Grace Filled Marriage

VIDEO STUDY

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Welcome

We are delighted that you are leading this video study. You are going to have the opportunity to lead a study that will have a direct and profound effect on many generations to come. It will also have a life-changing effect on the couples who study along with you.

This Leader’s Guide is designed to help you easily succeed in your role. You will not only succeed, but you’ll find your own life affected as well. During this study, people are going to laugh, cry, and make commitments to a whole new standard of raising their families.

We want to orient you to the material you will be using and help you use this study in such a way that everyone participating will be able to raise their stock value as a spouse and as an individual. This study is not just about handling the everyday challenges of marriage. It’s about changing the way you think as a married person. We want to equip couples to be the best they can be. Thanks for your willingness to be a part of this transformational study.
Getting Started

The first step is to get the word out about this great study. Get couples excited by talking about the *Grace Filled Marriage* class/group you are going to start. Announce the class publicly from the pulpit, in existing classes, on facebook, twitter and through email. Hand out flyers, add the class to your church bulletin and website, and show the promotional video. Promotional materials are available online at gracefilledmarriage.net.

Below is a suggested timeline to use as you promote and prepare for your class/group.

**Six Weeks Out**

- Read this leader’s guide in its entirety.
- Become familiar with gracefilledmarriage.net.
- Begin publicity and class sign-ups.
- **This video study is meant to be used in conjunction with the participant workbook/discussion guide and is 100% more effective when done so.** Each individual should have their own personal workbook in order to follow along, fill in the blanks, discuss with each other, dig deeper into related scripture, and record thoughts and action points.
- The workbooks are the most important tool your participants can have in order to have a transformational experience. Order now for quick delivery at gracefilledmarriage.net.
- You can defer the cost of this study by asking each participant when they register to pay for their workbook/discussion guide and if they want, a copy of the book, *Grace Filled Marriage*, which will also enhance their takeaway from the study. (Pricing info available at gracefilledmarriage.net)
Four Weeks Out
• Continue publicity and class sign-ups
• Recruit small-group discussion leaders if it appears that you will have more than 10-12 people participating in the study. Use these leaders to facilitate discussion groups of 8-10 people.

Two Weeks Out
• Order workbooks/discussion guides at gracefilledmarriage.net for each participant (additional may be ordered for late sign-ups). The workbooks are the most important tool your participants can have for them to have a valuable and transformational experience.
• Participants who read along in the corresponding chapters of the book, Grace Filled Marriage, get a more comprehensive and complete view of this great grace adventure. In addition to their workbook/discussion guide, participants can order a copy of the Grace Filled Marriage book at gracefilledmarriage.net.
• If applicable, hold a discussion group leaders’ meeting. Watch the first session and review the discussion questions provided at the end of each session.
• Final publicity and sign-ups.
• Make reminder calls, texts or emails about the first meeting.
• Make plans to have a fun, inviting meeting environment. Consider having snacks, comfortable seats and greeters to make everyone feel welcome.
Keys to Success

1. Determine a Format
This video study is meant to be flexible and can be used in a variety of ways such as a:

- Small Group Study
- Individual or Couples Study
- Church Sunday School Study
- Retreat or Evening Church Study

Your format will determine how much time you can devote to discussion. You may have to choose some of the questions to discuss in your group and encourage them to do the rest at home. The most important questions when it comes to applying the new principles to their own lives will be found in the Bringing It Home section. **Make sure everyone fills in an answer to the last question of the Bringing It Home section before you close your time.**

We have designed the video portion of the study to be about 25-30 minutes in length, with the remaining time to be used with your workbook/discussion guide. This study is all about creating a Grace Filled Marriage philosophy and making grace the DNA of your marriage. In order to do that, one must not only learn this model, but also apply it. That’s why discussion is the primary focus of this study. Through discussion, the individuals learn how to apply these principles and create change within their families.
2. Prior to each meeting

- Review the session outline and watch the session on the DVD or online. If you experience any problems with your DVD, please contact Family Matters immediately. If for some reason the DVD needs to be replaced, you can show another lesson until you receive your replacement.
- Pray for wisdom and understanding as you lead. Also pray that your participants will be receptive, empowered and encouraged by the lesson and sharing.
- Get your room ready by arranging chairs for watching the DVD and by making sure all your audio/visual equipment works.
- Make a commitment to start and stop your group on time.
- Begin reinforcing the benefits of going through the entire video study at the first meeting. Some people will not be able to make all the classes, but most will try if there is accountability within the group.

3. How to use this Study

This video study is meant to be used in conjunction with the participant workbook/discussion guide and is 100% more effective when done so. Each individual should have their own personal workbook/discussion guide in order to fill in the blanks, take notes, and answer the discussion questions. To order go to gracefilledmarriage.net. Each session has fill-in-the-blanks so that participants can easily follow along with the concepts that are being presented and discussion questions at the end of each session. If a person
misses a fill-in-the-blank, the answers are in the back of each workbook.

4. Small Group Techniques

- Promote interaction! Your role is to facilitate conversation; allow participants to hold each another accountable.
- Give everyone a chance to speak; don’t allow the talkers to dominate the conversation. Encourage those who are quiet to participate by directly asking them a question.
- Set the pace by being honest and transparent yourself.
- Use humor and share personal stories.
- Don’t be afraid of silence. Sometimes you have to wait for a response, especially when the subject matter is difficult.
- Allow participants to cry if they are hurting. Show your group that you genuinely care.
- Be excited about accomplishments! Applaud transformation.

5. Keys to An Effective Study

Group Commitments That Ensure Success (you might want to read these at the first meeting):

-Courtesy – Each participant should commit to arriving to each session on time.
- Acceptance – Each participant should affirm the other participants’ verbal contributions.
- Confidentiality – Each participant should be careful to not talk about personal issues shared by fellow participants
outside the context of this study.

- Honesty – Each participant should be forthright and truthful when they speak.
- Respect – Each participant should be careful not to stand in judgment, give quick advice, or criticize his or her fellow participants. The goal is to make the group a safe place for participants to talk openly about their roles and about their children.

**Suggested Schedule**

Below is a suggested time schedule to complete each session in a 60 minute time frame. If you have more time, then we suggest you use it in the *Bringing it Home* section.

The video itself is laid out in the following format:

1. **Introduction (1 – 2 minutes)** – Darcy Kimmel introduces the topic being addressed during this session and gives an overview.
2. **Teaching (approx. 25-30 minutes)** – Tim Kimmel presents the topic for this session. Each session is supported by corresponding chapters in the book, *Grace Filled Marriage*. Though not required, we highly recommend that the leader and participants read the chapters of this book for a richer and fuller understanding of the principles discussed.
3. **Discussion (remainder of time)** – *Making this Yours* is the key transformational component of the video study. At the
end of each session, there are questions in the workbook/discussion guide to get the discussion going on what was presented. These questions are broken up into the following 3 sections:

- **Getting it Started** - (approx. 9 minutes) Basic questions aimed at getting people comfortable and talking.
- **Taking it Deeper** – (approx. 9 minutes) These questions and scriptural passages help solidify the concepts presented by Dr. Kimmel in the video.
- **Bringing it Home** – (approx. 10 minutes) These questions help the participants think about how these principles can be applied in their own lives and marriages.

At the end of each session, there is a prayer for your group with which you and/or your spouse can close. This is a time when you ask God for his help in taking what you’ve learned as a group and turning it into individual benefit. If time permits, this is a good spot to share special prayer needs focused on the marriages of the participants. It might be tempting to broaden the scope of these requests, but in consideration of the time, those requests should be addressed at another time.
Session Overviews

Session I: What’s Grace Got to do with it?
- For most marriages, the thing that’s most lacking in their relationship isn’t love; it’s grace. When God’s grace is the active ingredient of our marriage, it automatically brings the best out of our spouse.
- In this session, you’ll learn what grace has to do with strong, healthy, and contented marriages.

Session 2: Marriage Through the Lens of God’s Grace
- Our personal point of view plays a huge role in how we tend to view and treat our spouse. It determines whether we even have a chance to truly maintain close and intimate heart-connection.
- This session deals with three perspectives we often maintain with our spouse that make it impossible to be an agent of God’s grace in their life.

Session 3: God’s Grace and a Secure Love
- As we look at the philosophical starting point and strategic path of grace-filled marriage, we’ll begin to unpack the specific tactics that lead to a stronger bond with our spouse.
- Something as simple as a house drawn on a paper napkin can show us that grace-filled marriages operate in constant awareness of each spouse’s driving inner needs for security, significance and strength.
Session 4: Grace-Filled Sex

• It’s vital to our heart-connection as couples that we graciously and enthusiastically maintain a healthy view of sex and honor its greater role in marriage.

• God’s gracious heart is giving, focused outward, generous, servant-hearted, and takes delight in being there for us when we need it. All of these grace-filled attitudes serve us well when it comes to the sexual intimacy that we share as a married couple.

Session 5: Enjoying a Significant Purpose and a Strong Hope

• Marriage is the ideal setting for both mining and refining our potential as individuals. Marriage is also capable of blunting everything good about us. It depends on how much we’re willing to let God’s gracious heart of hope, mercy, and forgiveness flow through us to our spouse.

• We’ll learn how grace builds a greater purpose into our relationship and offers consistent hope.

Session 6: The Freedom within a Grace-Filled Marriage

• God’s grace untethers hearts from the oppressive arrangements that often encumber love, steal joy, and stifle potential.

• One of the most effective delivery systems for a grace-filled relationship is a marriage that deliberately sets each other’s hearts free. We’ll learn about four wonderful freedoms God loves to see thriving in our marriage.
Session 7: The Character of a Grace-Filled Marriage

• In a grace-filled marriage, what determines how well we meet what we face, or how much joy we have along the way, is heavily determined by our commitment to keep our character muscles of faith, integrity, poise, disciplines, endurance, and courage in top form.

• If we want a marriage that runs the race of life strong and ultimately finishes well, we have to be committed to keeping our core character muscles strong both individually and as a couple.

Session 8: The Heart Qualities of a Grace-Filled Marriage

• What holds our highest affections and focus plays a huge role in whether or not we get to enjoy the kind of closeness as couples or experience the kind of eternal impact God intends us to enjoy.

• A life and a marriage aimed at true greatness gives our marriage deeper meaning and allows our marriage to make an eternal difference.
Final Thoughts

You did it! You’ve raised the stock value in your own marriage and the marriages of the participants by going through this study. You’ve formed some great relationships during this eight session study and we encourage you to continue these relationships. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Do another DVD study together.**
  - *Grace Filled Marriage* Part II (check gracefilledmarriage.net for availability)
  - *Grace Based Parenting Part 1: Creating an Atmosphere of Grace*
  - *Grace Based Parenting Part 2: Building Character*
  - *Grace Based Parenting Part 3: Aiming your Child at True Greatness*
  - *The Hurried Family: Help for the Hurried Home*
  - *Extreme Grandparenting: The Ride of your Life*

- **Do a book study together.**
  - *Little House on the Freeway*
  - *High Cost of High Control*
  - *Grace Based Parenting*
  - *Raising Kids Who Turn out Right*
  (All of these helpful tools are found at familymatters.net)

- Encourage the participants to lead another group of couples or pre-marrieds through this study.
- Look into bringing a *Grace Filled Marriage Conference* to your area. Go to familymatters.net/events for more information.
• Have a *Grace Filled Marriage study* reunion in six months.
• Plan a marriage retreat using the theme of a Grace Filled Marriage.
• Keep up with the prayer needs of each other via social media.

Thank you for being used by God in the lives of others. May God richly bless you!

Because Every Family Matters,

[Signature]

Tim and Darcy Kimmel