

April 9 “Naked Forever”

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

Introduction:

When we got married, we had visions of romantic escapades and adventures that would last a lifetime! By God’s grace and our willing participation, they can! **This week’s focus is on creating a thriving marriage, regardless of the season we’re in.** The Growth Guide below is intended to help you in that journey.

Thoughts from the video:

- Lots of marriages stop short of the finish line because they did not prepare themselves to make it the whole distance.
- We are not called to endure or survive each other as if it were a life sentence - we are called to thrive.
- That does not mean we won’t have hard seasons - we need to plan for them before they arrive.
- How we **treat** each other now is going to affect how we will get through those hard spots.
- What we **learn** now and how we **approach** things now will make all the difference in order for us to make it long haul.
- God had a reason for putting us together as a couple - He has a job for you to do that only you can fulfill.

- “Start dating again” means **investing time** into one another.
- If you keep investing in your marriage, every season in your marriage can be your best season.

- Dreaming together brings us closer together and helps us look forward in our relationship.
- God has called us to have ambition, dreams and a future together, as a couple, not individually.
- Just leisure dulls us; new adventures sharpen us.
- Plan adventures that will shape your life/family into what you want them to be.
- What are you as a couple uniquely qualified to do? What is the purpose for which God brought you two together?

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 topics. Spend enough time/days on each topic till both of you have communicated enough about it (for now :-).
- End your “talk time” each day by praying out loud with each other.

Note: Examples of seasons include single, married, kids/family, empty nesters, etc. Examples of dreams could include things relating to a marriage partner, hobbies, family, finances, etc.

Please personalize the following to meet your needs.

Seasons:

- List some seasons in life (past, present and future).
- Are/were there some seasons you
 - Look(ed) forward to? Why?
 - Dread(ed)? Why?
- Look back at some seasons that are over, or just about over for you.
 - How do you think you handled them?
 - What did you do well? What would you change?
 - How can those lessons help you in current or future seasons?

Dreams - big and small:

- List some hopes and dreams you have or had individually.
 - Have your individual dreams sometimes competed with your marriage thriving?
- List some dreams/ambitions you had or have as a couple.
- Are you currently living now what used to be a dream?
- Have some of your dreams died?
- Is there something you, individually or as a couple, need to change so that the dreams you share as a couple can live?
- What dreams/plans do you think God has for you as a couple?

Linking Seasons and Dreams:

- What are some dreams that do not change, regardless of seasons?
- Considering your current season, what are your/God’s dreams for this season?
- Do those dreams need to be fulfilled within a certain time period?
- What do you anticipate to be your next season?
- What dreams, yours and God’s, are attached to that season?
- How can you prepare now for those dreams to become a reality?

Planning:

- One of God’s plans for you is for you to have a thriving marriage in every season of your life.
- Spend some time planning how you want to keep investing time so that your marriage can remain alive and healthy in every season.