

## GOING FURTHER

### FOOTHILLS SUPPORT

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#### Marriage Idea Cards

Free resources and date night ideas available at the Faith @ Home center or at [myfamilyseason.com](http://myfamilyseason.com)

#### Foothills Groups

Foothills offers a variety of Foothills Groups on different days of the week. In community you'll get to see sides of one another you don't get to see in private, receive support from other Christians, and develop a circle of friends you can share life with as a couple. Visit <http://www.foothillsbaptist.org> to find a group.

#### D-Groups

A D-Group is a small group of 3-4 people of the same gender that meet together weekly for the purpose of putting sin to death and growing in holiness. D-Groups strengthen a marriage by strengthening the individual as they confess sin, receive encouragement, and find accountability for spiritual disciplines. To find a group talk with your Foothills Group leader or visit [www.foothillsbaptist.org/d-groups](http://www.foothillsbaptist.org/d-groups).

#### Marriage Workshop

Interactive marriage courses are offered seasonally through Foothills. Check with a pastor for the next available workshop.

#### Biblical Counseling

Foothills provides biblical counseling through Biblical Counseling of Arizona (<https://www.biblicalcounselingaz.org/>), a non-profit organization dedicated to meeting the needs of individuals, couples, and families using biblical wisdom. Foothills will cover the first three sessions for any member or married couple seeking counseling. For more information, visit [www.biblicalcounselingaz.org/personal-data-inventory-form/](http://www.biblicalcounselingaz.org/personal-data-inventory-form/) or call 480.759.2118.

## *Building a*

## **STRONG MARRIAGE**

# BUILDING A GOD-HONORING MARRIAGE

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## How can believers become intentional about building a God-honoring marriage?

### PRIORITY ONE

#### Discover God's Design for Marriage

We must understand that every marriage is intended to be a masterpiece reflecting THE marriage between God and His people. Marriage is the most frequent metaphor used in the Bible to describe God's relationship with His people. In fact, writing to the Ephesians, Paul called marriage a "profound mystery" because the man represents Christ, the groom, while the woman represents His bride, the church. The marital union of husband and wife is a sacred reflection of the gospel itself.

### PRIORITY TWO

#### Commit to a Covenant Marriage

Today's civil marriages are much like business contracts—easy to get into and easy to get out of. God's covenant with His people was a promise to remain eternally faithful even if His people were not faithful in return. In covenant marriage, both spouses are committed for a lifetime—in sickness and health, for better or worse. They do not threaten divorce or consider it as an option.

### PRIORITY THREE

#### Pursue a Passionate Marriage

God calls us to pursue a passionate, thriving marriage. The Song of Solomon expresses the kind of love, joy and celebration God designed for marriage. That passion is built on much more than infatuation and sexual desire. It is rooted in the physical, emotional and spiritual intimacy God created couples to experience as a foretaste of the eternal unity, communion and intimacy we can have with God. Prioritize a routine like date nights to fan the flame of intimacy in your marriage.

### PRIORITY FOUR

#### Become Heroic in Marriage

Christ made the ultimate sacrifice to rescue humanity. Writing to the Ephesians, Paul connected Christ's sacrifice directly to marriage: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:25) and "Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands" (Ephesians 5:24). In other words, mutual submission to one another requires giving up our own interests to heroically serve the other person.

### PRIORITY FIVE

#### Fight for Your Marriage

Every couple will mess up. Too often, however, they also choose to give up. Throughout scripture, God fights for His relationship with His people, remaining faithful in the face of unfaithfulness. He forgives again and again. No couple can avoid strife and arguments, but we can avoid giving the "devil a foothold" in our marriages by keeping short accounts and quickly restoring the relationship regardless of what happens. Prayer is a key part of fighting for your marriage. Statistics from Gallop and the National Association of Marriage Enhancement reveal that when couples pray together on a daily basis less than one percent would end up getting a divorce.

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## GOING FURTHER

### RESOURCES

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*What Did You Expect: Redeeming the Realities of Marriage* by Paul Tripp  
Offers God's powerful, transforming grace and his life-rearranging wisdom amidst unmet expectations.

*Rocking the Roles: Building a Win-Win Marriage* by Robert Lewis  
Explains how marriage can be a perfect blend of structure and equality, balance and beauty.

*The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God* by John & Noel Piper  
Shares the vision of what marriage should be according to the Bible.

*Love, Sex, and Lasting Relationships: God's Prescription For Enhancing Your Love Life* by Chip Ingram  
Offers life-changing biblical wisdom to help readers build enduring relationships of love and intimacy