



MARRIAGE--

What If?

The Marriage Your Heart Longs For. ♥

GROWING TOGETHER. ♥ LOVING DEEPER. ♥ LIVING CONNECTED.

— *Not just good, but truly life-giving.* —

Marriage: What If?

The Marriage Your Heart Longs For

GENERATE GOODNESS

The Fire That Makes Us - *How Shared Struggles Build an Unbreakable Marriage!*

What if your marriage could become more than simply surviving the demands of life? What if it could become emotionally safe, spiritually alive, and truly life-giving? In this Men's RoundTable series, we will explore God's design for intimacy, healing, delight, and connection through *The Deep-Rooted Marriage* by Dan Allender and Steve Call alongside *Fire and Song* by Carl W. Lehnbauer. This is an invitation for men to move beyond merely "getting along" toward cultivating a marriage that becomes truly life-giving.



GOD – MARRIAGE – GROWTH

Conflict Is Healed by Taking the Initiative

Song of Solomon 2:8-2:17 & 3:1-3:5



1. **The Husband Takes the Initiative** → The groom comes toward his bride with joy and invitation. He doesn't withdraw after distance. He pursues her. He calls her. "Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away." (2:10). His words are full of affection, not accusation. Rather than demanding that she come to him, he lovingly invites her back into relationship. His initiative communicates: "I still want you." "I still delight in you." "Our relationship is worth pursuing." Healthy husbands understand that leadership in marriage often begins with taking the first step toward reconciliation. Song of Solomon 2:8-17.
2. **The Wife Takes the Initiative** → Later, the roles reverse. The bride experiences separation and immediately begins searching for her beloved. She refuses to remain distant. She gets up, seeks him, asks others if they have seen him, and rejoices when she finds him. She doesn't allow pride or fear to keep her from pursuing restoration. Her pursuit demonstrates that love is active, intentional, and courageous. Song of Solomon 3:1-5.
3. **MUTUAL PURSUIT** → The Song of Solomon presents a beautiful rhythm of mutual pursuit. Sometimes the husband leads. Sometimes the wife leads. Neither keeps score. Neither waits for the other to deserve reconciliation. Both value the relationship more than winning the argument. That reflects the heart of covenant love.

Suffering Each Other's Humanity!

Chapter 12 in D-R Marriage book



1. SAFE PLACE FOR WEAKNESS → Every spouse is wonderfully made ... and deeply broken. Marriage eventually exposes: weakness, fear, failure, sin, limitations, disappointment. The temptation is to become irritated. God invites us to become compassionate. Galatians 6 says, "Bear one another's burdens." Notice—God doesn't say, "Fix one another." He says, "Bear." Healthy marriages don't demand perfection. They become safe places for weakness. Galatians 6:1-5.
2. DRIVES US TOGETHER → Romans 8 tells us creation groans ... our bodies groan ... our spirits groan. But we do not groan without hope. Marriage teaches us that not every prayer is answered immediately. Some suffering remains. Some questions linger. Yet couples who pray together discover that suffering can deepen dependence upon Christ. The fire either drives us apart—or drives us to God together. Romans 8:18-28.

Suffering Each Other's Dreams!

Chapter 12 in D-R Marriage book

1. DEATH OF EXPECTATIONS → Perhaps one of the most overlooked parts of marriage. Sometimes the deepest grief isn't tragedy. It's the death of expectations. Dreams change. Careers shift. Health changes. Children choose different paths. Retirement looks different. The invitation is to grieve together—instead of blaming one another. Ecclesiastes reminds us there is "a time to weep ... and a time to laugh." Healthy marriages make room for both.



Suffering Death!

Chapter 12 in D-R Marriage book



1. **FACING DEATH** → Every marriage experiences death. Not only physical death. The death of: expectations, youth, control, dreams, parents, friendships, health, security. Yet resurrection always follows surrender. The Gospel teaches us death never has the final word. Christ transforms endings into beginnings.
2. **DEAL WITH GOOD & BAD** → Meet the Good and the Bad with the Spirit. Don't merely survive suffering. Meet suffering with the Holy Spirit. Celebrate victories together. Cry together. Pray together. Hope together. Laugh together. Grieve together. The Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness. These are precisely the qualities suffering attempts to steal.

ACTION: Journal This!

1. Which is harder for you: taking the first step after conflict or receiving your spouse when they do? What keeps you from taking the initiative—pride, fear, hurt, or the desire to be "right"?
2. What "fire" has most strengthened your marriage?
3. How has suffering deepened your dependence upon Christ?



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