

# *the Andersons*

**WEEK 2 | MARRIAGE | GROUP GUIDE • SHAWN JOHNSON**

## **START**

To get things started, go around the circle and answer this question:

**Do you have a couple that you look up to because of their great marriage? What is one thing about their relationship that you admire?**

## **SHARE**

Welcome to our teaching Series called “The Andersons.”

God has much to say when it comes to doing relationships his way. Relationships done right can enrich our lives and bring us to whole new levels of fulfillment, peace and growth. Relationships done wrong will reap frustration, stagnation and ultimately will bring us harm.

We can all recall times in our lives where we asked people for relational advice. Whether a friend, co-worker, stranger on the plane or even a counselor, how do we know what advice is good advice and what advice is bad advice? Throughout this series, we are going to look at God’s perfect design on how to do relationships right by contrasting that with what it looks like to do relationships wrong. Each week, we will start the message with a look into the dysfunctional world of “The Andersons.” We will learn what not to do when it comes to friendship, dating, marriage and parenting.

This week we are talking about marriage. This topic is not only for those who are married, but tremendously important for those who are single or divorced. There is never a better time to talk about God’s design for marriage than when we aren’t married. For those who are married, this study is designed to help us decide to start stepping out bravely to prioritize God first in our relationships.

**Let’s start by reading Matthew 22:37-39**

**Why do you think loving God with all your heart, soul and mind should come first in life?**

**Why is it important that God be “the Lord” of our lives and not just a part of it?**

**How does making sure that we are submitted to God’s supreme and loving leadership give us the best possible foundation to build a healthy marriage on?**

## **GROW**

Marriages that put God first can lead to deeper joy, security, peace, and laughter in life. We all desire this whether we are married or want to find that right person to marry in the future. We all hope that if we are married, we will have joy, security, peace and laughter in that marriage. But according to stud-

ies, about fifty percent of marriages end in divorce and half of those who are married claim that physical intimacy isn't happening. We all know what type of marriage we desire, but how do we get there with the odds stacked against us?

Jesus once encountered a woman who had her share of broken marriages. She personally made devastating choices and was left ashamed and felt her life was broken. This woman thought if she just had that perfect guy, her life would finally turn around. It seemed like joy was eluding her no matter how hard she tried.

### **Read John 4:7-15**

The NIV Study Bible notes rightly expound on this, and think each of us can relate to the woman at times:

The woman mistakenly believed that if she received the water Jesus offered, she would not have to return to the well each day. She was interested in Jesus' message because she thought it could make her life easier. But if that were always the case, people would accept Christ's message for the wrong reasons. Christ did not come to take away challenges, but to change us on the inside and to empower us to deal with problems from God's perspective.

**How does this story compare to the culture we live in today?**

**In the beginning, what was the woman seeking from Jesus?**

**What stands out to you about Jesus' response to the woman?**

Matthew 6:33

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and these things will be given to you as well.

**What does it actually look like to seek God first?**

**In what ways do you personally need to seek God first when it comes to your marriage?**

**For those who are single right now, how do you need to seek God first in your relationships?**

## **MOVE**

Throughout this week's message, Shawn talked about the importance of ordering our priorities. First and foremost, we should love God with all of our heart, soul and mind; we seek him first in all we say and do. Secondly, we are to love others and that should start with our spouse. We all need to do an honest inventory of what is important when it comes to loving our spouses. Our spouses need to come before our kids, jobs, hobbies and what's on the TV screen. It is easy to lose sight of our spouse in the busyness of life and in our aspirations to see our kids succeed at everything. Although it may seem noble, running a child-centric home will eventually bring a sad and stagnant distance between husbands and wives.

We can do this! Let's fight for our marriages, let's fight to keep God first and allow him to change us to become the kind people we are called to be. If you have kids, the best thing you can do for them as parents is to set an example of how to love God and love your spouse. Single parents, let's show our children what a sold out follower of Christ looks like and set an example for them.

For us to build stronger marriages, let's talk about three things we can start doing today to build better marriages:

Praying with our spouse.  
Discussing God's word together.  
Attend church together and spend time with other believers.

Let's read James 5:16, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Hebrews 10:24-25

Considering these verses, how can we implement them into our lives?

For those of you who are married, when it comes to praying, discussing God's word as a couple---do you have any ideas that have worked well for you that you would share with everyone?

This week, "let us consider how we may spur one another on..." and think about how we can do that for another couple that might be struggling, a single parent or a single person needing encouragement.

## **PRAY**

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles that we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

## **TO GO**

I Chronicles 16:11

Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!

Additional Resources on Marriage:

From This Day Forward – By Craig Groeshel

The Mingling of Souls – By Matt Chandler

\*For a complete list of Red Rocks Classes offered for pre-marital and marriage enrichment, please contact [Chris@redrockschurch.com](mailto:Chris@redrockschurch.com)