

THE *Marriage* WALK

devotional to be
used around the
quarter-mile
prayer path



THE *Marriage* WALK

is one lap around the quarter-mile prayer path. You will have many opportunities to talk with each other and talk with God. Be honest and authentic with yourself, your spouse, and God. Seek to listen well to your spouse and God.

Some conversation and prayer prompts will be very relevant to you, but others will be less relevant. The Marriage Walk will likely take an hour or more. This is your time together as a couple. Do the sections that will be most useful and meaningful for your marriage.

Your Hopes FOR THIS TIME TOGETHER

As you start The Marriage Walk, sit on the bench on the right-hand side of the trail. Both of you share one thing you would like to have happen during The Marriage Walk.

Praying

FOR YOUR CHILDREN

Continue on the trail to the patio with the eight blue chairs. Sit next to each other on two of the chairs.

If you do not have children, you can skip this part. You can also use this time to pray for your friends' children, children in your neighborhood, or nieces and nephews. These children can be any age. If you do not have children and are hoping to have children, pray for your future children.

- **Talk** with each other about how you can pray for your child(ren).
- **Select** one or two things each child needs most from God right now.
- **Pray** aloud for each child. If you are praying aloud together for the first time, remember that the best prayers are simple and heartfelt.

GIVING

Gratitude

TO EACH OTHER

After praying, continue on the trail toward the volleyball courts. You will see a flat bench on your left and another on your right. Sit on either bench. A golden delicious apple tree is directly north of the bench on the right.

A WELL-SPOKEN WORD AT JUST THE RIGHT MOMENT IS LIKE GOLDEN APPLES IN SETTINGS OF SILVER.

-Proverbs 25:11

- **Reflect** on three to five reasons you are grateful for your spouse. It could be something about them, something specific they have done, how they treat you, or a quality they possess and share.
- **Share** those three to five things with your spouse.

Continue walking the prayer path and talk to each other about how it felt to say those words and how it felt to hear those words.

You will come to two flat benches on the left side of the trail just north of the volleyball courts. Sit on one of the two benches and face the volleyball courts. Notice the supports for the volleyball nets and the shelter's roof. Without adequate support, the nets and roof would collapse. Support is essential. Discuss these two items:

Supporting EACH OTHER

1. Share one way your spouse has supported you.
2. Talk about one way your spouse can support you during this season of life.

A PRAYER FOR

Your Marriage

TO GLORIFY GOD

Continuing on the trail, you will take a sharp right. On the left side of the trail, you will see a bench with a back. Sit on the bench and look at the bur oak tree to your right.

**THEY WILL BE CALLED OAKS OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS, A PLANTING OF THE
LORD FOR THE DISPLAY OF HIS SPLENDOR.**

-Isaiah 61:3

God wants your marriage to thrive. A healthy, vibrant marriage will be a display of God's splendor. Pray this prayer together:

God,

Thank You for planting our marriage.

Like an oak tree:

Help us develop deep roots.

Help us expand upward and outward.

Help us grow rich fruit.

We pray that our marriage becomes a display of your splendor.

Amen.

Loving

EACH OTHER WELL

After taking a few sharp corners, sit on the bench on the right-hand side of the trail.

It has a back and faces a sycamore tree directly on the

other side of the trail. Look to your left, and you will see five rocks—each representing one of the five love languages:

1. Words of Affirmation
2. Gifts

3. Acts of Service
4. Spending Quality Time
5. Physical Touch

Reflect, using the five love languages, about how your spouse can best love you during this season of your life.

Share the best way for your spouse to love you. Be specific. For example:

- *Good words are important to me. I like it when you compliment me in front of others.*
- *Quality time is critical to me. I love when we turn off our devices and are fully present with each other.*

Restate to your spouse what you heard and how you can love them best.

Challenges

AND CONFLICTS

Continue walking the trail. This section has many twists and turns, like many marriages. You'll notice a picnic table. Feel free to stop and talk or continue walking the trail through the cedar trees. Sit on the bench on the left-hand side of the trail. Notice the darkness created by the shade from the trees. Notice, as well, the ruined tree in front of you. It was a healthy tree for most of July 31, 2024. By the end of that day, the strong winds knocked the tree over. Only the stump remains.

Marriage is like life: darkness and damage happen.

- **Remember** some challenges your marriage has overcome in the past.
- **Share** how you overcame this.
- **Talk** about what you learned about yourself and each other.
- **Bring** a current challenge or conflict you are facing to God.

- **Pray** the following prayer together:

God,

We are thankful You have led us through dark and challenging times, even if we weren't aware of Your presence. We are grateful for the healing that has happened, the lessons we learned, and for emerging stronger.

For the times when our marriage has been easy, we thank You for those seasons.

We currently face new challenges and conflicts. Make us aware of Your presence and power. Help us to listen to each other. Give us patience and kindness to one another. Bring us to places of light and wholeness.

Amen.

Forgiveness

The next bench sits between the cross and the grapes. Sit facing the cross. The cross is the symbol of forgiveness. Marriage is often thought of as a union of two people who have figured out how to forgive each other.

- Thank your spouse for their past grace and forgiveness. Be specific, as you are comfortable.
- Reflect on something you need forgiveness extended to you from your spouse.
- Share your request for grace from your spouse.

- **Pray** the following prayer together:

God,

As we look at the cross, we are reminded of Your forgiveness. We are grateful for Your forgiveness and the forgiveness we have received from each other. We pray for any forgiveness that remains in front of us, for the healing of hurts, and for hope for a better future where less forgiveness will be necessary.

Amen.

MAKING EACH OTHER

A *Priority*

Start your journey downhill. Sit on the bench on the right-hand side of the trail. Ask yourselves the question:

How can we better prioritize our relationship with quality time and intimacy in the midst of our busy schedules?

- **Talk** about ideas to prioritize your marriage.
- **Plan** to implement one thing to make your marriage a greater priority.

Continue walking on the trail. The grapes will be on your left. Sit on the next bench that will be on your left-hand side. There is a big rock in front of you. The big rock represents how you will ask your spouse to pray for you.

Praying

FOR EACH OTHER

- Think of one thing you want your spouse to pray for you about.
- Share that one thing with your spouse when you are both ready.
- Pray aloud for your spouse. If this is new to you, keep the prayer short and simple. God knows what you are.

Dreams

COMING TRUE

Make your way down the trail to the patio. Sit next to each other in two blue chairs. Look at the firepit and notice it is the shape of the world.

- **Reflect** on something you want to do or a place you want to go. Something or someplace you can't imagine not doing or not seeing during your remaining time in this world.
- **Share** your dream with your spouse.
- **Plan** on making these things happen.

Next STEPS

Walk on the concrete trail to complete the prayer path. Sit on the bench at the beginning/ending of the trail, use one of the picnic tables in the picnic shelter, or talk in the parking lot.

- Reflect on what you experienced.
- Prioritize one thing you will do to strengthen your marriage because of this time together.
- Share your one thing.
- Plan to implement your one thing.

THE MARRIAGE WALK IS NOT DESIGNED TO BE A ONE-TIME EVENT. CHALLENGE YOURSELVES TO DO IT TWICE A YEAR OR QUARTERLY. IF YOU DIDN'T FINISH OR COULDN'T GIVE ENOUGH ATTENTION TO CERTAIN PARTS, PLAN ON RETURNING SOON.