



— Hebrews 4:12 (KJV) —

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper
than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing
asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow,
and is a discerner of the thoughts of the intentions
of the heart.

BUILT TO LAST

Building a Christ-Centered Covenant

Keith R. Reinhardt

Author

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Built to Last

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WAKE UP

Conference Session One

Returning to God's Design for Covenant Marriage

Author: **Keith R. Reinhardt**

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Conference Session One - Wake Up

Session Purpose

This session awakens husbands and wives to the truth that marriage must be defined by God rather than by tribe, family expectations, personal experience, social pressure, or cultural tradition. Participants will examine the voices that shaped their understanding of marriage, return to God's original design, understand the biblical responsibilities of husband and wife, and learn to test every marital custom by Scripture.

Teaching Sections

- Who Taught You What Marriage Should Be?
- God's Original Design: One Man, One Woman, One Covenant
- Headship, Submission, and Equal Dignity
- Covenant or Culture? Testing Marriage Traditions by Scripture

Session Covenant

- Do not use this teaching to attack your spouse.
- Do not defend every custom merely because it is old.
- Do not assume every warning is meant for another couple.
- Do not compare your marriage with another marriage.
- Allow Scripture to examine husband, wife, family, tribe, and tradition.
- Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

Teaching Section 1: Who Taught You What Marriage Should Be?

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): **Romans 12:2**

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Supporting Scriptures: Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 7:8-13; Colossians 2:8

Big Idea

Every husband and wife enters marriage carrying beliefs learned from family, culture, personal experience, and observation, but only God has the authority to define marriage.

Teach

Most people never deliberately decide what marriage should be.

They absorb a definition by watching **parents, relatives, elders, churches, communities, media, and other couples.**

Some examples teach covenant faithfulness, respect, sacrifice, hospitality, and responsibility.

Other examples normalize **violence, silence, adultery, multiple wives, neglect, control, or emotional distance.**

Family history may explain why a person thinks or reacts a certain way.

But it does not have final authority.

Every inherited belief must be tested by Scripture.

Before a couple can build differently, they must identify the voices that have been shaping them.

A husband may repeat his father's harshness even while promising never to become like him.

A wife may remain silent because she was taught that truthfulness is disrespect.

Both may carry expectations that were never examined under the Word of God.

Expectations and Reality

Randy Carlson summarizes a common source of marital disappointment with a simple formula:

$$\text{Expectations} - \text{Reality} = \text{Disappointment}$$

When what we expect from our spouse is greater than what we actually experience, disappointment grows. Some expectations are biblical and should be discussed; others come from family, culture, past relationships, or assumptions and must be examined under Scripture. Healthy couples communicate expectations rather than **expecting a spouse to read their mind.**

Romans 12:2 teaches that transformation begins with the renewing of the mind.

Marriage changes when husband and wife stop asking, 'What is normal around us?' and begin asking, 'What is faithful before God?'

The Gospel does not require us to despise our families or cultures.

It requires us to place every influence beneath Christ.

We honor what is good, repent of what is sinful, and refuse to pass destructive patterns to the next generation. That may have come from

- Parents and grandparents
- Tribal traditions and community expectations
- Pastors and church teaching
- Previous relationships, pain, and disappointment
- Social media, entertainment, wealth, and status
- Fear of family rejection or public shame

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- What did your father teach you about being a husband?
- What did your mother teach you about being a wife?
- **What did you observe in your parents' marriage?**
- Were conflict, silence, violence, or unfaithfulness treated as normal?
- **Were women treated as partners or property?**
- **Were men expected to lead or merely control?**
- Which beliefs must now be tested by Scripture?

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

1. (Pause.)

Illustration

A builder can work with great effort and still construct a crooked house if the measuring tool is wrong. Sincerity cannot correct a false standard. In the same way, couples can work hard at marriage while measuring themselves

by family custom, public opinion, or personal desire. Scripture is the true measure. Until the standard is corrected, the structure will continue to lean.

Uganda Application

Your marriages may be influenced by family, clan, tribe, bridewealth expectations, inheritance customs, childbearing expectations, elder authority, and community reputation. Some customs encourage respect, responsibility, hospitality, and family support. **Others may normalize domination, multiple wives, silence around abuse, forced marriage, unequal treatment, or excessive family interference.** No custom should be accepted or rejected merely because it is African, Western, old, or modern. **It must be examined under God's Word.**

Key Statements

- Every marriage is shaped by a voice. Who are you listening to???
- **What is common is not always biblical!!!**
- What is traditional is not automatically holy!!!
- **Family history may explain a pattern, but it does not excuse disobedience.**
- **Scripture must become louder than culture.**

Speaker Notes

- Invite reflection without shaming parents or cultures.
- Emphasize that inherited patterns can be changed through Christ.
- **Pause after the questions and do not rush the silence.**
- **Keep the focus on personal examination rather than spousal accusation.**

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Transition

Once we identify the voices that shaped us, we must return to the first voice - **the voice of the Creator**. Genesis does not begin with culture's version of marriage. It begins with God's design.

Teaching Section 2: God's Original Design: One Man, One Woman, One Covenant

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): **Matthew 19:4-6**

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Supporting Scriptures: Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 2:18-25; Malachi 2:14-16

Big Idea

Marriage begins with God's creation design: one man and one woman joined in a lifelong covenant of faithfulness, companionship, responsibility, and one-flesh unity.

Teach

God created male and female in His image.

Marriage was God's idea before sin entered the world.

The man leaves his father and mother; **husband and wife establish a new primary household.**

The two become one flesh.

Marriage is a covenant, not merely a contract, = family arrangement, financial transaction, or permission for sexual relations.

Sexual intimacy belongs within the covenant.

Polygamy appears in biblical history, but it is never presented as God's creation ideal. Man did it

Jesus returned to Genesis and said, 'the two shall become one flesh.'

A contract is usually maintained as long as both parties believe the arrangement benefits them.

A covenant is a sacred promise made before God.

Covenant love remains truthful and faithful when emotions fluctuate, when hardship comes, and when sacrifice is required.

Four Expressions of Love in Marriage

Marriage includes several expressions of love that work together:

- **Eros - Romantic Love:** Attraction, affection, romance, and sexual intimacy between husband and wife.
- **Philia - Friendship Love:** Companionship, conversation, shared interests, laughter, and enjoying life together.
- **Storge - Family Love:** Natural affection, loyalty, belonging, and care that grows within a family.
- **Agape - Sacrificial Love:** Choosing the good of your spouse with Christlike faithfulness, even when love requires sacrifice.

Feelings can rise and fall, but agape covenant love helps protect the marriage through changing seasons and makes room for friendship, affection, and family loyalty to grow.

One flesh means more than sexual union.

It speaks of **shared life:** bodies, loyalties, responsibilities, resources, decisions, pain, hope, and future.

The two do not disappear as persons, **but they no longer live as independent competitors.**

Malachi describes marriage as a covenant before God.

This means a spouse cannot be treated as disposable.

The Lord hears the tears produced by betrayal, neglect, and treachery.

Worship cannot be separated from the way a husband or wife treats the covenant partner God has entrusted to them.

- God created marriage before sin entered the world.
- Husband and wife form a new primary household.
- Marriage includes exclusive sexual faithfulness.
- Marriage is designed to be lifelong.
- Marriage joins families, but the covenant belongs to the husband and wife before God.

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- Do you see marriage as a covenant or an arrangement?
- **Has extended family become more influential than the marriage covenant?**
- **Have you treated your spouse as a possession rather than a covenant partner?**
- Have you divided your loyalty between your spouse and another relationship?
- **Does your marriage reflect one-flesh unity or two separate lives?**

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

(Pause.)

Illustration

Two pieces of cloth can be laid beside each other without becoming one. Covenant is more like stitching them together. The thread does not erase the identity of either piece, but it joins them into one fabric with a shared strength and purpose. When that fabric is torn, both sides are wounded. This is why covenant must never be handled casually.

Uganda Application

Bridewealth, family involvement, ceremonies, and community recognition may serve honorable purposes. They become distorted when marriage is treated as a purchase, when a woman is viewed as property, or when relatives believe they own the right to control the couple. Marriage may join families, but the covenant belongs to the husband and wife before God.

Key Statements

- Marriage is created by God.
- Marriage is covenant, not ownership.
- The biblical pattern is one man and one woman.
- **Husband and wife form a new primary household.**
- What God joins must not be treated casually.

Speaker Notes

- State the one-man, one-woman pattern clearly and without apology.
- Distinguish biblical description from biblical prescription when discussing polygamy.
- Do not portray covenant as permission to tolerate danger or criminal conduct.
- Emphasize both permanence and sacred responsibility.

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will we begin this week?

Transition

God's design establishes the covenant. The next question is how husband and wife live within that covenant without turning responsibility into domination or submission into silence.

Teaching Section 3: Headship, Submission, and Equal Dignity

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): **Ephesians 5:21-25**

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, **love your wives**, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

Supporting Scriptures: Ephesians 5:26-33; Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 2:18; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7

Big Idea

The husband and wife possess equal dignity before God while carrying distinct responsibilities within marriage. Biblical headship calls a husband to lead through sacrificial love, while biblical submission never requires a wife to accept sin, neglect, deprivation, or abuse.

Teach Video

The husband's model is Jesus Christ.

He is called to love his wife sacrificially, accept responsibility for the home, provide and protect, listen, honor, remain sexually faithful, lead spiritually, admit failure, and reject harshness.

The wife is called to respect her husband, support righteous leadership, speak truth with wisdom, contribute her gifts and discernment, reject manipulation and contempt, remain faithful, and obey God above every human authority.

Equal dignity does not require sameness, and distinct responsibility never permits domination.

Headship is not a license to control.

Submission is not inferiority or forced silence.

Ephesians 5 begins with mutual submission to Christ.

Neither spouse stands above the authority of Jesus.

The husband cannot demand what Christ forbids, and the wife is not called to cooperate with sin.

Christ's headship is revealed at the cross.

He does not exploit the Church.

He gives Himself for her good.

Therefore, any claim to headship that produces fear, humiliation, sexual coercion, or violence contradicts the very model it claims to represent.

A wise husband welcomes his wife's discernment.

A wise wife does not confuse respect with pretending that wrongdoing is right.

Covenant partnership requires truth spoken in love, humility when corrected, and a shared desire to obey God.

- Husbands: love, serve, protect, provide, listen, pray, remain faithful, and accept responsibility.

- Wives: respect, support what is righteous, speak truth wisely, remain faithful, and use God-given discernment.
- Both spouses: submit to Christ, reject manipulation, confess sin, and honor the image of God in one another.

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- Does the husband lead by serving or by intimidating?
- Does the wife respect or undermine?
- Is headship being used as a demand for control?
- Is submission being misunderstood as silence?
- Does the couple make room for each other's wisdom?
- Would the wife describe her husband's leadership as loving?
- Would the husband describe his wife's response as respectful?

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

(Pause.)

Illustration

A shepherd walks ahead to guide, stays near to protect, and is willing to place himself between danger and the flock. He does not beat the sheep to prove that he is in charge. Biblical headship carries the same spirit of responsible, sacrificial care. Authority is proven by service, not intimidation.

Uganda Application

In some families, a husband may believe that paying bridewealth gives him ownership or unquestioned authority. A wife may be taught that submission means she has no voice and must accept violence, adultery, or economic exploitation. Scripture does not permit this distortion.

Key Statements

- Equal dignity does not require identical responsibility.
- Distinct responsibility never permits domination.

- Headship is sacrificial responsibility.
- Submission is not inferiority.
- No spouse is permitted to use Scripture as a weapon.

Speaker Notes

- Read Ephesians 5 through the example of Christ, not through cultural assumptions.
- Speak directly against physical, sexual, spiritual, and economic abuse.
- Avoid making wives responsible for managing a husband's sin.
- Call both spouses to humility and obedience to Christ.

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Transition

When Scripture defines responsibility, it also gives us a way to test tradition. We can now ask which customs reflect covenant faithfulness, which need correction, and which must be rejected.

Teaching Section 4: Covenant or Culture? Testing Marriage Traditions by Scripture

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): **Mark 7:8-9**

"You **have** let go of the commands of God and are holding on to **human traditions**." And he continued, "You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God **in order to** observe **your own traditions!**"

Supporting Scriptures: Mark 7:10-13; Acts 17:11; Colossians 2:8; Revelation 7:9-10

Big Idea

Culture is a gift, but culture is not God. Every marriage custom must be received, corrected, or rejected according to Scripture.

Teach

Some customs may be affirmed because they encourage respect, responsibility, family support, hospitality, public recognition, and wise counsel.

Some customs need correction because something good has become burdened by unfairness, fear, excessive demands, family control, tribal superiority, or silence about wrongdoing.

Some practices must be rejected because they contradict God's design and violate human dignity.

Jesus confronted religious traditions when they nullified the command of God.

Longevity does not make a practice-- righteous.

A custom may be familiar, widely accepted, and defended by respected elders, yet still require correction.

The Church must avoid two equal errors.

One is treating every traditional practice as holy.

The other is treating everything Western or modern as automatically better.

Christ is not the servant of any culture.

Every culture stands under His judgment and receives His redeeming grace.

Testing culture requires courage because obedience may disappoint relatives or expose injustice.

Yet respectful disagreement is not dishonor **when the demand being refused contradicts Scripture or endangers a person.**

- **Affirm:** respect for elders, family support, hospitality, community celebration, formal introductions, and counsel from mature believers.
- **Correct:** excessive bridewealth demands, relatives controlling the couple, tribal prejudice, unequal inheritance expectations, blaming infertility on the woman, and measuring adulthood only by marriage or childbirth.
- **Reject:** polygamy, forced or early marriage, domestic violence, sexual coercion, adultery, treating the wife as property, occult rituals, concealment of abuse, abandonment, neglect, and pressure to participate in sin.

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- Which traditions strengthen marriage?
- **Which traditions place pressure on the couple?**
- **Does bridewealth communicate honor or ownership?**
- Are relatives supporting the marriage or controlling it?
- Are harmful practices protected by the phrase, "This is our culture"?
- Is family reputation valued above truth and safety?
- What must be brought under Christ's authority?

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

(Pause.)

Illustration

A farmer sorts seed before planting. Good seed is preserved, damaged seed is discarded, and mixed seed is examined carefully. In the same way, **Christians do not reject an entire culture, nor do they plant every inherited practice without examination.** *Scripture helps us preserve what is good, correct what is distorted, and reject what will produce harm.*

Uganda Application

Uganda contains many peoples, languages, and marriage customs. No single example describes every tribe or family. The purpose is not to attack culture but to place every culture beneath Christ. Christians receive what is good, correct what is distorted, and reject what is harmful.

Key Statements

- Culture is a gift, but culture is not God.
- Old does not automatically mean holy.
- Respect does not require participation in sin.
- A Christian marriage belongs first to Christ.
- Every tribe and nation must bow before Scripture.

Speaker Notes

- Avoid stereotypes and acknowledge the diversity of Ugandan cultures.

- Use the receive-correct-reject framework repeatedly.
- Make clear that forced marriage and abuse are covenant violations.
- End Session One by calling participants back to God's design, not merely away from cultural errors.

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Transition

Wake Up has shown us the standard. Clean Up now requires honest confrontation with the sins, wounds, and divided loyalties that damage the covenant.



— Hebrews 4:12 (KJV) —

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper
than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing
asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow,
and is a discernor of the thoughts of the intentions
of the heart.

CLEAN UP

Conference Session Two

Confronting What Is Destroying the Marriage Covenant

Author **Keith R. Reinhardt**

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Conference Session Two - Clean Up

Session Purpose

This session helps couples confront the sins, wounds, behaviors, and traditions that weaken or destroy marriage. Participants will examine personal responsibility, abuse, neglect, passivity, domination, polygamy, sexual unfaithfulness, divided loyalties, divorce, separation, reconciliation, and remarriage.

Teaching Sections

- The Sins We Bring Into Marriage
- Domination, Passivity, Abuse, and Neglect
- Sexual Unfaithfulness, Polygamy, and Divided Loyalties
- Divorce, Separation, Reconciliation, and Remarriage

Session Covenant

- Do not use another person's sin to avoid examining your own.
- Do not pressure anyone to disclose abuse publicly.
- Do not confuse forgiveness with permission.
- Do not confuse separation for safety with rebellion.
- Do not excuse sin by appealing to custom.
- Seek safe and wise help when needed.
- Ask, 'Lord, what must I confess, confront, change, or bring into the light?'

Teaching Section 1: The Sins We Bring Into Marriage

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): **1 John 1:8-9**

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Supporting Scriptures: James 1:13-15; Genesis 3:8-13; Matthew 7:3-5

Big Idea

Marriage problems are not created only by the spouse. Every husband and wife brings desires, fears, wounds, habits, and sins into the covenant.

Teach

Marriage often reveals what is already present in the heart.

Pride, fear, jealousy, anger, shame, control, passivity, and unforgiveness become visible when two lives are joined.

Adam blamed Eve and then blamed God.

That pattern continues whenever a spouse uses the other person's failure to avoid personal responsibility.

Repentance begins when a husband or wife stops defending, comparing, and blaming and says, 'Lord, I was wrong.'

Personal responsibility does not mean accepting blame for another person's abuse or betrayal.

Each person must own what is truly theirs.

The victim is not responsible for the offender's violence, adultery, or manipulation.

Confession is specific.

It does not say, 'Mistakes were made' or 'I am sorry you were hurt.'

It names the wrong without excuses, acknowledges the damage, seeks forgiveness, and accepts appropriate consequences.

1- John -- promises cleansing when we walk in the light.

Hiddenness protects sin.

Truth opens the door to grace.

Christ is not threatened by the truth about us.

He already knows it, **and** He invites us to bring it into the light.

- Pride and blame
- Anger and bitterness
- Jealousy and controlling behavior
- Withdrawal and refusal to communicate
- Dishonesty and financial secrecy
- Hidden addictions and sexual sin
- Shame, fear, and comparison
- Unforgiveness and refusal to apologize

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- What do I keep blaming on my spouse?

- Where have I refused correction?
- What habit is affecting the marriage?
- What wound influences my reactions?
- What secret have I protected?
- Where have I demanded change without changing myself?
- What apology have I refused to make?

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

(Pause.)

Illustration

A cracked water container may look acceptable from a distance, but pressure reveals the weakness. **Marriage often applies pressure to the heart.** The pressure does not create every crack; it exposes what needs repair. We should not curse the pressure for revealing what God wants to heal.

Uganda Application

Family and cultural pressures may influence behavior, but they do not remove personal responsibility before God. The Gospel gives more than an excuse; it gives power to repent and begin a new pattern.

Key Statements

- You cannot change what you refuse to own.
- Marriage reveals what is already in the heart.
- Blame prevents repentance.
- Hidden sin eventually becomes visible.
- Restoration begins with honesty.

Speaker Notes

- Differentiate personal responsibility from victim-blaming.
- Model a specific confession rather than a vague apology.
- Give participants a quiet moment for self-examination.
- Keep hope centered in Christ's cleansing grace.

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Transition

Some sins damage marriage through personal attitudes and hidden habits. Others use power or absence to crush the covenant. **We must name domination, passivity, abuse, and neglect honestly.**

Teaching Section 2: Domination, Passivity, Abuse, and Neglect

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): **Ephesians 5:25, 28-29**

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. In this same way, **husbands ought to love their wives** as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church.

Supporting Scriptures: Colossians 3:19; 1 Peter 3:7; Ezekiel 34:1-4; Proverbs 31:8-9

Big Idea

A marriage can be destroyed either by oppressive control or irresponsible absence. Biblical leadership rejects both domination and passivity.

Teach

Domination uses power to control, frighten, silence, or exploit.

Passivity refuses responsibility, avoids difficult truth, and leaves the burdens of the home on the other spouse.

A husband never has the right or authority to discipline, belittle, or criticize his wife as though she were a possession or a child, especially in front of others.

A wife is never required to accept violence as proof of submission.

Abuse is not limited to physical assault.

It may include sexual coercion, threats, intimidation, economic deprivation, isolation, humiliation, spiritual manipulation, destruction of property, or preventing medical care.

Financial neglect can be abusive when a spouse deliberately withholds necessary support, hides income, spends family resources destructively, or uses food, school fees, medicine, and housing as instruments of control.

The church must never protect a reputation at the expense of a vulnerable person.

Telling an endangered spouse simply to pray more, submit more, or return immediately can increase danger and misrepresent God.

Repentance by an abuser is more than tears, promises, or religious language.

It includes ending the harmful behavior, accepting lawful and pastoral accountability, respecting boundaries, making restitution where possible, and demonstrating sustained change over time.

- Domination: physical violence, threats, sexual coercion, economic control, humiliation, isolation, destruction of property, and spiritual manipulation.
- Passivity and neglect: refusal to provide while able, avoiding conflict resolution, leaving all burdens on one spouse, selfish spending, refusing communication, failing to protect children, and being physically present but relationally absent.

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- Is fear being used to control the home?
- Does one spouse control all money and information?
- Has violence been excused as discipline?

- Has the husband demanded authority while avoiding responsibility?
- Has the wife used contempt, manipulation, or silence to punish?
- Are the children living in fear?
- Is separation necessary for safety?

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

(Pause.)

Illustration

A roof can fail in two ways. It can collapse under crushing weight, or it can be left unfinished so that rain enters the home. Domination crushes. Passivity leaves the family uncovered. Biblical responsibility neither crushes nor abandons; it protects, serves, and acts.

Uganda Application

In communities where endurance and family reputation are highly valued, victims may be pressured to remain silent. The church must not protect appearances while people remain in danger. Safety, medical attention, lawful protection, wise pastoral support, and confidentiality can work together.

Correct Response

- Protect the endangered spouse and children.
- Seek immediate safety when danger is present.
- Report criminal conduct to proper authorities.
- Obtain medical attention where necessary.
- Involve trustworthy pastoral, legal, and professional help.
- Require accountability and sustained fruit of repentance.
- Do not force immediate reconciliation.

Key Statements

- Abuse is not headship.
- Violence is not discipline.
- Passivity is not peace.
- Submission does not require remaining in danger.
- Forgiveness does not immediately restore trust.

Speaker Notes

- Do not invite public disclosure.
- Say clearly that immediate safety takes priority when danger is present.
- Avoid promises that pastoral counseling alone can resolve criminal or severe abusive conduct.
- Emphasize confidentiality while acknowledging lawful reporting duties.

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Transition

Abuse and neglect violate covenant through power and absence. Sexual unfaithfulness and polygamy violate it through divided bodies, divided loyalties, and divided households.

Teaching Section 3: Sexual Unfaithfulness, Polygamy, and Divided Loyalties

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): **Hebrews 13:4**

Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

Supporting Scriptures: Genesis 2:24; Matthew 5:27-30; Matthew 19:4-9; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20

Big Idea

Marriage requires exclusive covenant faithfulness. Adultery, polygamy, pornography, secret partners, and divided households violate the one-flesh union.

Teach

Polygamy is recorded in Scripture but is not the creation pattern.

Its repeated results include jealousy, rivalry, favoritism, pain, and household division.

A Christian man should not take another wife while his covenant wife is living.

Infertility, failure to produce a son, illness, conflict, wealth, status, or customary permission do not justify another wife.

Sexual unfaithfulness also includes secret relationships, pornography, transactional sex, and emotional loyalties that belong within the marriage covenant.

Jesus moves the conversation from the outward act to the heart.

Lust cultivates a private world in which another person is used for gratification.

Pornography trains the eyes and imagination to separate sexuality from covenant love.

Repentance requires more than saying the relationship meant nothing.

It requires ending the relationship completely, removing secret access, telling the truth, accepting accountability, and refusing to blame the betrayed spouse.

The wounded spouse may forgive and still require time, boundaries, testing, counseling, and evidence before trust can be rebuilt.

Reconciliation cannot be demanded on the offender's timetable.

- Adultery and secret sexual relationships
- Multiple wives and divided households
- Pornography and sexual objectification
- Transactional sex and the use of money or gifts for access
- Emotional affairs and secret communication
- Using infertility or the absence of a son to justify another relationship
- Cultural tolerance of male unfaithfulness

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- Has cultural acceptance excused covenant unfaithfulness?
- Is another person receiving loyalty that belongs to the spouse?
- Has pornography damaged marital intimacy?

- Has infertility been used to justify another relationship?
- Has money been used to obtain sexual access?
- Is the offender willing to end the relationship completely?

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

(Pause.)

Illustration

A lamp cannot give steady light when its oil is divided among several containers and hidden rooms. Covenant love requires a concentrated loyalty. When affection, sexuality, money, and secrecy are divided among multiple partners, the household loses the light and stability God intended.

Uganda Application

When a polygamous man becomes a Christian, the church should not correct one sin by creating abandonment, homelessness, or hunger. He should take no additional wives, provide responsibly for every existing wife and child, reject favoritism and exploitation, and receive pastoral discipleship. He should ordinarily not be placed in church leadership that requires the husband of one wife.

Key Statements

- The biblical design is two becoming one.
- Sexual faithfulness is not optional.
- Cultural permission does not make adultery righteous.
- Pornography trains the heart against covenant love.
- Repentance requires ending the unfaithful relationship.

Speaker Notes

- Address male and female unfaithfulness, while acknowledging common cultural double standards.
- Do not humiliate people from polygamous backgrounds.
- Distinguish pastoral care for existing families from approval of polygamy.
- Emphasize concrete fruits of repentance.

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Transition

Covenant violations raise difficult questions about separation, divorce, reconciliation, and remarriage. These matters must be handled neither casually nor cruelly, but under the full counsel of Scripture.

Teaching Section 4: Divorce, Separation, Reconciliation, and Remarriage

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): **1 Corinthians 7:10-11**

To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

Supporting Scriptures: Malachi 2:13-16; Matthew 5:31-32; Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:12-16, 39

Big Idea

God designed marriage to be lifelong. Divorce is a tragic result of covenant-breaking sin, but Scripture recognizes limited circumstances in which separation or divorce may be necessary or permitted.

Teach

Divorce is not God's original design and must never be treated casually.

It is not a biblical escape from ordinary difficulty, financial pressure, disappointment, loss of emotion, infertility, tribal disagreement, or family disapproval.

Jesus identifies sexual immorality as a legitimate ground for divorce.

Paul teaches that a believer is not bound when an unbelieving spouse abandons the marriage.

Death ends the marriage covenant and frees the surviving spouse to remarry in the Lord.

Severe, persistent, unrepentant abuse may require immediate separation.

Conservative Christians differ on whether abuse alone constitutes final grounds for divorce and remarriage, but no responsible interpretation should require a person or children to remain in immediate danger.

Reconciliation is desirable where there is truth, safety, repentance, accountability, and sustained change.

Forgiveness is commanded, but restored trust is not automatic.

Separation and divorce are not identical.

Separation may create necessary safety, interrupt destructive behavior, permit legal protection, and provide time for truthful evaluation.

It should not be treated as rebellion when danger or serious wrongdoing is present.

Remarriage must not become a way of baptizing adultery.

A person must not manufacture a divorce in order to pursue another relationship.

At the same time, people with past marital failure are not beyond the grace of Christ.

Repentance, truthful pastoral examination, and faithful obedience can mark a new beginning.

- Divorce may be permitted for sexual immorality and abandonment by an unbelieving spouse.

- Separation may be necessary for violence, danger to children, criminal conduct, severe addiction, or refusal of accountability.
- Death ends the covenant and permits remarriage in the Lord.
- Some conservative interpreters understand severe, unrepentant abuse as constructive abandonment.
- others permit separation but restrict remarriage unless adultery or literal abandonment occurs.

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- Is the reason for divorce biblical or merely personal desire?
- Has every reasonable path of repentance, counsel, safety, and reconciliation been considered?
- Is someone using divorce to pursue another relationship?
- Is the wounded spouse being pressured to reconcile without evidence of change?
- Are children being protected?
- Has church leadership examined the circumstances carefully and without favoritism?

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

(Pause.)

Illustration

A physician does not call amputation good, but may recognize that in a grave condition it can become necessary to preserve life. Divorce is never the creation ideal. Yet Scripture does not require us to pretend that covenant-breaking sin has no consequences. The goal is not to make divorce easy; it is to uphold truth, safety, justice, repentance, and the holiness of marriage.

Uganda Application

In some communities, family honor, bridewealth, or clan pressure may keep a person trapped in a dangerous or abandoned marriage. The church must protect covenant faithfulness without making safety and justice impossible. A civil divorce does not automatically settle every biblical question concerning remarriage. Each case requires truthful pastoral examination.

Key Statements

- God designed marriage to endure.
- Divorce must never be made easy.
- Safety and justice must never be made impossible.
- Forgiveness does not erase consequences.
- Reconciliation requires repentance.
- Remarriage must be examined by Scripture, not desire.
- Past marital failure is not beyond the grace of Christ.

Speaker Notes

- State the biblical grounds carefully and avoid simplistic formulas.
- Acknowledge the interpretive difference concerning abuse and divorce.
- Do not pressure an endangered spouse to return.
- End with both holiness and hope: grace does not lower the standard, but Christ receives repentant people.

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Transition

Clean Up has named what destroys covenant. Stand Up now turns toward the daily practices that build a truthful, responsible, protected, Christ-centered home.



— Hebrews 4:12 (KJV) —

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper
than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing
asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow,
and is a discerner of the thoughts of the intentions
of the heart.

STAND UP

Conference Session Three

Building a Christ-Centered Home That Endures

Author **Keith R. Reinhardt**

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Conference Session Three - Stand Up

Session Purpose

This session equips couples to practice covenant faithfulness in everyday life. Participants will learn to communicate truthfully, resolve conflict, forgive, steward money and work, establish boundaries with relatives, protect the marriage from outside interference, disciple their children, and leave a godly legacy.

Teaching Sections

- Speaking Truth, Resolving Conflict, and Practicing Forgiveness
- Shared Stewardship: Money, Work, Family, and Responsibility
- Protecting the Covenant From Outside Interference
- Leaving a Godly Marriage and Family Legacy

Session Covenant

- Practice what is taught.
- Replace accusation with responsibility.
- Refuse secrecy.
- Establish boundaries with wisdom and respect.
- Seek help before a problem becomes a crisis.
- Build a home that children can safely imitate.
- Ask, "What must we begin doing faithfully?"

Teaching Section 1: Speaking Truth, Resolving Conflict, and Practicing Forgiveness

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): Ephesians 4:31-32

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Supporting Scriptures: Ephesians 4:25-30; James 1:19-20; Matthew 18:15-17; Colossians 3:12-15

Big Idea

Strong marriages do not avoid every conflict. They address conflict with truth, humility, self-control, forgiveness, and a desire for restoration.

Teach

Conflict becomes destructive when spouses attack character, threaten, humiliate, withdraw, involve outsiders prematurely, or refuse responsibility.

Healthy communication listens before answering, speaks without humiliation, addresses one issue at a time, rejects violence, confesses specific wrongs, and seeks wise help when needed.

Forgiveness releases revenge to God.

It does not call evil good, cancel accountability, erase consequences, or require an immediate return to danger.

Listening is not waiting for a turn to speak.

It seeks to understand what the other person is saying and what fear, pain, or need may be beneath the words.

Timing matters.

Serious issues should not be ignored.

But they should be addressed when both spouses can speak safely and clearly.

A pause for self-control is different from the silent treatment used as punishment.

A biblical apology contains no 'but.

It identifies the wrong, acknowledges the effect, expresses sorrow, asks forgiveness, and states what will change.

Trust then grows through repeated faithful action.

- Listen before answering.
- Speak truth without humiliation.
- Address one issue at a time.
- Refuse threats, violence, and public embarrassment.
- Confess specific wrongs and ask forgiveness honestly.
- Seek wise mediation when the couple cannot resolve the matter safely.
- Rebuild trust patiently through consistent behavior.

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- How do you respond when corrected?
- Do you listen or prepare your defense?
- Do you use silence as punishment?
- Do you use words to wound?

- Do you involve relatives before speaking to your spouse?
- Have you asked forgiveness specifically?
- What conflict requires wise mediation?

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

(Pause.)

Illustration

When a small fire begins in a cooking area, wise people address it before it spreads through the house. Conflict is similar. Ignored resentment grows. Reckless words spread the flames. Truth, humility, and self-control help contain the fire before it destroys what took years to build.

Uganda Application

Strong family networks can provide wise mediation, but relatives should not turn a private conflict into public humiliation or tribal conflict. Mediators must seek truth rather than automatically defending their own family member.

Key Statements

- Truth without love becomes cruelty.
- Love without truth becomes avoidance.
- Forgiveness releases revenge.
- Trust is rebuilt through faithful behavior.
- Peace is not the absence of honest conversation.

Speaker Notes

- Demonstrate a healthy apology aloud.
- Distinguish a cooling-off pause from punitive silence.
- Remind participants that mediation must be safe and impartial.
- Do not reduce serious abuse to a communication problem.

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Transition

Truthful communication protects the heart of the relationship. Shared stewardship protects the practical life of the household - money, work, property, time, and responsibility.

Teaching Section 2: Shared Stewardship: Money, Work, Family, and Responsibility

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): **1 Timothy 5:8**

Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Supporting Scriptures: Genesis 2:15; Proverbs 31:10-31; Luke 16:10-12; 1 Corinthians 4:2

Big Idea

Marriage joins two lives under God's stewardship. Money, labor, property, children, time, and responsibilities must be handled with honesty and cooperation.

Teach

Financial secrecy produces fear and mistrust.

One-flesh unity requires truthful knowledge of income, debt, obligations, property, business activity, and major decisions.

Provision must not become a weapon of control.

Household labor, caregiving, farming, trading, business, and paid employment all contribute real value.

Extended-family support may reflect generosity and responsibility.

But it should not repeatedly deprive the immediate household of food, school fees, shelter, medical care, or stability.

Stewardship begins with the confession that everything belongs to God.

Neither spouse has the right to treat income, land, business, or property as a private kingdom while the other remains uninformed and vulnerable.

Financial faithfulness requires planning.

A simple written budget can turn anxiety into shared decision-making.

The purpose is not control but clarity: what is coming in, what must be paid, what can be saved, and what can be given.

A household becomes stronger when work is recognized rather than invisible.

Caring for children, cultivating food, maintaining the home, managing a small business, and earning wages are all forms of labor that deserve respect and honest conversation.

- Honest provision and shared knowledge of income and debt
- Budgeting for food, school fees, health care, housing, transport, and savings
- Transparency concerning land, inheritance, business income, loans, and obligations
- Agreement concerning support for extended family
- Rejecting gambling, destructive alcohol spending, and secret debt
- Recognizing the value of household labor and childcare
- Discussing major decisions before commitments are made

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- Does each spouse know the family's financial condition?
- Is money hidden?
- Are relatives receiving money secretly?
- Are alcohol or gambling consuming household resources?
- Is one spouse carrying all labor?
- Are major decisions discussed?
- Are both spouses trustworthy with what God provides?

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

(Pause.)

Illustration

Two people carrying a heavy load can move it safely when they know the destination and coordinate their steps. If one suddenly turns, hides part of the load, or refuses to carry any weight, both are endangered. Shared stewardship requires shared knowledge, agreed direction, and faithful contribution.

Uganda Application

Extended-family support can reflect generosity and responsibility. It becomes destructive when relatives receive priority over the immediate household without agreement between husband and wife. A wife's farming, trading, caregiving, household, or business labor should not be treated as invisible. A husband's responsibility to provide should not be used to justify control or secrecy.

Key Statements

- One flesh should not live with secret finances.
- Provision is a responsibility, not a weapon.
- Household work has value.
- Financial faithfulness protects peace.
- Generosity requires wisdom and agreement.

Speaker Notes

- Encourage a simple household budget and regular financial conversation.
- Address land, inheritance, and business transparency directly.

- Avoid devaluing unpaid household labor.
- Call out financial neglect without shaming those facing genuine poverty.

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Transition

Even a couple that communicates and stewards well can be weakened by outside control. A lasting marriage needs wise boundaries with relatives, friends, spiritual influences, and former relationships.

Teaching Section 3: Protecting the Covenant From Outside Interference

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): **Genesis 2:24**

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

Supporting Scriptures: Proverbs 15:22; Exodus 20:3; 1 Corinthians 10:14; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

Big Idea

Marriage should receive wise counsel and family support, but no relative, tribe, spiritual practice, friendship, or outside relationship should govern the covenant.

Teach

Leaving father and mother does not mean dishonoring parents.

It means the marriage becomes the primary human covenant and the couple accepts responsibility for its decisions.

Counsel should guide rather than control.

Parents, elders, pastors, and relatives must not demand loyalty against the spouse, force another marriage, conceal abuse, control finances, or pressure participation in sin.

No occult practice, charm, ancestral ritual, spirit consultation, or promise of spiritual protection should compete with the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Healthy boundaries are not hostility.

They are clear statements about who makes decisions, what information remains private, how assistance will be offered, and what behavior will not be permitted in the home.

A spouse should not use relatives as an army against the other spouse.

Nor should a pastor use spiritual authority to replace the couple's conscience, demand money, conceal misconduct, or control private decisions.

Former partners, private messaging, and emotionally intimate friendships can quietly reopen doors that covenant faithfulness requires closed.

Protection includes transparency, appropriate distance, and willingness to remove access that threatens trust.

- Boundaries with parents, relatives, elders, and clan leaders
- Friends who undermine the marriage
- Tribal prejudice and family superiority
- Occult practices and spiritual fear
- Former romantic partners and secret communication
- Social media and private messaging
- Pastoral manipulation and misuse of authority
- Family financial demands and pressure regarding children or additional wives

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- Who has more influence than your spouse?

- Do relatives control decisions that belong to the couple?
- Is one family treated as superior?
- Are tribal traditions producing prejudice?
- Are occult practices being demanded?
- Is private marital information shared carelessly?
- Does outside counsel strengthen or weaken the covenant?

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

(Pause.)

Illustration

A home needs doors. A door can open to welcome guests and close to protect those inside. A house without doors is not more loving; it is unprotected. Marriage boundaries work the same way. They allow healthy family support while preventing control, intrusion, and danger.

Uganda Application

Family and community support should be honored. However, the couple must not surrender the marriage to relatives, clan pressure, spiritual fear, or tribal expectations. A Christian may respect elders while refusing any command that contradicts Scripture or endangers the household.

Key Statements

- Leaving does not mean dishonoring parents.
- Cleaving means establishing primary marital loyalty.
- Counsel should guide, not control.
- Tribe must submit to Christ.
- No spiritual power should compete with Jesus Christ.

Speaker Notes

- Frame boundaries as protection, not rejection.
- Respect elders while keeping Christ as the final authority.
- Address occult fear directly but pastorally.
- Include pastoral manipulation among possible outside threats.

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Transition

Protected covenant becomes a place where the next generation can learn truth, dignity, repentance, and faithfulness. The final question is not only whether this marriage survives, but what legacy it leaves.

Teaching Section 4: Leaving a Godly Marriage and Family Legacy

Read

Foundational Scripture (NIV): Joshua 24:15

But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.

Supporting Scriptures: Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 78:4-7; 2 Timothy 2:2; Matthew 5:14-16

Big Idea

A marriage influences children, relatives, churches, and future generations. A godly legacy is built through repeated faithfulness, not public appearance.

Teach

Children learn marriage by watching marriage.

They notice whether authority serves or controls, whether conflict leads to violence or repentance, and whether sons and daughters receive equal dignity.

A godly home is not a perfect home.

It is a home where Christ is honored, sin is confessed, forgiveness is practiced, children are protected, work is honest, and truth is not hidden.

What harmed one generation does not have to continue into the next.

Through repentance and discipleship, families can end patterns of violence, polygamy, tribal hatred, financial secrecy, abandonment, and emotional neglect.

Legacy is formed in ordinary repetition: the prayers offered, the way money is handled, the manner in which correction is given, the willingness to apologize.

The protection offered to the weak.

Sons should not learn that manhood is domination.

Daughters should not learn that womanhood is silence.

Both should see equal dignity, faithful responsibility, courage, compassion, truth, and service.

A transformed marriage becomes more than a private blessing.

It strengthens churches, neighborhoods, extended families, and future marriages.

One household under Christ can interrupt a pattern that has harmed generations.

- Prayer and Scripture in the home
- Faithful church life and honest work
- Sexual purity and covenant loyalty
- Hospitality and community service
- Respectful communication and protection of children
- Equal dignity of sons and daughters

- Ending generational violence, tribal hatred, polygamy, and secrecy
- Modeling repentance, forgiveness, and faithful service

Ask

Quietly ask the Lord:

- What are your children learning from your marriage?
- Do they see love or fear?
- Do they see confession and forgiveness?
- Are sons learning to serve or dominate?
- Are daughters learning dignity or silence?
- What harmful pattern must end with this generation?
- What will your marriage teach younger couples?

Do not use these questions to accuse your spouse. Ask only, 'Lord, what are You saying to me?'

(Pause.)

Illustration

A large tree begins with a seed planted long before anyone sits in its shade. Daily acts of faithfulness may seem small, but they become shelter for children and grandchildren. Likewise, repeated sin can become a thorn that wounds generations. What you plant in your marriage today will grow beyond you.

Uganda Application

Ugandan families often influence wide networks of relatives, churches, neighborhoods, and tribes. One transformed marriage can strengthen many households. Couples should preserve hospitality, community care, respect, generosity, and responsibility while refusing inherited violence, exploitation, occult practices, and tribal conflict.

Key Statements

- Your marriage is teaching someone.
- Children learn marriage by watching marriage.
- Repentance can begin a new family pattern.

- A godly home is built through daily faithfulness.
- What harmed one generation does not have to continue into the next.

Speaker Notes

- End with hope and concrete commitment rather than guilt.
- Invite couples to name one pattern that ends with them.
- Connect family transformation to church and community renewal.
- Prepare participants for the final commissioning.

Personal and Couple Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do we need to discuss honestly as a couple?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Transition

We have awakened to God's design, confronted what destroys covenant, and identified the practices that build a lasting home. The conference now ends with a covenant commitment before God.

WAKE UP - Session Response

Use this page privately or as a couple. Do not use it to accuse or embarrass one another. Write honestly before God and identify the next faithful step.

The truth from this session that most challenged me:

A belief, habit, or behavior I must bring under Scripture:

One confession or conversation that needs to take place:

One boundary or practical change our marriage needs:

The person, pastor, counselor, or mature couple we may ask for help:

Our prayer and commitment before God:

CLEAN UP - Session Response

Use this page privately or as a couple. Do not use it to accuse or embarrass one another. Write honestly before God and identify the next faithful step.

The truth from this session that most challenged me:

A belief, habit, or behavior I must bring under Scripture:

One confession or conversation that needs to take place:

One boundary or practical change our marriage needs:

The person, pastor, counselor, or mature couple we may ask for help:

Our prayer and commitment before God:

STAND UP - Session Response

Use this page privately or as a couple. Do not use it to accuse or embarrass one another. Write honestly before God and identify the next faithful step.

The truth from this session that most challenged me:

A belief, habit, or behavior I must bring under Scripture:

One confession or conversation that needs to take place:

One boundary or practical change our marriage needs:

The person, pastor, counselor, or mature couple we may ask for help:

Our prayer and commitment before God:



Hebrews 4:12 (NIV) —
For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper
than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing
joints of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow,
and is a discerner of the thoughts and intentions
of the heart.

BUILT TO LAST

Final Conference Commissioning

WAKE UP. CLEAN UP. STAND UP.

Keith R. Reinhardt

Author

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Conference Commitment

- We will return to God's design for marriage.
- We will place every tradition, custom, belief, and family expectation under the authority of Scripture.
- We will reject domination, abuse, passivity, neglect, adultery, polygamy, secrecy, and manipulation.
- We will honor the equal dignity of husband and wife.
- Husbands will lead through sacrificial love, responsibility, truth, and service.
- Wives will walk in wisdom, respect, faithfulness, truth, and courage.
- We will protect the vulnerable.
- We will pursue repentance before demanding change from another.
- We will seek reconciliation where truth, safety, and genuine repentance make it possible.
- We will not use forgiveness to conceal wrongdoing.
- We will not use Scripture to excuse sin.
- We will build homes where Christ is honored, children are protected, truth is spoken, and covenant faithfulness is practiced.
- By the grace of God, we will leave a godly marriage and family legacy.

Personal Response

One belief about marriage I need to examine:

One sin or pattern I need to bring into the light:

One practical change I need to make:

One boundary our marriage needs to establish:

One person or couple we will ask for wise help:

One way we will strengthen our family this week:

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for creating marriage and revealing Your design through Your Word. Forgive us for every belief, custom, attitude, and action that has contradicted Your truth. Teach husbands to love as Christ loved the Church. Teach wives to walk in wisdom, respect, truth, and courage. Heal what has been wounded, expose what has been hidden, protect those who are in danger, and lead us into honest repentance. Give us grace to forgive, wisdom to establish necessary boundaries, and strength to rebuild what can be restored. May our homes honor Jesus Christ and leave a faithful legacy for the generations that follow. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.