



PLANNING OUTLINE FOR THE MARRIAGE SEMINAR

Greetings! We are thankful for the opportunity to come to your church and present this marriage seminar. Our prayer is this seminar can be a glory to God and strengthening to your church and those that attend. We are providing you with this planning outline to help you prepare for the seminar. It is understood that some specifics in this document may need to vary depending upon your church and the details of the event. *Please do not hesitate to contact us with additional questions as you work through the planning process.*

For your planning purposes:

- We recommend that the local elder create a planning committee to take care of the coordination and logistics for the seminar. The committee can then communicate the status of plans and get the elder's input, as needed.
- The seminar information is applicable to young and old, newly married and well-seasoned marriages, and for converted and unconverted individuals.
- The presentation is conducted using PowerPoint.
- Each attendee will receive a binder of the handouts of the PowerPoint slides. Two weeks before the seminar, you will need to give us an approximate number of attendees so we can make enough copies of the handouts.
- We encourage the elder and ministers of your church to attend the seminar.

We will need for you to furnish:

1. A screen large enough for all attendees to clearly see the PowerPoint slides.
2. A small table placed at the front and center of the room where we can set our laptop and PowerPoint projector (we do not need a podium or note stand).
3. If electrical outlets are more than 8 feet away from the small table for the laptop and projector, an extension cord will be needed.
4. Two tables (4' X 8' large rectangular or large circular) for brochures, pamphlets, handouts, and books. These two tables should be placed in a location where they are easy to access during the breaks and fellowship time so that attendees can browse through the materials.
5. Pens; one for each attendee.
6. 3"X5" Note cards; one for each attendee.
7. Two baskets in which to put note cards with questions.
8. Two flip charts with large pads of paper and one new set of colored markers.
9. A wireless lapel microphone for the speaker is preferred. A second microphone should be available for general announcements by the committee and for when a local couple is interviewed about their marriage.
10. A wireless internet connection is helpful to provide access to the ACCFS website.

Lunch and Refreshments:

- We *strongly suggest* you have lunch catered or pre-made (i.e., boxed lunches) so all involved can have a day where they can just relax, listen, learn, and fellowship.
- Since the seminar involves sitting and listening to a speaker for long periods of time, providing drinks and snacks during the breaks is important.

Some things to consider:

- Each host church needs to decide how broad (or narrow) to spread the invitation to attend the seminar. This may include all of the married couples in a congregation, people from several Apostolic churches, or specific segments of the church (e.g., by length of marriage). Please make sure information about the seminar is provided early enough so participants can get it on their calendar.
- Each church needs to consider how babysitting will be handled for couples with young children. For example, some churches have opted to provide babysitting during the seminar.
- What location is best? We have done presentations in church Sunday school areas, fellowship halls, school auditoriums, college lecture halls, and hotel conference rooms.
- Do you plan on recording the seminar? If so, you will need to ensure that recording equipment and someone who can run the recording equipment is available. Often, people from your local church who are not able to attend the seminar appreciate being able to obtain CDs and handouts, or those that attend would like to be able to give CDs and handouts to someone else.
- What type of seating arrangement do you want? In previous seminars, seating has been in benches, rows of folding chairs, or at tables (preferred arrangement). There will be time allotted for the audience to reflect on concepts presented so, in this case, it would be helpful for them to have a table so they can write more easily.
 - Husbands and wives should sit together during the seminar.

Considerations for special sections of seminar:

- During the section of the seminar dealing with gender differences, we divide the group by gender and talk to each separately. Ideally, the facility needs to allow for the men and women to be separated by a solid divider/partition or provide another room for one of the groups to go into for this section. If this is not possible, we will separate the group by having the men go to one side of the building and the women to the other.
- In the “Appreciating Your Mate” section of the Seminar, we would like to interview an older couple from your local church about their marriage. Essentially, this is a testimony about their marriage. At the end of this document you will find a sheet to give to the older couple ahead of time so they know what types of questions they will be asked to speak about.

Some final thoughts:

- Do you want to provide the couples with a gift to take home from the Marriage Seminar? For example, some churches have given each couple attending the seminar a gift bag with a copy of the book The Five Love Languages or Love and Respect in it. Some churches have given couples gift cards to go out to eat.
- Do you want to inform the attendees of the costs associated with holding a seminar (facility costs, ACCFS costs, etc.) and allow them the opportunity to donate to help cover these costs?
- Do you want to encourage the couples to go out for a date night on Saturday evening after the seminar?
- ACCFS will provide all participants with a feedback form asking them about their perceptions of the seminar. In the week following the seminar, ACCFS will email the elder a PDF file with scanned copies of these feedback forms so that the local church leadership can know how the seminar was received.
- *ACCFS would like to work with you to continue the teaching and application process of this material beyond the day of the seminar. We have developed resources to this end and will be glad to discuss these with you as appropriate.*

Sample Schedules:

Saturday Only Option:

(Please Note: We will attempt to hold tightly to the schedule)

8:15a – 8:30a	Registration and seating (We will start promptly at 8:30a)
8:30a – 8:40a	Welcome, Orientation, Hymn, and Opening Prayer (Local Committee)
8:40a – 10:30a	Presentation
10:30a – 10:45a	Break
10:45a – 11:55a	Presentation
11:55a – 12:40p	Lunch
12:40p – 2:30p	Gender Differences / Break-out Session
2:30p – 2:40p	Break
2:40p – 3:20p	Presentations
3:20p - 3:50p	Interview: Appreciating Your Mate
3:50p – 4:00p	Answer questions from notecards; complete feedback forms
4:00p – 4:05p	Closing Comments and Prayer

Friday Evening / Saturday Option:

(Please Note: We will attempt to hold tightly to the schedule)

Friday Evening

6:30p – 6:45p	Registration and seating (Note: We will start promptly at 6:45p)
6:45p – 6:55p	Welcome, Hymn, Orientation, and Opening Prayer (Local Committee)
6:55p – 7:45p	Presentation
7:45p – 8:00p	Break
8:00p – 8:50p	Presentation
8:50p – 9:00p	Closing comments, hymn, announcements, prayer

Saturday

8:30a – 8:45a	Arrive and find seats (Note: We will start promptly at 8:45a)
8:45a – 8:55a	Welcome, Hymn, Orientation, and Opening Prayer
8:55a – 10:15a	Presentation
10:15a – 10:30a	Break
10:30a – 12:00p	Presentations
12:00p – 1:00p	Lunch
1:00p – 1:30p	Interview: Appreciating Your Mate
1:30p – 2:15p	Presentation
2:15p - 2:30p	Break
2:30p – 3:45p	Gender Differences – Break-out Session
3:45p – 4:05p	Answer questions from notecards; complete feedback forms
4:05p – 4:15p	Closing Comments and Prayer



MARRIAGE SEMINAR: APPRECIATING YOUR MATE

Directions for the Couple Being Interviewed

Thank you for being willing to share how God has been faithful to you through the ups and downs of life and marriage. This opportunity provides encouragement to couples in their marriage and walk with the Lord.

Purpose: This is an opportunity for the older to encourage and teach the younger. After hearing more about the history of your lives and marriage, we want the couples to come away with the message, “God is faithful and Christian marriage is a blessing.”

Format: In this section of the Marriage Seminar, we interview a mature couple from the local church congregation about their marriage. In many ways, this is similar to a testimony; however it is a testimony about your marriage. You will sit in chairs at the front of the room and talk into a microphone. Kaleb Beyer will facilitate the discussion and ask you questions.

Balance: You are not expected to have a perfect marriage or to have everything figured out! In fact, one of the goals of this section is to show that all couples have their ups and downs and God will help them through it.

Time: The whole interview takes 30 minutes. That means each of you will have only a couple minutes to talk about each question.

Preparation: Below are the questions you will be asked. Feel free to think through and come up with some ideas of what you might want to share. However, don’t feel that you need to have perfectly prepared responses. We would like you to be able to talk conversationally and let the Spirit lead you.

Examples of Questions:

1. How did you meet each other?
2. What personal qualities did you notice and admire?
3. How did you need to change since getting married?
4. How has the Lord used you to help your spouse?
5. How has the Lord used your spouse to help you?
6. What has being married taught you about God’s love for us?
7. What is something your spouse does for or with you to make you feel loved?
8. How have you and your spouse managed and adjusted to your individual differences?
9. How is your spouse a support to you, and how do they make up for your weaknesses?
10. Can you tell us how you worked through some type of conflict or difference together?
11. Through the years, what have you done to nurture spiritual oneness in your marriage?
12. From your experience, what advice would you give to couples?

If you have questions, please contact Kaleb Beyer at ACCFS by phone 309-263-5536 or email kbeyer@accounseling.org.