10 Lack of Emotional, Spiritual, Recreational Presence



Breakout Questions

1 What traps do you see yourself falling into in your marriage? How do you think falling into this trap affects your marriage?

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2 Share what you think it might look like to intentionally commit to allowing God to change this habit?

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3 Where have you had one of these habits in your past and changed it? How did changing this habit affect your relationship?

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Lunch Break Notes

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Love: Choosing to Do What is Best for the Other and Honors God

1 Pray – Stay attuned to God and each other (*Are you with me?*)

2 Love Languages – Quality Time, Physical Affection, Acts of Service, Words of Encouragement, Gifts

3 Live for an Audience of One

4 Speak the Truth in Love

5 Practice One Anothering (*mutuality, reciprocity, freedom*)

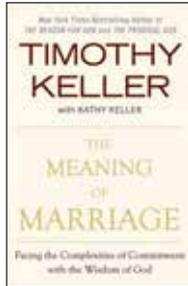
6 Commit to repairing the relationship when a mistake is made (*humility*)

7 Know that God does not give us “grace for our imaginations”

8 Accept each other’s influence (*Would you choose me again? Do you see me as competent?*)

9 Get help – early

10 Persevere

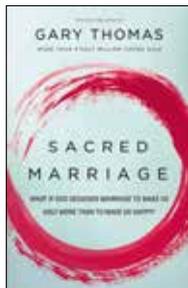


The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God

by **Tim Keller**

Based on his acclaimed sermon series, Tim Keller shares from his own experiences with his wife Kathy of 37 years and

counting. He wrote this book to give a compelling vision of what marriage was designed to look like from the Bible from Genesis to Revelation—from the first marriage of Adam and Eve to the last marriage of Christ and the Church. It's a big, sweeping picture of God's vision of marriage and shows marriage to be a glorious relationship that is also misunderstood and mysterious. This book offers instruction on how to have a successful marriage, and is essential reading for anyone who wants to know God and love more deeply in this life.

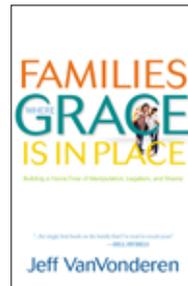


Sacred Marriage: What If God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More Than to Make Us Happy?

by **Gary Thomas**

Marriage is more than a sacred covenant with another person. It is a spiritual discipline designed to help you know God better, trust

him more fully, and love him more deeply. What if God's primary intent for your marriage isn't to make you happy, but holy? Sacred Marriage reveals how marriage trains us to love God and others well, how it exposes sin and makes us more aware of God's presence, how good marriages foster good prayer, how married sex feeds the spiritual life, and more.

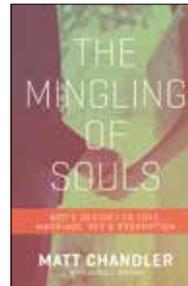


Families Where Grace Is in Place: Building a Home Free of Manipulation, Legalism, and Shame

by **Jeff VanVonderen**

Using his professional and personal experience, VanVonderen shows readers how to nurture God-honoring relationships free of

manipulation, legalism, and shame. This book is a practical and insightful discussion on living a graceful life and building a strong and happy home using God's tools. This book helps us to understand the importance of grace in our families. It deals both with the marriage relationship and the parent child relationship and gives a helpful perspective on how we might demonstrate grace in our homes.

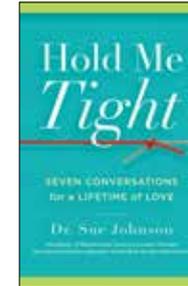


The Mingling of Souls: God's Design for Love, Marriage, Sex, and Redemption

by **Matt Chandler**

In a culture where the foundations of attraction, love, marriage, and sex are rapidly eroding, Matt Chandler offers an eternal, counter-intuitive perspective from the biblical book Song of Solomon.

Scripture says we're to nurture our hearts above all else—yet we are inundated with songs, movies, and advice that contradicts and cheapens God's design for love and intimacy. Chandler reveals the process Solomon himself followed—Attraction, Courtship, Marriage even Arguing. Chapters on Conflict and Sex will radically change how readers view—and approach—love.

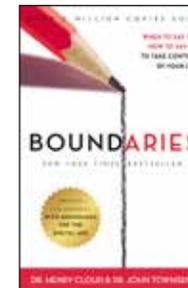


Hold Me Tight: Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love

by **Sue Johnson**

Dr. Sue Johnson presents Emotionally Focused Therapy, a type of couples therapy with the highest rate of success, to the general public for the first time. She teaches that the

way to save and enrich a relationship is to reestablish safe emotional connection and preserve the attachment bond. With this in mind, she focuses on key moments in a relationship and uses them as touchpoints for seven healing conversations.



Boundaries: When to Say Yes, How to Say No to Take Control of Your Life

by **Henry Cloud and John Townsend**

Boundaries are the personal property lines that define who you are and who you are not, and influence all areas of your life—physically, emotionally,

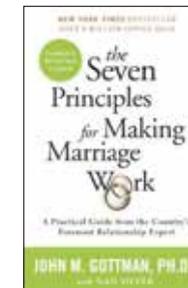
spiritually. Boundaries help us answer the questions: Can I set limits and still be a loving person? How do I answer someone who wants my time, love, energy, or money? Why do I feel guilty when I consider setting boundaries? In this book, the authors unpack the 10 laws of boundaries and give biblically-based answers to these and other tough questions, and show you how to set healthy boundaries with your spouse, children, friends, coworkers, and even with yourself. You'll discover firsthand how to reclaim your freedom to walk as the loving, giving, fulfilled individual God created you to be.



Boundaries in Marriage
by **Henry Cloud and John Townsend**

Learn when to say yes and when to say no—to your spouse and to others—to make the most of your marriage. Only when a husband and wife know and respect each other's needs, choices, and freedom can they give themselves freely and lovingly to one another. Boundaries

are the “property lines” that define and protect husbands and wives as individuals. Once they are in place, a good marriage can become better, and a less-than-satisfying one can even be saved. The authors help husbands and wives understand the friction points or serious hurts and betrayals in their marriage—and move beyond them to mutual care, respect, affirmation, and intimacy.



The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work: A Practical Guide from the Country's Foremost Relationship Expert

by **John Gottman**

Dr. John Gottman is the leading researcher in couples and conflict. His work has revolutionized the way we understand, repair, and strengthen marriages. His unprecedented study of

couples over a period of years has allowed him to observe the habits that can make—and break—a marriage. This book is the culmination of that work: the seven principles that guide couples on a path toward a harmonious and long-lasting relationship. Straightforward yet profound, these principles teach partners new approaches for resolving conflicts, creating new common ground, and achieving greater levels of intimacy. It offers strategies and resources to help couples collaborate more effectively to resolve problems.

Special Thanks to:

MARLA DELONG

Thank you for your wisdom and teaching.

WEST AND SUZANNE BREEDLOVE

Thank you for leading worship.

OUR FACILITATOR COUPLES

Thank you for leading the breakout sessions.

Dan and Elizabeth Anderson

Joe and Barbara Bryant

Ben and Sherry Broome

Bill and Amy Broome

Ward and Mary Dilworth

Eric and Cara Foster

Mike and Stephanie Green

Jon and Toni Lawler

Brad and Cary Lewis

Greg and Jan McWhorter

Buddy and Kathie Odom

Ken and Dana O'Kelley

David and Martha Reynolds

Neal and Alli Peters

Chris and Sally Scott

Dale and Kimberly Widmer

OUR PANEL COUPLES

Thank you for sharing your stories.

David and Martha Reynolds

Matt and Leigh Avery

Buddy and Kathie Odom

Dan and Elizabeth Anderson

Jon and Toni Lawler

Torrey and Summers McMurray




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