

# Fellowship in Marriage

Quarter 3 | Lesson 1 | Spiritual Formation

1. **Connecting:** Do an activity to explain unity and discuss fellowship in marriage.
2. **Teaching:** Learn how God gave Adam and Eve to each other in marriage (Genesis 2:18–24).
3. **Responding:** Reflect on fellowship in marriage and pray about committing hopes to God.

## SUPPLIES

- Bibles
- Sand or dirt of 2 different colours or textures, separated into 2 cups
- Large bowl or pot
- Large spoon

*Optional Supplies:*

- Memory Verse poster
- *The Action Bible*, image of Adam and Eve
- Paper
- Chalkboard and chalk or large paper and markers
- Pencils
- Student Pages

The 2 types of sand or dirt need to be different colours or textures. You may also use 2 types of rice or beans. The students will pour these together during an object lesson.

## Teacher Devotion

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*That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife,  
and they become one flesh.*

Genesis 2:24

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God created a plan for marriage in the very beginning—when He first created man and woman. His plan for marriage included love and unity, where both partners would honour each other and Him. But, in our sinful world, many marriages do not follow His plan.

If your own marriage is broken, be encouraged! If you have seen marriages around you crumble, do not lose heart! Remember the central theme of the Bible is not perfection—it is redemption. Scripture is full of examples of imperfect families that glorified God. In Genesis 24–27, we discover that Isaac and Rebekah clearly loved each other, yet they did not seem to experience deep unity. Their twin sons certainly did not experience unity! Still, God used their union for His plans, as the entire nation of Israel came from their son Jacob. Whatever your situation and experience, God can use your story to help your students understand His plan for unity through fellowship in marriage.

**Teacher Tip:** Some of the biblical concepts for marriage presented in these lessons may be in sharp contrast to those of some religions and cultures. As you consider typical marriages in your area, try to separate what is cultural from what is biblical. Seek to present biblical truths.

## Lesson Time

### 1. Connecting: Do an activity to explain unity and discuss fellowship in marriage.

Greet your students. As you welcome them, begin a discussion about marriage. Ask them about marriages in the area. Have they seen marriages they admire? Marriages they do not think work well? Invite them to share with the class, but they should not mention names, only the situations.

- **How would you define marriage?**
- **What are some characteristics you have seen in strong marriages?**

Students may list things such as caring, love, compassion, kindness, respect, good communication, and other positive traits.

- **Why do you think these things help to keep marriages strong?**

**Teacher Tip:** Share examples from your own marriage or from the marriages of Christians you know. Your openness will encourage the students to share also.

**Today we will learn about God's plan and purpose for marriage. First, I need 2 volunteers to help me with a demonstration.**

Ask for 2 volunteers and have them stand in the front of the group, where everyone can see them. Give each volunteer 1 of the cups with sand.

**Teacher Tip:** If boys and girls will be uncomfortable with the implication of being together in this demonstration of a marriage, you may use 2 students of the same sex.

Have the volunteers pour some of the sand in their cups into a large bowl or pot and stir them together. You will still need some sand left in each of the cups for an activity at the end of class. Show the bowl of mixed sand to everyone in the room.

Now ask the volunteers to try to separate their own sand and put it back in their cups. Tell them they cannot take any of the other sand, only their own. Allow about 1 minute for them to try to do this. Students will quickly realize it is difficult if not impossible. Thank the volunteers, and ask them to rejoin the class. Set aside the bowl.

- **How is marriage like the bowl of sand?**

Students may offer statements such as "It is 2 different people becoming 1" or "Things become combined when you get married."

**Marriage is actually God's idea, and He has a beautiful plan for marriage. According to the Bible, marriage is a relationship between a man and a woman that teaches us about God's love. The Bible says 2 people—the husband and the wife—become 1, just like the sand in our bowl. When we poured the 2 different kinds of sand together, they became 1 new thing. You can still see the 2 different things, but they are so mixed together that it would be extremely difficult to separate them again. That is the way God wants all marriages to be—2 people mixing their lives together, becoming 1. God's plan for marriage is for the husband and wife to experience fellowship, teamwork, and biblical love.**

## 2. Teaching: Learn how God gave Adam and Eve to each other in marriage (Genesis 2:18–24).

In order to understand God's plan for marriage, it is important to know more about the first marriage in the Bible.

The first verse of the Bible, Genesis 1:1, tells us, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Next God made the oceans and the land. He put plants on the earth and stars in the sky. Then He created fish, birds, and animals. Finally, He made a human being and named him Adam. God put Adam in a beautiful place called the garden of Eden and gave him authority over all of creation. But God knew that Adam needed a companion, so God created Eve.

If possible, show the *Action Bible* image of Adam and Eve. Ask a student to read Genesis 2:20–23 aloud from the Bible.

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*So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.*

Genesis 2:21–24

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- **Based on these verses, what is 1 thing God plans for in a marriage?**

Students may say, "The husband and wife should be united" or "They should separate from others so they can be together completely."

**Teacher Tip:** Your students may be embarrassed by the idea of "becoming one flesh," or they may comment in inappropriate ways about sex. Point out that God intended the physical union in marriage to be beautiful and shared only between a husband and wife. Remind them to make only respectful and appropriate comments.

The relationship between Adam and Eve was a gift from God. God told them that their separate lives would be united together as 1 life. Now Adam was not alone. He had a companion. He had someone to share his experiences and a common purpose. The fellowship experienced between husband and wife is the deepest possible kind of fellowship between 2 people, greater than in any other human relationship.

That is still what God wants marriage relationships to be today. The husband and wife leave their individual lives and begin a new life of fellowship together. When they share a common purpose and share experiences as companions, they become more and more unified.

- **Do you think it would be difficult or easy to have fellowship with a spouse? Why?**

Allow students to share their thoughts.

Although it is God's plan, fellowship in marriage is not simple or easy. Some marriages are really difficult, and the husband and wife seem to hate each other. In other marriages, it seems the 2 people live in the same house, but they have separate lives. They never learn to have a common

purpose or become companions. It is as if they each keep their own cups of sand and never pour them together into the bowl. They may share parts of their lives, but they never really share all of themselves with each other.

Sometimes marriages are abusive. One spouse may be trying to create unity, but the other is breaking it down with disrespect or violence. In order for marriages to follow God's perfect plan, couples must work to grow in fellowship with each other.

- What are some things a husband and wife can do for each other in order to grow in fellowship?
- What can they do with each other?

**Teacher Tip:** Do not be surprised if your students ask about sex. Some teens might have innocent questions. Others may have engaged in sexual activity. In cases where teens have experienced sexual abuse, they might show an alarming familiarity with sex. Consider your responses ahead of time. Remind your students that sex is meant to be a beautiful and private treasure to be shared within marriage.

**God shows us the model for a good marriage and how we can work toward it.**

Ask a student to read Ecclesiastes 4:9–10, 12 aloud from the Bible. If you are using it, show the Memory Verse poster.

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*Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:  
If either of them falls down, one can help the other up....  
Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three  
strands is not quickly broken.*  
Ecclesiastes 4:9–10, 12

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- Though this passage was not originally written primarily with marriage in mind, what can we take away from these verses in regard to marriage?

Answers may include "The husband and wife can support each other and help each other" or "They will be stronger together."

- The 3 strands in this type of cord are woven together. Who do you think the third cord in a marriage would be?

Guide the students to realize that the third cord is God.

Having a good marriage is more difficult without God's help and without both people relying on Him. Being married can be very rewarding and very difficult. Sharing your life with another person requires patience, compromise, and understanding. You need to practice forgiveness and grace—and you need to put the other person above yourself. Because we are sometimes selfish, this can be challenging! But God can help us with our marriages if we trust in Him. With God's help, we can work to achieve fellowship and unity in marriage.

### 3. Responding: Reflect on fellowship in marriage and pray about committing hopes to God.

*Optional:*

Write the sentence below on the board or a large paper so it is large enough for the whole class to see.

If you have paper and pencils, or if you are using the Student Pages, your students can respond to the question there.

*End of Option*

**Think about how you would finish this sentence: "If I am married in the future, I will work to grow in fellowship in my marriage by..."**

**Teacher Tip:** Some of your students may never get married. So, in these lessons about marriage, remind them when it is appropriate that the things they are learning will help them in all of their relationships. This information is valuable no matter what happens in the future.

**Consider God's plan for fellowship in your marriage. What could you do to build fellowship? Think about what traits you would look for in a spouse. Think about what kinds of things you could do with your spouse to build fellowship even in the difficult times. Think about what you might have to change in your own life to help build fellowship. For example, maybe you would plan to talk with your husband or wife about your problems. Maybe you would rely on the Lord together to help you through difficult times. Maybe you need to work on communicating more clearly. Spend the next few minutes thinking about your own possible future marriage and what you can do to build fellowship.**

**Now think about your life today. You can begin now to grow in fellowship in your current relationships at home and with your friends. You can learn to share life experiences, enjoy companionship, and share common purposes and goals. Working on these things now will help you in your future marriage! Spend a moment considering ways you can grow in fellowship in your relationships now.**

After 2–3 minutes, lead the students in praying for fellowship in their future marriages.

**God has a wonderful and amazing plan for your life. He already knows if you will marry and whom you will marry. He wants the very best for you. He can help you to prepare for the future He has planned for you if you ask for His help.**

Place the cups of sand where the students can reach them.

**If you would like to work to have fellowship in marriage with your future spouse, you can pick up a little sand from 1 of the cups. As you hold it, think of a specific thing you can work on or learn now to create fellowship in your future marriage. Maybe you will work on becoming more patient. Maybe you will trust your hopes to God. Maybe you will try to talk to someone new each day.**

**After you have decided what you will do, pour your sand into the larger bowl where the sand is mixed together. Your sand will be mixed with the sand of others in the group. You can begin to learn and work to have fellowship now.**

Give the students a few minutes to complete this activity.

**You can invite God into your future marriage and your relationships now. Ask Him to prepare your heart and life for what He has planned for your future, whether it is marriage or something different. Ask God to help you grow in fellowship in your relationships today.**

Give students a minute to think and pray individually. Close with this blessing based on Ecclesiastes 4:9–10.

**Blessing:** May our Creator God, who made woman from man, help you to grow in fellowship now and in the future in a possible marriage. May you learn to rely on others in fellowship so that you are stronger together.

**Family Connection:** Encourage the students to ask their married family members how they met and decided to marry. The teens can then share God's plan for fellowship in marriage. If possible, give the families copies of the Resource Article "What Is a Healthy Christian Marriage?" The article is included with this lesson.

Lead the students in singing this quarter's song if possible.

"Waymaker" by Sinach: <https://youtu.be/DFGDU3XZmms>