WORK PRIVATELY

Four Commitments

Read each commitment on your own. Consider what it would require of you, then make these commitments to your marriage. Give each one at least thirty seconds of thought before moving on.

KEEP MY RESPONSE FAITHFUL

01

I will honor God in how I handle a problem, even when that is hard. I will look at my own conduct and refuse to excuse unkind words or resentment because I feel under pressure.

UNDERSTAND BEFORE I ANSWER

02

I will listen to what troubles my spouse without rushing to defend myself or give an answer. I will ask what I may be missing and try to understand why this matters to them.

GROW CLOSER THROUGH PROBLEMS

03

I will see problems with money, relationships, or anything else as opportunities to grow closer to my spouse. I will look for ways to meet the challenge and make our life together better.

BE SOMEONE MY SPOUSE CAN COUNT ON

04

I will take responsibility for my part in making things better. I will follow through on what I promise and ask for help when I need it. I want my spouse to know they can count on me.

REFLECT PRIVATELY

Before We Discuss

Work on this privately and be prepared to discuss in an upcoming conversation.

BEFORE WE TALK

Answer each question for yourself. Then, with a kind and considerate heart, note how you think your spouse might answer as well. Be prepared to listen and discover whether you understood them correctly.

FOR THE HUSBAND

1. Which problem is hardest for me to handle well? How do I usually respond?

2. How can my wife help me with the things that trouble me most?

FOR THE WIFE

1. Which challenge weighs most on me? How does it affect my attitude?

2. What could I gain by asking my husband for help with this issue?

OUR PRESSURE CHECK-IN

Rate each area from 1 (little or no stress) to 10 (great stress). Star the two that most need attention. Compare your answers without correcting one another.

Area to Consider	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Faithfulness to God	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Family / in-laws / other people	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Money / possessions	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Parenting / adult children	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Work / time / responsibilities	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Health / grief / caregiving	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Intimacy / affection	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

PRACTICE TOGETHER

The Ten-Minute Conversation

Sit down together without distractions. Share what you wrote on *Before We Discuss*. Be mutually inquisitive, then use the four helps below to guide your conversation.

CONVERSATION STARTER

Recall a challenge you have already faced together. What did your spouse do that helped, and what would you like to carry into the next challenge?

01	**CHOOSE ONE CONCERN** Compare your pressure check-ins and choose one concern to discuss. Name what is going well, then explain where you need help.
02	**UNDERSTAND BOTH EXPERIENCES** What makes this problem difficult for each of you? Listen to your spouse before explaining your side. What do you understand better now?
03	**AGREE ON A PRACTICAL APPROACH** Choose a practical step you can each take. How will those choices honor God and help you work together? Give one another a clear commitment.
04	**PICTURE PROGRESS** Picture your family six months from now, having handled this problem and found greater peace. Let that picture keep you motivated as you work through it together.

ENDING QUESTIONS

What is the number one thing I can do to help us deal with any problem?

What have I learned from this lesson that could help us the most?

What can we pray about together this week?

PRAY AND COMMIT

Face What Comes Together

FAITHFULNESS. UNDERSTANDING. RESPONSIBILITY.

OUR PRAYER

Father, thank You for our marriage and the good we still share. Thank You for the time You have given us and the opportunity to work through our problems together. We are grateful for Your patience and the hope we have in Jesus. Help us use these days well. Keep us faithful to You when the way is difficult. Give us patience to listen and honesty to admit what needs to change. Where we have sinned, help us repent and make things right. Where we disagree, guide us toward an answer that honors You. Teach us to care for one another while we work on the problem. Help us use what we have wisely and seek help with humility. Give us strength to follow through on the changes we promise. May our family grow closer and find greater peace as we trust You and work together. In Jesus' name, amen.

THIS WEEK WE WILL

- [ ] Be prayerful about new ways to address your most difficult problems.
- [ ] Communicate with one another until we agree on a course of action.
- [ ] Hold ourselves accountable for a change that will help our family.

THINGS I HAVE LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AND MY SPOUSE