



Support, Shepherd, and Send Out Our Kids



13-SESSION GUIDED STUDY
BY RYAN JOY & BRYAN SCHIELE

Session 1: Marital Stability

Conversation Starter: "Sinkhole Alley" (Daily Download #244)
Bonus Resource: "I Don't Use Recipes" (Weekly Episode #140)

biblegeeks.fm/trainingwheels

SESSION
1

THE CONVERSATION STARTER
“Sinkhole Alley”



STABLE FOUNDATIONS

Launch your study with this
CONVERSATION STARTER

[Watch the video](#) or read it below.



READ

Before the study, take a moment to read Matt. 19:6-9; Mal. 2:14-16; and Eph 5:22-33



BONUS RESOURCE

Feel free to listen to **Weekly episode #140, “I Don’t Use Recipes,”** before your study, as an example of a conversation led by this study guide.

biblegeeks.fm/140



There's a terrifying place in Florida called "sinkhole alley" — a three-county-wide swath of land known to swallow houses whole! Imagine enjoying a Saturday morning off, watching cartoons with your family, when suddenly the foundation beneath you erodes, leaving you fighting for your lives in your pajamas. We like to think of our home as a safe place, but what makes it safe? What's the bedrock on which a stable family is built?



THE BIG IDEA

The marriage covenant is God's foundation for a stable family.

Jesus says that in marriage, we become *"no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate"* (Matt. 19:6). So a rock-solid marriage begins with reverence for God and the one-ness he creates. *"Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth ... your companion and your wife by covenant"* (Mal. 2:14).

And as the next verse highlights, our honor for our spouse affects our children. *"Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth"* (Mal. 2:15). Sometimes couples split apart; sometimes they drift apart. But non-stop fighting and unfaithfulness will weaken the foundation of your family, eroding the bedrock on which you once hoped to build.

So, grow your love for your spouse, stay on the same page, and work out your differences in a way that honors Christ (Eph. 5:21). Sacrifice for each other, holding your relationship above all others — even above a relationship with your children! Mutual love and respect act as the reinforced concrete to keep that sinkhole from ever forming. As Paul said, *"However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband"* (Eph. 5:33).



THE BIG QUESTION

How are you fostering stability in your relationship?

Marital Stability

SOLIDIFY YOUR MARITAL FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION



Launch the study with a **CONVERSATION STARTER** on the Big Idea.

Read, listen, or watch “Sinkhole Alley” – biblegeeks.fm/daily-244 ▶▶▶



ICE BREAKER — Get everyone engaged and talking.

Did you ever try to pit one parent against another growing up?
How'd that work out?

ACT I



JESUS SAID — Matthew 19:6-9

What's the main point of this passage?

What insights and applications do you take from these words of Christ? What do we need to get from these words that – if understood and applied – has the power to change a life or a family?

Is there anything else here you find helpful or interesting? Anything you've never noticed before – or have always loved about these words?

Marital Stability

SOLIDIFY YOUR MARITAL FOUNDATION

ACT II



HEAVY WORDS — Covenant

The Hebrew word for “covenant” (בְּרִית – “berit”) referred to “a solemn commitment guaranteeing promises or obligations”¹. How seriously should we take covenants? Why? Consider the following passages and jot down your observations and insights. If you’re studying in a group, choose one passage you want to share something about, and prepare a few notes. Gen. 8:20-9:17; 15:1-20; Josh. 9:1-27; Jer. 34:17-20; 31:31-37

What do you learn about the marriage covenant in Malachi 2:10-16?

What’s your biggest takeaway about marriage from these passages and this word?

ACT III



REACH OUT — Connect with each other with this question.

How have you dealt with disagreements in your marriage through the years?

WRAP UP



THE CHALLENGE — Ready to put it into practice?

Ask your spouse where you need to get on the same page, and talk through whatever issues you both see.



REQUEST — Go to God in a closing prayer.

For example: “Holy Father, help us not to separate what you’ve joined together” (cf. Matt. 19:6).



NEXT SESSION — Devotion to God

Prepare by reading Luke 1:46-56; 2:22-52

1 - Williamson, P. R. (2003). Covenant. In T. D. Alexander & D. W. Baker (Eds.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (p. 139). InterVarsity Press.