

PREMARITAL GUIDANCE

Preparing
for a Christ-
Centered
Marriage



PREMARITAL GUIDANCE

At Calvary Community Church, it is our joy and privilege to walk alongside engaged couples as they prepare for the covenant of marriage. We believe marriage is one of God's good gifts, established at creation for his glory and the flourishing of humanity. Scripture teaches that marriage is a lifelong covenant between one man and one woman, joined together by God as husband and wife (Genesis 2:18–25; Matthew 19:4–6). Because marriage was established by God at creation, our preparation for marriage begins not with cultural expectations but with God's revealed design for human identity, covenant, sexuality, companionship, family, and faithfulness.

Our Pastoral Commitment

As part of our responsibility to shepherd the Calvary Community Church family, every engaged couple begins by meeting with one of our pastors. This initial conversation allows us to hear your story, celebrate God's work in your lives, discuss your plans, and discern the next steps in preparing for marriage.

Once a pastor has committed to walking with you through the premarital process, a tentative wedding date may be reserved on the church calendar if Calvary Community Church's facilities are being considered. Our pastors also regularly officiate weddings at venues throughout our community.

"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.

Matthew 19:4–6

Preparing for a Christ-Centered Marriage

Every wedding officiated by a Calvary Community Church pastor is understood as a sacred act of Christian worship and must reflect the church's biblical convictions regarding marriage. Our pastors officiate weddings only for couples entering the covenant of marriage as Scripture defines it—a lifelong union between one man and one woman. All weddings held on our campus or conducted under the care of our pastoral ministry are expected to honor and reflect these convictions.

We do not view premarital guidance simply as a requirement before a wedding but as an essential part of our pastoral ministry, an opportunity for discipleship, pastoral care, and preparation for a lifetime of faithfulness to Christ. Our desire is not merely to prepare couples for a wedding ceremony but to help them build a Christ-centered marriage which reflects God's faithfulness, wisdom, and love. We want every husband and wife to begin their marriage with a firm spiritual foundation and practical tools which will serve them throughout their marriage.

Marriage is not merely a private commitment, but a covenant established by God and celebrated within the family of God. As your church family, we are committed to encouraging, praying for, and walking alongside you as you begin this new season of life. Our desire is not only to help you prepare for your wedding day but to support you as you grow together in faithfulness to Christ throughout your marriage.

An outside pastor may officiate a wedding held at Calvary Community Church only with prior approval from our pastoral staff and ensuring the pastor, couple, and ceremony affirm and honor Calvary Community Church's biblical convictions regarding marriage.



Our Convictions About Marriage

Marriage is far more than a legal relationship or cultural tradition. It is a sacred covenant established by God that reflects his faithful love and his purposes for humanity. A thriving marriage is rooted in faith in Jesus Christ and daily dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

We recognize that our culture offers many competing ideas about marriage and family. Yet we believe God's design remains wise, beautiful, and life-giving. His commands are given for his glory and for the good of his people. As husbands and wives submit their lives to Christ and follow his Word together, they discover the joy, strength, and security found in God's design.

Our goal in premarital guidance is to help each couple understand and embrace God's design for marriage. We seek to strengthen marriages through biblical teaching, honest conversation, practical preparation, and prayer so that each husband and wife is equipped to build a marriage marked by faithfulness, humility, sacrificial love, forgiveness, and enduring hope.

Because marriage is a covenant before God, we encourage every couple to view this season of preparation as an act of discipleship. Our prayer is not simply that your wedding day would honor Christ, but that your marriage would increasingly display the love of Christ throughout a lifetime together.

Prepare for Covenant Faithfulness

Marriage is not sustained merely by changing feelings or circumstances but by covenant faithfulness. During premarital guidance, couples will consider what it means to make and keep a lifelong covenant before God (Malachi 2:14; Matthew 19:6). We will discuss faithfulness during seasons of difficulty, the importance of repentance and forgiveness, the cultivation of trust, and the commitment to seek help when serious problems arise.

You ask, "Why?" It is because the Lord is the witness between you and the wife of your youth. You have been unfaithful to her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

Malachi 2:14

What You Can Expect

Because marriage is a covenant requiring lifelong faithfulness, we believe preparing for marriage deserves thoughtful prayer, intentional investment, and biblical guidance. We generally recommend allowing at least six months for premarital guidance whenever circumstances permit. This is a pastoral recommendation rather than a requirement, and exceptions may be considered by the pastoral staff.

Our desire is not simply to prepare you for your wedding day, but to help you establish a Christ-centered marriage that reflects the beauty of God's covenant design and brings him glory. Throughout the premarital guidance process, you will meet with a pastor who will encourage, challenge, and equip you through biblical teaching, practical conversation, prayer, and personal application. We recognize that lasting marriages are not built through human effort alone, but through the grace of God and the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.

Where significant unresolved issues involving abuse, addiction, deception, serious relational instability, or other concerns are identified, the pastoral staff may recommend additional counseling, a period of further preparation, or postponement of the wedding before proceeding. Such recommendations are intended to protect the couple, provide appropriate pastoral care, and promote the long-term health and faithfulness of the marriage.



Spiritual Readiness for Marriage

Because Christian marriage is a covenant established by God and intended to reflect the relationship between Christ and his Church, we believe those entering a Christian marriage should personally profess faith in Jesus Christ and demonstrate credible evidence of a desire to follow him. Premarital guidance therefore includes discussion of each person's relationship with Christ, understanding of the gospel, participation in the life of the church, and commitment to build the marriage according to God's Word.

Where one of the individuals does not profess faith in Jesus Christ, the pastoral staff will carefully evaluate the circumstances and will generally recommend postponing the wedding until both individuals can credibly affirm faith in Christ and demonstrate a sincere desire to follow him. The purpose of this process is not merely to establish eligibility for a wedding, but to help ensure that the couple is entering marriage with a shared commitment to Christ and his Word. In this way, the church seeks to guard against a professing believer entering marriage with an unbeliever in a manner contrary to the biblical principle of being unequally yoked (2 Corinthians 6:14).

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

2 Corinthians 6:14

Grow in Your Readiness for Marriage

In marriage, God joins a husband and wife together in a covenant relationship. As you prepare for this lifelong commitment, we will explore your spiritual maturity, your relationship with Jesus Christ, your shared convictions and values, and your readiness to enter marriage with faithfulness, humility, and integrity. We will also identify areas where further growth, healing, or honest conversation may strengthen your relationship before your wedding day.

Strengthen Your Relationship

Healthy marriages are cultivated through honest communication, mutual trust, forgiveness, and servant-hearted love. Together we will discuss family backgrounds, previous relationships and marital history where applicable, expectations for marriage and family life, communication patterns, conflict resolution, and hopes regarding children and parenting, helping you better understand and serve one another.

Embrace God's Design for Marriage

Scripture presents a beautiful vision for marriage as a covenant that reflects Christ's love for his Church (Ephesians 5:22-33). Together we will study God's purposes for marriage and consider the biblical calling of husbands and wives to love, serve, honor, and encourage one another as equal image-bearers who fulfill complementary responsibilities within God's good design.

Prepare for the Realities of Married Life

Every marriage experiences seasons of both joy and challenge. We will discuss practical areas that shape married life, including financial stewardship, generosity, sexual intimacy within the covenant of marriage, healthy relationships with extended family, wise decision-making, and spiritual disciplines that strengthen your home and deepen your walk with Christ.



Plan a Christ-Honoring Wedding Ceremony

Your wedding ceremony is a joyful celebration of the covenant you are making before God, your families, and your church. Together we will ensure that your ceremony clearly proclaims the gospel, reflects the covenant nature of marriage, and gives glory to God.

Throughout these sessions, our prayer is that you will grow not only in your love for one another, but also in your love for Jesus Christ. We desire to see your marriage firmly established on the truth of God's Word, strengthened by the grace of the gospel, and equipped to reflect Christ's faithful love throughout all the years God gives you together.

