

March 26 “Naked and Alone”

KEY VERSE: Gen. 2:18 “And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good for man to be alone.’”

Introduction:

We all have our own ideas of what we **want** to happen in our lives. These ideas, **often unspoken**, then create an **expectation** of what life should look like. These expectations determine what we want our **normal**, or **culture**, to be. These ideas revolve around topics like:

- time,
- priorities/values,
- money and finances,
- children,
- hobbies,
- sports,
- fun,
- goals,
- dreams,
- intimacy,
- sex,
- desires,
- style,
- education,
- vehicles,
- vacation,
- housing, etc.

When you and your spouse have enough of these topics where you don't see eye to eye, “You might be sitting beside one another but you feel miles apart.” (Dave & Ashley Willis)

Thoughts from the video:

- Healthy couples aim to be in the love seat, not on the me-seat.
- Love seat
 - Unified in every way (They might not always get along, but they will get through it together.)
 - A place of love, respect and commitment, with no exit strategy.
 - No barrier between you.
- Me seats
 - Facing our problems on our own.
 - Blaming the other for our problems (see list above)
 - Often pride related
 - Rooted in a crime that your spouse committed against you.
 - So you retreated to the me seat
 - Don't know if I can forgive and trust this person
- Forgiveness and trust are two different things
 - Forgiveness is something you give freely, can't be earned
 - Trust can't be given; it can only be earned
 - Forgiveness is the first step in earning trust
- Treat my spouse not the way they treated me, but the way God treats me
 - Eph 5:25 husbands love your wives as Christ love the church and gave Himself up for her
 - Walking closely with God is the only way to be able to walk in forgiveness

- Might feel like we are too far gone
 - There's nothing that we can do that's beyond the grace of God to forgive and heal
- Hosea - married a prostitute, who left him. Then he went back to get her.
- That is the standard that God asks us to keep
- Impossible for us to do in our own strength
- Need to forgive ourselves as well
- We are not alone - God is always ready to help us,

Growth Guide

- Integrate a minimum-15-minute "device free" talk time into your day — morning coffee, evening walk, dinner conversation, late night pillow talk.
- Begin each conversation with the events, challenges and joys of your day. Then spend some time discussing the following topic for each day.
- End your "talk time" each day by praying out loud with each other.

Thursday: Survey your loneliness landscape.

Go through the list above, slowly, one by one, discussing each item and assessing whether or not it needs attention in your marriage. Mark it. Add any other items you would like.

This first time through, make sure you are not diving too deeply into any one item - today's goal is to identify **which** areas that you want to address, NOT **why** you want to address them.

Make sure both of you have a voice - if one of you thinks an item is fine in your marriage, make sure your partner has opportunity to agree OR disagree. Just because one of you is fine with an item does not mean the other is also.

Friday - Tuesday: Slide - towards each other :-)

Go back to Thursday's list, choose which topic you want to address for the day and dig into it.

Here are some thoughts about how you might be able to do it:

1. Use some sort of measuring tool to reveal where you see yourself on this.
 1. For example: on a scale of 1 - 10, where would you say we are on this topic, 1 being very close and 10 being very far apart. (Have a number in mind before you hear your spouse's number.)
2. After talking about where you are on the scale, talk about why you are there. If you are close together or far apart, talk about what brought you there. Use specific examples. What caused you to drift apart/grow close? These answers might be unique to each of you. This might be sensitive, depending on if there is broken trust and deep wounds.
3. What are some specific things you could do/say/change that could take you to the next level?

Wednesday: See - look back on the week.

Loneliness happens because we choose loneliness; intimacy happens because we choose intimacy. In other words, both loneliness and intimacy are often the fruit of our beliefs, followed by our action or inaction. And you can change that.

You might be feeling raw in your marriage right now after digging into it so intensely. You might be thinking you have too much crap to deal with. It's not whether or not you have crap - it's what you choose to do with the crap.

Look back and assess. Has anything changed in your marriage this week? Did you make progress on each item you discussed? Did it help? If not, why not?