



Couples Refresh MasterClass

Week 1 — PROMISE : Covenant > Contract (Foundation)

In the room: Draft your two-sentence Covenant Statement; choose a weekly 10-minute “We” decision; dedicate the journey in prayer.

Closeness Challenge: 6-second kiss + three blessings (daily).

Three guiding truths

- Love matures in promise-keeping, not performance-scoring.
- Stability creates safety; safety makes vulnerability (and growth) possible.
- Marriage is a mission bigger than preference—you're building a life, not trading services.

Research highlight

- Couples with shared, explicit commitment markers (rituals, vows revisited, couple identity) show significantly higher relationship stability in longitudinal studies; regular shared faith practice is associated with a substantially lower divorce risk (~30–50%).

Scripture (full text)

- Mark 10:6–9 (ESV): “But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”

One-sentence exegesis: God Himself joins husband and wife into one flesh; therefore the covenant's durability rests finally on God's design and authority, not fluctuating emotions.

Week 2 — PINPOINT: Know & Be Known (Love Maps + Admiration)

In the room: Build Love Maps (current stresses, hopes, people, goals); install 5:1 specific appreciation; practice a 10-minute non-logistics check-in.

Closeness Challenge: Daily check-in + Admiration Note.

Three guiding truths

- Curiosity is love in action—attention tells the heart “you matter.”

- Gratitude directs perception; what you praise, you notice more of.
- Deep knowing requires rhythm, not random intensity.

Research highlight

- Stable couples maintain roughly a 5:1 positive-to-negative interaction ratio during conflict; positivity acts as a buffer that prevents disagreements from spiraling.

Scripture (full text)

- Hebrews 10:24–25 (ESV): “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

One-sentence exegesis: Love grows through intentional, regular consideration and encouragement, which God commands as a means of mutual perseverance.

Week 3 — Micro-Yeses & Shared Influence (Trust in the Small Things)

In the room: Identify bids for connection; create a 60-second connection menu; rehearse soft start-ups and receiving influence.

Closeness Challenge: Use your connection menu 3×/day.

Three guiding truths

- Tiny responses (eye contact, “tell me more,” a touch) build large trust.
- Humility multiplies wisdom—shared influence beats unilateral control.
- Honor in tone and posture opens the heart; pride shuts it.

Research highlight

- In observational studies, happy couples turn toward each other’s bids about 86% of the time, while distressed couples do so around 33%; refusing to share influence drastically raises the likelihood of marital failure (roughly 4 in 5 risk when one partner chronically

rejects it).

Scripture (full text)

- Ephesians 5:21 (ESV): “Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

One-sentence exegesis: Spirit-wrought mutual submission is the Christ-centered pattern that dethrones self and makes room for holy love.

Week 4 — Calm Conflict Fast (Four Horsemen → Antidotes + 4-Step Solver)

In the room: Spot Criticism, Defensiveness, Contempt, Stonewalling; replace with Gentle Start-Up, Responsibility, Appreciation, Self-Soothing; run the 4-Step Solver (define → brainstorm 5 → choose/test → review); set tone/time guardrails + a repair phrase.

Closeness Challenge: Use the Gentle Start-Up once for a real issue + a Repair Phrase before bed.

Three guiding truths

- How you start a hard talk often determines how it ends.
- Repair is holy work—owning your part invites grace.
- Anger may alert, but righteousness is never produced by rage.

Research highlight

- The first three minutes of a conflict discussion predict its trajectory with very high accuracy (~90%+); contempt is the single strongest predictor of breakup/divorce.

Scripture (full text)

- James 1:19–20 (ESV): “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”

One-sentence exegesis: God commands listening and restraint because human anger,

untamed by the Spirit, cannot yield the God-pleasing fruit we seek.

Week 5 — From Gridlock to Shared Meaning (Dreams, Values & Family Banner)

In the room: Conduct the Dreams Interview; name non-negotiables vs. negotiables; draft a provisional compromise; craft a two-line Family Banner; select one weekly ritual (5–15 min).

Closeness Challenge: Practice your ritual once; do a Banner Check before one decision.

Three guiding truths

- Under every entrenched stance lives a dream or a fear worth hearing.
- Shared story (identity + purpose) turns a house into a home.
- Small, repeated rituals preach what your family truly loves.

Research highlight

- Couples who frequently fight about money (about weekly) are ~30% more likely to divorce than those who rarely do; aligning values and meaning reduces chronic conflict around time and spending.

Scripture (full text)

- Joshua 24:15 (ESV): “And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

One-sentence exegesis: Covenant households choose allegiance to the Lord, publicly declaring that His service orders their life.

Week 6 — Rhythms & Cover (Your 1-Page Family Operating System)

In the room: Build your Family OS (covenant, Love-Map rhythm, fondness ritual, micro-yes list, accept-influence rule, conflict SOP, dreams summary, Family Banner + weekly ritual, 2-minute daily prayer, 30/90-day reviews).

Closeness Challenge: Pray together 2 minutes/day and schedule your 30- & 90-day check-ins.

Three guiding truths

- Rhythms beat resolutions; what you calendar you actually keep.
- Prayer re-centers desire on God, softening hearts toward one another.
- Review and repair protect momentum; drift is normal, neglect is optional.

Research highlight

- Couples who set aside weekly “couple time” are about 3.5× more likely to report being very happy in their relationship than those who rarely do; regular check-ins sustain these gains.

Scripture (full text)

- Colossians 3:16–17 (ESV): “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

One-sentence exegesis: Christ’s indwelling Word and worship shape the home’s cadence, so that every act becomes God-ward and grateful.

What couples take home

- A 1-page Family OS you can post and live by
- Short videos & worksheets, Soft Start-Up stems, Dreams Interview, Family Banner template, Solvable vs. Perpetual quick guide, Daily Prayer card
- A shared language to see, hear, and love deeper—on purpose and with peace