



# MARRIED COUPLES BE INTENTIONAL: CONNECTION

———— PART 1 ————

## OPENING PRAYER

(Either spouse can pray)

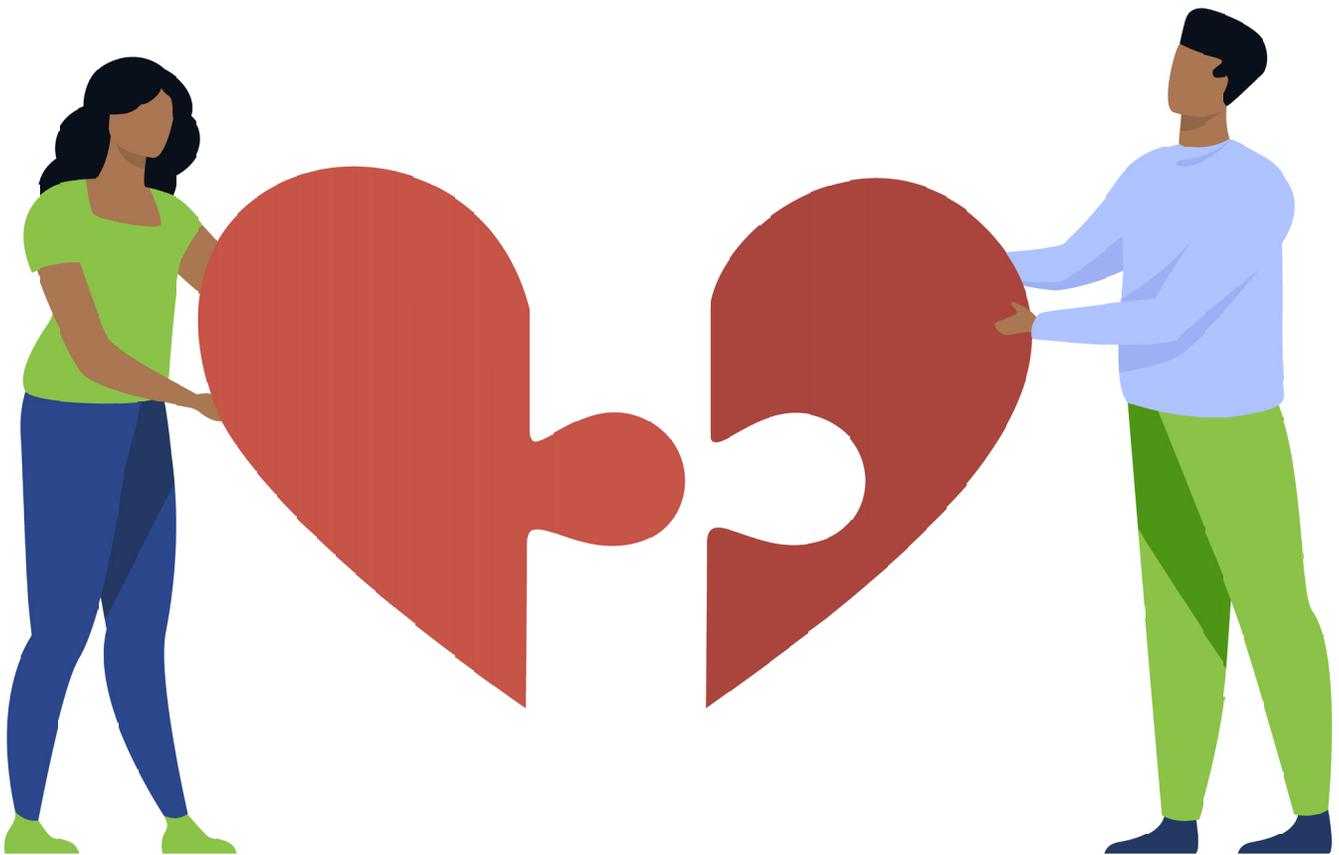
**MARRIAGE CHECK-IN:** Is there anything that I used to do that you wish I still did? (Be specific & feel free to elaborate)

**QUESTION:** (aim for about 15 - 20 minutes of conversation) What does the phrase "Intentional Love" mean to you?

## BIBLE VERSE:

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. - 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV*

**CONVERSATION:** We often hear about how hard marriage is and while that can sometimes be true, I challenge you to change that narrative. Does marriage take work? Yes. Can marriage be wildly rewarding? The answer is also, yes! The thing is, you won't just accidentally stumble upon the rewarding part of marriage, it takes intentionality! Intentional Connection, Intentional Communication, and Intentional Prayer! Let's dive into some practical ways to activate intentionality within your marriage.



## INTENTIONAL CONNECTION

### Identify your spouse's love language

- It's important to take the time to identify your spouse's love language. We often tend to love people the way that we want to be loved, but that doesn't mean that that's the way they best receive love. To identify your love language click [HERE](#).

### Make Sex A Priority

- Sex with your spouse shouldn't feel like a chore but instead an intimate connection. It's yet another way of communicating "I am yours and you are mine". Sex within marriage is God-designed and should always be mutual and frequent. When a marriage is healthy and you both should feel connected and satisfied. When things get "rocky" within your relationship sex is usually the first thing to go so it's vital to make sure that intimacy is made a priority because a sexless marriage can literally rock a relationship to its core. Below are a few tips to help you make sex a priority in your marriage:

1. Simply put, life gets busy, so schedule sex if you need to!
2. Respect your spouse's need for an emotional connection before a physical connection.
3. Talk openly and honestly with your spouse about what does or doesn't satisfy you sexually. These conversations can be uncomfortable but keep in mind they are also necessary.
4. Don't be afraid to spice it up by trying something new! Try things like creating a storyline, playing truth or dare, or maybe even something as simple as having sex in a place that you've never done it before! You never know what new level of intimacy may be unlocked.
5. If you and your partner are having issues connecting (no matter the reason) there is absolutely no reason to be ashamed. Please consider reaching out to a licensed counselor to help heal that area of your relationship.

*Note: To learn more about Zion Church's Family & Marriage Counseling resources please click [HERE](#).*

### Incorporate Consistent Dating

- With all the demands of life, it's essential that you make dating a consistent part of your marriage. It allows time for you to have uninterrupted time to focus on one another. Dates can and should be much more than just the normal dinner & movie. Don't be afraid to get creative! ie: Hiking, Painting, Cooking class, etc. Check out [52 Uncommon Unusual Dates](#) for some date night inspiration!

### Pillow Talk

- Quite honestly "pillow talk" has got to be the most underutilized form of communication within a marriage. Taking advantage of the time of day which is most commonly the calmest to connect and debrief about life, share your feelings or just share a good laugh is unmatched.

**CHALLENGE:** Over the next 7 days set aside time to discuss some fun things that you would like to do together as a couple. Next, make a list of 12 date night ideas. Lastly, mark your (physical) calendar or share a digital reminder on your phone of the date location, and times with one another!! Remember, the goal is to make your date a priority so making it visible helps! Bonus: For fun, alternate who plans the date so that the responsibility is shared between the both of you.

Remember, it's no accident that God has placed you and your spouse in each other's lives. Your union has a purpose, you just have to be intentional about seeking it!

### **PRAYER:**

*"Father God, thank you for the blessing of marriage. We know that it's no accident that you have placed us together. Please give us wisdom, clarity, and purpose so that our marriage honors you at all times. We ask that you allow us to be intentional in every area of our marriage, especially when it comes to our connection, communication, and prayer life. Lord be our light when darkness tries to creep into our relationship. Father, help us to love and accept one another so that we can experience the power of your love. We ask all these things in Jesus' name, Amen.*