

“Faith to Love: Love Is Grown, Not Found”

Crosspointe Marriage | Class 3

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

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

Ice Breakers

- **Found or Grown:** Most of the love stories we grew up with talk about “finding” love. When you look at the marriages you most admire, does their love look like something they found, or something they grew? What tells you so?
- **Daily Choices:** Think about the last week of your marriage. Name one small, intentional choice you made that nudged your relationship in a healthy direction, and one default reaction that pulled the other way.
- **Foundation Check:** Class 1 anchored us in Christ as the foundation, and Class 2 named marriage as a covenant. As you walk into this lesson, which of those two truths is most alive in your marriage right now, and which one needs fresh attention?

Key Scripture Passages

- **2 Peter 1:1–4** — Faith is described as a gift of equal standing, granted by the righteousness of Christ. Through His divine power we have everything we need for life and godliness, and through His promises we are made partakers of the divine nature. Faith is the foundation we begin with, not something we manufacture.
- **2 Peter 1:5–7** — Peter calls believers to add to their faith, with all diligence, a sequence of qualities: virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. Spiritual growth is intentional and ordered, not accidental.
- **Genesis 2:20–25** — The first marriage was established before God as a covenant, with God identifying the need, providing the sacrifice, and giving the couple responsibility to become “one flesh.” This is the covenant ground on which Faith to Love builds.
- **Ephesians 5:21** — “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” Mutual humility before God comes before any conversation about roles or responsibilities, and it sets the tone for every covenant practice that follows.
- **James 2:17** — “Faith without works is dead.” Faith that does not produce active obedience and Christlike conduct is incomplete; virtue is what makes faith visible.
- **Hosea 4:6** — “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” Without grounded biblical understanding, marriages are pulled around by emotion, culture, and opinion.
- **Proverbs 25:28** — A person without self-control is like a city whose walls are broken down. Truth must govern reactions, or impulses will tear down what has been built.
- **Romans 5:3–4** — Suffering produces perseverance, perseverance produces character, and character produces hope. Endurance, not quick results, is how God grows us in marriage.
- **1 Timothy 4:7–8** — “Train yourself for godliness,” which holds promise for this life and the life to come. Godliness is formed by long-term, repeated obedience.

- **Ephesians 4:32** — “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” Kindness within the body of Christ, including the marriage covenant, reflects the heart of God.
- **1 Corinthians 13:4–7** — Love is patient and kind, not envious, not boastful, not easily angered, keeps no record of wrongs, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Agape love is the finished fruit of every quality that comes before it.
- **John 13:34–35** — Jesus commands His followers to love one another as He has loved them, and says this sacrificial love is how the world will know they are His disciples.
- **1 John 4:19** — “We love because He first loved us.” Christlike love in marriage flows out of the love we have already received in Christ, not out of what our spouse has earned.
- **Galatians 5:22–23** — The fruit of the Spirit, including love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, is grown in us by the Holy Spirit. These qualities are not willpower, they are fruit.

The Big Picture

Class 1 gave you the foundation: a marriage built on a personal relationship with Christ, sustained through prayer, the Word, and the work of the Holy Spirit. Class 2 named what kind of relationship marriage actually is: a covenant established by God, sealed by sacrifice, and held together by commitment, faithfulness, sacrifice and service, grace, perseverance, and unity. Faith to Love picks up exactly where those classes leave off. If faith is the gift God places into your hands, and covenant is the structure He places around your marriage, the question of this lesson is simple and serious: what do you intentionally do, day after day, to grow that faith into love?

The answer comes from 2 Peter 1. Peter says faith is given to us by the righteousness of Christ, and that through His divine power we already have everything we need for life and godliness. But then he gives a charge: “with all diligence,” add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control perseverance, and to perseverance godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. The order is not random. Each quality builds on the one before it. Virtue activates faith. Knowledge anchors virtue in truth. Self-control lets truth rule behavior. Perseverance keeps self-control going over time. Godliness reorients the whole life around God. Kindness turns godliness outward toward people. And love, agape love, is the finished fruit of all the rest.

A strong biblical marriage is not built on feelings alone, it is built through repeated, intentional obedience in how spouses treat one another. Love in marriage is not something you stumble into; it is something you grow into, one quality at a time, by daily choices empowered by the Holy Spirit. You are not adding these qualities to earn your marriage. You are adding them to fully live out the covenant you already have. Love is grown, not found, and the path from faith to love is walked one diligent step at a time.

Group Discussion Questions

- Peter says we should add to our faith “with all diligence.” Where in your marriage have you been hoping growth would just happen, when God is actually inviting you to grow it on purpose?
- Faith without virtue stays passive. Where in your marriage do you believe the right things but not yet live them out, and what is one virtue choice that would make your faith visible at home this week?

- Virtue without knowledge can drift into legalism or be misguided. What is one area (roles, love and respect, forgiveness, covenant commitment, communication) where you sense God asking you to deepen your biblical understanding?
- Self-control allows truth to rule rather than anger, fear, pride, or hurt. Which of those four most often hijacks your responses, and what would it look like to let truth lead instead?
- Perseverance is sustained self-control over time. Where has slow progress, uneven change, repeated conflict, or rising stress tempted you to quit emotionally? What keeps you in the game?
- Godliness is formed through long-term faithfulness. What is one shared rhythm (praying together, inviting God into decisions, letting Scripture shape priorities, modeling repentance) that could shift your marriage from “shared logistics” to “shared life with God”?
- Kindness reflects God’s heart in everyday clothing. What is one small, practical kindness your spouse would notice immediately if you started practicing it this week?
- Love (agape) is the finished fruit of every previous quality, not the starting point. What does it change for you to hear that love in your marriage is grown, not found?

Closing Challenge

- Sit down with your spouse and read 2 Peter 1:5–7 out loud. Together, name which one of the seven qualities (virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, kindness, love) feels strongest in your marriage right now and which one needs the most growth.
- Pick one quality from that list to intentionally practice this week. Define one concrete action that proves it (for example, for self-control, pause five seconds before responding in tension; for kindness, one specific act of service each day).
- Identify one default reaction (sarcasm, contempt, withdrawal, retaliation, raised volume) that has been undermining your covenant. Confess it to God, name it to your spouse, and choose the virtue response that replaces it.
- Establish one small shared faith rhythm with your spouse. Pray together once a day, read a short passage of Scripture together, or invite God into one decision out loud. Begin this week and keep it simple enough to actually sustain.
- Practice giving the benefit of the doubt. The next time something your spouse says or does feels off, choose to believe the best, ask before assuming, and listen fully before responding.

Personal Action Steps

- Read 2 Peter 1:1–7 slowly, twice. In your own words, write out what you already have in Christ (verses 1–4) and what you are called to add to your faith (verses 5–7).
- Identify the one quality in the chain (virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, kindness, love) where growth has stalled in you, and ask God specifically to grow it. Tell one trusted person so you are not working on it alone.
- Choose one virtue to make visible at home this week, especially when emotions push the other way. Speak respectfully in conflict, refuse sarcasm and contempt, keep purity in thought and action, or choose integrity when tempted to withdraw or retaliate.
- Grow your knowledge intentionally. Pick one biblical topic that your marriage needs (roles, love and respect, forgiveness, covenant commitment, communication) and read, study, or listen to solid teaching on it this week.

- Practice one self-control habit every day. Pause before speaking, lower your tone, refuse to escalate, and choose calm over control. Notice how your responses change when truth, not emotion, governs the moment.
- Build a simple perseverance plan. Name one healthy habit you will not quit even when progress feels slow, and one conversation you will keep showing up for instead of shutting down.
- Pray for your spouse by name every day this week. Do not pray about them; pray for them. Ask God to grow in their heart what only He can grow, and to do the same in yours.

Memory Verse

“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.” — 2 Peter 1:5–7 (NIV)

Main Themes

Theme 1: The Foundational Truth — Faith Is the Gift, Growth Is the Choice

Faith is God’s gift, the foundation you start with. Through the righteousness of Jesus Christ you have been granted faith of equal standing with every other believer, and through His divine power you already have everything you need for life and godliness. That is grace; you did not earn it, and you do not have to manufacture it. But Peter does not stop at the gift. He says, “For this very reason, with all diligence, add to your faith.” Growth in marriage happens as you intentionally build on that faith through daily choices. A strong biblical marriage is not built on feelings alone; it is built through repeated, intentional obedience in how spouses treat one another. The foundation is settled in Christ. The construction is your daily, willing, Spirit-empowered cooperation with what He is already doing.

Personal Reflection

- Where have you treated faith as something static, instead of as the foundation God expects you to actively build on?
- What does “with all diligence” look like in the season of marriage you are in right now?
- Which is more honest about your last month, that your marriage has been coasting on feelings or being shaped by intentional obedience?

Theme 2: Virtue — Making Faith Visible

Virtue is moral excellence: choosing what is right, honorable, and pleasing to God, especially when it is difficult. Virtue follows faith because faith without virtue remains passive. Virtue activates faith by aligning our choices with what we believe. Without virtue, knowledge and growth can be misused or become hollow. In marriage, virtue means choosing what is right, honorable, and Christlike toward your spouse, even when emotions say otherwise. It looks like speaking respectfully during conflict, refusing sarcasm and contempt, keeping purity in thought and action, and choosing integrity when you are tempted to withdraw or retaliate. Faith must shape your choices and conduct, not just your beliefs. Virtue is what makes faith visible at home.

Personal Reflection

- Where is there a gap between what you say you believe about marriage and how you actually behave when you are tired, hurt, or annoyed?
- Which virtue choice (respect in conflict, no sarcasm, purity, integrity instead of withdrawing or retaliating) does the Spirit press most directly on your heart right now?
- What would your spouse say is one place your faith has become visible recently, and one place it is still mostly invisible?

Theme 3: Knowledge — Anchoring Virtue in Truth

Knowledge is growing in understanding of God’s Word, His character, and His truth. Knowledge follows virtue because right living must be guided by right understanding. Virtue without knowledge can become legalistic or misguided, and knowledge grounds our faith in truth so we are not led by emotion, culture, or opinion, but by God’s Word. We must know who God is and how He works in order to walk wisely. In marriage, this means growing in biblical understanding of roles, love and respect, forgiveness, covenant commitment, and communication. It looks like studying Scripture together, learning biblical conflict resolution, understanding your spouse’s needs, and seeking wisdom before reacting. Knowledge anchors virtue in truth so the right thing is also the wise thing.

Personal Reflection

- Which voice has been louder in your marriage decisions lately, Scripture, your emotions, your culture, or your opinions?
- Which area (roles, love and respect, forgiveness, covenant commitment, communication) most needs deeper biblical grounding in your relationship?
- What is one practical step you can take this week to seek wisdom before reacting in a recurring conflict?

Theme 4: Self-Control — Letting Truth Govern Behavior

Self-control is the ability to govern our desires, emotions, words, and reactions. It follows knowledge because knowing truth does not automatically mean we live it; self-control allows truth to rule our behavior. Without self-control, our impulses will undermine our growth, because spiritual maturity requires restraint, wisdom, and intentional responses. Truth must govern behavior, not just inform it. In marriage, this means truth controls your responses, not anger, fear, pride, or hurt. It looks like pausing before speaking, refusing to escalate arguments, managing tone and volume, refusing emotional revenge, and choosing calm over control. Self-control allows knowledge to shape daily living and protects the relationship from damage that words and reactions, once released, are very hard to take back.

Personal Reflection

- Which impulse most often hijacks you in conflict: anger, fear, pride, or hurt?
- What does a Spirit-led pause look like in the heat of a hard conversation with your spouse?
- Where has a lack of self-control already left damage that needs to be acknowledged and repaired?

Theme 5: Perseverance — Faithful Over the Long Haul

Perseverance is steadfastness: the commitment to remain faithful under pressure, hardship, or delay. It follows self-control because perseverance is sustained self-control over time. It keeps us steady when obedience becomes costly. Growth happens through endurance; without perseverance, we quit when growth is slow or life is hard. Spiritual growth requires endurance over time, not quick results. In marriage,

this means remaining committed when progress feels slow, change is uneven, conflict repeats, and stress increases. It looks like not quitting emotionally, continuing healthy habits, showing up in conversations, and staying engaged instead of shutting down. Perseverance keeps us faithful when growth is hard, and growth in marriage is proven over time, not in perfect days.

Personal Reflection

- Where have you been quietly checking out emotionally because growth has felt too slow?
- Which healthy habit do you need to refuse to abandon, even when circumstances make it inconvenient?
- What would it look like to stay engaged the next time you would normally shut down or walk away?

Theme 6: Godliness — A Shared Life Oriented Toward God

Godliness is a life that reflects reverence for God in attitude, priorities, and conduct. It follows perseverance because godliness is formed through long-term faithfulness; it is the result of consistently choosing God over self. Godliness aligns our entire life with God, not just our actions, but our heart and desires. It reflects a life shaped by reverence for God, not self. In marriage, godliness means building a shared life oriented toward God, not just shared logistics. It looks like praying together, inviting God into decisions, valuing obedience over comfort, letting Scripture shape priorities, and modeling repentance and humility for one another. Godliness grows out of sustained obedience and shifts marriage from self-centered to God-centered, which is the only orientation that holds up in every season.

Personal Reflection

- Is your marriage primarily a partnership of logistics, or a shared life with God? What evidence supports your answer?
- Where are you choosing comfort over obedience in your marriage right now, and what would obedience actually require?
- Is repentance something your spouse regularly sees in you, or something you mostly avoid? What is one place to model it this week?

Theme 7: Kindness — Love in Everyday Clothing

Kindness is genuine care, patience, and compassion toward fellow believers. It follows godliness because true devotion to God always impacts how we treat others. You cannot love God deeply and remain indifferent to people. Faith is lived in relationship, and brotherly kindness protects unity and reflects Christ within the body of believers. Spiritual maturity is proven in how we treat others, especially fellow believers, and your spouse is the closest fellow believer you have. In marriage, kindness means treating your spouse with active, practical compassion, not just tolerance. It looks like a gentle tone, thoughtful gestures, patience with weaknesses, listening fully, and giving the benefit of the doubt. Kindness reflects God's heart within your marriage; it is love in everyday clothing.

Personal Reflection

- Would your spouse describe your daily presence as kind, or as merely tolerant?
- Which everyday kindness (tone, thoughtful gesture, patience, fully listening, benefit of the doubt) is most missing right now, and what would change if you reintroduced it?
- Where do you tend to rush past your spouse instead of giving the patient compassion you would give a friend at church?

Theme 8: Love — Sacrificial, Covenant Love as the Finished Fruit

Love (agape) is selfless, sacrificial love that seeks the good of others regardless of return. It is last because it is the full expression of spiritual maturity; all of the previous qualities prepare us to love like Christ. Love is the ultimate evidence of a life transformed by faith, and without love, growth is incomplete. In marriage, love is the goal: Christlike love that gives without keeping score. It looks like serving when you are tired, forgiving quickly, seeking your spouse's good, choosing unity over winning, and loving even when love is not "felt" in the moment. Love is not the starting point of your marriage; it is the finished fruit of disciplined growth. That is why love is grown, not found, and why faith that adds virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, and kindness will eventually produce a love that looks unmistakably like Jesus.

Personal Reflection

- Where have you been waiting to "feel" love before you act in love? What changes if you treat love as the fruit of obedience instead of the prerequisite to it?
- Which expression of agape (serving when tired, forgiving quickly, seeking your spouse's good, choosing unity over winning, loving when not felt) is God specifically asking from you right now?
- If love is the finished fruit, which earlier quality (virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, kindness) is the next step on the path for you?

The Big Idea

In biblical marriage, faith is the foundation, virtue shapes behavior, knowledge shapes direction, self-control shapes reactions, perseverance shapes endurance, godliness shapes priorities, kindness shapes connection, and love shapes the whole covenant. You are not adding these qualities to earn your marriage. You are adding them to fully live out the covenant you already have.

Faith grows into love when:

- Faith is treated as the gift you build on, not a finish line you have already crossed.
- Virtue makes faith visible at home, especially when emotions push the other way.
- Knowledge anchors virtue in truth, so right living is also wise living.
- Self-control lets truth, not anger, fear, pride, or hurt, govern your responses.
- Perseverance keeps you faithful when progress is slow, change is uneven, conflict repeats, and stress increases.
- Godliness reorients the marriage from shared logistics to a shared life with God.
- Kindness clothes godliness in gentle tone, patience, and active compassion at home.
- Love, the finished fruit, gives without keeping score and looks like Christ.

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