

A Study Guide for

“Built to Last: A Foundation No Storm Can Destroy”

Crosspointe Marriage | Class 1

Vision: To build strong marriages with a foundation in Christ.

Mission: Mentor, encourage, and support marriages through Biblical teaching and guidance.

Ice Breakers

- **The Picture vs. The Reality:** Think about your wedding day or the early days of your marriage. What did you imagine your life together would look like? How is that picture different from where you are today—and what do you think has shaped the difference?
- **Built on What:** If someone asked you, “What does a marriage that is built to last actually run on?” what would have been your honest answer five years ago? What would you say now?
- **The Storm Test:** Describe a recent storm in your marriage—big or small. What did the storm reveal about what the two of you have been building on?

Key Scripture Passages

- **2 Peter 1:1–4** — Peter does not begin with commands—he begins with a foundation. Before he tells believers how to grow, he reminds them what God has already supplied: like precious faith, grace and peace, divine power, the knowledge of Him, and exceedingly great and precious promises. These four provisions are the load-bearing structure for every Christian and every Christian marriage.
- **Ephesians 5** — Paul calls believers to walk in love, walk in light, and walk in wisdom; wives are called to submit to their husbands, and husbands are called to love their wives as Christ loved the church. Marriage is given as the picture of Christ and His church—which is exactly why Satan attacks it.
- **1 Corinthians 13** — Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love is not puffed up; love does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, and thinks no evil. The qualities the world admires in marriage are the qualities Scripture says only love produces.
- **Matthew 7:24–27** — Jesus contrasts two builders. Both heard the words. Both faced the same storm. The difference was the foundation. The storm did not create the outcome—it exposed it.

The Big Picture

Nobody walks down the aisle hoping their marriage will fail. We get married to someone we love, and we plan a long, happy, and adventurous life together. So we naturally focus on the qualities we believe will make it work: patience, kindness, forgiveness, love, selflessness, respect, honesty, faithfulness, calmness, encouragement, supportiveness, humility, listening, trustworthiness, and consistency. These are good. The Bible itself teaches them in Ephesians 5 and 1 Corinthians 13. The problem is not the list. The problem is that adding information to your mind does not change you or your marriage.

The world tells couples that if they simply do their best and live by these qualities, everything will work out. But it doesn't—because every marriage will face storms. Satan attacks marriages because they are foundational to God's kingdom, reflecting the divine love between Christ and the Church. Financial

pressure, health crises, infidelity, communication breakdown, parenting stress, job loss, extended-family conflict, spiritual disconnect, and seasons of emotional distance are not unusual—they are inevitable. The first signs are usually small: a crack in communication, a shift in tone, emotional distance, repeated conflict. Those cracks are rarely the real issue. They are symptoms of what the marriage is built on. Storms don't destroy marriages. Weak foundations do. Storms only have the power to expose what the marriage is built on.

So if information alone is not enough, what does produce real change? Peter answers in 2 Peter 1:1–4 by pointing to four resources every Christian already has: faith in Jesus Christ, access to God, divine power and knowledge through the Holy Spirit, and the exceedingly great and precious promises of God. These are not self-help techniques—they are the supernatural provisions God has given through faith in Christ. A marriage anchored in shared faith has a cornerstone that does not move. A marriage that prays together has constant access to the wisdom of God. A marriage relying on the Holy Spirit can carry weight self-control could never carry. A marriage standing on God's promises interprets hardship as a place to trust Him more deeply rather than as evidence of failure. Strong marriages are not sustained by our efforts. They are sustained by God's provision. Built to Last means building where storms don't get the final word.

Group Discussion Questions

- What qualities or actions did you assume would make your marriage succeed when you first got married? Looking back, where did you discover that having those qualities on a list was not the same as having them produce change in you?
- The lesson says, "Adding information to your mind does not change you or your marriage." Where in your marriage have you been trying to fix something by learning more about it rather than by depending on God for it?
- Storms don't destroy marriages—weak foundations do. What was the most recent storm in your marriage, and what did it reveal about the foundation you had been building on?
- The most crucial thing for a successful marriage is your individual relationship with Jesus—not your spouse's, your parents', or your pastor's. Why do you think it is so easy to outsource your spiritual life to someone else, and what would change if you owned it personally this week?
- Of the four resources—faith, access to God, divine power and knowledge, and God's promises—which one is most active in your marriage right now? Which one is most underused? What would it look like to lean into the underused one this week?
- Is there a place in your marriage right now where you have been relying on willpower to hold things together? What would it look like, practically, to stop carrying that weight alone and let the Holy Spirit carry it with you?

Closing Challenge

- Sit down with your spouse and answer one question out loud together: "What are we building on?" Be honest. Don't debate the answer—just name it. Then ask, "What is one thing we can do this week to start building on Christ instead?"
- Pick one storm you are facing right now—financial, parenting, health, communication, family, spiritual—and bring it to God together in prayer this week. Don't just talk about it with each other. Inquire of the Lord about it together, the way David eventually inquired of the Lord in his crisis.

- Replace one default phrase this week. Instead of saying “This is what I want,” learn to ask, “What would honor Christ in this situation?” Notice what changes in the conversation, the outcome, and the atmosphere of your home.
- When tension begins to rise during a conversation this week, one of you say out loud: “Before we keep talking, let’s pray for wisdom.” Then actually stop and pray—even briefly—before the next sentence.

Personal Action Steps

- Read 2 Peter 1:1–4 every morning this week. Each day, write down which of the four provisions—faith, grace and peace, divine power and knowledge, or precious promises—you most need to lean on that day, and ask God specifically for it.
- Identify one ongoing tension in your marriage that you have been trying to fix with effort, logic, or willpower. Stop adding effort. Bring it to God in prayer with your spouse this week, and ask the Holy Spirit specifically to do what only He can do in that area.
- Choose one practical “In the Moment” practice from this lesson and use it this week: pray before a difficult conversation, pause mid-conflict to ask the Holy Spirit for patience, or remind your spouse, “God is still working in our marriage even when we can’t see it yet.”
- Practice forgiveness because Christ forgave you, not because your spouse has earned it. Identify one thing you have been holding onto this week, take it to God in prayer first, and then release it to your spouse.
- Commit to attending church and growing spiritually together rather than pursuing separate spiritual lives. If your rhythms have drifted apart, name it honestly and pick one shared rhythm—church, prayer, Scripture, or worship—to start this week.
- Choose one promise of God to memorize and stand on as a couple over the next month. Write it where you both will see it. When circumstances try to push you toward fear or discouragement, speak it out loud to each other.

Memory Verse

“As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature...” — 2 Peter 1:3–4 (NKJV)

Main Themes

Theme 1: Information Is Not Transformation

Key Point: Every couple already has a list of qualities they believe will make their marriage succeed: patience, kindness, forgiveness, love, selflessness, respect, honesty, faithfulness, calmness, encouragement, supportiveness, humility, good listening, trustworthiness, and consistency. The Bible itself teaches these virtues in Ephesians 5 and 1 Corinthians 13. The problem is not the list—it is the assumption underneath the list. The world tells us that if we just learn enough, try hard enough, and behave well enough, our marriages will be fine. But adding information to your mind does not change you or your marriage. Real change does not come from a better list. It comes from a better foundation.

Personal Reflection

- Where in your marriage have you been hoping that learning more, reading more, or hearing more would finally produce the change you want—and how long have you been waiting for that to work?
- Which quality on the list comes hardest for you in your marriage right now? Have you been trying to perform it, or have you been asking God to produce it in you?
- If your spouse described what your marriage is actually built on (not what you say it is built on), what would they say? Are you comfortable with that answer?

Theme 2: Storms Don't Destroy Marriages—Weak Foundations Do

Key Point: Every marriage will face storms: financial pressure and debt, health crises or unexpected loss, infidelity or betrayal, communication breakdown, parenting stress or blended-family challenges, job loss or career changes, extended-family conflict, spiritual disconnect, and seasons of emotional distance. The first signs are almost always small—a crack in communication, a shift in tone, emotional distance, repeated conflict—and we usually don't recognize them as a real threat. But those cracks are not the real issue. They are symptoms of what the marriage is built on. Satan attacks marriages because marriage reflects the divine love between Christ and the Church, and he sends storms specifically to expose and exploit a weak foundation. The question is not whether a storm is coming. The question is what your marriage is built on when it arrives.

Personal Reflection

- Looking back at your marriage, what storm exposed something about your foundation that you had not realized was there? What did it reveal?
- What small cracks—tone, distance, repeated conflict, communication—have you been treating as the problem when they may actually be symptoms of something deeper? What might the deeper issue be?
- If a major storm hit your marriage in the next twelve months, what is the honest assessment of what it would expose about your foundation today? What would you want to be different by the time it arrives?

Theme 3: Faith in Jesus Christ — The Cornerstone

Key Point: Marriage must be anchored in your individual and shared faith in Christ. Faith in Jesus gives the marriage three things at once: foundation and stability, because Jesus is the solid, immovable base on which the church and individual lives are built; alignment and standard, because just as a cornerstone determines the accuracy of a building, Jesus is the standard for truth that directs how a couple lives and thinks; and a unifying agent, because He holds the entire spiritual building together. The most crucial thing to have for a successful marriage is your individual relationship with Jesus—not your spouse's, not your parents', not your pastor's. Yours. Practically, that looks like praying together about decisions instead of relying on personal opinions, reading or discussing Scripture together even briefly, choosing forgiveness because Christ forgave you, seeking biblical truth in conflict instead of defending preferences, growing spiritually together rather than separately, and reminding each other of God's truth when one spouse is discouraged. The key shift is moving from "This is what I want" to "What would honor Christ in this situation?"

Personal Reflection

- Is your faith in Christ something you carry into your marriage as your own, or have you been leaning on someone else's faith to do the work for you? What needs to change?
- Where do you most often default to "This is what I want" in your marriage? What would it look like, in that exact place, to ask "What would honor Christ in this situation?" instead?
- Of the practical examples—praying together, Scripture together, choosing forgiveness, seeking truth in conflict, growing spiritually together, encouraging each other with truth—which one is currently strongest in your marriage, and which one needs the most attention?

Theme 4: Access to God — The Structural Connection

Key Point: Peter calls our faith "like precious faith"—equal in value and equal in access. In marriage, one spouse is not spiritually superior. Both have direct access to God, and both are responsible for their own spiritual health. Before Christ, access to God was limited and mediated through priests. Now every believer—including every spouse—has constant, direct access to God through prayer and the Holy Spirit. Practically, that access shows up when couples pray together during stressful seasons, ask God for wisdom before difficult conversations, confess sin to God quickly instead of letting pride grow, pray for a struggling spouse instead of criticizing them, seek God individually and bring what they learn back into the marriage, and pause to pray during conflict instead of escalating. The simplest in-the-moment practice is also the most powerful: when tension begins to rise, one spouse says, "Before we keep talking, let's pray for wisdom."

Personal Reflection

- Are you operating in your marriage as if you and your spouse have equal access to God, or are you waiting for the "more spiritual" one to lead? What would change if you owned your own access this week?
- When was the last time you asked God for wisdom before a difficult conversation with your spouse—not after, but before? What kept you from doing it?
- What is one recurring conflict in your marriage where pausing to pray together, in the moment, could change the outcome? What would it cost you to actually do that next time?

Theme 5: Divine Power and Knowledge — Strength That Holds the Weight

Key Point: Marriage will demand more than human intelligence or strength can supply. God provides divine power and knowledge through the Holy Spirit for patience when emotions run thin, forgiveness when wounds are deep, and endurance when seasons are long. A marriage relying only on self-control will eventually crack under pressure. A marriage relying on God's power can carry weight it was never meant to carry alone. Practically, that looks like choosing patience when you are emotionally exhausted, responding calmly when you feel misunderstood or attacked, extending grace after a hurtful mistake, staying committed during difficult seasons, serving your spouse even when you feel unappreciated, and letting the Holy Spirit guide your words during conflict. The simple in-the-moment prayer is enough: "Holy Spirit, help me respond with patience."

Personal Reflection

- Where in your marriage are you currently running on willpower and self-control alone? How long do you think that strategy can hold before something cracks?

- Of the three things divine power supplies—patience, forgiveness, endurance—which do you most need right now? Have you actually asked the Holy Spirit for it, or have you been trying to manufacture it yourself?
- Think of the last time you reacted in anger toward your spouse. If you had paused and prayed, “Holy Spirit, help me respond with patience,” before answering, how do you think the moment would have gone differently?

Theme 6: God’s Promises — Stability in a Fallen World

Key Point: Marriage exists in a world that constantly applies pressure through self-interest, division, distraction, and discouragement. God’s promises are not inspirational slogans—they are structural supports meant to be written on your heart, heard when you speak, and seen in your actions. They anchor the marriage when feelings fluctuate, when circumstances change, and when hope feels lost. Practically, that looks like trusting God during financial uncertainty instead of panicking, holding onto hope during difficult seasons, remembering that God is working even when progress feels slow, believing that God can restore broken areas of a relationship, encouraging each other with Scripture during discouraging moments, and choosing faith in God’s faithfulness instead of fear about the future. The in-the-moment reminder is simple and load-bearing: “God is still working in our marriage even when we can’t see it yet.” Without promises, marriages interpret hardship as failure. With promises, hardship becomes a place to trust God more deeply.

Personal Reflection

- What season or struggle in your marriage right now is most tempting you to interpret hardship as failure? What promise of God speaks directly to that situation?
- Are God’s promises functioning in your marriage as inspirational slogans or as structural supports? What would have to change for them to actually carry weight when life pushes back?
- What is one specific promise of God you and your spouse could memorize together this month and speak out loud to each other when fear, discouragement, or doubt shows up?

The Big Idea

Before God asks us to communicate better, serve more, love harder, or grow faster, He asks one question: “What are you building on?” Strong marriages are not built on information and the effort you put into living it out. Strong marriages are built on the resources we receive through our faith and reliance on Jesus.

Built to Last happens when:

- Our decisions are built on shared faith in Christ.
- We use our access to God through prayer and thanksgiving.
- We depend on the Holy Spirit’s power instead of our willpower or knowledge.
- We seek and stand on God’s promises when life gets hard.

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