A Study Guide for

“Stay Connected: Deeper Connection. Deeper Intimacy.”

Crosspointe Marriage | Class 9

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

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

Ice Breakers

- **Dead Battery:** Have you ever plugged in your phone at night, gone to sleep, and woken up to a dead battery because the cord had come unplugged at the wall? What did you assume, and what did it cost you?
- **Far Apart:** Can two people share a house, a schedule, and even a bed while still feeling far apart? What do you think might be missing?
- **“I’m Fine”:** When do you tend to say “I’m fine” when you are really hurting? What do you do instead of explaining what happened?
- **Charged and Ready:** We make sure the phone is charged before we need it. Where in your life do you assume you are connected without checking the source?

Key Scripture Passages

- **Genesis 2:24–25 –** A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and they become one flesh. They were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed: a picture of being fully known and feeling no need to hide.
- **Genesis 3:7–10 –** Sin opens their eyes. They sew fig leaves, hide from the presence of the Lord, and Adam says, “I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.” Shame, fear, and hiding replace openness.
- **Proverbs 18:13 –** “He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him.” Understanding your spouse’s thinking starts with listening before answering.
- **John 15:4–5 –** “Abide in Me, and I in you.” Fruitful living depends on remaining in Christ, the vine; without Him we can do nothing.
- **Romans 12:2 –** Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. God shapes how we think so that we can understand our spouse instead of assuming we already do.
- **Ephesians 4:29–32 –** Let no corrupt word proceed from your mouth, but what is good for edification that it may impart grace; put away bitterness, wrath, and anger; and be kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving, even as God in Christ forgave you.
- **Ephesians 5:28–29 –** Husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies, for no one ever hated his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.
- **James 1:19 –** Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

The Big Picture

Sharing a home, responsibilities, and daily routines can make us assume we are connected. Like a phone that sat plugged in all night while the cord was quietly out of the wall, a marriage can look

connected and still be running on empty. We may expect affection, conversation, or intimacy without recognizing that our spouse feels disconnected, and we may hide our own disconnection instead of saying what we need. Closeness requires intentional attention to our relationship with God and with each other.

God's design is a picture of being known and unashamed. In Genesis 2:24–25 the two become one flesh, naked and not ashamed. They were physically naked. In marriage, that picture of being seen without shame also helps us consider openness beyond physical nakedness. That kind of openness goes beyond what your spouse sees with their eyes: it is being able to say where you are struggling with God, what you really think, what has hurt you, and what helps you feel close. Then sin entered, and the couple who had been unashamed covered themselves and hid from God's presence. We still do this when we say "I'm fine" while we are hurting, or avoid a hard conversation instead of explaining what happened. When the phone did not charge, the answer was to follow the cord back to the source, and when we recognize distance in our marriage, we need to examine our connection too, beginning with our connection to God.

Openness cannot be demanded, so we help create room for it by becoming trustworthy with what our spouse shares. Our connection with God is the foundation for the connection He designed us to share in marriage, and through prayer, His Word, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God teaches us to love, listen, serve, and respond with grace. This class looks at that connection in four areas: Spiritual (share your foundation), Mental (understand their thinking), Emotional (know their heart), and Physical (express closeness).

Group Discussion Questions

- Could we assume we are connected simply because we share a home, schedule, and routines?
- What is God's design for connection and intimacy in marriage? How closely does your marriage reflect it?
- What changed between "they were not ashamed" and "I was afraid, and I hid myself"? What are some ways fear and shame can cause spouses to hide or withdraw?
- Can two people share a house, a schedule, and even a bed while still feeling far apart? What might be missing: attention, friendship, prayer, understanding, honest conversation, tenderness, time, trust?
- Does your spouse know how you are doing spiritually, or only that you go to church?
- When your spouse sees something differently, do you become curious or start preparing your argument?
- When your spouse shares something painful, do they leave the conversation feeling understood?
- How does the way we respond to honesty affect whether our spouse will want to be honest with us again?
- Does your physical affection communicate care, or does your spouse experience it mainly as a request for something?

Closing Challenge

- Choose one action. Pick one small action for this week and decide together on a specific time to practice it.

- Ask the spiritual question. Ask each other, “What is God teaching you, and how can I pray for you?” Listen without correcting the answer or comparing your growth with theirs.
- Ask the mental question. Before responding to your spouse’s opinion, explain it back in a way they recognize as accurate.
- Practice mental connection: Ask, “How are you seeing this?” Before responding, explain your spouse’s perspective back in a way they recognize as accurate.
- Ask the physical question. Ask, “What kind of affection helps you feel loved and close to me?” and receive the answer with care.
- Pray together. Thank God for creating marriage, and ask Him to help you stay connected to Him and to each other.

Personal Action Steps

- Ask yourself honestly: Are we intentionally connecting, or simply going through our routines?
- Ask yourself: Have I communicated where I feel disconnected, or have I hidden it?
- Examine your own connection with God: how are prayer, His Word, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit shaping how you love your spouse?
- Notice where you say “I’m fine” when you are hurting, and decide what you could say instead.
- Ask yourself the closing question: “What am I holding back, and what response do I need to change so we can grow closer?”
- Consider whether you have ever used something your spouse shared as ammunition later, and take responsibility if your words or actions have made sharing difficult.
- Practice listening phrases such as “That sounds discouraging. Tell me more,” “I didn’t realize that hurt you,” and “Thank you for telling me.”
- Choose one small action and one specific time to practice it this week.

Memory Verse

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.” – John 15:4 (NKJV)

Main Themes

Theme 1: Are We Really Connected?

Most of us make sure our phone is plugged in at night and ready to use in the morning. But it is possible to plug it in, go to sleep, and wake up to a dead battery: the cord came unplugged from the wall, and all night you assumed it was charging because you assumed it was connected. Could we be making that same assumption in our marriage? Sharing a home, responsibilities, and daily routines can make us assume we are connected. But closeness requires intentional attention to our relationship with God and with each other.

We may expect affection, conversation, or intimacy without recognizing that our spouse feels disconnected, and we may hide our own disconnection instead of communicating what we need. Our connection with God is the foundation for the connection He designed us to share in marriage. Through prayer, His Word, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God teaches us to love, listen, serve, and respond with grace.

Personal Reflection

- Are we intentionally connecting, or simply going through our routines?
- Have I communicated where I feel disconnected?
- Am I nurturing my relationship with God and allowing Him to shape how I love my spouse?

Theme 2: Known and Unashamed (Genesis 2:24–25)

God's design for connection and intimacy includes becoming one, sharing a foundation in Christ, knowing and being known by each other, being open and unashamed, loving and caring for each other, and enjoying affection and sexual intimacy within marriage. Your spouse cannot take God's place. But putting God first means living out His love toward your spouse. Our connection with God is the foundation; our marriage is where we put into practice what He is growing in us.

Verse 24 tells us that the two became one flesh. Verse 25 gives us a picture of what that closeness looked like: they were naked, and they were not ashamed. They were physically naked, but think about what it means to be seen and feel no need to hide. In marriage, that kind of openness goes beyond what your spouse sees with their eyes. It is being able to say, "Here's where I'm struggling with God. Here's what I really think. Here's what has hurt me. Here's what helps me feel close to you." And when your spouse lets you see that part of them, how you respond matters. When you listen and treat what they share with care, you give them a reason to trust you with more of who they are. That is how being known deepens your connection.

Personal Reflection

- How closely does my marriage reflect God's design of being known and unashamed?
- Which of those four statements is hardest for me to say to my spouse?
- When my spouse has opened up to me, have I given them a reason to trust me with more?

Theme 3: What Is Intimacy?

Intimacy is the closeness that develops as husband and wife share their lives, understand one another, and respond with faithful care. We look at that connection in four areas. Spiritual intimacy is sharing our relationship with God, His truth, and His direction for our lives. Mental intimacy is sharing and understanding thoughts, beliefs, ideas, and perspectives. Emotional intimacy is sharing feelings, fears, hurts, and hopes with honesty and care. Physical intimacy is expressing closeness through affection, touch, and sexual intimacy within marriage.

Sex is an important part of marriage, but being physically close does not automatically mean we are emotionally or spiritually close. Two people can share a house, a schedule, and even a bed while still feeling far apart. What might be missing? Attention, friendship, prayer, understanding, honest conversation, tenderness, time, and trust. Sharing a life gives us opportunities to connect. Knowing and caring for each other deepens that connection.

Personal Reflection

- In which of the four areas (spiritual, mental, emotional, physical) do I feel closest to my spouse, and in which do I feel farthest?
- What is missing in our marriage right now: attention, friendship, prayer, understanding, honest conversation, tenderness, time, or trust?
- Where have I assumed that sharing a life meant we were connected?

Theme 4: What Changed When Sin Entered (Genesis 3:7–10)

We have seen a picture of being known and unashamed. But do we always live that way? Sometimes we say, "I'm fine," when we're hurting. We avoid a hard conversation or pull away instead of explaining what happened. In Genesis 3, the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked. They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings, and when they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden, they hid themselves from His presence. When God called, "Where are you?" Adam answered, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

Notice the covering, the shame, the fear, and the hiding. Sin disrupted their relationship with God, and the couple who had been naked and unashamed now covered themselves and hid from Him. Remember the phone: when it did not charge, the answer was to follow the cord back to the source. When we recognize distance in our marriage, we need to examine our connection too, beginning with our connection to God. Communication skills, personality insights, and marriage resources can help us, but they cannot take God's place. He shapes the heart we bring to those tools, and to our spouse. As we let God work in us, it should change how we respond when our spouse opens up.

Personal Reflection

- Where do I cover, hide, or pull away from my spouse instead of explaining what happened?
- When have I said "I'm fine" when I was hurting?
- Where do I see distance in my marriage, and what happens when I follow it back to my connection with God?

Theme 5: Closeness Requires a Trustworthy Response

Openness cannot be demanded. We help create room for it by becoming trustworthy with what our spouse shares. That means listening without using a vulnerable disclosure as ammunition later, asking questions to understand, and taking responsibility when your words or actions have made sharing difficult.

Being known requires honesty. Staying connected requires care for what has been shared. Our responsibility as a spouse is to become someone they can trust with what they share.

Personal Reflection

- Have I ever used something my spouse shared against them later?
- Have my words or actions made it harder for my spouse to share with me?
- What would it look like for me to take responsibility for that this week?

Theme 6: Spiritual Intimacy – Share Your Foundation (John 15:4–5)

We begin with spiritual intimacy because our relationship with God shapes what we bring into every other connection. Jesus teaches that fruitful living depends on remaining in Him: "Abide in Me, and I in you… I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." Our personal relationship with Christ is the foundation, and we must also grow in Him together. Spiritual intimacy brings those truths into our shared life. We let our spouse see what God is teaching us, where we need to grow, and where we need prayer.

Spiritual openness sounds like, “This passage challenged how I’ve been responding to you,” “I’ve been struggling to trust God with this,” “I need to ask your forgiveness,” and “Will you pray with me about this?” We can attend church together and still avoid sharing our spiritual lives. Shared spiritual intimacy grows as we pray, discuss Scripture, seek God’s direction, and practice obedience at home. Our connection with God should become visible in how we treat each other. As we let God shape our lives, He also shapes our thinking, which prepares us to understand our spouse instead of assuming we already do.

Personal Reflection

- Does my spouse know how I am doing spiritually, or only that I go to church?
- Which of the four statements of spiritual openness do I most need to say to my spouse?
- How could I ask my spouse, “What is God teaching you, and how can I pray for you?” and listen without correcting or comparing?

Theme 7: Mental Intimacy – Understand Their Thinking (Romans 12:2; Proverbs 18:13)

God calls us to renew our minds, and Proverbs warns against answering before listening. Mental intimacy means learning how your spouse sees life: their beliefs, ideas, interests, expectations, and perspectives. Our beliefs about a situation affect our response. Sometimes we react to the meaning we assigned to our spouse’s actions before asking what they meant.

Picture one spouse who wants to discuss a purchase immediately while the other wants time to think. One assumes, “You don’t care.” The other thinks, “You’re pressuring me.” They may simply be misunderstanding each other’s way of processing the decision. Mental connection asks, “How are you seeing this?” “What matters most to you about it?” “What led you to that conclusion?” and “Have I understood you correctly?” Keep learning about each other beyond problems and decisions: discuss something you learned, an idea that interests you, or a hope for the future. You do not have to think alike to understand each other. Before responding to your spouse’s opinion, explain it back in a way they recognize as accurate.

Personal Reflection

- When my spouse sees something differently, am I curious, or am I preparing my argument?
- Where have I reacted to the meaning I assigned to my spouse’s actions before asking what they meant?
- When did I last ask my spouse about something they learned, an idea that interests them, or a hope for the future?

Theme 8: Emotional Intimacy – Know Their Heart (James 1:19; Ephesians 4:29–32)

Emotional intimacy grows as we share our feelings and respond to each other with patience, kindness, and grace. Mental intimacy asks, “How do you see this?” Emotional intimacy asks, “What has this been like for you?” Your spouse might explain every detail of a difficult day and still be waiting for you to recognize that they felt embarrassed, discouraged, or alone.

Our words, our response to hurt, and our behavior during disagreement affect whether our spouse feels comfortable opening up again. James calls us to be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath, and Paul tells us to let no corrupt word proceed out of our mouths, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. Try saying, “That sounds discouraging. Tell me

more," "I didn't realize that hurt you," "Do you need me to listen, help, or pray with you?" and "Thank you for telling me." Understanding a feeling does not mean agreeing with every conclusion. It means treating your spouse's experience as worthy of your attention. How we respond to honesty affects whether our spouse will want to be honest with us again. Ask, "What has been weighing on your heart?" and listen before explaining, defending, or offering a solution.

Personal Reflection

- When my spouse shares something painful, do they leave the conversation feeling understood?
- Where do my words, my response to hurt, or my behavior during disagreement make it harder for my spouse to open up again?
- Which of the four phrases would be hardest for me to say, and why?

Theme 9: Physical Intimacy – Express Closeness (Genesis 2:24–25; Ephesians 5:28–29)

Physical intimacy includes nonsexual affection and sexual intimacy within marriage. Both belong within a relationship of faithful, loving care. Holding hands, an embrace, a kiss, or sitting close can communicate, "I enjoy being with you." Sexual intimacy provides a meaningful expression of the one-flesh relationship. It deserves honest conversation, mutual care, and attention rather than assumptions. Paul writes that husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies, for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

The phone illustration highlights how easily we can focus on what we want rather than the person we want to be close to. That makes us laugh, but it also exposes an expectation we can bring into marriage. My spouse has thoughts, feelings, needs, and concerns. Have I paid attention to the person I want to be close to? Talk privately about affection, desire, comfort, and concerns, and remember that fatigue, illness, pain, and difficult seasons may require adjustments and support. Spiritual, mental, and emotional connection nurture physical intimacy. They do not create an obligation to respond sexually. We pray, listen, and serve because we love our spouse, and physical intimacy should express that same love. Ask, "What kind of affection helps you feel loved and close to me?" and receive the answer with care.

Personal Reflection

- Does my physical affection communicate care, or does my spouse experience it mainly as a request for something?
- Have I paid attention to the person I want to be close to, including their thoughts, feelings, needs, and concerns?
- When did we last talk privately and honestly about affection, desire, comfort, and concerns?

The Big Idea

Deeper intimacy grows as we bring our whole selves into the marriage and faithfully care for what our spouse shares. That means nurturing four connections: Spiritual, sharing your foundation; Mental, understanding their thinking; Emotional, knowing their heart; and Physical, expressing closeness. These connections strengthen one another, so continue nurturing all four rather than treating them as steps you finish.

If we are not plugged into God, we will not be charged up and ready to love our spouse and serve them as God intended. We are careful to charge the phone we depend on. Are we as intentional about

connecting with God, whom our marriage depends on? Through prayer, His Word, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God shapes our thinking, changes our responses, and teaches us how to love. My responsibility begins with my connection to God. I cannot make my spouse connect with Him, but I can take responsibility for the love, grace, and care I bring into our marriage.

Deeper connection happens when:

- Spiritual: You share your foundation, letting your spouse see what God is teaching you and where you need prayer.
- Mental: You understand their thinking and explain their view back before you respond.
- Emotional: You know their heart, listening before explaining, defending, or offering a solution.
- Physical: You express closeness with affection and care, never as an obligation.
- You take responsibility for the love, grace, and care you bring into the marriage, beginning with your own connection to God.
- You ask, “What am I holding back, and what response do I need to change so we can grow closer?”

Stay Connected: Deeper Connection. Deeper Intimacy.