

# Six Habits of Spiritually Happy Men

## Habit #4: Spiritually Happy Men Pray For & With Their Wives

Unedited Transcript

Brett Clemmer

Good morning gentlemen. It's great to be with you this morning. Before I get started, before we get started on the lesson, I want to share with you what God is doing in the life of a man in Louisiana through the ministry of Man in the Mirror.

This gentleman has a short and powerful story of the transforming power of the gospel. We're honored at Man in the Mirror that we get to be a part of that, in this case, through one of Pat's books. Let me just read an email that he sent us. He said, "I recently completed my reading of The Man in the Mirror. Wow! I have been in a faith based program here in prison for 3 years and I consider myself to be a student of God's word having committed this season of my life to seeking the things that are spiritual in nature. During this time, I have read many books, all of which were enlightening and offered insights. However, when I began reading The Man in the Mirror, I was introduced to a totally different perspective on a plethora of issues concerning all men in our attempts to deal with the often unspoken dilemmas we face throughout the course of our lives."

When we republish this next edition, we need to put that on the back cover of the book. Then he said this, "Although I may be bound by bars and walls during this season of my life, I have truly been set free on the inside by placing my faith in what Christ did at Calvary's cross. My time in this place is coming to an end and I look forward to going back into the world and being a good steward over that which he has entrusted me, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I look forward to working the principals of accountability, self-examination, proper use of time and financial resources, and if I should marry, exercising the biblical function of a husband and father in a church body where the word is going out uncompromised so that I may be part of the solution in my home, community, and the world around. May God continue to bless your ministry and all of its endeavors to reach the spirit of men."

This is written by a man I'll call Carl who's in a prison in Louisiana. This is a great introduction to what we're going to talk about today in this next spiritually, in this next habit of spiritually happy men: Spiritually Happy Men Pray With And For Their Wives. Why don't we do this: why don't we take a moment, we'll pray for Carl, I'm going to pray for this bible study here this morning.

Lord, we're so grateful that you would gather us again this week. That we would be able to look at what your Scriptures say, look at what you speak into our hearts Lord as we try to be the best husbands we can be and father more than that, as we try to be in the right relationship with you. Lord, when we see a man like Carl who's looking at prison as a season that he's going to get through, Lord, and that he's going to come through on the other side as a better man because he knows you, because he follows you, Lord.

As a man who's looking forward to the kingdom impact that he can make because he's studied your word and he's accepted your offer of eternal life through grace and faith.

Father, we pray that you'd be with him, Lord. Make him a man of impact both where he is now in this prison, Lord, and then when he gets out. We lift all this up to you in Jesus name, asking you, Father, to use this morning for your glory. In Jesus name, Amen.

All right. We're continuing the series on spiritually happy men and we're looking today at this fourth habit of spiritually happy men. Spiritually happy men pray for and with their wives. Let's look at an overview of what we're going to talk about. We're going to talk about 3 things this morning. First we're going to talk about the Power of Prayer. Now, we all know that we should pray and often we do--right when we see those red and blue lights in our rear view mirror, or when your boss calls you in unexpectedly, we start to pray. We're going to take just a few minutes to see what the scriptures really say about the power of prayer.

Then, we're going to talk about the Meaning of Marriage. What's marriage really all about? Is it just companionship to keep us from being lonely? Is it to have kids that can mow our lawn when they're teenagers and give us grandkids when we get old? What is marriage? It's much more than that. It's almost mystical.

Then, finally we're going to look at how do we bring these 2 things together. How do we bring prayer into our marriage and why is it that spiritually happy men pray for and with their wives?

Whenever we do something like this, whenever we talk about marriage, I'm always mindful of the guys in the room, the guys that are watching that are single for one reason or another. I want you to know that I still think that you're going to be able to take a lot from this lesson. I even made the guarantee in the description of this bible study that if you're in a relationship or you hope to be in one in the future, the points we talk about today will lead you to have the best relationship you've ever had if you'll follow them. Pat emailed me last night when he saw that guarantee and he said, "That's a very strong promise, I'm really praying for you now."

Let's begin by talking about the power of prayer. We could do a series on prayer. Right? The scriptures say much about prayer and we don't have time to talk to everything. I would recommend if you want to read a good book on prayer, read Tim Keller's book that just came out, last year I think, on prayer. I'm actually going to read from it a little bit today. What I want to do is, I want to start taking you on a very quick tour of the scriptures and some of the things that the Bible has to say about prayer. You don't need to try to keep up with me on this. You might just want to write these references down as we go.

I Chronicles 16:11 says this, he says, "Seek the Lord and his strength. Seek his presence continually." Think about the Psalms. They're full of prayers of many kinds. Prayers for strength, prayers for deliverance, prayers for victory over enemies, prayers of repentance and sorrow, prayers that recount the glory of God.

Jesus talks about prayer. In the Sermon on the Mount he has this very famous passage, Matthew 7:7-11 says this, "Ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives and the one who seeks finds, and so the one who knocks it will be opened. Which one of you, if his son asks him for bread will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish will give him

a serpent. If you then who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father who is in Heaven give good gifts to those who ask him?"

In Luke 18, Jesus tells the story of the persistent widow. Do you remember this story? She keeps going to the unrighteous judge and she keeps bugging him, she keeps asking him for justice and he keeps putting her off. Finally, basically just to get her out of his hair, he gives her the justice that she wants. Luke says that Jesus taught this parable so that the disciples would know that they are always to pray and not lose heart. Paul reminds every church that he writes to, read the first few verses of just about every epistle that Paul wrote, he talks about how much he's praying for that church. He consistently teaches them about prayer. He tells the Colossians, "continue steadfastly in prayer." The Philippians, "don't be anxious about anything, but instead, pray." The Thessalonians, "pray without ceasing."

Prayer is so effective and important to God, Paul says, that we read in Romans 8:26, "Likewise, the spirit helps us in our weakness for we do not know what to pray for as we ought." Let me say that again. "For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words." That's amazing! God himself intercedes within the Godhead. The Holy Spirit communicating our needs to the Father on our behalf. It's amazing the power of prayer.

In my life, I've seen the power of prayer. You probably have stories too. My grandmother was a particularly powerful prayer warrior. She was about this tall and she and my grandfather were missionaries in China and the Philippines. I have a picture on my desk at work of a rose bush that my grandmother found a dead rose plant on the side of the road, and she took it home, and she planted it, and she prayed for the rose bush.

People would say, "Why did you plant a dead rose bush in your yard?" She'd say, "Oh, I'm praying that the Lord will bring it back to life." The next year, she had a huge beautiful rose bush. After that everybody in the neighborhood started bringing dead houseplants to her. She would pray for them, and they would come back to life. She would say, "Leave it with me for a week or two and we'll see what the Lord does. By the way, that's the real Miracle-Gro, right?"

When Kimberly and I got married, we planned our wedding reception to be in a pavilion on the beach in Connecticut. Even though the venue was inside, it had a wrap-around deck, and then the beach outside. We had really looked forward to entertaining on the deck and being out there for the social time, and taking pictures on the beach. It was a couple of days before the wedding, my grandparents had flown in from California and I looked at the weather report and it called for rain starting that morning, the morning of our wedding and going all the way into the evening. I was disappointed. It was going to be okay. I was getting married and that was going to be great. I just knew Kimberly and I had both really been looking forward to being outside. My grandmother walked into the kitchen on Thursday night, two days before the wedding.

She looked at me and she said, "What's wrong?" I didn't even know that she could tell something was wrong. I said, "Well, Grandma, I just read the weather report and it's calling for rain all day on Saturday and we were really looking forward to being outside. But you know what? It's going to be a great day, it's going to be wonderful." She didn't say a word. She just walked up to me, she took my hand. She bowed her head, and she closed her eyes, and about a minute later she looked up and with a twinkle in her eye she said, "It's going to be a beautiful day on Saturday. The Lord told me." If you look at wedding pictures from my wedding day, you will see blue skies with wispy clouds just like God told my grandma it was going to be.

Does that seem silly? Praying for the weather? Let me remind you what Jesus says, he says, "Our father likes to give his children good gifts when we ask him." I'm pretty sure my grandma was one of his favorites. James 5:16, says, "The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." Hazel Clemmer was a righteous lady and God answered her prayers. There's a quick overview of the power of prayer. What I want to do now, let's turn our attention to the meaning of marriage.

How many guys in the room have been married at some point in their lives? How many of you? Just about everybody, not everybody, but just about everybody. On a scale of 1 to 10, how difficult is marriage? I heard an 11, do I hear 12? Do I hear 12 anywhere? Marriage is hard isn't it? I mean, I'm going to tell you, marriage quite simply is the hardest thing I've ever done. It is the hardest thing I've ever done. No one has ever made me happier and no one has ever made angrier than Kimberly has. There is no one person that I care as much about, and there is no person that I have let down as badly as Kimberly. Every engaged couple that we meet, when we talk to them now, we give them the same advice. We say, "Marriage is not a Nicholas Sparks novel." Okay? It's not "The Notebook."

You know the honeymoon period thing? This is what we tell them, You know the honeymoon period thing? It's bunk. It's not true. The first year is terrible. Anybody that tells you the first year is great, they're idiots. Don't listen to them, the first year is terrible. It just takes time, be prepared. Marriage is super hard and it's going to take you time to stick through it and get into the rhythm of being married.

Here's the great thing about advice like that, if their marriage is decent, they're thrilled, but if it's hard, which I've had a lot of people come back to me and say, "Man, I'm glad you said that to me." I went into the first year of marriage, I thought it was going to be great. I thought, marrying my wife in Connecticut, dragging her away from her family to Florida to live near my family, with no friends, I thought the first year was going to be awesome.

It takes time, you know? Marriage is hard. Pat and David wrote this great book, *The Marriage Prayer*. I did not know Pat as going to be here so this is not a suck up or anything and the book is back on the back table. *The Marriage Prayer*, it's a great overview of what marriage is about through 6 phrases and a very simple 68 word prayer. I'm going to tell you how to use the prayer in a few minutes, and we've actually put the marriage prayer card on your table. Don't look at it yet.

I want to point out one of the great insights in this book. As I was reviewing for today, it explains why marriage can be so difficult. In the section on unity, it talks about how most women want to be pursued and cherished, while most men seek to avoid conflict. Most women want to be pursued and cherished, while most men seek to avoid conflict. This can really come into battle with each other in a marriage. Think about it. Your wife wants to be able to be angry and cry, and we just want to say, "Tell us what to do so you'll stop being mad and you'll stop crying." She doesn't want to stop being mad, she doesn't want to stop crying. She wants to process those emotions with you. Doesn't that sound fun?

You're like, list of things to do today: Go to Home Depot, change the light bulbs, help my wife process her angry emotions. Right? Especially when she's mad at you. Who wants to do that? This is why marriage is so difficult sometimes and this is why ...

Think about this. If your wife wants to be pursued and cherished, this is why prayer in marriage is so powerful. This is why prayer in marriage is so powerful, but it's also why it's so hard, because we don't want the conflict. Sometimes the conflict of prayer and marriage is that we don't feel like ... You know,

we feel like hypocrites when we want to pray with our wives. How do we get through that and why is it like this?

A man's role in marriage, we talk about Ephesians 5:25, we all hear this verse all the time, right? "Husbands love your wives like Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." We're supposed to love our wives like Christ loved the church. What's Christ's role in the church? Well, Jesus plays 3 roles in the church. He plays the role of prophet, priest, and king. We need to play these roles in our marriage of prophet, priest and king. What does a prophet do? A prophet listens to God and then tells his family what God says to him. Starts reading the scriptures, he prays, he gathers in what he needs to gather in from the Lord that he wants him to speak into the lives of his family and he goes and he does that.

What's a priest do? A priest goes to God on behalf of his family. He listens to his family and then he goes to God behalf of his family and presents their prayers to God. Then, what does a king do? A king leads, and provides, and protects. How does prayer help us fulfill these roles in our marriage?

Marriage is an example of our core identity. We were made to be in a relationship. Genesis 2:18, God says, "it's not good for man to be alone so I will make a helper for him." God created woman. Now did he gather up some dust and shape it into this great looking thing and says here's your woman? No. He created woman right out of Adam's side. Think about this, 2 people from 1 flesh, 2 persons from 1 flesh.

Think how similar this is to the trinity. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 3 persons in 1 Godhead. One of the reasons that marriage is so powerful and so mystical is that at a soul level, at a visceral level, it connects us to the core of who God made us to be and how he made us.

Again, I know, some of you are alone. Maybe you're widowed, maybe you've never been married, maybe you're divorced. For guys, for most men without a mate, it's hard. It's not a choice that you would willingly make. God calls us to be alone at times. Sometimes through the death of a spouse, or just, or never being married, or being in a situation where you're pulled out of your marriage. I want to give you this reassurance, that as a Christian, you will not remain alone. The very analogy that Paul uses to describe the closeness of Jesus to the church is the closeness of marriage. We're the church.

The intimacy that we're going to have with Jesus, it's not physical intimacy, but it's a spiritual intimacy. Imagine someone knowing literally everything there is to know about you and loving you without reservation. Now imagine that person being willing to die for you so that all those unrighteous things about you, that you wouldn't want God to even know about, that he actually wipes them away. That's the relationship, that's the intimacy that we have with Christ. This is the intimacy that we want to pursue in our marriages as well.

Let me say some difficult things about divorce. It may be a little tough to hear, but let me say it. Divorce is terrible. God hates it. Why does he hate it? Well, because he knows how much it hurts his children. Look at Malachi 2, verses 13 to 16. "And this second thing you do. You cover the Lord's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. But you say, Why does he not? Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union?" Did you catch that?

One flesh, but now with a portion of the spirit right 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. For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the Lord, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the Lord of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless."

Guys, divorce is violent. If you've been through one, you know this is true. Maybe not physically violent, but emotionally violent, spiritually violent. Let me just say to you, if you're in a miserable marriage, please try and do everything you can to save it. Go to counseling, get help, repent of your own addictions and idolatry that may be tearing your marriage apart. It can take a long, long time to recover from a divorce. Ask any guy that's been through it.

There's biblically allowable reasons for divorce, and I know guys who've had no choice for various reasons, but if you can avoid it, please avoid it. It's hard to be spiritually happy in the midst of a divorce. It's hard to be spiritually happy in the midst of a divorce. You'll recover, but it can take a long time. Instead, think about what Peter said in I Peter 3:7. He said, "Live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel since they are heirs with you of the grace of life. Why? So that your prayers may not be hindered."

One final thing I just want to say, one more uncomfortable thought that I want to make clear and that's this: Spiritually happy men are not having sex with women they're not married to. Spiritually happy men are not having sex with women that they're not married to. If you want to be spiritually happy, you're going to have to follow what the scriptures say. Marriage is the biblical way for us to be in those kinds of relationships. All right, so, enough heavy stuff.

If God is the creator, the redeemer, the all-powerful God of the universe, and your wife is one flesh with you, the most importantly earthly relationship that you have, doesn't it make sense that you would invite God's presence into that important relationship? Into your marriage? This brings us to our Big Idea that praying with my wife brings the greatest power in the universe into my most important earthly relationship. **Praying with my wife brings the greatest power in the universe into my most important earthly relationship.** Spiritually happy men understand this, so they pray for their wives, and they pray with their wives. I mentioned Tim Keller's book before, I want to read a little clip here from it.

He was talking about, in the fall of 1999, he had taught a bible study course on the Psalms, "and it became clear to me that I was barely scratching the surface of what the Bible commanded and promised regarding prayer. Then came 9/11. Our whole city sank into a kind of corporate clinical depression. For my family the shadow was intensified as my wife, Kathy, struggled with the effects of Crohn's disease, and then finally, I (Tim Keller) was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. At one point during all this, my wife urged me to do something with her we had never been able to muster the self-discipline to do regularly. She asked me to pray with her every night. Every night. She used an illustration that crystallized her feelings very well. As we remember it, she said something like this: Imagine you were diagnosed with such a lethal condition that the doctor told you that you would die within hours unless you took a particular medicine—a pill every night before going to sleep. Imagine that you were told that you could never miss it or you would die. Would you forget? No, it would be so crucial that you wouldn't forget, you would never miss. Well, if we don't pray together to God, we're not going to make it because of all we're facing. I'm certainly not, she said. We have to pray, we just can't let it just slip our minds."

Let's start talking about this, and let's talk about praying for your wife. How do you pray for your wife? Let me give you 3 ways that I think you should be praying. First of all, pray for your marriage in general. The marriage prayer is a great tool. If you've got this card on your table, everybody grab one of these cards. You want to pray for your marriage in general, and the marriage prayer is a great tool to do this. You can see these 68 words, you can see by the way, this card tears in half, and you can give the other half to your wife. You give your wife the half with the picture of the woman on it and you keep the half with the picture of the guy on it. Okay? Not the other way around. Six phrases, 68 words, I'll let you read through that.

Secondly, after you pray for your marriage in general, pray for your wife specifically. Now, intrinsic in this is that you know what you actually need to pray for, *so you have to ask*. Okay? The only way you're going to be able to pray for your wife beyond, "Lord, let her have a good day, not crash the car, and not burn dinner," is you have to actually have a conversation with her so that you can know what's on her heart. You've got to talk, which means you've got to get rid of some of these outside distractions.

Think about, what distracts us from having conversations with our wives? What would distract you from having a deep conversation with your wife? The kids? The TV? Say that again? Disharmony? Disharmony, yeah. Absolutely. Like, she doesn't want to talk to you, thank you very much. Honey I want to know your heart. Get away from me. Right? These things can creep in and become distractions.

For most of us, I think we've got to stop at, we've got to stop doing something if we're going to add something. Your life is busy, you want to start talking to your wife a little bit more, you're going to have to make some changes. One may be turning off the TV. It may be reducing a commitment. I've heard guys say, "I'm so busy at church, I don't have time to talk to my wife," and she's busy too. Look at these places in your life where you can eliminate some things that may be distractions. Maybe get your sleep schedules in sync. I know for me, my wife likes to go to bed earlier than I do. People use to say, "Make sure you and your wife go to bed at the same time." It sounds kind of legalistic so I didn't do it. She likes to get a couple more hours of sleep than I do. I can't even imagine that.

Then I realized, oh, well I could go to bed when she does, we could talk, and then I could get up. I started doing that. When she goes into bed, I go into bed, and it gives us a few minutes to talk. She reads a book or plays a game on her phone, and when she gets quiet, if I'm still awake, then I go back out and do something else. Here's the funny thing I've realized about it. I really do need that sleep. God used that to actually help me start getting more sleep because then I'm in bed. I'm comfortable, I don't really need to get up, I think I'll just go to sleep. Then I started getting more sleep, sometimes even able to get earlier in the morning, so it worked out. Right?

We need to know some things about our wives if we're going to pray for her effectively. What is she worried about? What's going on ... If she works, what's going on at her work, or what's going on at home? How's her relationship with her friends? I'm going to invite you at the groups to brainstorm. What are some questions that you could ask your wife to maybe begin to find out a little bit more about her? As you get to know her intimately, you can pray more specifically. I would also suggest that you write the things down that she says to you, because if you're like me, my wife says something, we have this heartfelt conversation, then I get distracted, and I don't remember most of what she said. Right? Maybe get in the habit of writing these things down somewhere. On your phone, you've got that notes function on most of your phones, or you get a little notebook. Write these things down. Trust me. Many of your wives will be more than pleasantly surprised when you actually remember something that she said to you. Okay?

Third then, I want you to pray about your own struggles in your marriage. What might those be? Do you want to stop losing your temper? Pray for that. Do you wish you would communicate better? Pray for that. Do you have differences in your approach to money, or child rearing, or faith? Pray about those things. Do you wish you had more sex? Pray about it. Why not? Amen?! I think a 96 year old guy in the back of the room said that. I'm just kidding. I'm just kidding.

Here's 3 things, here's these 3 things again, all right. Pray for your wife, for your marriage in general, and the marriage card can help you do that. Pray for your wife specifically. There's my beautiful wife Kimberly. Then pray through your own struggles as well. All right? Here's what I think you'll find over time. As you focus on your marriage and on your wife's needs, many of your struggles ... You know, as you focus on the first thing and the second thing, some of those things in the third category are going to start to resolve. God will use your outward focus on your wife to help some of those other things resolve. As the power of God comes to bear, you're going to desire what's best for your wife. I think you'll begin to realize that He's transforming your heart and He's changing your affections.

This all great, but I want to encourage you to take 1 more step beyond this. All right? Being the priest for your wife is good. When you pray for your wife, you're being the priest for your wife. You're presenting her needs to God. But to fulfill your responsibilities as prophet and king, you need to lead her into God's presence personally. Psalm 145:18 says, "The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth." To do this, you need to pray with your wife as well. Why is this so important? Well, it's powerful. The National Association of Marriage Enhancement says that, "Couples that pray, only 1 out of 1,156 that pray together regularly get divorced. Dr. Phil cites a David McLaughlin statistic that it may be 1 in 10,000 people who pray together regularly get divorced.

How do you do it? How do you pray with your wife? There's 2 things I want to ask you. Are you a planner, an organizer? Or are you a spontaneous, fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants kind of guy? Determining what kind of guy you are is going to determine how you pray with your wife the most effectively. If you're an organized guy, you set an appointment. You say, "Honey, I would like to meet you at 8:30 at night, in the bedroom so that we can pray together and have devotional time." Then get the smelling salts out, wake her back up again. Right? You set an appointment. Maybe get a devotional book and you read the devotion book together. There's plenty of them out there. *Devotions for Couples* that Pat wrote. There's plenty of great devotion books out there. Then maybe keep a shared journal. Maybe you journal together. That's for you planning, organizing guys. If you're like that, as far as I'm concerned, you're one of the weirdest people on the face of the earth. All right? I'm not like that. I'm spontaneous, I'm seat-of-the-pants.

If you're a spontaneous guy, then you have to be opportunistic. Okay? One of the ways that I've found, when I'm leaving in the morning and my wife is up and I realize that honestly, the Holy Spirit prompts me, "Hey you need to pray for her," I give her a hug. I get physical contact. I say, "Hey honey, can I pray for you?" She melts. She loves it. "Of course you can pray for me." I say a very simple prayer usually. It's "Lord, thank you so much for Kimberly, you know how much I love her." If I know something's going on, I'll pray for that. I usually say, "Please be with our kids today wherever they are, whatever crazy thing they're doing. And Lord I just pray," this is how I always end, I say, "Lord I just pray that Kimberly knows how much you love her and how much I love her." Then I kiss her on the cheek and I walk out the door.

You know what's ... The more I do this, you know what she'll do for me? If I'm going through a rough time now, she'll come up to me and she'll see that something's wrong, and she'll say, "Hey, can I pray for you?" That's pretty cool. Right? This intimacy that comes when you are sharing at this deep level about



your faith, guys I'm telling you, it's recent. It hasn't been going on my whole marriage. We're going to celebrate 25 years in August. It's only been the last couple of years that we've had it at this level. Once we got the last kid out of the house ... Honestly that was probably part of it. You're just so wrapped up in that.

I want to give you time to talk about this at your tables, but I want to take one more minute to talk to the single guys and make good on my promise that this is guaranteed to give you the best relationship ever. If you want to make your dating relationship the best one you've ever had, do these 2 things. You ready? Start praying the marriage prayer right now, for the marriage that you one day hope to have. Take that marriage prayer and just put it in the future tense and start praying right now for it. Then secondly, if you've got a girlfriend, start praying with her right now, and if you don't have a girlfriend, commit to doing that.

Let me say this. If you're like, "Well she'll never want to do that." Well, that may tell you something about your relationship. Right? That may tell you something about the woman that you're dating. If she has no desire to go in God's presence with you, those are some tough conversations to have. Pray the marriage prayer right now, start praying with your girlfriend right now, or start as soon as you get one. I guarantee you it will be the best dating and relationship you've ever had or you can get your money back on this morning.

All right. Let's go to the tables for our talk, but before we do that, let's remind you of the Big Idea. **Praying with my wife brings the greatest power in the universe into my most important earthly relationships.** Let me pray for you real quick.

Father, thank you so much for these guys. Thank you for marriage. Lord, nothing brings us more joy and fulfillment, nothing brings us more pain and heartache, Lord, than marriage and that's a great analogy Father for what we must do to you. Father, I pray for all the marriages represented in this room, that you would strengthen them Lord, that you would through the power of your Holy Spirit, Lord, you would draw us into your presence both individually praying for our wives, and for our marriages, Lord, and then corporately with our wives Lord, that we would enter your presence. Father, for the single guys, for guys that are hurting this morning, would you bring healing to their heart Lord, would you bring godly women into their lives. Would you make the men here into the leaders, into the spiritual leaders in their household that you call them to be, that every wife at the deepest recesses of her soul wants. Lord, bless these guys, give them your favor in their marriages. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.