



The Road To **FREEDOM**



TALK IT OVER

Debunking Marriage Myths That Lead to Misery

The Road to Freedom - Part 6
Pastors Andy and Stacie Wood
May 31 - June 1, 2025

If you would like to watch the weekend message, visit www.saddleback.com/watch.

Open your group in prayer and remember that this is only a guide. Feel free to discuss each of the questions provided or simply dive deeper into just one. Before you close with prayer, take a few minutes to look over the Three Essential Questions toward the end of the document.

Scriptures

1 Corinthians 7:6-7, James 1:17, John 8:31-32, Matthew 19:4-6, Genesis 1:27-28, Genesis 2:18, Ephesians 5:21-26a, Ephesians 5:33

Questions:

1. What is your understanding of marriage, and where did you get this view? How has your childhood or early adulthood shaped your perspective?
2. Matthew 19: 4-6 (NIV) says, "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." Society defines marriage as a contract, but God designed it as a sacred covenant. Why is this an important distinction? How does this truth change your perspective?
3. Read Genesis 1:27-28 and James 1:17. Society sends us the message that marriage will mess up our lives or make us feel trapped, but God created it to be a sacred gift. How is this teaching different? What do you find interesting about the data shared from the secular book "Get Married"? See below.
 - a. In 2022, 75% of married mothers reported being "completely" or "somewhat" satisfied with their lives, compared with 54% of single women without children.

- b. Married men earn about 40% more household income than their unmarried peers, even after comparing household size, age, education, race, and ethnicity.
 - c. Married men ages 18–55 are about twice as likely to report being “very happy” compared to unmarried men.
- 4. Why do you think Ephesians 5:22 elicits strong reactions and leads some to conclude that biblical marriage roles and responsibilities are outdated or even oppressive? What are common misconceptions about the words “leader” and “helper”? How do Ephesians 5:23 and Genesis 2:18 combined with Ephesians 5:22 show us a fuller picture of God's design for marriage and why it works best when we embrace it?
- 5. Pastor Stacie warns that without the heart postures of sacrificial love (husband) and respect (wife), the roles of husband (leader) and wife (helper) can become distorted. Common pitfalls include hostile domination and lazy abdication for men and manipulative grasping and brazen insubordination for women. How have these played out in culture and in your life? What are some ways that you can show sacrificial love (if you're a husband) or respectful support (if you're a wife), or to prepare for that role if you're single?
- 6. Read Ephesians 5:21, 5:25-26a, and 5:33. Many people believe the main goal of marriage is personal happiness while Pastor Andy reveals that God's greater purpose is our holiness. Why is it unrealistic to expect another person to make you happy? What would it look like to choose to be more like Christ instead of just trying to find personal fulfillment in your day-to-day interactions with your spouse?
- 7. What truth challenged your thinking the most, and how can you begin replacing that myth with God's design this week? Can you share an example of a marriage you saw that worked well? What next steps can you take this week to practice sacrificial love, respect, and Christlikeness in your current marriage or other relationships?
- 8. Whether you are married, single, engaged, divorced—God offers hope, help, and healing. You can find resources at [Saddleback.com/cares](https://saddleback.com/cares). What's one resource you could pursue this week?

Three Essential Questions

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they, or the group, can do as a result of hearing the message.

- 1. **What did you hear?** *What point in this message was most impactful for you?*
- 2. **What do you think?** *How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?*
- 3. **What will you do?** *How will you or your group put into practice what you've learned today?*

Small Group Action Steps

- 1. Consider taking the Group Health Assessment in your small group. This assessment will help you see how your small group is balancing the five purposes and will give you suggested next

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steps for each purpose. Click here to take the Group Health Assessment:

<https://saddleback.com/connect/smallgroups#spiritualCheckup>

2. Did you know that Saddleback produces many new small group studies each year? Visit <https://saddleback.com/studies> to check out Saddleback's ever-growing library of small group curriculum.

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