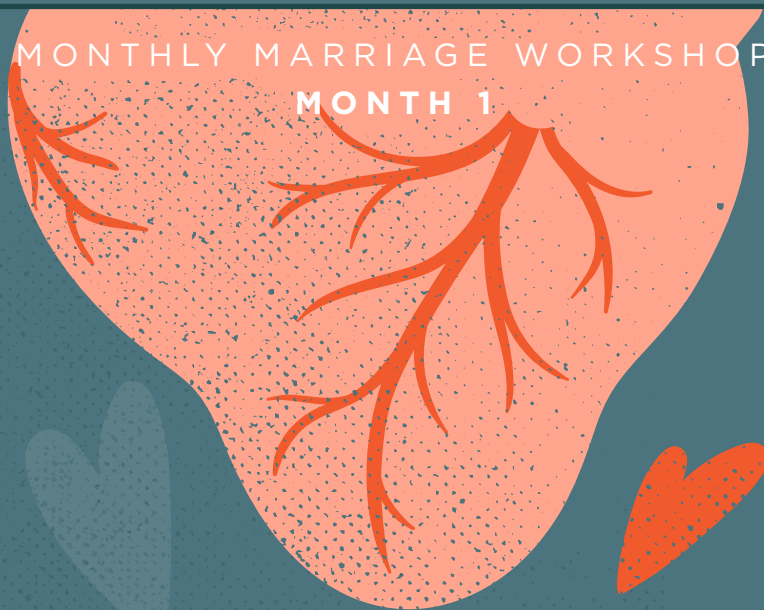




HOW TO CREATE A
VISION & MISSION
FOR YOUR MARRIAGE OR FAMILY

MONTHLY MARRIAGE WORKSHOP
MONTH 1



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THE 'WHY'

This month's theme is all about vision and mission. A healthy, concise, and understood mission and vision is what we would consider the most pivotal thing every marriage needs to thrive. In fact, we'd say this is the number one thing we'd attribute our personal health and marital strength to. There's nothing more valuable than for you as a couple to be thinking about a mission statement and letting that protect and guide your marriage. So, what is a marriage mission and vision?

THE 'HOW'

After doing this month's action plan, you will walk away with:

- 1. A marriage or family mission statement.*
- 2. 'Pillars' that you can immediately use to filter and protect your marriage.*
- 3. Multiple and practical ways to make your marriage proactive, not reactive.*
- 4. Something to hang in your house that Joanna Gaines would be proud of to display as a reminder to you and your family of what you are filtering your life through.*

During the live webcast on March 4th, we are going to be diving into the "why." Below are some notes and ideas (with some things that won't be included in the webcast) from that talk to get you thinking. Reading this first will allow you as a couple to get your wheels spinning and come to the table ready to rock on March 4th.

VISION & MISSION - This is the oxygen of a healthy relationship. Every person, group, or family has to have a place it's headed, a direction, or finish line in mind. You can't set your life in a particular direction if you don't know where you want to take it or your family and marriage.

We like to say there are two parts to a mission and vision. There's the *general* and then there's the *particular*. The *general* is the mission that every marriage on earth has been given. This is the general purpose of marriage, or what marriage is for. The *particular*

mission is the very particular way God wants to apply the *general* mission in a very specific way in your family. The particular mission is the one that you and your spouse (and kids) have been brought together by God as a team to do and fulfill.

WHAT IS YOUR VISION?

Before you can nail down your personal family or marriage vision and mission statement, we need to know the general vision and mission given to every human on earth.

“The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”

Genesis 2:15 (NIV)

We weren't told just to bow down and worship God via song for our entire life. Isn't it interesting that when we are singing, we feel most worshipful or connected to God? Worship at the beginning of the Bible primarily was centered around the job God gave us. Our job was to make, cultivate, create, build, steward, and tame. To put this another way; to take raw materials and make something beautiful. So from the first page, Adam and Eve were given a job to do. And that job was a big one. The job was to bring the world into order, beauty, and blessing. In fact, one common misunderstanding for folks when they read Genesis is that the entire earth was the Garden of Eden (i.e., beautifully landscaped, all the fruit, trees and animals, etc.). But in fact, that's not the case. The Garden of Eden was just a small pocket on earth. In some sense, it was the prototype. God makes it and brings it into order (from chaos) and then looks at Adam and Eve and essentially says, “Go make the rest of the earth look like this.” Go into the chaos, and bring order and beauty. And since it's such a big job, you're going to need lots of babies to do it (“be fruitful and multiply...”).

What a fun vision and mission, right?

Do you see the primary and general mission for your marriage and family as being cultivators of the earth? God brought you two together to be a team that was stronger together than separate, with one goal in mind—to do the job given in the beginning. Make stuff. And show

His grace, love, beauty, and blessing in it.

We see a hangup in marriages in regards to understanding this concept. Couples don't necessarily understand or think about the general mission given to them by God from the Garden. They don't fully understand or absorb the fact that they are a team and unit specifically brought together by the Creator of the universe to accomplish their job in a way different than every other couple out there.

Do you believe you, your spouse, and kids (if you have them) are a team? A unit particularly drafted and brought together by God in a way that every team member's gifts and talents and personalities (and even weaknesses!) come together to give your team and identity and fullness to fulfill God's mission?

HOW AND WHAT TO DO NEXT

Now comes the fun part! Below is not exhaustive and it's also not something you can do and then say, "OK sweet, we have a mission statement, and we are going to have a perfect marriage starting tomorrow." That's not how it works. These questions and small exercises are better thought of as kindling to a fire. They give you a few sparks, but just like a fire, it's something that needs to be built upon and stoked so it will continually burn. We hope the questions below give you a great start to think about your mission and vision. One thing I'll note is the particular mission of your family is flexible and changeable. It's not permanent. It changes as the marriage and family changes. Which means it needs to be revisited in certain seasons; revised, adapted, and evolved. For example, one big season where the particular vision would probably change is when a couple has been married 20 to 30 years, and all their kids are out of the house. Their mission would need to be altered and adapted to their particular mission by seeking God's face and heart while asking, "What does He have for us now? What season are we entering into?"

HOW TO CRAFT A FAMILY VISION OR MISSION STATEMENT

Please note: A mission statement comes in many forms. It can be a paragraph that's beautiful and perfectly worded. It can be seven words that represent the seven pillars you feel like your marriage is called to. Or it can be a mixture of both. Feel free to word it or do it however you would like. The key is putting to paper the things you feel called to and are passionate about to guide the ship and create a legacy for your family.

Ask each other these few questions to get the ball rolling:

1. What is different about our marriage?
2. What other marriages do you really respect? Why?
3. What is important to our marriage?
4. What kind of marriage do we want to have?
5. If others talk about our marriage, what do we want to be known for?

After spending some time on the above questions and getting the discussion going, write down beliefs or missions in relation to the three big relationships in your life.

GOD

How important is God to you? Why? In what way?

NEIGHBOR

How do you love others well? In regards to the world's needs, what do you care about most intensely?

KIDS (IF APPLICABLE)

Why did you have kids? What's your heart and goals for your family?

With all of the above, remember secondary stuff is not the goal here. You want to try and find the biggest priorities and callings and passions in your marriage and family. That is almost always where the mission and vision arise from and how your marriage or family can uniquely impact the world and create a legacy.

Then, for the third step, answer below

1. What do you see your strengths as?
2. What do you see your spouses strengths as?
3. As a couple what are your best complementary strengths?

Now let the above simmer and talk about it together. Then get out a piece of paper and give a rough draft or distillation a shot. Like I said above, maybe you just pick seven pillars and those are your vision for you family and marriage. Or it reads more like a paragraph. It can look however you want it to look. Give it a stab below.

WHAT IS TO COME THIS MONTH

If you're getting a little stuck or unsure about this months "to do's", don't sweat it! Speak freely, brainstorm and write out as much as possible. The fun is in the discussion and the brainstorming session with your spouse. Don't worry if it's not perfect yet or you need a little more help.

Next week we are going to interview friends of ours who heard us do this talk and then put pen to paper with their mission statement and have gone all the way. Their mission statement for their family is displayed on a sweet chalkboard frame in their house already. We are going to interview them and hear how they went through this process. They are going to share their key elements and are even going to get their kids on video to hear how

they got involved in the process. In addition to this video, we have their PDF of everything they listed out to help give you the framework for you to start. That will be during the second week. The third week, Alyssa and I will post a video and our document with our family mission and go over that to help you as well.

By the fourth week, we hope that you can wrap your heads around this and have something that is ready to hang on your wall. We will come up with some creative ways as a community to get something designed for your house. We have examples that range from free DIY to spending \$5 to make a cool design or even a t-shirt. We will ask everyone in the community to post what they feel comfortable posting on the Facebook page. We will choose five couples with the coolest design or creativity and give out some sweet prizes that month.

Love you guys!

Jeff + Alyssa

