

# DEEPER: Have a Changing Center

## BUILDING FAITH BEYOND SUNDAYS

Northland family, this guide is here to help you carry the weekend's message into your week—into your home, your conversations, and your relationships. Whether you gather as a family, meet with friends, or reflect personally, these tools will help you build a faith that lasts and a home anchored in Christ.

## THE MAIN THEME

The stability of your marriage and family depends on the stability of your center. If your center is constantly shifting—anchored in feelings, changing circumstances, or unmet needs—your relationships will eventually feel the strain. Jesus is the massive anchor who meets your deepest needs, shapes your understanding of marriage, and calls you to mirror His love in your home. When we root ourselves in Him, our marriages can weather any storm.

## DIGGING DEEPER...

We live in a culture where marriage often begins with the wrong expectations. Many enter it hoping a spouse will “complete” them or keep them happy—but no human can fill the place that only God can occupy. From the very beginning in Genesis, God met Adam's every need before Eve entered the picture. Marriage is a gift from God, but it was never meant to replace God as our source of satisfaction.

Anchoring your marriage in God's mind and design means holding the same convictions, embracing complementary differences, and enjoying shared commonalities. It also means seeing marriage as a mirror of God's character—showing grace, patience, sacrifice, and love that points the world to Him.

## WHAT NOT TO MISS...

- Marriage doesn't meet my needs—God does.
- Marriage was God's idea, not ours.
- God's design for marriage includes:
  - Same Conviction (shared faith and mission)
  - Synergistic Compatibilities (differences that enhance rather than divide)
  - Similar Commonalities (shared interests that draw you together)
- Marriage mirrors God's character and covenant love.
- Your center determines your constancy; your foundation determines your stability.
- Jesus is the only massive anchor strong enough to hold your marriage through any season.

## LIFE APPLICATION...

If your relationship has been strained by unmet expectations, start this week by shifting your center back to Jesus. Ask Him to be your satisfaction before you look to your spouse to meet a need. If you're single, prepare for marriage by letting God meet your needs now. If you're married, talk with your spouse about the "center" of your relationship—what it has been, and what you want it to be. Then commit together to anchor in Christ.

## VERSE OF THE WEEK

**Matthew 19:6** – “So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

*Family Use:* Memorize this verse together. Talk about what it means for God to join two people and how that changes the way we treat one another in marriage.

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some “changing centers” people often build their relationships on?
2. How have you seen God meet your needs in ways no person could?
3. Why is it dangerous to expect a spouse to be your source of fulfillment?
4. Which of God's three pillars for marriage—conviction, compatibility, or commonality—do you see most in your marriage or in a healthy marriage you admire?
5. How can opposite traits in a couple be a blessing rather than a source of conflict?
6. In what ways can marriage mirror God's character to the world?
7. What's one practical way you can anchor your relationship in Christ this week?
8. How do you think singles can apply these truths before marriage?
9. What storms in life have tested your marriage's foundation?
10. What would it look like for your family to “weather adversity” with Jesus as the anchor?

## THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

As a couple, choose one area where you've been relying on your spouse for something only God can give. Commit to bringing that need to Him in prayer each day. If you're single, identify one area where you've sought fulfillment in relationships and replace it with a spiritual practice that draws you closer to Jesus.

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## DAILY DEVOTIONALS

### MONDAY – Faith Before Feelings

READ: Genesis 2:7–9, 15–18

REFLECT: God met Adam's every need before creating Eve. True fulfillment begins in Him.

RESPOND: Journal one way you've looked to people before God to meet a need. Spend time asking Him to fill that place in your heart today.

### **TUESDAY – Anchored in God's Idea**

READ: Matthew 19:3–6

REFLECT: Marriage was God's creation, designed for unity and permanence.

RESPOND: Pray for marriages in your church to reflect God's design, starting with your own if you're married.

### **WEDNESDAY – Same Conviction**

READ: 2 Corinthians 6:14–15

REFLECT: Shared faith is the strongest foundation for a lasting relationship.

RESPOND: Discuss with your spouse or a friend how your faith shapes your decisions and goals.

### **THURSDAY – Mirroring God's Character**

READ: Ephesians 5:25–28

REFLECT: Marriage reflects Christ's sacrificial love for the church.

RESPOND: Do one act of sacrificial love today—without expecting anything in return.

### **FRIDAY – Weathering the Storms**

READ: Psalm 62:5–8

REFLECT: God is a refuge and fortress in every trial.

RESPOND: Share with your small group or family how God has been your anchor in a difficult time.

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## **SMALL GROUP LEADERS**

### **FACILITATOR TIPS**

- Keep the discussion Christ-centered, not spouse-centered.
- Invite singles to share perspectives on preparing for a God-centered marriage.
- Create space for honesty—marriage struggles are common, and grace should lead the conversation.

### **PRAYER POINTS**

**CONNECT** – Thank God for being the ultimate source of fulfillment; pray for deep connection with Him and one another.

**CARE** – Lift up marriages that are hurting; ask God to meet their needs and restore trust.

**CULTIVATE** – Pray for couples to grow in shared convictions and complementary strengths.

**COMMISSION** – Ask God to use marriages in our church as a witness of His covenant love to the community.

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Father, thank You for designing marriage as a gift and calling us to anchor our relationships in You. Forgive us when we've looked to others to fill the place that belongs only to You. Teach us to mirror Your love in our homes, to hold fast in every season, and to bring You glory in all we do. Amen.