

RADIANT MARRIAGE ACADEMY

COURSE OVERVIEW

Marriage Should Be Awesome.

INTRODUCTION

Before you begin anything, it's always good to mentally prepare yourself to be the best you can be! This initial lesson focuses on the emotional and spiritual preparation couples should strive for in order to get the most out of our course. This includes preparation to be open, vulnerable, humble, transparent, and trusting with your spouse. We also introduce the idea of working through the uncomfortable or difficult situations to gain openness, vulnerability, loss of pride, transparency, and trust--because these will make an amazing marriage!

LESSON 1: A HEART OF COMMITMENT

What is oneness and why is it so important?

Without being fully committed, any undertaking is vulnerable to failure. Marriage is no different. In this lesson, we talk about the importance of oneness and being 100% committed to each other and the marriage, with no room for a backup plan. We explain that marriage can be constant work, but also how beautiful it can be when healthy. The reason that this is hard work is because it will likely require some changes that you'll have to be active about implementing--the biggest healing and growth comes from the hardest work to overcome the deepest wounds from your past and the worst habits from your present.

LESSON 2: A STRONG FOUNDATION

Life is busy--how do we keep God at the center?

Drawing near to God and keeping him at the center of our marriages is the single most important thing we can do. This will bring deep levels of intimacy and connection. In this lesson, we'll talk about the benefits of seeking God together, and some practical steps you can take to make this a regular part of your life.

LESSON 3: A GODLY PERSPECTIVE

Is a “normal” marriage the same as a healthy marriage?

We each come into our marriage with an expectation of what “normal” will look like. In this lesson, we talk about how “normal” and our belief about God is shaped by our own perspectives and life experiences, causing tension between a husband and wife. We challenge that belief and help couples to set aside their “normal,” instead, turning to a definition of “healthy”, focusing on truth.

LESSON 4: COMMUNICATING WELL

What does it mean to communicate well?

In a world of texts and emails, we challenge the cultural definition of “communication.” We talk about communication styles and how to truly listen to one another. Finally, we present a new perspective that in marriage, it doesn’t matter who is “right,” nearly as much as if each person feels heard, respected, and valued in their opinion.

LESSON 5: FIGHTING FAIR

How do I fight well with my spouse?

Conflict is inevitable, so when it happens, we want to treat each other the best we can, but it’s hard sometimes! In this lesson, we talk about how to give your spouse grace, and how to respect and honor your spouse in the midst of a fight. We also talk about how complaints can actually lead to greater depth and richness to a relationship. It’s not husband against wife, it’s the husband/wife team against the issue!

LESSON 6: THE BEAUTY OF INDIVIDUALITY

How can I be my best self in my marriage?

God gives us each different personalities, skills, and passions, and we need to value those differences and nurture our individualities. It’s through doing that that we can truly be our best for our spouse and our marriage. With that being said, we also need to take responsibility for ourselves, making sure that we’re being a husband or wife who honors the Lord. Part of this is setting our expectations. In this lesson, we dive into the beauties of individuality and how to be aware of ourselves, avoiding the pitfalls of passivity, indifference, and arrogance. We also talk about seeing your spouse’s heart and appreciating the beauty in those God-given differences.

LESSON 7: HEALTHY ROLES

Who has God called us to be in our marriage? What is the true, Biblical definition of submission?

Men and women are equal before God, but they have different roles. Masculinity and femininity should be embraced and honored rather than seen as superior or inferior. We need to find the beauty in who God made us each to be in our differences. Ultimately, we are to submit to God FIRST, then to each other. In this lesson, we'll talk about biblical roles in marriage, how they work together, and shine new light on the much-contested topic of submission. (It's not what you think!).

LESSON 8: LOVE STYLES

How can I best love my spouse?

How we show love can vary widely from person to person. We tend to assume that everyone feels love the same way we do. One spouse may feel most loved when they receive a meaningful gift, while their mate may feel most loved when they're curled up together on the couch talking. No one is more right than the other, but it's important to be aware of how your spouse feels love most deeply so that you can truly connect with their heart. In this lesson, we'll go over different styles of love and share tips and tricks on learning how each of you feels love the most. Understanding this will take intentional time and an innate sense of curiosity about your spouse. You'll gain a deeper understanding of each other and feel so much more connected once you put this into practice!

LESSON 9: HONORING YOUR SPOUSE

How do I uplift, encourage, and respect my spouse (even when they're not around)?

If you've ever played a sport or competed as a team in any area, you know the importance of teamwork. Your marriage is the ultimate team. As part of the same team, we want to be praising our spouse to them and others, giving them the utmost respect and grace, and protecting them with all we have, no matter what. Appreciating, praising, and respecting your spouse is an often-overlooked area that we sometimes start to forget after we get married. In this lesson, we'll talk about the power that your words can have, and what to avoid, and offer tips for growth.

LESSON 10: NOT GOING IT ALONE

How can having great people in our lives make us better?

If you think you can handle everything that comes up in your marriage flawlessly, you'd be wrong. Dangerously wrong. DIY marriage can be disastrous. Having a community of the right people (family, friends, mentors, and counselors) involved in your lives helps you to grow as individuals and as a couple. In this lesson, we talk about how to find and keep the right people in your inner

circle, the types of people that can be toxic to your marriage, some potential stumbling blocks, and some huge benefits of having a close community.

LESSON 11: SHIFTING EXPECTATIONS

How can expectations impact our marriage when reality is different?

When we get married and the honeymoon ends, reality can be quite different from our expectations. We will have expectations in day to day life, as well as expectations about life in general. Sharing our expectations with each other regularly helps to avoid hurt and disappointment. Communicating expectations may seem a bit awkward at first, but will eventually become more natural. In this lesson, we'll talk about what it means to communicate your expectations in a clear way that your spouse can understand, how to work through the disappointment, and also how to overcome unmet expectations.

LESSON 12: SEX SHOULD BE AWESOME

What is great sex and what are the secrets?

FINALLY! (right?) God designed sex and blesses it in the context of marriage--it's a beautiful thing in the context of a safe, committed marriage. If we're being honest, it's a bit more complicated than one might think. It's something that should be talked about regularly, openly, and honestly within a marriage. In this lesson, we will dig into the tips behind great sex, the dangers to avoid, and how to spot what might be holding you back from even better sex.

LESSON 13: BUILDING A SOLID TEAM

Why is it important that I work through life with my spouse instead of running to others (even family) first? What needs to be in place for this to happen?

A new marriage is a beautiful seed that needs time to develop into a sturdy oak tree. It's important that the new couple holds their marriage as the single most important relationship in their lives. Here, we'll talk about what a healthy version of leaving and cleaving looks like, setting boundaries, the emotional safety that needs to be in place to successfully have a 'leave and cleave' mentality, and how to lovingly navigate the confusing waters of family and in-laws as a united team.

LESSON 14: WORKING THROUGH BROKENNESS

How can struggles from long ago impact my marriage?

Everyone has a past that has formed who they are today. When we're hurt by something and the emotional pain doesn't fully heal, the wound can fester and come up in areas of our marriages

where we wouldn't expect it. In this lesson, we'll show you how to identify past hurts that have left a mark, and also how to address the root of these wounds in a way that allows for healing. From here, you'll be able to move forward and blossom as a couple.

LESSON 15: HANDLING MONEY WELL

Why should we regularly work through our finances as a team? How do we do so?

This is one of the two biggest topics of fights, hang on for this one! When a couple works together and handles money decisions as a team, it brings them closer together in other areas too! In this lesson, we talk about how to handle your money well, what it looks like practically to work as a team, basic budgeting skills, how to avoid money fights, and how to set and achieve financial goals.

LESSON 16: PLANNING THE BIG PICTURE

How do we pursue God's direction as a team?

In this lesson, we dive into finding God's purpose as a couple, seeking to serve him with our lives, and how to practically do that as a united team. With a solid, Biblically founded marriage, we can do amazing things for the Kingdom of God. The question is--are you ready?