

Better Together

TOOLS FOR A LASTING MARRIAGE

PART 3: BETTER PERSPECTIVE

Most of us come into marriage with some expectations of how things will go. But those expectations can give us tunnel vision, causing us to miss the chance to enjoy and appreciate our spouses. We'll talk about the difference between desires and expectations and what we can do to develop better perspective.

CONNECT

Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions as a group.

1. When you think back to when you first got married, what were some of the expectations you didn't realize you had?
2. What did you find most surprising in your first year together?

LEARN

Watch the video for **Part 3: Better Perspective**.

APPLY

1. What did you think about the explanation in the video of how desires and expectations in marriage are different from each other?
2. One way to determine if something is a desire or an expectation is by evaluating your response when it does or doesn't happen. An unmet desire might be disappointing, but if it causes anger or resentment, it was an expectation. Or, in another scenario, if we have a desire and our spouse satisfies it, we would naturally feel appreciative and thankful. If our spouse does something for us and we're not feeling gratitude, it was most likely an expectation.

Can you think of a time when your spouse did something for you that made you feel really thankful? If so, share your experience with the group.

3. Have you ever known a couple that seemed to have a transactional relationship? Maybe it felt like they had an invisible scoreboard in their house. What did you notice about that kind of relationship?
4. In the video, Allison said, "In marriage, you win or lose together." What do you think about that statement? How have you seen this in your relationship with your spouse?
5. Practicing gratitude is one of the best ways to fight against saddling your spouse with the weight of your expectations. Take a moment in group and have each person share something they appreciate or admire about their spouse.



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BEFORE NEXT TIME

This week, focus on developing the habit of gratitude toward each other. Commit to finding one thing each day that you can appreciate about each other. For “bonus points,” find a creative way to communicate your gratitude or brag on your spouse in front of someone else.

PRAY

Take a few minutes to allow group members to share any prayer requests and end your time together in prayer. If you want to try something different, have couples split off and pray together.

