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Welcome!

If there's anything you don't need when you're about to get married, it's one more thing to do.

Unless, of course, that one thing might make the *other* things a whole lot easier.

We can't guarantee that *Ready to Wed* will take all the challenges out of your wedding—or your marriage. It won't keep you from forgetting your anniversary, thaw all the icy silences, or make your spouse alphabetize the shoes in your closet.

But it *will* help you understand why you're getting married, how to stay that way, and how to enjoy it to the fullest. That's because you'll learn what's vital to a healthy relationship, keys to working out your differences, and what God considers most important in “holy matrimony.”

In other words, you'll discover how to be the husband or wife you really want to become.

You've Got the Power

Chances are you're reading this book because you believe preparing for your marriage is worth the effort. That proves you're well-informed.

Why? Because when it comes to ensuring enduring marriages, premarital training makes a difference.

A *big* difference.

Research shows that *80 percent of couples who receive premarital counseling stay together*.¹ Couples who take part in premarital programs also report a 30 percent increase in marital success over those who don't participate—with better conflict management skills, higher dedication to one's mate, greater emphasis on the relationship's positive aspects, and improved overall relationship quality. These effects seem to last six months to three years after the program ends—even for high-risk couples like those coming from homes where parents divorced or had high conflict levels.²

In other words, getting premarital training is one of the most powerful choices you can make. You've chosen wisely!

What You're in For

Getting ready to wed takes effort, but it shouldn't mean boredom or busywork. So we've designed this program to be provocative and practical. At its heart is an entertaining, down-to-earth video series featuring a collection of popular marriage experts, including Dr. Greg and Erin Smalley. You'll also hear from engaged and recently married couples who've discovered truths you can use.

Next there's the book *Ready to Wed: 12 Ways to Start a Marriage You'll Love*. Written by the Smalleys and several of their friends who just happen to know a lot about the subject, it lets you go deeper on key topics after you've watched and discussed the videos. It's also a great reference to have around when the honeymoon is over and the two of you sail into the future.

And in your hands is the resource that's going to make it all personal—the couple's workbook.

In each chapter of this book, you'll find the following sections, most of which you'll use during your meetings with your mentors, pastor, or counselor:

Survey Says... An opportunity to look at your Couple Checkup report.

Selfie. Take this survey to figure out where you stand on the subject at hand.

WeTube. Use this section as you watch and talk about the DVD.

App(lication). Practice makes perfect, so here's your chance to begin applying principles from the DVD to your own marriage.

FaceTheBook. To wrap up, you'll find out which sections of the *Ready to Wed* book to read during the week to go deeper.

Finally, there's a FREE app that will help you create healthy relational habits that inspire good connection and communication.



It's full of great devotionals, date night ideas, and quizzes. Plus it will encourage you to pray for your exciting future together.

But enough introductions. You're busy. You've got a wedding to plan—and a marriage to launch.

Are you ready to get *Ready to Wed*? May God bless your preparations, your wedding—and the *real* adventure beyond!

Note: Many issues addressed in this series are difficult ones. Some couples may need to address them in greater detail and depth. The DVD

presentations and this guide are intended as general advice only, and not to replace clinical counseling, medical treatment, legal counsel, or financial guidance.

Focus on the Family maintains a referral network of Christian counselors. For information, call 1-800-A-FAMILY and ask for the Counseling Department. You can also find helpful advice for couples at focusonthefamily.com.