



Note to facilitators: Thank you for facilitating a Grace Marriage group. Your role is vital. You set the tone, and keep the day moving for everyone. Please spend time in prayer before the coaching day. Arrive early and enthusiastically greet participants as they arrive. We hear from many participants that the tone set by the facilitators is a critical aspect in helping the day to be successful. Be positive and enthusiastic. The Lord is using you to bless many people!

To help you stay on time, you may find it helpful to write your planned starting time in the blanks on the left margins prior to your coaching session. The times listed in parenthesis will help keep you on track to cover the material, but *be flexible as needed*. Your group may need a little more discussion in one area and less in another.

Don't be afraid of periodic silence in discussion because people often need a moment or two to collect their thoughts. But also guard against allowing a session to drag on too long.

FACILITATORS - Remember the important instructions in the Facilitator's Playbook about:

- reading the lessons
- completing the worksheets (giving clear instructions)
- having couples get space from other couples for one-on-one discussion
- leading group discussion (dealing with dominators)



TEACHING VIDEOS: There are teaching videos available on your GM resource page to go along with each of these lessons.



CREATE A PLAYLIST: As couples are checking in for the day, ask them to write down the name of their "SONG" on a piece of paper that you have on the table. It could be the song they danced to at their wedding, a song that was playing when they went on their first date, or a song they both love.

Once you have this list first thing, ask someone to quickly make a playlist on a free music app with this list of songs on it. Then, during your breaks throughout the day, play this list of songs as it surprises the couples when they identify their song playing.

This is a sweet way to kick off a romantic gesture and remind the couples of a sweet memory they have tied to their song choice. Plus, it gives you some background music for the day.



WELCOME AND PRAYER (8-10 minutes):

_____ WELCOME (4-5 minutes)

FACILITATOR COMMENTS:

- Welcome to Grace Marriage coaching! We are excited you have chosen to proactively work on your marriage. Remember: **Grace + Intentionality = Transformation!**
- May each of us receive the refreshing grace of Christ and the wonderful fruits of the Spirit into our lives and our marriage.
- It is very important to **stay off your cell phones during the sessions** unless you have extenuating circumstances that require your availability. You may check your phones during the breaks if absolutely necessary. We want to spend the day with as few distractions as possible. We will focus on putting our marriages under the grace of Christ and intentionally investing in our relationship.

Optional Overview Video (6 minutes):

Play "**Intro Video - Part One**" from the Grace Marriage Resource Page.

OPEN IN PRAYER (1-2 minutes)



EYE EXAM (35 minutes)

_____ **VERSES (5 minutes):** Each quarter we will begin our time together by reflecting on God's word. Let's turn to page 4. Facilitator, read page 4 and give participants 2-3 minutes to write their response to Philippians 4:8. Then ask a few individuals to share their thoughts.

_____ **WATCH THE VIDEO (5 minutes):** Play the teaching video from the GM Resources page as you get started with this lesson.

***If technology isn't available, read the lesson in your group as stated below. -OR-*

_____ **READ THE LESSON (5 minutes):** Have volunteers read pages 5-6 aloud to the group.

_____ **WORKSHEET (10 minutes):** Have everyone fill out the Eye Exam worksheet on page 7 individually. Encourage participants to think **specifically** what they like about their spouse. For example, instead of just writing, "I think my wife is beautiful," have them list specific attributes they like about their spouse's appearance.

_____ **ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION (10 minutes):** **During all one-on-one discussions today, encourage couples to move around the room to have space to talk privately.** Have each spouse take 5 minutes to share their comments with their partner. Ask them to explain why they answered as they did. After 5 minutes, prompt them to switch to allow the other spouse to share.

_____ **GROUP DISCUSSION (5 minutes):** Ask each person to share one thing they appreciate about their spouse, being mindful not to share anything that would embarrass them.



BREAK (5 minutes) ***Remember to play fun music during the breaks!*



THE FOUNDATION (48-55 minutes)

VERSES (10 minutes): Have the participants silently read over the verses on page 10 and underline what stands out to them. Inform the participants that some will read and reflect quickly, and others more slowly.

Encourage them to work at their own pace. Let them know it is okay if they do not get to every verse.

WATCH THE VIDEO (13 minutes): Play the video from the GM Resources page.

***If technology isn't available, read the lesson in your group as stated below. -OR-*

READ THE LESSON (8 minutes): Have volunteers read pages 11-13.

WORKSHEETS (12 minutes): Have each person fill out the worksheets on pages 14-16 individually.

***Remember to play soft instrumental music during worksheet and one-on-one times.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes): Have husbands get with another guy and wives with another woman for discussion. If you have an odd number of couples, one group will have three in it.

Instruct the small groups to each take a turn discussing their worksheets, and ask them to close by discussing how they personally want to improve in showing more grace to their spouse.

GROUP DISCUSSION (8-10 minutes): *Remind participants that this session is about self-reflection, not about pointing out perceived faults in one's spouse. Instruct the group that this is not the setting to bring up things that might embarrass their spouse. Be watchful to make sure everyone remains engaged so this portion does not drag.*

1. What are the differences between a performance-based marriage and a grace-based marriage?
2. Where else do you see performance-based acceptance? (*social media, celebrity culture, work environments, school settings...*)
3. Do you know any couples who seem to radiate grace? What attributes make you want to be around them?



BREAK (5-10 minutes) ***Breaks can be shortened if extra time is needed during lessons.*



RED LIGHT ON THE DASH (30-36 minutes)

_____ **WATCH THE VIDEO (11 minutes):** Play the video from the GM Resources page.

***If technology isn't available, read the lesson in your group as stated below. -OR-*

_____ **READ THE LESSON (5-7 minutes):** Have volunteers read pages 18-19.

_____ **WORKSHEETS (10 minutes):** Ask participants to fill out the worksheets on pages 20 and 21.

_____ **ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION (15 minutes):** Have each couple go over the worksheets together. The couple should discuss how they can be most helpful when the other is struggling and take notes as they learn. Again, make sure one spouse shares half of the time allotted and then give direction for them to switch.



Optional Overview Video (5 minutes):

Play "**Intro Video - Part Two**" from the Grace Marriage Resource Page.



INTIMACY IGNITER (36-40 minutes)

_____ **WATCH THE VIDEO (1 minute):** Play the teaching video from the GM Resources page as you get started with this lesson.

***If technology isn't available, read the lesson in your group as stated below.*

_____ **READ THE LESSON (5 minutes):** Facilitator, read page 24 to the group and ask each person to write James 1:19 in their own words, or using first-person pronouns.

_____ **ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION (30 minutes):** Have couples move to a private area for personal dialog on any topic of importance to them. If no particular issue comes to mind, they may discuss any of the questions on pages 24-25.

Make sure to communicate to the couples that one spouse should talk for 15 minutes and then switch and allow the other spouse to talk for 15 minutes. This assists in keeping the communication balanced during this time.

_____ **GROUP DISCUSSION (5 minutes):** Bring everyone back together and ask: "What are you invested in right now, or what do you want to invest in, in the future?" (Encourage short, even one-word answers.)

Facilitator, read the statement on page 26 ("An investment in your marriage is a good investment.")



_____ **BREAK (5-10 minutes)**



THE 621 CHALLENGE (15-19 minutes)

_____ **WATCH THE VIDEO (9 minutes):** Play the teaching video from the GM Resources page as you get started with this lesson.

***If technology isn't available, read the lesson in your group as stated below. -OR-*

_____ **READ THE LESSON (5 minutes):** Have a volunteer read pages 28-29.

_____ **ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION (10 minutes):** This time is for couples to plan their upcoming quarter together. Encourage them to discuss various ideas for dates, and use page 30 to write out a list. What are some things they have done in the past that they enjoyed? Are there some things they would like to do that they have never done, but would like to try?

Encourage participants to decide which night (or day) of the week is best for them to designate as time just for them as a couple. **Urge participants to write their plans, otherwise the dates are unlikely to occur.** Would it be practical for them to get away for a night or two during the quarter? Use the bottom of page 30 to schedule their dates.



_____ **TAKE HOME ACTIVITY (3 minutes):** Since your group created a playlist of everyone's favorite love songs today, encourage the couples to go home and create their own fun playlist. They can call it their "**Night to Remember**" playlist and include all of their favorite songs that spark great memories in their lives. Then, tell them to use this playlist at home one night for either a fun dance party or just to have these songs playing in the background during a game night or while cooking supper.

These types of playlists don't have to include only love songs, but maybe your favorite song from high school or the song you and your friends would sing on the bus or a song that reminds you of your spouse. Music has a way of bringing people together, and fun, memorable songs can do just that for you and your spouse.



AGREE TO disCONNECT (20 minutes)

_____ **WATCH THE VIDEO (5 minutes):** Play the teaching video from the GM Resources page as you get started with this lesson.

***If technology isn't available, read the lesson in your group as stated below.*

_____ **READ THE LESSON (5 minutes):** Have a volunteer read page 32.

_____ **WORKSHEET (5 minutes):** Have each participant fill out the blanks on page 33, setting boundaries on technology use to protect family time.

_____ **ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION (10 minutes):** Have each spouse share their agreement with the other. Remind the participants not to be critical or attacking during this discussion. Have one spouse share for 5 minutes and then give them a prompt when to switch for the other spouse to share.



THE ONE THING (3 minutes)

_____ Please turn to page 34. As you reflect on the things discussed today, what would you say is the ONE THING that you personally commit to work on in order to improve your marriage? You may wish to take a few minutes to flip through the book and review what we have discussed today. Write your primary area of focus for the coming quarter in the box on page 34.



CONTINUING THE PROGRESS – THE WEEKLY CHECK-UP (3 minutes)

_____ Ask everyone to turn to page 35 (“Continuing the Progress”). In the back of your book are perforated cards to help you continue the progress begun today. Sometime at the beginning of each week, you and your spouse are encouraged to spend 15-20 minutes discussing the items on the card. Tear out the card for Week 1. Fill it out as you discuss the five points each week:

- What am I thankful for about my spouse?
- Is there anything weighing on you? How can I pray for you this week?
- What are a few action items that I could do that would help you this week?
- When will we spend one-on-one time together this week?
- How is my progress on “The One Thing” (my primary takeaway) so far this quarter?

Place your completed card in a place where you will see it throughout the week.

_____ **Encourage and close in prayer**