

*"Marriage God's Way is a thorough and comprehensive treatment of marriage. The reader who works his way through this volume will be richly rewarded."*

Tedd Tripp—Husband of 48 years and best-selling author of *Shepherding a Child's Heart*

# MARRIAGE GOD'S WAY WORKBOOK



*A Biblical Recipe for Healthy, Joyful,  
Christ-Centered Relationships*

Scott LaPierre

*"This is what every marriage needs! Your mind will be filled with the pure and perfect word of God. If you want a book that is built on the foundation of scripture, Marriage God's Way is for you."*

Scott Brown—Husband of 31 years, director of The National Center for Family-Integrated Churches, and author of *A Theology of the Family*

## The perfect companion to *Marriage God's Way!*

God intended marriage to be a great joy, but we can only experience this joy if we obey the principles in His Word. This workbook will help you apply the biblical recipe in *Marriage God's Way*. Inside you will find:

- Clear instructions on prayer, communication, and forgiveness
- Insightful questions that solve marital frustrations
- Practical exercises to enjoy with your spouse
- Helpful discussion topics that strengthen your relationship

Use this great tool in your marriage, small group, or church. It is perfect for engaged couples, newlyweds, and marriage veterans. There are questions for husbands, wives, and both as a couple:

- HUSBAND: What are three ways your wife makes you feel respected? Disrespected?
- WIFE: Second only to Christ, do you feel like the supreme relationship in your husband's life? Why or why not?
- HUSBAND: When your wife is suffering, do you feel like she takes it out on you like Rachel did with Jacob (Genesis 30:1)?
- WIFE: What can your husband do to help you more easily resist the temptation to nag him?
- BOTH: What do we have in our home that threatens our holiness, and how do we remove it?

Regardless of the person asked, the purpose of each question is to help you have a *Healthy, Joyful, Christ-centered Relationship!*

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Scott is the senior pastor of Woodland Christian Church in Woodland, Washington and a conference speaker. He and his wife, Katie, grew up together in northern California, and God has blessed them with six children and a seventh on the way.



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## Using This Workbook

Following these guidelines will allow you to receive the most benefit:

- 1 The workbook contains questions for each section in *Marriage God's Way*. Read the book before looking at the corresponding questions.
- 2 Instead of reading a chapter of the book and then answering the questions, it is best to read one section at a time and then answer the questions.
- 3 Some questions are addressed to both spouses, while others are for only the husband or wife. Whatever the case, be sure to discuss all your answers with your spouse.
- 4 Ideally, husbands and wives should each have their own workbook and do the work together.

### Expect Tension

In Chapter 2 of *Marriage God's Way*, the third section, "Embrace the Struggle" says:

As you work through this book, recognize the tension created in your marriage is a good thing. God is introducing areas that need to be improved, and the best way to do that is by asking each other tough questions.

This will be even truer as you use this workbook. Whenever you experience tension, remember God is at work strengthening weak areas of your relationship!

### Focus on the Way Your Spouse Feels

Many workbook questions contain the word "feels." This is because:

- It is not a question of whether a husband *thinks* he loves his wife. It is a question of whether his wife *feels* loved.
- It is not a question of whether a wife *thinks* she respects her husband. It is a question of whether her husband *feels* respected.

Consider these two passages from *Marriage God's Way*:

1. In Chapter 10 the sixth section, "Perception Is Reality," records: "Note the emphasis here is how a wife *feels*. A husband might insist: 'My wife is the supreme relationship in my life. She is more important than anything else.' But the wife might not feel that way. A wife's perception is her reality. It is not about what the husband says or even thinks but about what the wife feels."
2. Chapter 11 discusses wives respecting their husbands, and the fifth section, "Learning, Then Embracing" records: "A wife who does [these things] will have a husband who feels very respected."

Focus on the way your spouse feels. Then, after learning how your spouse feels, make the appropriate changes to help your spouse feel differently. The poor alternative is trying to talk your husband or wife out of feeling the way he or she feels. The section, "Embrace the Struggle," also says:

A husband might say, "Outside of the Lord Himself, do you feel you are taking second place to anything in my life?" If a wife answers that she does not feel she is the supreme relationship in her husband's life, the husband should not try to talk her out of the way she feels or persuade her to see things differently. Likewise, a wife might ask her husband, "Do you feel I respect you?" If the husband explains how she makes him feel disrespected, the wife should not argue with her husband and try to convince him he is wrong. Instead, each spouse should listen to the other and try to make the appropriate changes.

Similarly, if your husband or wife is hurt by something you have done, do not try to make him or her feel wrong. When hearing your spouse's thoughts, commit to not interrupting or arguing. If you understand how your spouse feels, then you will learn to treat him or her the way he or she wants to be treated.

## **Crucify Your Flesh and Apologize the Right Way**

As you continue through this workbook, you are going to hear answers that reveal:

- Your weaknesses
- Hurts you have caused
- Ways you have failed

Your flesh will flare up and threaten the work God wants to do in your marriage. Read Romans 8:13 and Galatians 5:24, and then list three ways you will need to crucify your flesh:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Stay on guard against your sinful nature tempting you to get angry. Do not let pride have victories in your marriage! Instead, humble yourself and ask for forgiveness the right way. Some people – whether intentionally or unintentionally – act like they are apologizing, but their “apologies” are simply ways of making excuses and shifting blame. This only serves to increase frustration and hurt. Sincere apologies have the opposite effect – they diffuse aggression and prevent bitterness. Proverbs 15:1a says, “A soft answer turns away wrath” and there are not many softer answers than apologies made the right way. To do this, make sure you avoid two words:

1. Avoid the word “but.” When an “apology” contains this word, it is an excuse disguised as a confession:
  - “I’m sorry, BUT if they hadn’t done that...”
  - “I am sorry, BUT this happened...”
  - “I’m sorry, BUT I never would’ve done this if not for...”
2. Avoid the word “you.” When an “apology” contains this word, it is a manipulative way for people to shift blame, and make the other person feel bad about being hurt or upset:
  - “I’m sorry YOU did this...”
  - “Well, I’m sorry YOU are mad...”
  - “I’m sorry YOU are offended...”

Instead, make sure you apologize the right way. This involves two steps:

1. First, say: “I am sorry for...” or “I am sorry I...” followed by the offense you committed.
2. Then, say: “Will you please forgive me?”

The second step is important because it:

- Shows you recognize you have done something requiring forgiveness
- Shows you are not minimizing your actions
- Engages the other person and requires a response

Finally, if your spouse asks for forgiveness and you say, "I forgive you," you are obligated to do your best to forgive the way God forgives. God does not forget our sins, but He does choose not to remember them:

- Isaiah 43:25b – I will not remember your sins.
- Jeremiah 31:34b – I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.
- Hebrews 8:12 and 10:17 – Their sins and lawless deeds I will remember no

more. When you say, "I forgive you," you are committing to do your best to:

- Not remember your spouse's sin
- Not hold the sin against your spouse
- Refuse to bring up the sin in the future

Although Saul was the king of Israel, a more appropriate title would be the King of Excuses. Do not be like him! Read 1 Samuel 13:1-14 and 15:1-29. What was wrong with Saul's "apologies"? What excuses did he make? Who did he blame? Provide three examples:

1.

2.

3.

## Take Your Time and Pray!

There is no rush as you continue through this workbook with your spouse. Allow time for prayer and reflection. Do not rush answering questions, asking each other questions, or sharing your responses. Consider working through no more than one chapter per day. Also, plan the location and atmosphere when using this workbook:

- Would it be best to do the work over some activity, such as a meal together?
- Could it be helpful to discuss your answers while taking a walk?
- Will you be more consistent if you choose a specific time (and possibly place)?

Pray together when you begin and conclude your times together.<sup>1</sup> When you begin, pray specifically for:

- Graciousness and honesty in answering the questions
- Humility in receiving your spouse's criticisms

When you conclude, pray specifically for:

- Your spouse to be the husband or wife God wants him or her to be
- The Holy Spirit's help in applying what you have learned and making the appropriate changes

Finally, be sure to thank God for the gospel that equips you to have the *healthy, joyful, Christ-centered relationship* he desires for you.

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<sup>1</sup> If you are forced to do the workbook without your spouse, you should still pray.

## Introduction

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*“The truth of God’s Word has the power to heal  
and strengthen any marriage.”*

---

What is the significance of marriage in relation to the church? In relation to society?

How can our marriages serve as evangelistic tools?



# Part I

Recognize That . . .



## Chapter One: Your Marriage Reflects Your Relationship with Christ

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*“When a husband knows his love, and a wife knows her submission is an act of obedience to Christ, it can be that much easier. A husband’s love and a wife’s submission is not a test of their obedience to their spouse. It is a test of their obedience to the Lord.”*

---

Consider your relationship with your spouse is a reflection of your relationship with Christ. What three adjectives would you use to describe your marriage?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Are these the same adjectives you want to describe your relationship with Christ? If not, what changes do you need to make?

Two commands from the Bible give us the standard for marriage:

- Ephesians 5:25 – Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.
- Ephesians 5:22 – Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

Husband: Do you see your love for your wife as a reflection of your love for Christ? Why or why not?

Wife: Do you see your submission to your husband as a reflection of your submission to Christ? Why or why not?

What are common excuses people give for not obeying these commands?

Which of these excuses do you tend to use?

## Trust the Holy Spirit to Help You

*Marriage God's Way* states that being the husbands and wives God commands us to be is intimidating and overwhelming. What other words would you use?

---

*"If there is any area of the Christian life in which the Holy Spirit's help is necessary, it is marriage."*

---

The first half of Ephesians 5 is about "living in the Spirit." Considering the second half of Ephesians 5 contains the marriage passage, what is the significance of the instructions in the first half?

Read John 14:16, 26, and 16:7. What three areas of your marriage most need the Holy Spirit's help?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Read 2 Corinthians 9:8 and Philippians 2:13.

1. What "good works" do you recognize in your marriage?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Which works are you more naturally inclined toward, and therefore they are easier for you?



## We Cannot Just Sit Back

Read Romans 13:13-14. List three ways you are “making provision” for your flesh:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

---

*“The Holy Spirit is not going to supernaturally take control of a marriage when the individuals are not committed to putting forth the necessary effort.”*

---

Provide three practical examples of how the Holy Spirit might compel you to treat your spouse better:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

You should verbalize your appreciation for your spouse’s changed behavior. Provide three examples of ways your spouse has tried to change:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

---

*“We should see ourselves working side by side with God in our marriages.”*

---

## Chapter Two: Marriage “Problems” Are Really Symptoms

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*“When you are not involved in the body of Christ, you will not receive the encouragement and exhortation God wants you to have.”*

---

While remembering to focus on *yourself*, if a “marriage doctor” were to examine your marriage, what are three “symptoms” he would observe?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What does your time in God’s Word look like? If you are unsatisfied with your answer, what changes should you make?

Are you involved in a church? Notice the question is not, “Do you go to church?” Or “Are you a member of a church?”

1. If you are involved in a church, in what ways do you share the marital challenges you are experiencing so God can use your church family to help you?

- 2 If you are not involved in a church, what changes need to be made so you can be active and involved?

## Handling Frustrations

Why do marriage passages, such as Ephesians 5:22-33 and 1 Peter 3:1-7, intertwine instructions for both spouses? In other words, why should husbands and wives be familiar with Scripture's commands for their spouses?

After looking at the verses above, what things do you struggle with that are preventing you from fulfilling your role in marriage?

How can you encourage your spouse to fulfill the role God has given him or her? Provide three examples:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What can you do to make being married to you easier? Provide three examples:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How will you pray for your marriage differently?

## **Embrace the Struggle**

What “recurring injuries” do you see in your marriage? In other words, what problems or conflicts do you continue to experience that need to be embraced so they can be straightened out?

Why should you expect discomfort as you and your spouse discuss the tough issues?

In what ways can this discomfort be beneficial?

## God's Chastening Is Not Punishment, but a Father's Loving Discipline

In your own words, explain why some people receive "the peaceable fruit of righteousness," but others do not.

---

*"It is not easy to understand how powerful God's Word is when you have not seen it work. It is not easy to understand the importance of obeying Scripture until you have disobeyed it and personally experienced the negative consequences."*

---

As you continue through this workbook and difficult conversations take place, what reminders do you need to tell yourself? I encourage you to go back to the beginning of the workbook and reread, "Crucify Your Flesh and Apologize the Right Way" as often as necessary.

Before beginning Part II, circle the answers that would complete the following two sentences. People familiar with your marriage would say:

1. It seems like:
  - a. He is the leader in their relationship.
  - b. He might be the leader in their relationship.
  - c. She might be the leader in their relationship.
  - d. She is the leader in their relationship.
  
2. It seems like she:
  - a. Tries to help her husband.
  - b. Might be a help to her husband.
  - c. Doesn't help her husband.



# **Part II**

## **Genesis 1–3: Creation of Marriage and the Fall**



## Chapter Three: God's Establishment of Adam's Headship

---

*"If we understand that man's headship began at creation, we will see it as part of God's natural, healthy, divine plan for husbands and wives."*

---

What evidence shows that God established male headship at creation?

Why is it significant that God established male headship before the fall?

What is the significance of creating Adam first and then Eve, instead of creating them as a pair as He did with the animals?

## **God's First Command**

Why did God give the first command to Adam alone instead of both Adam and Eve?

## **Adam Names the Animals and Eve**

What two purposes did God accomplish by having Adam name the animals?

1.

2.

What is the significance of God bringing Eve to Adam so he could name her?

## **History's First Surgery**

Why did God choose to create Adam from Eve's side rather than from the "dust of the ground" as He had done with every other living creature (including Adam) up to that point?

Why does Genesis 2:24 mention a man leaving his father and mother without mentioning a woman leaving her parents too?

Why would Genesis 2:24 mention leaving father and mother when Adam and Eve had no earthly father and mother?

In a marriage ceremony, a father walks his daughter down the aisle to her groom. What biblical principle does this symbolize?

## **Egalitarianism Versus Complementarianism**

Have you been taught a complementarian or egalitarian view of marriage? If egalitarian, are you willing to reserve judgment and openly receive what the Bible teaches about distinctions between husbands' and wives' roles and responsibilities? Why or why not?

In what ways has egalitarianism influenced Western culture?

*Marriage God's Way* states, "Egalitarians will insist a difference in roles and responsibilities implies a difference in equality, importance, or value." Considering what you read about complementarianism, how would you refute this statement?

Since complementarianism provides better relationships between husbands and wives, in what ways are you resisting God's design by embracing egalitarianism ideas? How are these detrimental to your marriage? What adjustments do you and your spouse need to make?

## **Better Together**

In what ways do you and your spouse complement each other?

---

*"When a husband and wife become one flesh on their wedding day, they are two people who complement and complete each other."*

---

List three of your spouse's strengths:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Chapter Four: Male Leadership Is God's Pattern

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*"The pattern of male leadership in the community of faith began at creation and is maintained throughout Scripture."*

---

Considering God called men to be leaders throughout the Old Testament, what application do you see this having for the church and the home?

### **Queens, Priestesses, and Prophetesses**

What can women learn from:

1. The evil examples set by Jezebel and Athaliah?
2. The godly examples set by Esther and Huldah?
3. The inconsistent examples set by Miriam?

## Deborah the Reluctant Judge

If someone defended or promoted female leadership using Deborah as an example, how would you respond?

---

*“Deborah affirmed the rightness of male leadership, not only looking to Barak to lead but letting him know this is what God wanted.”*

---

Wife: What lessons can you learn from Deborah?

Husband: What lessons can you learn from Barak?

## The Pattern Continues Today

Think of an example for each item below, and discuss the outcome/consequences:

Husband: A time your leadership was absent.

Wife: A time your husband's leadership was absent.

Husband: A time your wife usurped your leadership.

Wife: A time you usurped your husband's leadership.

After reading chapter four, how will you view leadership roles for men and women in the church and home differently?

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*"When churches have female pastors or elders, they have rejected the teaching of God's Word."*

---

## About the Author

Scott is the senior pastor of Woodland Christian Church in Woodland, Washington and a conference speaker. He and his wife, Katie, grew up together in northern California, and God has blessed them with seven children.



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### **Subscribe to Pastor Scott's Newsletter**

Receive free chapters of Pastor Scott's books, videos of his conference messages, and updates about his ministry by subscribing to his newsletter:

[www.subscribepage.com/ScottLaPierre](http://www.subscribepage.com/ScottLaPierre)

## Would You Like to Invite Pastor Scott to Speak at Your Event?

You can expect:

- Professionally prepared and delivered messages
- Handouts with lessons and discussion questions
- Copies of Pastor Scott's books to offer as gifts to increase registrations (if you desire)
- Prompt replies to communication
- Advertising of your event on Pastor Scott's social media



Schedule for Conferences—Typically there are one or two sessions on Friday evening, and three or four sessions on Saturday, but there is flexibility: conferences can be spread over three days or kept to one day, and Q&A sessions can be added.

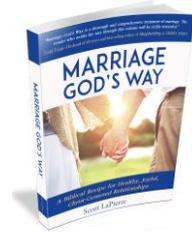
Outreach—Consider viewing the conference as an outreach to share Christ with your community. Pastor Scott can run a Facebook ad, and/or set up a Facebook event page for those in the church to share with others.

For more information, including sample messages and endorsements, please visit:

[www.scottlapierre.org/conferences-and-speaking](http://www.scottlapierre.org/conferences-and-speaking).

## **Marriage God's Way: A Biblical Recipe for Healthy, Joyful, Christ-Centered Relationships**

Nearly everything in life comes with instructions, from the cell phones we use to the automobiles we drive. Yet when it comes to marriage, many people struggle without proper guidance. Pastor Scott presents the needed biblical instructions combined with:



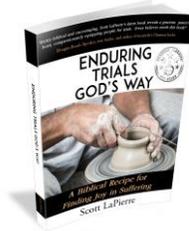
- Personal stories and application to daily life
- Explanations of the roles and responsibilities God has given husbands and wives
- Answers to common questions about godly love and how to show it, headship and submission, intimacy, and establishing an indestructible foundation for your relationship

Endorsed by well-known ministry leaders:

- **Tedd Tripp:** “The reader will be richly rewarded.”  
—Best-selling author of *Shepherding a Child's Heart*
- **Scott Brown:** “This is what every marriage needs!”  
—Founder of The National Center for Family-Integrated Churches and author of *A Theology of the Family*

## Enduring Trials God's Way: A Biblical Recipe for Finding Joy in Suffering

Trials are part of life on this side of heaven, and God wants to use them for your good! Learn scriptural principles that give you the encouragement you need when suffering. Every chapter concludes with questions that help you apply what you are reading.



heaven,  
good!  
you the  
suffering.  
questions  
reading.

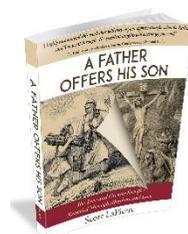
- Develop the spiritual perspective to embrace trials
- Appreciate the maturity trials produce
- Understand the rewards for enduring trials
- Recognize God is still compassionate and gracious during trials

*Enduring Trials God's Way* has been endorsed by well-known ministry leaders:

- **Douglas Bond:** “Richly biblical and encouraging, Scott LaPierre’s latest book reveals a gracious pastor’s heart, compassionately equipping people for trials. Every believer needs this book!”  
—Speaker, tour leader, and author
- **Dr. Carlton McLeod:** “One of the best biblical treatments of suffering I have seen. You want this book in your library!”  
—Speaker, author, and senior pastor

## A Father Offers His Son: The True and Greater Sacrifice Revealed Through Abraham and Isaac

Have you ever wondered why God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son in Genesis 22? The Angel stopped Abraham showing God did not intend for him to kill Isaac, but what did God desire? God wanted to test Abraham, and readers will discover the account primarily reveals:



- In human terms what God would do with His Son two thousand years later
- The many ways Abraham and Isaac are a picture of God and His Son
- The tremendous love of God shown through Christ's sacrifice

Genesis 22 is not primarily about Abraham and Isaac. God and Jesus are the true and greater Father and Son shining forth in the account. Abraham did not spare his son but was willing to deliver him up for God. Likewise, God “did not spare His Son, but delivered Him up for us all” (Romans 8:32). With thought-provoking questions at the end of each chapter, the book is perfect for personal use or small groups.

*A Father Offers His Son* has been endorsed by ministry leaders:

- **Dr. Paul Benware:** “I highly recommend this work that will deepen your appreciation for what the Father and Son went through. The excellent insights will encourage your soul.”  
—Professor, Pastor, Speaker, and Author
- **Cary Green:** “As a jeweler holds a gemstone and examines each priceless, shining facet, Pastor Scott holds high this picture of heaven’s sacrificial love and examines every detail.”  
—Senior Pastor, Missionary, and Church Planter