Pre-Marital Counseling
Counselor’s Guide
Dear Counselor,

Thank you for dedicating your time to helping couples start their marriages off right. This material is extremely easy to use, yet very powerful at the same time.

Your counselees should view the video or listen to the audio teachings prior to each session. You will need to let them know that you expect them to fill-in-the-blanks on their study guide prior to each session because you will be discussing the material they have viewed or listened to.

Your guide has all of the blanks already filled in, plus questions for you to ask the couple within text boxes placed throughout the study guide. Hopefully you have already gone through their premarital inventory and will be able to come up with some additional questions based on what you discovered there.

Make sure that each couple fully understands the biblical principles of marriage. If they have questions please make sure and take the time to thoroughly answer them. You will be meeting with them four times, which should give you enough opportunity to go over everything in-depth.

The lessons they will view or listen to last between 13-15 minutes each. Your discussion will last approximately 45 minutes, leading to an hour total for each subject. You can view the video or listen to the audio with them, or let them do that on their own prior to meeting with you.

If you choose to provide additional materials for the couple to study, that is completely up to you. Most counselors find that what is provided in the Pre-Marital Counseling Kit is all that they need.

May God bless you as you seek to build God-honoring marriages!

In Christ,

Barry Davis, D.Min.
GOD'S DREAM FOR YOUR MARRIAGE

1. GOD'S PLAN FOR MARRIAGE

"At last!" Adam exclaimed. "She is part of my own flesh and bone! She will be called `woman,' because she was taken out of a 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, although Adam and his wife were both naked, neither of them felt any shame. – Genesis 2:23-25

Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. – Genesis 5:2 (KJV)

Why did God call “their” name Adam? What does this tell us about how God views the marital relationship? Do you view it in the same way?

…the two are united into one. – Genesis 2:24b

✧ United Physically

While the physical relationship is obviously important, do you believe it is the most important? Why or why not?

✧ United Emotionally

Do you feel like you two are united emotionally right now? If so, can you give me an example or two that would demonstrate that?

✧ United Spiritually

Did you find the Triangle illustration helpful? What does it show you about the importance of being united spiritually? Do you feel that you are both growing closer to God and to each other? If not, what could be done to change that? If so, what are your presently doing to bring growth in this area?
2. GOD’S PROCESS FOR MARRIAGE

*This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.* – Genesis 2:24

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This explains why a man *leaves his father and mother* ...

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<th>Dependence on Spouse</th>
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This explains why a man *leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife* ...

Do either of you feel like you, or your fiancé, has a problem “letting go” in this area? How can you stay close to your parents, but at the same time be independent of them and dependent on your spouse?

3. GOD’S PURPOSE FOR MARRIAGE

Do you believe that God specifically called you two together to be man and wife? Why or why not?
Of the three purposes listed, which do you think will be the greatest challenge for you in the days ahead?

Do you have any questions about this session that I can answer for you?

**HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS**

Date and Time of next Appointment: ________________________________

Next Session Topic: **FOUR KEYS TO INTIMACY**
FOUR KEYS TO INTIMACY

KEY #1 – COMMITMENT

Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery.
– Hebrews 13:4

RED FLAGS WHEN DEALING WITH THE OPPOSITE SEX

1. Do not spend time alone with them, at lunch, on any type of outing, or go anywhere with them without their spouse and/or your spouse present.
2. Do not talk on the phone with them just to chat – if it isn’t about business, or something you must discuss, don’t do it.
3. If for some reason you need to hug them, do it from the side rather than the front.
4. Do not say or do anything that could be interpreted as flirting.
5. If you find yourself thinking about someone else more than you do your spouse, you need to cut off that relationship immediately.

Drink water from your own well—share your love only with your wife.
– Proverbs 5:15

KEY #2 – COMMUNICATION

How would you describe your communication skills with your future spouse?
Do you think your future fiancé will communicate with you well in the future?
Why or why not?
My dear brothers and sisters, be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. – James 1:19

Do either of you have a problem controlling your temper? How will you deal with anger in marriage?

SIMPLE HINTS FOR HUSBANDS AND WIVES BY DR. ED WHEAT

FOR WIVES:
(1) Never repeat to anyone else the things your husband tells you in private.
(2) Give your husband your total enthusiastic attention and listen with interest while he becomes more comfortable in expressing himself.
(3) Do not interrupt him or come to conclusions about what he is saying.
(4) Acknowledge that you understand even if you disagree, and repeat his thoughts and feelings back to him so that he is sure you understand. Don’t let your disagreements sound like disapproval.

For Future Wives: Do you understand the importance of these four “hints”? Do you believe you will be able to live by them in the future? Why or why not?

FOR HUSBANDS:
(1) Spend time together alone really listening to your wife because you want to understand her better. Of course this means turning the TV off!
(2) Look at your wife and move close to her while you are talking.
(3) Plan times when you will be uninterrupted and then give her the gift of your interested attention.
(4) Pay attention to your wife when other people are around. This will mean more to her than you know.

For Future Husbands: Do you understand the importance of these four “hints”? Do you believe you will be able to live by them in the future? Why or why not?

“Because women usually feel more need to talk than men, husbands should learn that they can love their wives just by listening. I mean really listening: concentration accompanied by eye contact.” – Ed Wheat

KEY #3 – CONSIDERATION
In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat her 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. If you don't treat her as you should, your prayers will not be heard. – 1 Peter 3:7

How can you honor your future mate? List some specific ways that you will do this after you are married:

Why does God connect the way we treat our spouse with answered prayer? What does this tell you about the importance of this key?

**KEY #4 – CONTACT**

The husband should not deprive his wife of sexual intimacy, which is her right as a married woman, nor should the wife deprive her husband. The wife gives authority over her body to her husband, and the husband also gives authority over his body to his wife. So do not deprive each other of sexual relations. – 1 Corinthians 7:3-5a

What does it mean to deprive someone of sexual intimacy? Is there ever a time when this would be appropriate? What does it mean to “give authority” of your body to your spouse? Are you willing to do that?

**HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS**

Date and Time of next Appointment: ________________________________

Next Session Topic: **MEN & WOMEN: ENJOYING THE DIFFERENCE**
MEN AND WOMEN: ENJOYING THE DIFFERENCE

1. DIFFERENT INTENTIONALLY

What differences, other than physical ones, are readily apparent between yourself and your fiancé?

So God created people in his own image; God patterned them after himself; male and female he created them. – Genesis 1:27

How does it make you feel to know you are made in God’s image? Why are both male and female necessary to complete the image of God?

But in relationships among the Lord's people, women are not independent of men, and men are not independent of women. For although the first woman came from man, all men have been born from women ever since, and everything comes from God. – 1 Corinthians 11:11-12

2. DIFFERENT EMOTIONALLY

Describe some ways that you and your fiancé react differently emotionally to various circumstances: Crisis; Joy; Suffering, etc…

Does the way we react emotionally speak to strength and weakness, or simply to the different way we have been “wired”?

3. DIFFERENT RELATIONALLY

What is the first thing you think of when you hear the word “submission”? How do you think it should apply to marriage? Are you a submissive person?
And further, you will submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. You wives will submit to your husbands as you do to the Lord. For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of his body, the church; he gave his life to be her Savior. As the church submits to Christ, so you wives must submit to your husbands in everything. And you husbands must love your wives with the same love Christ showed the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by baptism and God's word. – Ephesians 5:21-26

THREE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FROM EPHESIANS 5:21-26

1. Husbands and wives are to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
2. Wives are to submit to their husbands as they do to the Lord.
3. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the Church.

Which of these roles appears to be the most difficult? If a husband truly loved his wife as Christ loved the church, would she be more or less likely to be voluntarily submissive?

4. DIFFERENT STRATEGICALLY

Have you ever considered that God might want to use you and your future family in a strategic way? With God’s help, how do you think you might have a positive impact on future generations?

HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS

Date and Time of next Appointment: ________________________________
Next Session Topic: CONFLICT RESOLUTION: HOW TO FIGHT FAIR
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Tell me about the biggest fight you’ve ever had? How did you resolve it?

Some Facts About Conflict


Why would it be abnormal if there was never any conflict in marriage?

2. Conflict Is An Opportunity For Growth.

Name at least a couple of ways that conflict could help your relationship grow in a positive direction:

3. Conflict Must Be Diffused Or It Will Destroy.

What will happen to your relationship if conflict is never resolved?

4. Conflict Demands Rules So No One Gets Hurt.

Are one of you a better fighter than the other? Why is it necessary to have some ground rules for fighting in a relationship?

How To Diffuse Conflict In Your Marriage

– DEFINE THE PROBLEM

A wise person is hungry for truth, while the fool feeds on trash. – Proverbs 15:14

Have you ever been in an argument and then realize you didn’t really know what you were fighting about? How can that happen?
- **INITIATE A TIME TO TALK**

How much time do you actually spend in dialogue with each other right now? Is this something you need to work on? If so, what will you do about it?

"So if you are standing before the altar in the Temple, offering a sacrifice to God, and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there beside the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.” – Matthew 5:23-24

- **FOCUS ON THE PERCEIVED PROBLEM**

It's harder to make amends with an offended friend than to capture a fortified city. Arguments separate friends like a gate locked with iron bars. – Proverbs 18:19

- **FEEL THEIR PAIN**

Finally, all of you should be of one mind, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds. – 1 Peter 3:8

When your fiancé hurts, do you hurt with him or her? What if you don’t agree with the reason behind the hurt? How can you still sympathize with him or her?

- **UNCOVER THE ROOT PROBLEM**

The longer you are together, the better you will be able to “read” each other. This is very helpful when it comes to conflict resolution. For the time being, list some ways that you can uncover the root problems behind your conflict:

People’s thoughts can be like a deep well, but someone with understanding can find the wisdom there. – Proverbs 20:5 (NCV)
Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do your part to live in peace with everyone, as much as possible. – Romans 12:17-18

THREE TIPS FOR RECONCILIATION:
1. Own Your Responsibility.
2. Confess, “I was wrong.”
3. Ask forgiveness – “Will you forgive me?”

Is it difficult for you to take these steps? Do you think it will be difficult for your fiancé? Why are these steps necessary?

ESTABLISH A SPECIFIC ACTION PLAN

Have you thought about how you will handle conflict in marriage? Give me an example of a specific action plan to resolve conflict:

HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS
Discuss any final wedding plans.

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