



# United MARRIAGE WEEK

---

FRI 07 FEB - FRI 14 FEB

## RESOURCE FOR COUPLES

This resource has been put together as part of our marriage week celebration . It is meant to be used as a couples activity. Take time out of your schedule and enjoy doing the sessions together and learn more about each other and also your relationship.

We believe building a stronger connection is vital to any relationship. So we hope you find this information helpful and it enhances your marriage relationship as you engage with it.

# United MARRIAGE WEEK

## THE ART OF BUILDING OUR 'WE'

There is a profound moment in the traditional wedding vows where the seriousness of the occasion is magnified. The minister looks at the couple, and the witnesses, and reminds them and the wider audience that the Apostle Paul compared marriage to the union between Christ and His Church. It is a sobering, beautiful reminder: marriage is not a whimsical bond. It is a relationship entered into only after prayerful thought and reverent consideration.

In a world of "Marriage at First Sight" and "disposable" connections, something in us instinctively feels that a life-long union deserves more than a snap decision. Marriage is not a social experiment; it is a sacred landscape.

**This year for Marriage Week, we invite you to walk with us as we explore "United" The Art of Building Our 'We'**

We want to move beyond just "getting by" and discover how to make the marriage journey inspiring, fresh, and deeply motivational—not just for ourselves, but for everyone we meet along the way. Your marriage is more than a private agreement; it is a vital building block for our communities and our nation. We believe that as we strengthen our marriages our homes are strengthened and so also is the soul of our nation.

**Throughout this week, we will journey through four principles we can build our marriages on:**

- **Commence:** Revisiting the beauty of how we first started.
- **Connect:** Honoring the daily choices we make to truly see and hear one another.
- **Concede:** Learning to manage conflict so that conflict never manages us.
- **Covenant:** Discovering the resilient joy of sticking together through every season of life.

Whether you are in a season of "different skies" or enjoying a clear path, we invite you to use the resources below to nourish your relationship and find your common ground once again.

# COMMENCE

## Starting the Journey

Commencement isn't just about Day One

It's about a daily decision to "re-start."

It is an invitation to stop looking at past hurts or stale routines and decide that today is a new beginning. Whether a couple has been married five years or fifty, they can choose to commence a new level of intimacy everyday.

## The "Lost" Connection

I remember watching the TV series "Lost" years ago. As the programme progressed, I became more confused until watching it became unbearable. Even years later, reading explanations of the ending remained just as bewildering as the show itself.

Sadly, many couples may feel "lost" in their marriage relationships for varying reasons: It could feel like the plot of '**lost**' bewildering. It is so easy to drift so far from our original "Why" that the current storyline of our relationships no longer makes sense.

In the wedding vows, couples promise "for better or worse, for richer or poorer." But somewhere in the thicket of life, the "Why" can so easily be replaced by a search for the nearest exit.

**Commencing** means returning to your "Why." It's about anchoring yourself to the reason you chose this specific person for your lifelong journey, allowing that original spark to fuel a new start

---

## Scenario

### The Independent Heart and the Anxious Soul

*Jake and Adrianna shared a love for sports and a deep attraction when they first met*

*They are now five years married but their social needs are clashing and beginning to put pressure on their marriage. Adrianna, who is a conflict resolution manager for a global company is secure and outgoing; Jake, who works as an online security expert, is shy and retiring and loves his privacy. He has very limited friends and family and is now beginning to feel increasingly insecure when Adrianna spends time with friends and colleagues. Silence and snide remarks are beginning to replace their original "banter."*

#### How will you advise the couple?

Take the opportunity to chat together to see how you as a couple will deal with a situation like this - what advice will you give to the couple together and how will you also advice them separately

## Tips for resolution

- **Affirm the "Why":** Try and rediscover what unites you
- **Observe, Don't Accuse:** Always start with self rather than accusing the other.
- **Create a "Safe Harbour":** Sometimes you have to let someone feel heard so they can hear you also. .
- **The "One Body" Perspective:** If you have faith, make God a part of your resolutionIn i.e. 1 Corinthians 12

# THE FAITH PERSPECTIVE

How do we make our faith an integral part of our marriage relationship? We can so easily fall into the trap of only opening up our relationship to the divine when we sense there is trouble or conflict. In truth so much of how we consult our relationship with our faith will reflect on our marriage relationship.

The praying aspect of our faith is a reminder that we communicate not just to get what we think we want or need but we communicate to know. In the same way prayer increases our knowledge of God and exposes us to more of God's amazing character so our communication with our partner is meant to draw us closer into who they are and what shapes and inspires them.

One of the mistakes people make in a marriage relationship is assuming they know all they need to know about their partner and they stop being inquisitive about them. This lack of interest in their partner's world means the relationship can become mundane rather than creating the opportunity to discover and rediscover the person they fell in love with.

## Reflection Questions

1. When was the last time you and your partner discussed your "Why"?
2. In the Jake/Adrianna scenario, who do you identify with more: the one feeling stifled or the one feeling left behind?
3. How can this text from Philippians 2:3-4 help both parties "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."

## Marriage Puzzle: "The Anchor Word"

To be solved together.

Instructions: Below are four scrambled words found in your vows or in the text above. Unscramble them, then use the circled letters to reveal the one thing every "Commencement" needs.

H E R I C R (\_\_\_\_\_)—The opposite of poorer.

N O R H O U (\_\_\_\_\_)—To highly respect

R E N T P A R (\_\_\_\_\_)—To have someone in your life

V E N A T N O C (\_\_\_\_\_)—A sacred promise.

- Take the 4th letter of word 1
- The 2nd letter of word 2
- The 1st letter of word 3
- The 4th letter of word 4)

The Solution: You both need \_\_\_ to start again

## THE SACRED START

It began with a look, a spark, a smile  
Under the expanse of a shared, new sky.  
Two paths converge where the journey is laid,  
In the light of the promises solemnly made.  
Oh, the joy of the start, when the heart is wide,  
With a chosen companion right by your side.  
A journey ahead full of hope

under the weight of time  
The road can grow long and the maps can blur,  
Till we lose the "us" in the way we were.  
The plot becomes tangled, the "Why" fades from view,  
And the "Better or Worse" feels heavy and the cost.  
Yet here is the secret of the Covenant we made:  
Love isn't a river that only runs deep.  
It's a choice to Commence at the break of the day,  
To sweep the old hurts and forgive the past  
To look at the stranger and see the lover who shares your bed,  
To experience the strife yet honour the words  
for richer and poorer, sickness and health  
For renewal is found when we dare to hope,  
To open the door and let "Today" in.  
So let's start over, right here where we stand,  
With a fresh, steady grip on a familiar hand.  
The journey continues, the story is grand,  
Led by the grace of the Unseen Hand.

## REFLECTION

1. **The First Sky:** The poem speaks of the "joy of the start." What is one specific, tiny detail from when you first met that still makes you smile today? (A certain look, a joke, or a place).
2. **Clearing the Dust:** The poem mentions "sweeping the old hurts." Is there a "dusty" area in your relationship—a small resentment or a repetitive argument—that you both agree to forgive and leave behind today so you can "let Today in"?

3. **Seeing the Lover:** In the busyness of life, we often see our spouse as a "co-manager" of the house. What is one quality in your partner that you saw when you started going out that you still admire now that they are your spouse?

## The "Unseen Hand" Gratitude List

Focusing on the spiritual oversight of your marriage.

On a piece of paper, draw a simple line down the middle.

- **Left Side ("The Strife"):** Briefly note 2 or 3 "mountains" or "heavy costs" you have faced together (e.g., a job loss, health scare, or move).
- **Right Side ("The Unseen Hand"):** For each of those struggles, write down one way you saw grace or strength sustain you through it.

# CONNECT

## Choosing to Communicate

This is about the "Heart."

It moves communication from a chore to a choice.

It's the intentional act of bridging the gap between two people to ensure no one feels "alone" while standing right next to their partner.

Since **Commence** was about the "decision" to start, **Connect** is about the "action" of staying close. In marriage, connection isn't a state of being; it's a constant flow of energy between two people.

For Jake and Adrianna, "Connect" will be about finding a middle frequency where the "Security Expert" feels safe and the "Conflict Manager" feels heard.

### "Wired for Connection"

We live in a hyper-connected world. Perhaps the greatest "crime" a parent can commit in the 21st century is taking their children on holiday to a place with no Wi-Fi, a place where they cannot see what friends are posting or what their favourite club is doing. We are so used to this global, digital grid that we often take physical connection for granted, lulled by the illusion of "closeness" provided by social media.

### BUILT FOR CONNECTION

Human beings are hard-wired for relationships. This is why isolation is used as a punishment in remand centers; to be cut off is to suffer. In the Bible, one of the first needs God addressed was the need for companionship: "It

is not good for man to be alone." Just as God provided a helper for Adam to end his isolation, we must actively work to end the "emotional isolation" that can creep into even the busiest homes

In marriage, staying connected is not a guarantee, it is a discipline. It requires intentionality and habit-forming so that it never feels like a chore. The prophet Amos asks, "Can two walk together unless they agree?" The obvious answer is "No." Without the communication that forms a deep level of connectedness, there can be no walking together in agreement.

**The Handshake of the Soul:** Connection is more than being in the same house; it is being on the same frequency. We can unwittingly build "firewalls" against our spouse if we do not learn the art of connecting well.

- **Discussion:** Think of a radio. Sometimes we hear "static" in marriage, misunderstandings, tone of voice, or simple exhaustion. What is causing the most "static" in your communication right now?
- **Reflection:** Are you currently tuned into your spouse's "station," or are you waiting for them to tune into yours?

## Same House, Different Skies

Whilst Jake and Adrianna live in the same house and sleep in the same bed and love each other. Their outlook on life is vastly different and that affects the way they communicate and connect.

- A quiet night in is energising for Jake
- A night out with friends is therapeutic for Adrianna

The key to bridging these differences is learning to be a "guest" in your partner's world. This means Jake visiting Adrianna's social orbit for a time, and Adrianna visiting Jake's world of quiet stillness. By doing this, we "taste" the world from their perspective.

**Discussion:** Can you name one thing your spouse loves that you don't fully "get," but you are willing to try because it matters to them?

**Reflection:** How can we create a "shared sky" this week where both our needs for rest and engagement are met?

## STAYING ON THE SAME FREQUENCY

### The "Daily Handshake":

For the next seven days, commit to 15 minutes of "unfiltered connection."

**No Logistics:** Do not talk about bills, kids, or schedules.

**No Devices:** Phones stay in another room.

**The Goal:** Simply share one "high" and one "low" from your day. This is the act of staying on the same frequency.

---

## THE FAITH PERSPECTIVE

Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction? **Amos 3:3**

A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken. **Ecclesiastes 4:12**

These verses show how communication enhances and protects. Two people can only walk together if they agree on the destination. Similarly, standing "back-to-back" requires a high level of trust and communication to protect one another's "blind spots." When we factor in the Divine Presence—the third strand of the cord—our protection is strengthened.

One of the ways we enhance our relationship is by making God our primary reference point. If "families that eat together stay together," it is equally true that couples who pray together, stay together.

## A Learned Behaviour

We often believe communication is a natural talent—you either have it or you don't. The truth is, communication is a learned behaviour. Our upbringing and life experiences either teach us to communicate openly or to avoid it altogether. By choosing to "Connect" now, we are not only strengthening our marriage but modeling a positive tool for the next generation, creating adults who value and use communication well.

## DISCUSSION

If your communication style was a "security setting" (like Jake's work), is it currently set to "Public," "Private," or "Encrypted"? What would it take to move it toward "Trusted Access"?

# CONCEDE

## The Art of Yielding

This is about the "Will." It is often the hardest part of the journey. To **Concede** is not to "lose" an argument; it is to prioritize the relationship over being right. It is the "give and take" that keeps a marriage flexible instead of brittle.

Unfortunately in a world where conceding can be seen as failure, learning to concede in our marriage relationship requires a lot of wisdom and grace.

### The Scenario

#### Jake and Adrianna's Turning Point

As Jake and Adrianna try to "Connect," they hit a wall. Adrianna's sister is having a big 40th birthday party.

- **Adrianna** wants to go, stay late, and help clean up. She sees it as a vital family connection.
- **Jake** feels his "firewall" going up. He's had a grueling week at work dealing with a security breach. The thought of a loud party makes him want to retreat into his "offline" mode.

**The Conflict:** If Adrianna insists they stay late, Jake feels drained and ignored. If Jake insists they stay home, Adrianna feels isolated and resentful.

### Exploring "Concede"

In our individualistic world, "conceding" feels like weakness. But in a Covenant, it is a **Sacred Handover**.

- **The Sacrifice of the Right:** (Philippians 2:3) "Do nothing out of selfish ambition." In this scenario, both Jake and Adrianna have a "right" to

their preference. Conceding means asking: "What does the 'We' need more right now than what 'I' need?"

- **The "Yield" Sign:** Think of a junction in the road. If two cars refuse to yield, they crash. If one yields, the journey continues for both.

## Reflective Questions for Concede

- **The Win-Win Audit:** When was the last time you "won" an argument but felt like you "lost" a bit of closeness with your spouse? Was the victory worth the distance it created?
- **The 50/50 Myth:** Many people say marriage is 50/50. But if both people only give 50%, there is a gap in the middle. How does the idea of "conceding" change if you both aim for 100% of the other person's well-being?
- **Jake & Adrianna's Solution:** How could they both "concede" in the party scenario? (e.g., They go together, but agree on a firm exit time so Jake can recharge).

## If Only I Had Known

It felt like betrayal, sharp, cold, and deep. How could she sow what she knew we would reap? Trust, once unraveled, is hard to re-sew; The needle is heavy, the progress is slow. No matter the stitch or how tight the thread, the ghost of the rip still lives in my head.

She lied. To my heart, that was the end. A break in the spirit no comfort could mend. She confessed, she pleaded, she asked for a start, but I held my principles close to my heart. Does a leopard change spots? Can faith be restored? I drew out my "justice" and unsheathed my sword.

I listened to friends, I heard her soft plea, but I clung to the "right" of how things ought to be. I stood on my platform; I stood on my pride, While the

love that we built slowly withered and died. The veil was now scattered, the embers were cold, and I traded my peace for the "truth" I could hold.

The years tell a story I didn't foresee, of a heart caught in webs, no longer quite free. I hear through the grapevine she's found a new way, contentment and joy at the end of her day. She faced her own shadows, she walked through the fire, while I sat alone on my principled pyre. I wonder if grace could have mended the gap, If I'd seen her fear as a desperate trap. I demanded the debt, I demanded the soul, Instead of the mercy that makes a man whole. I couldn't concede; I wouldn't bend low, and I'm left with the seeds that I chose to sow.

If only I'd known that to "win" in my pride, meant losing the lover who stood by my side. Maybe life could have played a much sweeter tune, had I conceded to grace just a moment too soon.

## REFLECTIVE QUESTION

- **The Cost of Justice:** In the poem, the speaker "won" the argument but lost the relationship. Is there an area in your marriage right now where you are fighting to be "right" at the expense of being "connected"?
- **The Fear Behind the Fault:** The speaker mentions he ignored the "fear that caused the lie." When your spouse fails you, do you look at the behaviour or do you look for the fear behind it?
- **The Grace Gap:** If you were the one who made a mistake, how would you want your spouse to "concede" their right to be angry?

## The Faith Perspective: The Pattern of Christ

In our human nature, we view "conceding" as a loss. We think, "If I give in, I'm being a doormat." But the Christian faith offers a radical alternative: The Power of the Yield.

### 1. The Ultimate Concession

The most powerful example of concession is found in **Philippians 2:5–8**. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

- **Reflection:** If the Creator of the universe was willing to concede His comfort for our salvation, can we concede our preference for our spouse's peace?

### 2. Submitting to One Another

**Ephesians 5:21** says, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." Notice the order: before the famous instructions to husbands and wives, there is a general call for mutual yielding.

- **The Jake & Adrianna Application:** Jake isn't just "giving in" to a party; he is submitting to his wife's need for family connection. Adrianna isn't just "leaving early"; she is submitting to her husband's need for mental rest. Both are doing it "out of reverence for Christ."

### 3. The "Unseen Hand" in our Conflicts

Sometimes, the friction between a couple's desires is the very tool God uses to sand down our rough edges. When we concede, we are trusting that the **Unseen Hand** is working more through our humility than through our "winning" the argument.

#### Discussion & Reflective Questions

- **The Mirror of Grace:** When you feel the urge to stand your ground and "win," ask yourself: "If God dealt with me based on 'winning' and 'rights,' where would I be today?" **How can reflecting God's grace to you change how you respond to your spouse?**
- **The "Lesser" Goal:** In 1 Corinthians 6:7, Paul asks a stinging question: Why not let yourselves be cheated? **In a marriage, is "being right" more important than "being wronged"?**
- **The Harvest of Peace:** James 3:18 says, "Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness." **Think of a recent conflict. Did you sow "peace" (by conceding) or did you sow "discord" (by insisting on your way)? What was the harvest?**

#### The "Concede" Activity: The Yield Sign

The Scenario Exercise: Think of a recurring disagreement (money, chores, in-laws, or social time).

**Acknowledge the Need:** Each partner explains why their preference matters to them without the other person interrupting. (Jake: "I need quiet because my brain is overstimulated." Adrianna: "I need the party because family connection makes me feel alive.")

**The Sacrifice: Ask:** "What is the 10% I can give up to meet you 90% of the way?"

**The Prayer:** Hold hands and pray: "Lord, help us to value our unity more than our individual 'rights.' Help us to see this concession not as a loss, but as an investment in our covenant."

## THE SACRED YIELD

It starts with a wall, a line in the sand  
A tightening grip on a personal strand.  
Two voices rising, each claiming the right,  
To win the day's argument, to finish the fight.  
We stand on our "justice," we stand on our pride,  
While the heart of our "We" begins to subside.

For the cost of a "win" is often too dear  
If it buys us a victory but brings us to fear.  
The maps that we carry are different, it's true  
But the road isn't built for the "I," but the "Two."  
To Concede is a choice, a quiet, brave grace  
To seek out peace in a familiar face.

It isn't a losing, a bowing, a fall,  
It's the wisdom to see the great "Why" of it all.  
It's the pattern of Christ, who laid down His crown  
Who traded His glory to bring the walls down.  
When I yield my "right" for the sake of your rest  
I find that our covenant is truly most blessed.

So let's lower the firewalls, let down the guard  
And trust that the yielding is never too hard  
For when we are willing to bend and to part  
We find a new rhythm—the beat of one heart.  
The journey continues, the story is grand  
Led by the grace of the Unseen Hand.

# COVENANT

## The Promise that Protects

This is about the "Soul." It is the foundation that ensures the other three "C's" are not just temporary efforts. A covenant is fundamentally different from a contract. A contract is based on mutual protection ("I will if you will"), but a covenant is based on a mutual promise ("I will, even if you can't").

Just as a building's foundation is hidden beneath the earth, the covenant is the "Unseen Hand" that supports a marriage when visible feelings or circumstances fail.

## THE ANCHOR IN THE STORM

As we journey through marriage, we will face weights far heavier than social calendars or minor misunderstandings. Couples face illness, grief, and the multifaceted challenges of family, work, and health. Sadly, when "felt needs" go unmet, the modern instinct is to look for the nearest exit.

A Covenant Mindset remembers that marriage is more than a social arrangement; it is a sacred bond. When one partner is weak, the covenant provides the structural strength for the other to carry the load.

**Discussion:** In moments of deep frustration, do you find yourself looking for an "exit"—physically, mentally, or emotionally—or do you find yourself leaning into the "Anchor" of your vows?

**Reflection:** How does knowing your spouse is "Covenant-minded" change how safe you feel to be vulnerable or weak?

## The Faith Perspective: The Third Strand

'A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.' **Ecclesiastes 4:12**

In a Covenant marriage, God is not just a witness; He is the third strand.

- When Jake is too tired to **connect**, God's grace provides the energy.
- When Adrianna finds it too hard to **concede**, God's humility provides the way.

A covenant relationship moves us beyond past hurts and present challenges, calling us to be solution-focused through divine strength. This bond empowers us today to love the person our spouse will become in ten or twenty years.

God is the Alpha and Omega; He knows our beginning, our end, and every valley in between. When we realize that God is more invested in the success of our relationship than even we are, we can stop striving in our own strength and start leaning into His.

## THE RESET: PRAYER and REFLECTION

This is a moment to "reset."

In creation, God has woven reset into the fabric of life: new days, new months, and changing seasons.

"The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning." (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Just as God's love is reset and made fresh every morning, we can pray a prayer of "reset" over our marriage.

## **PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, thank You for the Father's love shown through You. Our hearts rejoice that You call us into a relationship with Yourself. Thank You for the gift of the Holy Spirit—the worker of love, grace, and forgiveness in our lives.

Lord, I thank you for my spouse. Thank You for the unique qualities You have placed within them. Help me to continue to see them through Your lens and to celebrate the good You have created. Give me the wisdom to support them in becoming all You desire them to be.

May our relationship continue to honor You. May it be a blessing to our community and the family You have given us. Protect us from both known and hidden dangers. Help us to champion each other and to be a constant reflection of Your love.

May our love be enriched by Your presence daily. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## **WRAP UP**

Each marriage journey is sacred. There is a reason you Commenced this path; may you never lose sight of that original "Why."

Our commitment to Connect is a reflection of our reality: human beings are not mind-readers. Unless we reveal ourselves through intentional communication, we cannot truly be known. Conceding to one another allows us to face our fallibility with grace. We all fail, but learning to ask for forgiveness and yielding our "rights" allows us to grow together rather than apart.

Finally, our willingness to keep loving is the ultimate picture of Covenant. It is the mindset that refuses to give up, desiring to love through the pain to reach the destination. This is not a covenant that tolerates abuse, but one that seeks to make things right—provided both parties are willing to love, forgive, and learn.

Blessings on your journey.



*United*  
**MARRIAGE WEEK**

---

FRI 07 FEB - FRI 14 FEB