



MARRIAGE:

A Blessing
AND A
BOOT CAMP

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FOR WIVES EYES: BIBLE STUDY OVERVIEW

Welcome to a 6-week devotional bible study for newlywed wives and a refresher for seasoned wives. Join together on this transformational journey of being the Christian woman and wife we are called to be.

Through weekly group discussion with your small group or women's bible study, redefine your strength as a woman and discover it as a wife. These devotions respond to what rests on the hearts of many women.

Build a solid foundation as a woman and a wife. Learn to be open and admit that we did not have all of the tools before entering the role. As long as your safety is not at risk, take the journey to gain the confidence and resolve to equip yourself for the season you are in as a wife. Take the journey to learn how not to second guess yourself or your marriage.

You have permission today to have flaws and be imperfect. Do you accept? There is such freedom in releasing this pressure. You're not alone. Anywhere you see a gap in life or marriage represents your call to fill it, not complain and run away.

First: Be sure your group has the book "Marriage: A Blessing and a Boot Camp" by Dr. Jennifer Edwards, paperback and eBook available at [Lulu.com](https://www.lulu.com) and at major online booksellers. Bulk rates for church orders available through Ingram.

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

Week 1: Learning Love

Read chapters: To You, From Me, Entering In, Learning Love

Group passage discussion:

We can rest well at night when we are serving the Lord as the woman and wife He is asking us to be. The journey to this place will not be easy. Those around us will notice a change in our temperament as we set new boundaries for how much they can invade our lives with endless expectations. They may not like the new boundaries we set, but we're living our lives for the Lord and not for them.

As harsh as that may sound, we must have this focus to preserve our own peace and stability. We become the steady pulse in the heart of our home. We continue to pray for others' peace who infringe upon our new beginning as a wife. We pray that they not seek temporary happiness from those around them – and maybe we were even one of the people that was their source.

Healthy relationships are not co-dependent and should allow us to evolve as women. We have all we need because the Lord is our provider, always. The torment of those not at rest with him can cause hell on earth if we let it. It can destroy everything and everyone in its path who does not stay focused on the Lord. We pray that as they grow in their faith they begin to see that we are living our lives to glorify Him.

Verses:

- 2 Corinthians 3:17-18
- Psalm 37: 1-3
- Matthew 5:16

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Who have you let disturb your peace this week? Why did they affect you so much?
2. What idea this week challenged you the most?
3. What do you do well from the readings that you can share as inspiration for the other women in your group?
4. What action can you take this week to sow into your marriage based on what you have read?

Week 2: Diffusing Drama

Read chapters: *The Change*, *Girl Code*, *Independent Woman*, *Are You A Prostitute?*

Group passage discussion:

If the person we are considering sharing the intimate details of our marriage with is not part of the problem or solution, what is our purpose in sharing with them? We all need to vent sometimes, however exercise prudent judgment in determining how this person might handle you as the *venter*. Do they offer an understanding ear? Do they offer you encouragement? Do they perpetuate the negativity? Do they enjoy the drama? Or worse, do they enjoy that *you* are having the drama? There's a slight difference.

We must exercise caution if we answered "yes" to the last three questions. Anyone who gets joy from our struggle or who does not offer to remind us of the Lord's assured blessings, is not the best companion. We need supporters who, despite the struggle that we present, push us toward our husband in unity amidst the truth and advice they deliver.

By choice or by force, we have learned that we are our own best friends. No one is quite as dependable as we are. At the end of the day, we can come to our own rescue. We are the woman, the man, the provider and the sustainer in our life. It is vital and required as a single "woman-in-waiting." However, we often lack the graciousness and the proper attitude to hone these strengths in our marriage. We don't have to change who we are, but we do have to change how we do things.

We have legitimate, yet flawed, reasons for developing this way of functioning. We have become a single cell amoeba, with our own metabolism and motivation that keeps us going all by ourselves. We are an energizer bunny of sorts. Many of us would even asexually reproduce if we could – who needs a man? In other words, if it weren't for "helping us" make babies, we might just pass on a man altogether.

Having these attitudes and thoughts have to be rooted from somewhere. Are we clinging to singlehood because we have been hurt or because we have pride? Are we clinging to careers because of our fear of rejection or loneliness if we pursue love? Are we living as wife to preserve an image or for the wrong reasons? We are making the bold request to the Lord to be broken and rebuilt if we want to better women and wives.

Verses:

- Philippians 4:8-9
- 2 Timothy 1:7
- Proverbs 31:11
- Titus 2:4-5
- Ephesians 5:23

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Do you share too much negative information about your husband? Why or why not?
2. What idea this week challenged you the most?
3. What do you do well from the readings that you can share as inspiration for the other women in your group?
4. What action can you take this week to sow into your marriage based on what you have read?

Week 3: 80/20 Rule

Read chapters: 80/20, Breaking the Image, Environment, Building Ourselves

Group passage discussion:

If our husband is unable to meet our needs in a certain area, we must also remember that the Lord fulfills all of our needs. The 80/20 rule is true; No one is our 100%, and we are no one's 100%. Why leave our marriage to get the 20% we are missing, and leaving behind our husband's 80%? It makes no sense. The grass is greener where we water it. Case closed.

Our husband is not the Lord, and we cannot expect him to have all that we need. Only the Lord can give us 100%. We can appreciate our needs in this area and accept that they make us human. Despite the perfection we sometimes strive for, they keep us grounded and real. We long for this attention, time and/or material expressions of love because we are living, breathing and feeling women.

The key resides in seeking this from the Lord and expressing our needs to our husband with no expectations. The last step here is to offer what we are missing to someone else. If we feel we are lacking something in our own life, it is time to cultivate it and sew it into someone else's life. This can be our new area of ministry.

Verses:

- Matthew 6:33
- Phillipians 4:11-13

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Is there something you are seeking from your husband that you should be seeking from God instead?
2. What idea this week challenged you the most?
3. What do you do well from the readings that you can share as inspiration for the other women in your group?
4. What action can you take this week to sow into your marriage based on what you have read?

Week 4: Saying Sorry

Read chapters: Closeness with Him, The Standard, Household Order, Biblical Submission

Group passage discussion:

If we apologize with the hopes that our mate will apologize as well, that is a form of manipulation. We are no longer just sorry for what we have done; we are hoping that our apology will create a response in our mate. Manipulation takes place whenever we do one thing with a hidden agenda or pre-meditated outcome that involves controlling the behavior of another person.

The worst kind of apology is the one that apologizes for your mate's feelings. Being sorry that someone "feels that way" is not an apology. If we have wronged our mate and his feelings are hurt, to merely be sorry that he feels that way is not taking ownership of our actions either. It is patronizing our mate and apologizing that for his incorrect feelings, according to us. It is patronizing and demonstrates neglect for any contribution we had in creating those feelings.

The best apologies mean that we are sorry, and that's that. We are sorry for what we have done. Our heart and our mind have shown us a better way to do it next time, and we are sorry that we have fallen short this time. It is hard to admit that we have fallen short. It is even harder to build a meaningful life with a mate who cannot trust us to be vulnerable.

Verses:

- 1 John 1:9
- James 5:16

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Do you have an unresolved conflict that you need to apologize to your husband about?
2. What idea this week challenged you the most?
3. What do you do well from the readings that you can share as inspiration for the other women in your group?
4. What action can you take this week to sow into your marriage based on what you have read?

Week 5: On Finances

Read chapters: Set the Tone for our Home, Forgiveness, Getting Practical, All About Me, Desperate Prayers

Group passage discussion:

With our independent life came finances that were all our own. Financial unity in marriage is paramount to a healthy, transparent relationship. Prior to getting married, couples should openly discuss their financial situation. For those of us with less than ideal finances, we must be honest with the reasons that got us to where we are. Were we frivolously shopping? Were we going through hard times? Did we give too much that we did not have? Our spouse should know that. Some of us are fearful of what this conversation look like, and how painful it might get. We are often ashamed enough about our situation, let alone having to discuss it with someone else. That is ok. In the long run, you will be happy that you were open with your mate. It will save you many trips running to the mailbox trying to beat him to seeing your monthly statements.

We can be honorable women in the conversation by telling the whole story; acknowledging any missteps or demonstrating awareness that we let others take advantage of us and showing our mate what we have learned so that the situation will not happen again. That's what they want to hear, that we will guard against it happening again. Be sure your story is honest, and that you are not casting blame where you should be accepting your own shortcomings.

Sometimes we have to have a conversation and make peace with ourselves before we can admit it to someone else. Take all the time that is needed, and be sure to hold this conversation before your wedding day. You both deserve to know what financial situation you are marrying into, just like we all want to get a taste of life with our future in-laws.

Verses:

- Romans 13:7
- 2 Corinthians 12:9

Reflection and Discussion:

1. What other areas besides finances require full transparency with your husband?
2. What idea this week challenged you the most?
3. What do you do well from the readings that you can share as inspiration for the other women in your group?
4. What action can you take this week to sow into your marriage based on what you have read?

Week 6: The Journey

Read chapters: Mission and Ministry, Live in Peace

Group passage discussion:

The decision of needing to adjust and grow, as women and wives, is where the change begins. We know we need to do something different; we need to be different. Who we are does not change, but the manifestation of who we are likely will. Our hearts are consistent, but our behaviors are usually what need to be modified. We know we need to change, now let's do it.

First, let's accept that we will not get it right all of the time. With change comes relapse; the behavior of which we are ashamed from years prior. We can remain confident in our change if we embrace relapse before it happens. We must expect relapse so that we can guard against it, and then recover from it. While this setback represents a return to the past, it also represents our awareness that we have fallen short. We are more tuned in and honest about who we are now so that we can recognize when we are missing the mark. Recognizing a relapse means we have come far enough to admit that something we were doing was wrong.

Let's give ourselves some accolades for at least not remaining in denial. We have since regressed and recognized that there is a mark higher that we are now capable of. Relapse means we can return to the beginning of change and faithfully pray it through to accomplishment again. We give thanks that the Lord has a hand in our change because we cannot do it alone.

Verses:

- Matthew 9:17
- Revelation 3:19
- John 13:34

Reflection and Discussion:

1. What are the top three things you have learned to strengthen you as a wife throughout this bible study?
2. How will you celebrate yourself as you observe your own transformation?
3. What idea this week challenged you the most?
4. What do you do well from the readings that you can share as inspiration for the other women in your group?
5. What action can you take this week to sow into your marriage based on what you have read?

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