



Overview

Important Notes

These five pre-marriage sessions aren't meant to be exhaustive. There are other topics (children, finances, sex, etc.) which could be addressed. These sessions are meant to provide a core for a congregation's pre-marriage counseling. One final session would seem wise, in which the pastor and couple would go through the rite of marriage and talk through the "practicals" of the wedding day (i.e., Will there be attendants? If so, will those attendants walk down the aisle as couples, or will only the bridesmaids process while the groomsmen stand in the front? Etc.) Since that session would look so different from one place to another, no guide is provided in this course.

Rationale for the Five Topics

1. **Forgiveness.** When a marriage is filled with Jesus' forgiveness, then reflected in forgiveness to each other, many other marriage issues either never happen, or are properly dealt with.
2. **The Essence of Marriage.** I need to know what God says about marriage before I can explore aspects of marriage (like, what's a husband/wife, how does love fit, etc.).
3. **Role of Man and Woman.** When I know what marriage itself is, then I need to know my specific role in that marriage.
4. **Love.** How do I best carry out my role? By learning about, then reflecting, God's love.
5. **Communication.** An important aspect of loving my spouse is properly communicating with them.

How the Lessons are Constructed

1. Each lesson contains Bible segments or passages which deal with the topic being considered.
2. Appropriate questions—generally more of the “what does this say” variety—are included with the passages.
3. Each lesson has in-class work, as well as work done at home, including watching some of the Marriage Moments videos produced earlier by WELS Discipleship. The Marriage Moments are meant to cement the thoughts studied in the lesson. If there are other at home assignments, those sometimes cement what had been studied, and other times move in a slightly different direction.
4. Other than lesson one, which assumes no homework done in advance, each lesson begins with a discussion of the homework from the previous lesson.

For Whom were these Written?

1. These sessions assume at least a basic knowledge of Christianity. If that knowledge isn't there, you may consider doing at least some Bible instruction work before beginning these sessions.
2. These lessons also were written with the idea that the presenter would be working with one couple but should work well if working with multiple couples at the same time.

How do I Teach These Lessons?

1. In general, the presenter reads the Bible segments.
2. In general, the presenter allows the participants to answer the questions.
3. Keep things moving. Shoot for 45 minutes/session (or less).
4. Other notes are found in the leader's guides.

Alternate Teaching Suggestions

- Consider assigning the homework *before* each session, rather than after each session, using the homework as a lead-in to the session. That would likely allow for the material in the lesson to be handled more quickly and allow for deeper/more practical discussion.
- Consider watching (some of) the Marriage Moments videos during the session, perhaps using them to replace some of the written material.