



Marriage

"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." Matthew 19:4-6

This month, we will be reading the book *The Mingling of Souls* by Matt Chandler. Throughout this book, Matt, alongside seminary professor Jared Wilson, will guide the reader through the book of Song of Solomon (or, depending on your translation, Song of Songs). The topics in this book are essentially an exegetical exercise through the book of Song of Songs. Matt will take you through the attraction phase through the fidelity that is marriage and a lifetime of relationship and love.

A good resource to pair alongside the reading of this book is the series that Pastor Bruce preached on the book of Song of Songs; you can find that here:

<https://biltmorechurch.com/media/series/song-of-solomon> or scan the QR Code at the bottom of the page.

Throughout the reading of this book, we hope that you continue to grow in ways to pursue and love your wife. Emotions will always rise and fall, but to quote Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "It is not your love that sustains the marriage, but from now on, the marriage that sustains your love." As you read through the process of love from the wisest person who ever lived, we hope that it will prompt you to be a husband or future husband who shows the love of Jesus to your wife.



Song of Solomon sermon series

January Assignments

- Read *The Mingling of Souls* and prepare some notes to share with your group. Your notes should include the following:
 - List the big ideas of each chapter.
 - List your key takeaways.
 - Discuss how you will apply it to your life now.
 - Bring your takeaways and application points to your monthly meeting.
- Have a Man-date with one other guy in your group. You could discuss topics like the book, the verses, family life, personal life, etc.
- DM Date Night With Your Wife: Prepare by reviewing several pages (listed below and in the Resources section)
- Memorize the verses below before your next group meeting. (*download the Verses app for help memorizing.*)
 - Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. 1 John 4:8
 - husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. 1 Peter 3:7
 - Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
Scripture is taken from ESV, but use whatever translation you prefer.
- REMINDER: Each month, go to biltmorechurch.com/davidsmen to download materials.

DM Date Night with Your Wife

This might be the most challenging assignment of the DM year. Plan a romantic evening out on the town for just the two of you. It is your responsibility to take care of all the arrangements (finding a babysitter, reservations, scheduling, etc.). Arrange a time and place to discuss the questions. Communicate the date in advance and prepare your wife for the evening's discussions. She needs to know you are not going to retaliate or attack when she shares her heart.

You aren't a perfect husband! Every husband falls short in loving his wife as Christ loves the church. Don't get angry or frustrated when your wife shares with you. Try to separate yourself from your emotions and communicate to her (with your words, actions, expressions, posture, sounds, etc.) that you are eager to love her the way she wants to be loved, and that you never want to offend her.

"Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry" James 1:19

This will be a "make it or break it" night. If you humbly and lovingly listen to her, you will reap great benefits. If you crack and retaliate while she is sharing, you could break her confidence and damage her deeply. Remember, gently treat her with honor and respect.

DM Date Night is not a forum for debate. It is an opportunity for your wife to share some very difficult things to say in a safe environment where she will not be attacked or criticized. **DM, your assignment is to listen and take notes.** Take notes and ask questions as if you are talking about another man. Do not take her feedback personally, but realize you are imperfect and have work to do. **This is not about what she needs to do – it is about you and what you need to do to be a better husband.**

Note to single DMs:

- If you are dating a woman who could be the one you'll marry, you can use many of these questions with her. Many married DMs wish we'd started our marriages better able to communicate with, listen to, and understand our wives. Get a head start!
- Otherwise, review these items and identify which ones you anticipate will be a struggle for you. Consider discussing them with another DM or trusted male friend.

Note to DM veterans:

- "I have to endure this again?" Yes. Just as you weren't a perfect husband the first time, you're still not perfect...but reviewing these items with your wife will provide a check of your progress and a reminder of what your wife values most (maybe that's changed since your last DM Date Night!).

Prior to your date night (allowing her sufficient time to review), give your wife each of the following: (1&2 is listed on biltmorechurch.com/davidsmen)

1. Ways We Offend Our Wives - This is a handout with 122 ways that men offend their wives. Give this list to your wife and have her select 5 to 10 ways that you personally offend her. She will discuss these on your date night.

2. 100 Ways to Love Her - Her Way - Ask your wife to check the ones that are meaningful to her, and then arrange them in order of importance to her. Use this list as a basis for learning her views. Your relationship will be greatly strengthened as you learn to love your wife her way.

3. Questions for Your Wife - On DM Date Night, after your wife has discussed the ways you offend her and the ways you can best express love to her, you will use the questions below to further identify areas that need to be discussed.

- Are we spending enough time together? How much is best? When?
- What time of day is best for us to talk?
- How do you want me to greet you at the end of the day?
- What is meaningful communication to you?
- Where do you rank our communication on a scale of 1-10? (10=best) What are some things I could do to make our communication a "10" in the next year?
- How am I doing with meaningful touch apart from sex? (1-10)
- What do I do when it comes to touching that you don't appreciate?
- What could I do in a heated argument to draw us closer – not farther apart?
- What would be a romantic evening for you?
- What are some things I do that take the romance out of our relationship?
- When you are hurting or discouraged, what is the best way I can help you?
- Decision-making – do you feel excluded or overburdened? What can I do to improve this area and make our relationship stronger?
- What do I do to make you fearful in some way?
- Are there any things in my life that you feel are more important than you? What can I do to make you feel you are second only to God?
- Is there anything else that I do or don't do that you feel dishonors you, frustrates you, embarrasses you or hurts you? Remember that it is my goal to be a better husband – please share honestly.