

HEART FOR FAMILY · SESSION ONE

Building a Godly Marriage

That Lasts a Lifetime

A Connect Group Series by Kirk & Chelsea Cameron
Real Life Church · Gosnells WA

“Heaven starts in the home and it flows out from there.”

— Kirk Cameron

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HEART FOR FAMILY · SESSION ONE

Godly Marriage

This lesson explores the faith-based principles that have helped couples build thriving, God-centred marriages — even through life’s most challenging seasons. Drawing on biblical wisdom and real-life experience, we’ll walk through six core principles designed to strengthen your covenant, deepen your connection, and keep Christ at the centre of your home.

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow.

Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 (ESV)

1

PRINCIPLE ONE

Put God at the Center — Not Your Feelings

Kirk teaches that marriage is not a contract between two people — it is a covenant between the husband, the wife, and Jesus Christ. When God is truly at the centre, the marriage becomes anchored to something that doesn’t shift with moods or circumstances. Chelsea adds that love must be a choice and an act of obedience, not just a feeling. “We are called to love, not just when we feel like it.”

“Marriage is a covenant relationship between me, my wife and Jesus. And there is no exiting out of that covenant relationship.”

— Kirk Cameron

God defines the terms of marriage — not culture, not feelings.

- ✓ When His design is followed, couples are not only less likely to divorce but also report greater happiness and fulfilment.

Love is obedience before it is emotion.

- ✓ Chelsea learned that choosing to love — even before the feelings return — is an act of trust in God’s faithfulness.

And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3:14 (NIV)

2

PRINCIPLE TWO

Your Biggest Enemy Is Yourself

Kirk is direct: “The biggest enemy in your marriage is yourself.” Every human heart carries pride, selfishness, and defensiveness. These are not problems that disappear when you find the right spouse — they follow you into every relationship.

Chelsea and Kirk both moved away from Hollywood thinking location was the problem. They quickly learned the real issue was pride. Real transformation starts by asking God to change you, not your spouse.

Stop praying for a new spouse — start asking for a new you.

- ✓ Chelsea’s prayer became: “Lord, change me so I can give my husband a new me.”

You can only control yourself.

- ✓ Only God changes people. Spending energy trying to change your spouse breeds resentment. Spending energy on your own growth yields fruit.

Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?

Matthew 7:3 (ESV)

3

PRINCIPLE THREE

Forgiveness Is the Foundation, Not the Finish Line

Chelsea openly shares that early in their marriage she kept a mental “list” of Kirk’s wrongs and felt a wall building between them. She knew that without learning to forgive, the marriage would not survive.

Kirk describes what Chelsea’s forgiveness meant to him: “It took a huge weight off my shoulders and allowed me to move forward, knowing our best days were ahead of us.” Forgiveness liberates both partners.

“I needed to stop praying for a new husband and start asking God to change me so that I could give my husband a new me.”

— Chelsea Cameron

Keeping a record of wrongs builds a wall.

✓ Chelsea learned from 1 Corinthians 13 — love does not keep score. Let God be the judge; choose grace.

Forgiveness is not condoning — it is releasing.

✓ It frees the forgiver from bitterness and creates space for real reconciliation and healing.

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

4

PRINCIPLE FOUR

Honour Your Covenant in Every Season

Kirk’s commitment is illustrated powerfully in the filming of Fireproof (2008). When the script called for a kiss with his co-star, Kirk refused — believing that “there is nothing make-believe about kissing an actress.” Chelsea dressed as the co-star so the scene could be filmed without Kirk breaking his vow.

Honouring your covenant means protecting your marriage in small moments, not just big ones. Guarding your eyes, your schedule, your conversations — these daily choices either build or erode the marriage.



Small commitments protect the big covenant.

Kirk’s decision on set communicated deep honour to Chelsea and to God.



Hang in there through the hard seasons.

Kirk says: “If you just trust the Lord, you can say, God taught us patience, kindness, and selflessness in those hard times.”

What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.

Mark 10:9 (ESV)

5

PRINCIPLE FIVE

Prioritise Deep Connection Over Busyness

Kirk and Chelsea are candid that many of the rough patches in their marriage were caused by packed schedules, major life transitions, and the sneaky accumulation of small distractions. Chelsea warns that watching TV together is not the same as a genuine date.

The Heart for Family series emphasises “dreaming together” — regularly sharing hopes, goals, and visions as a couple. This practice rebuilds emotional intimacy and reminds spouses why they chose each other.



Busyness and selfishness are silent marriage killers.

The enemy doesn’t always attack with a crisis — he sneaks in through schedules and screens.



Dream together regularly.

Couples who share vision, goals, and a sense of adventure build a unique kind of friendship at the heart of their marriage.

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain.

Psalms 127:1 (ESV)

6

PRINCIPLE SIX

A Strong Marriage Changes Culture

Kirk and Chelsea believe that reviving marriages is one of the most powerful things Christians can do for society. “Our culture so badly needs strong marriages and families. It’s the DNA of a healthy country and a healthy world.”

Joy is power. Kirk warns: “If joy is our strength and someone steals our joy, we’re dead in the water.” Protecting your joy in Christ — through prayer, Scripture, community, and worship — keeps you strong enough to love your spouse well and parent with grace.

“If we transform our marriages and families — if we revive them into a source of strength and power — we can change culture.”

— Kirk Cameron, Heart for Family

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

Ephesians 5:25 (ESV)

GOING DEEPER

Reflection & Discussion Questions

Use these questions individually, as a couple, or in your Connect Group.

For the Individual

1. In what areas of your marriage are you most tempted to focus on changing your spouse rather than asking God to change you?
2. Is there a “record of wrongs” you have been keeping — spoken or unspoken? What would it look like to surrender that list to God today?
3. How would you honestly describe the role Jesus plays in your marriage — centre, background, or emergency contact?

For Couples

4. When have busyness or small distractions been the biggest threat to your connection? What can you put in place to guard against that this week?
5. Kirk and Chelsea are transparent about real struggles. What is one area of your marriage you have been afraid to be honest about — with each other or with God?

6. What does “dreaming together” look like for your family? Set aside 30 minutes this week to share one dream each for your marriage, your family, and your faith.

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Practical Application

Faith without works is dead — and so is a lesson without action. Here are simple steps to apply these principles starting today.

7-Day Marriage Challenge

- Day 1 — Pray Together: Spend 5 minutes in prayer as a couple. Ask God to be the true centre of your marriage.
- Day 2 — Own Your Part: Identify one way your own pride or selfishness is affecting your marriage. Confess it — first to God, then to your spouse.
- Day 3 — Forgive One Thing: Release one grievance you have been holding onto. Write it down, then tear up the paper as an act of release.
- Day 4 — Honour Publicly: Express appreciation for your spouse in front of at least one other person — your kids, a friend, or on a phone call.
- Day 5 — Real Date Night: Plan a genuine, screen-free, face-to-face date. Ask each other: “What is one dream you have for our family in the next five years?”
- Day 6 — Guard Your Covenant: Identify one area of your daily routine where boundaries would strengthen your marriage. Make a commitment together.
- Day 7 — Celebrate & Pray Forward: Thank God for your marriage — including the hard seasons. Ask Him what He wants to build in your family next.

CLOSING PRAYER

A Prayer for Your Marriage

Lord, we come to You as imperfect people who need Your grace every single day. We confess that we have allowed pride, busyness, and selfishness to crowd You out of our marriage. Today we choose to place You at the centre — not just in word, but in every decision, every conversation, every moment of conflict. Change us before You change our circumstances. Give us the courage to forgive, the humility to grow, and the joy to love well. Build something in our home that points to You. Amen.

Real Life Church · Connect Group · Heart for Family, Session 1