



Christian Marriage Guide

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A warm, Bible-centred resource for reflecting on marriage with honesty, care and hope. Explore what Scripture teaches, consider practical ways to nurture a Christ-centred relationship, and make space for a conversation that honours both people.

A guide for real life

Marriage is lived in many different circumstances. This guide offers principles and questions, not a measure of anyone's worth or a one-size-fits-all answer. Take what is helpful, adapt it to your situation, and seek wise support when you need it.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Biblical foundations · Love in practice · Everyday rhythms · Reflection, conversation and care

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01 / BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

A shared life, shaped by love

The Bible speaks about marriage through covenant, companionship, faithfulness and care. These passages invite reflection rather than offering a formula that removes the need for wisdom, consent or compassion.

Genesis 2:24 | A joined life

Genesis describes a person leaving their parents, holding fast to their spouse, and the two becoming one flesh. Christians often understand this as a picture of deep commitment and shared life. Becoming one does not mean losing individuality: spouses remain distinct people whose dignity, voice, gifts and relationships deserve respect.

Ephesians 5:21–33 | Mutual care

Read this passage beginning with verse 21, which calls believers to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. The verses that follow address wives and husbands, and call husbands to a self-giving love modelled on Christ. Christians and churches interpret aspects of this passage differently, so read it carefully in its wider context. Whatever interpretation a couple holds, the passage must not be used to excuse domination, coercion or harm. Christian love seeks the good of the other; mutual respect means listening, sharing responsibility and treating each person as worthy of safety and care.

A thought to carry forward

A Christ-centred marriage is not measured by who has the final word. Consider how faithfulness, humility and shared care could shape the way you make decisions together.

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02 / LOVE IN PRACTICE

Love made visible

Christian love is more than a feeling. Scripture describes a way of treating one another that can be practised in ordinary moments, especially when life is tiring or differences are hard.

1 Corinthians 13 | The character of love

Paul's well-known description of love appears in a wider discussion about spiritual gifts and the life of the church. It presents love as patient and kind, not self-seeking or easily angered, and as rejoicing with the truth. Rather than using the passage to demand perfection, let it invite honest reflection about the habits that build trust.

Four small ways to practise love

- Be patient: pause long enough to hear what your spouse means, not only the words you first react to.
- Be kind: offer a specific word of appreciation or a practical act of help without keeping score.
- Honour truth: speak honestly and gently, and make room for both people to describe their experience.
- Choose humility: when you cause hurt, take responsibility and ask what repair would look like.

Colossians 3:12–14 | Put on compassion

This passage encourages compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience and forgiveness, and describes love as binding these virtues together. Forgiveness can be part of healing, but it does not require pretending harm did not happen, removing appropriate boundaries or staying in danger. Rebuilding trust takes honesty, changed behaviour and time.

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03 / EVERYDAY RHYTHMS

Small habits, stronger connection

There is no single routine that suits every couple. Choose a small practice that fits your energy, culture, health, work and season of life, then review it together rather than treating it as a test.

Make room for honest communication

Set aside a short, low-pressure time to check in. Each person can share one thing they appreciated, one concern they would like understood, and one kind of support that would help this week. Take turns, listen without interrupting, and reflect back what you heard before offering solutions. Use clear, specific language such as, “I felt overwhelmed when plans changed. Could we talk through changes together next time?” Speak from your own experience, ask open questions, and check whether now is a good time for a difficult conversation.

Share service and responsibility

Talk openly about the visible and invisible work of daily life, including household tasks, care, finances and planning. Ask what feels fair and where support is needed. Christian service is freely offered and mutual; it is not a reason one person should carry every burden or surrender their voice.

When disagreement comes

Pause if either person is too upset to listen, and agree when you will return to the conversation. Name the issue without insults, threats or scorekeeping. Look for the need or concern beneath each position, then choose one next step you can both consent to. If the same conflict keeps repeating, a qualified counsellor or trusted pastoral support may help.

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04 / REFLECTION AND CARE

Reflect, talk and seek support

Use these prompts privately or together. There is no need to answer everything at once. If a question feels difficult, you can pause, write instead of speaking, or return to it with a trusted professional or pastoral support person.

Personal reflection

- Which quality from 1 Corinthians 13 or Colossians 3:12–14 would you like to practise more intentionally this week? What might that look like in one specific moment?
- When do you feel most heard, respected and supported? What is one small way you could communicate that need clearly?
- What is one responsibility, routine or decision you could review together so it feels more shared and sustainable?

Conversation for two

What does mutual care mean to each of us in this season? Where do our expectations come from, and which ones do we want to keep, change or discuss further? How can we handle conflict in a way that protects dignity and makes space for repair? What would help each of us feel safe enough to speak honestly?

Safety matters

Abuse, intimidation, coercive control and violence are not ordinary disagreements, and no one deserves them. Biblical teaching about marriage must never be used to pressure someone to remain in an unsafe situation, keep abuse secret or accept harm as their responsibility.