

VERTICAL CONNECTION

A monthly encouragement from
your One Flesh Family

Remember to drop any questions that you have in
the Vertical Connection Questions Boxes located in the
foyer of Sanctuary 1 or 2 and in the Portable 3 classroom.

February 2026

Want to share your story? Reply to this email or write to ajohnson@tvbcsatx.org.

 Word for the Month: "Love your spouse and allow them to know it!"

Scripture to Pray Over Your Marriage

Ephesians 5:28–29: "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself." 29 "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:"

 Marriage Tip of the Month: "The New Man"

If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus:

That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lust, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. **Ephesians 4: 21 - 24**

The Family Manifesto on Marriage :

We believe that God created marriage for the purpose of couples glorifying God as one flesh, parenting godly children, and enjoying sexual pleasure. "As iron sharpens iron" (Proverbs 27:17) we believe that God uses marriage to sharpen a man and a woman and mold them into the image of Jesus Christ. Just as the Trinity reflects the equal worth of Father and Son, with different roles, we believe that God created a man and a woman with equal worth but with differing roles and responsibilities in marriage. (The Art of Marriage p.34)

Try This Together:

Start the year by getting on the same page. Set aside one intentional hour this month to talk about hopes for the year—**finances**, family, health, faith, fun — without problem-solving or criticism. Just listen and dream together. Feeling understood early in the year builds patience and teamwork for everything that follows. It's easy for our relationship goals and dreams to get lost in the midst of day-to-day life. Please be intentional in your efforts to connect.

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The 7-7 Marriage Rule

What is the 7-7-7 marriage rule? It is a strategy for intentional connection, suggesting couples schedule a date every 7 days, a night away every 7 weeks, and a romantic holiday every 7 months to keep the spark alive and prevent drifting apart amidst busy lives, focusing on consistent quality time and shared experiences. While it's a guideline, its core principle is consistent, undistracted time to foster intimacy, and can be adapted to fit financial or lifestyle realities, say relationship experts and articles from the internet.

The 7-7 Marriage Rhythm

-  **Every 7 Days (Weekly):** A dedicated date or uninterrupted time together — dinner, a movie at home, or a walk.
-  **Every 7 Weeks (Monthly-ish):** A short getaway or one-night staycation to step away from routine.
-  **Every 7 Months (Quarterly-ish):** A longer, romantic vacation or a trip to a new place.

Key Principles & Benefits

-  **Prioritizes Connection:** Helps couples avoid “just going through the motions” by intentionally scheduling quality time.
-  **Reduces Stress:** Keeps couples aligned and feeling valued, which can ease parental burnout, according to family wellness experts.
-  **Promotes Novelty:** Even small new experiences strengthen emotional bonds and keep the relationship fresh.
-  **Flexibility is Key:** It’s about consistency and intentionality, not perfection—simple at-home dates or adjusted timing still count when getaways aren’t feasible, as relationship experts note.

Real Marriage- Real Growth Quiet Strength in Marriage

Faith in each other - We believe in each other because of the relationship we have built between us. The construction of a relationship takes time, effort, and desire. What started out with just recognizing each other causes each to desire a closer relationship and understanding.

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Resources to Explore

Podcasts — Top Christian Marriage Podcasts

Podcasts have become a vital resource for ongoing encouragement, practical advice, and real-life stories. The following are among the most respected and widely followed Christian marriage podcasts in 2025:

- **Hosts Tony and Alisa DiLorenzo:** They are very transparent about their experiences discussing topics like sex, love, commitment and how to balance intimacy with everyday responsibilities.
- **Host Esther Perel: Where Should We Begin?** This unique podcast features real-life couples in therapy sessions with world-renowned therapist Esther Perel, offering a fascinating and insightful look into diverse relationship struggles.
- **Host Dave, and Ashley:** The Naked Marriage: Host Dave, and Ashley This podcast is a dedicated to undressing the truth about sex, intimacy and lifelong love. The concerns and questions most couples have in marriage often go unspoken until now.



Core Principles for Teaching Kids About Christ in 2026

Teaching kids about Christ in 2026 can be both deeply faithful **and** wonderfully creative. Kids today are surrounded by fast-moving media, short attention spans, and tons of digital noise — but that actually opens new doors for helping them understand who Jesus is in ways that feel real, joyful, and memorable.

1. Keep Jesus at the center, not just “church lessons”

Kids connect best when they see:

- Jesus as a friend
- Jesus as a helper
- Jesus as someone who understands their feelings
- Jesus as someone who loves them personally

Short stories from the Gospels, acted out or illustrated, make this come alive.

2. Use visual storytelling (kids learn visually now more than ever)

Children today absorb information through:

- Icons
- Simple illustrations
- Short animations
- Color-coded ideas

This is why illustrated parables, simple Bible story cards, and object lessons work beautifully.

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3. Model Christ more than you explain Him

Kids learn Christ most powerfully by watching:

- Patience
- Gentleness
- Joy
- Forgiveness
- Prayer
- Service

Your tone, your reactions, and your compassion preach louder than any lesson.

**Bible Trivia (Challenge Edition)****1. How many Gospels are in the New Testament?**

1. 2 B. 3 C. 4 D. 5

Answer: C

2. How many rivers flowed out of the Garden of Eden?

1. 1 B. 2 C. 3 D. 4

Answer: D

3. How many days was Lazarus in the tomb?

1. 1 B. 2 C. 3 D. 4

Answer: D

4. How many living creatures did Ezekiel see?

1. 2 B. 3 C. 4 D. 6

Answer: C

✿ February Kid Challenge of the Month

 **Challenge:** Show the love of Christ every day through simple acts of kindness, prayer, and encouragement.

 **Memory Verse:** "Love one another as I have loved you." — John 13:34

**A Prayer Over Our Marriage This Month**

God cover our marriage with renewed love, gentle communication, unity of purpose, and a fresh outpouring of grace that strengthens us both day by day.
Amen.