

What You Need To Do

Premarital Packet Contents:

- ✦ Class Registration (1)
- ✦ Counseling Covenant (1)
- ✦ Contact Information/Availability (1)
- ✦ Wedding Information (1)
- ✦ Sexuality And Culture (1)
- ✦ Premarital Application (2)

What you need to do:

1. **Complete** the premarital packet (**read through the material carefully**).

You **keep** the following:

- ◆ Cohabitation Philosophy
- ◆ Divorce & Remarriage Philosophy
- ◆ Wedding Information
- ◆ Contact Information/Availability

You **turn in** the following:

- ◆ Class Registration (1)
- ◆ Counseling Covenant (1)
- ◆ Premarital Application (2)

2. **Return** specified materials in the packet to the church office (mail or hand deliver). If you know the HDC pastor you would like to interview with when you return the completed packet, attach a note with the name to your registration form. (Keep in mind that pastor availability may be limited due to busy schedules.) Please note that your registration for the class is not complete until you interview with a pastor. *Class registration ends approximately one week prior to the start of a class.*
3. Have an **interview** with one of HDC's pastors before class registration ends. (Your packet information will be given to the pastor to review. He will contact you to set up an appointment.)
4. After your interview, the pastor will issue the invitation to attend the class. He will sign the registration form and return it to the premarital secretary. If you want to have your wedding at HDC, you can contact Facility Scheduling after your interview.
5. You will receive an e-mail (or call) acknowledging your invitation to attend the class after your interview. Please **RSVP** to 760-245-2415 x 225 / patti@highdesertchurch.com. We will need to know if you will or will not be attending the class so we will have enough books and materials.
6. **Attend** the six-week class: registration/materials fee is \$25 per couple to be paid at the first class. Cash (correct change appreciated) or check (made out to HDC) only.

PREMARITAL CLASS REGISTRATION

Her Information:

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Cell Phone (_____) _____

E-Mail Address* _____

His Information:

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Cell Phone (_____) _____

E-Mail Address* _____

** E-mail is our preferred way of contacting you with class information.*

If Known:

Wedding Date _____ Wedding Time _____

Wedding Location _____

Reception Location _____

Officiating Pastor _____

I met with the above named couple on _____ and have invited them to attend the next Premarital Class.

I met with the above named couple on _____ and will personally be working through the class material with them.

Pastor's Signature _____

Premarital Covenant

We sincerely want to know God’s will for our lives concerning our future together. Therefore, we see the counseling process as a way to understand and learn many of the practical issues in marriage before they become problematic. Our objective is not to merely comply with the expectations of the counselor and teacher, or to fulfill the requirements of the church for our marriage, but to seek out God’s will for our life together.

We both realize that God wants us to maximize our joy and abundance in marriage. Therefore, we will search God’s Word together to fully understand what His design is for us as husband and wife.

We know that it is inconsistent to willingly engage in sin and, at the same time, try to discern God’s will for our lives. We know that sexual intimacy outside of marriage is disobedient to His Word. We have chosen to set up boundaries and abstain from (or continue to abstain from) sexual intimacy until we are married.

We also understand that it is quite possible that up to this point in our relationship, we have misread the signs of God’s direction in our lives. Therefore, it might become apparent through the premarital counseling process that we should either postpone our wedding plans or possibly end our engagement.

Again, we realize, that our premarital counseling is a vital part of the marriage preparation process. We both fully commit to being faithful in giving that process the priority it so richly deserves. We commit to attending the counseling sessions and completing the assigned work on time.

Signed,

_____ and _____
His Signature Her Signature

_____ and _____
Please print his name Please print her name

Date _____

WEDDING INFORMATION

Pastoral Staff

The use of HDC's pastoral staff is limited to their availability and compliance with HDC's Policies and Philosophies of Ministry.

Wedding Hostess

All weddings at HDC must use an HDC hostess.

Premarital Counseling

All couples being married at HDC or using an HDC pastor, must go through the premarital counseling process as outlined by the pastoral staff. This can be waived if the couple is going through a comparable, alternative process approved by HDC's pastoral staff.

Facility Use

The use of the facility for weddings will only be allowed for members or regular attenders of HDC. In order to use the facility, the couple will need to have met the premarital counseling requirement as stated above. Use of a pastor not on staff at HDC must be approved by HDC's pastoral staff.

The use of the facility for receptions is limited to members of HDC. Smoking in the buildings is not allowed and alcoholic beverages are not allowed anywhere on the HDC campus. HDC does not allow dancing at HDC's campus.

Wedding Fees

All wedding fees will be calculated with the Event Fee Schedule. Fees must be paid prior to the wedding.

Wedding Fee Schedule

Victorville Campus:

Fireside Room	\$75
Chapel	\$100
Gym	\$125
Powell Auditorium	\$250

The above fees are waived for HDC members.

Custodial Fees	\$20/hour, minimum 4 hours
Wedding Hostess Fee	\$200
Wedding Assistant Fee*	\$100
Sound Technician	\$20/hour, minimum 4 hours
Sound Technician Assistant*	\$20/hour, minimum 4 hours

The above fees are based on a maximum of 6 hours. Additional fees may apply for weddings over 6 hours (rehearsal included).

*Wedding and sound technician assistants are required for Powell Auditorium weddings.

CONTACT & AVAILABILITY INFORMATION

CONTACTS

Premarital Class Information	Patti Melendez	760.245.2415 ext. 225
Premarital Class Leader	Paul Gostanian	760.245.2415 ext. 225
Facility Scheduling	Nancy Jones	760.245.2415 ext. 207
Audio/Video Information	Sam Pendergrass	760.245.2415 ext. 254

WEDDING AVAILABILITY TIMES*

Auditorium

Thursday Rehearsal	Open
Friday Rehearsal	Open
Friday Weddings	Open
Saturday Weddings	Stage must be cleared by 1:15 PM

Chapel

Friday Rehearsal	Open
Friday Weddings	Open
Saturday Weddings	Stage must be cleared by 2:30 PM

Gym

Friday Rehearsal	Open
Friday Weddings	Open
Saturday Weddings	Stage must be cleared by 2:30 PM

** Other times may be available; please contact Facility Scheduling.*

Receptions are limited to HDC members only and must conclude by the times listed above.

SEXUALITY AND CULTURE

HDC's Philosophy of Ministry

Adopted 11/2/14

HDC's Statement of Faith includes the following statements: *"We believe that marriage, although legally recognized by the state, had already been established by God to provide a healthy and safe environment for personal and spiritual growth. We believe that the Bible defines marriage as a lifelong union between one man and one woman and is the only context for biblical sexual expression."*

LESBIAN/GAY/BISEXUAL/TRANSGENDER (LGBT)

The Bible addresses the LGBT issue within the context of creation. Therefore, we cannot simply dismiss the clear viewpoint of Scripture as an antiquated cultural perspective, because there is nothing cultural about the act of creation. Paul's concerns, which he included in his letter to the Romans, take us all the way back to the first chapter in the first book of the first Testament, even before any type of sin entered the world or any culture had taken shape. God created man *and* woman, the foundational relationship through which sexual intimacy is uniquely shared.

But we must be careful to *not* believe that LGBT individuals are the only ones who want to redefine marriage. Many heterosexual Christians try to do that as well. As difficult relationships evolve, some are tempted to abandon the clear biblical teaching about heterosexual infidelity, divorce and remarriage.

Further, we believe that all people deserve to be treated with grace and respect. Our responsibility is to show the kindness of God to everyone, inasmuch as that leads people to repentance. All are welcome to attend HDC, but all who choose to attend will be challenged to recognize any attitudes and behaviors that the Bible characterizes as sin. We must resist the temptation to point fingers at people who simply sin differently than us. All of us are required to present our sinfulness to God, asking Him to generate the life skills that only He can and rearrange our priorities to glorify Him. When someone says that he or she was born with a certain sexual orientation or disposition, our response would be, "We were all born sinful, just different. We all have areas of our life that we tend toward sinfully, but as we mature in our faith, Jesus will address those areas and, if we allow Him to, He will bring those attitudes and behaviors in line

with His will.”

What should an LGBT individual expect at HDC?

We hope that everyone attending HDC would feel the security of being loved and welcomed. There are, however, some areas of involvement that require a level of commitment that some participants in our ministry are not yet ready to make. That does not diminish our love for any within our church family, and those areas will still be available to them if or when they decide to engage them.

Expect a warm welcome: worship services and large events—During HDC’s weekend worship services and large events, we gather as an imperfect family where all desperately need God’s grace. It is our hope that God’s Word will challenge all areas of our lives as we encounter Jesus and strive to become more like Him. We say, “Come as you are but don’t leave that way,” because we all have a lot of growing up to do.

When we share in the communion service (the Lord’s Table) we follow Paul’s admonition in 1 Corinthians 11:23-30 – to examine ourselves before we participate in the symbolic meal. Communion is to be celebrated with a clear conscience before God, as we agree with Him about our sin and renew our commitment to honor him in each area of our lives, including those relating to marriage. Likewise, in Romans 6:3-11, the Apostle Paul reminds us that, in water baptism, we are identifying with Christ’s effort to redeem us from our sin. Therefore, those who desire to participate in either communion or water baptism should first desire repentance, reflected in an attitude of humility and a willingness to make whatever lifestyle changes are necessary to honor the Lord.

Expect to be challenged: small groups—Small groups are where we do life together. As we gather with other members of our groups, we are regularly challenged about lifestyle choices, by friends who care about our spiritual journey. We would expect the people in your group to lovingly challenge, encourage and pray for you about any area of your life that falls short of God’s plan for His children.

Expect some restrictions: targeted classes, targeted small groups and events—Our targeted marriage classes, married small groups and events are designed for heterosexual couples who have chosen to enter the covenant relationship of marriage, and desire to learn how they can better reach their worlds for Christ through their marriage relationship.

Our *Premarital Classes* are designed for heterosexual singles. The *Marriage Lifepath* and *Married Couple's Retreat* are designed for heterosexual couples in covenant marriage relationships that are also legally recognized by the state.

Expect accountability: church membership – When you become an official member of HDC, you become a part of a team committed to the task of worldchange. When you sign the *Membership Agreement* you are indicating a desire to be accountable to other members of the church family, to honor God in all areas of your life – spiritual, financial, relational and sexual. Membership affords you opportunities to serve and lead through your lifestyle and your giftedness, encouraging others to serve God at that high level as well.

Church discipline – Our prayer is that the ministry of the Word and encouragement of the Body of Christ would give helpful direction and prevent personal and relational damage. However, should an official member of the church (having signed HDC's *Membership Agreement*) pursue a LGBT lifestyle, then the church discipline process, outlined both in Matthew 18 and HDC's Constitution, will go into effect.

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

As more marriages within the Christian community end in divorce, the role of the church becomes an increasingly precarious one. The church's obligation to believers has always included (1) preparing them to carry on Christ's mission of worldchange, (2) holding them accountable to the standard of Scripture, (3) ministering to those who are hurting and (4) redeeming those who have fallen. No issue requires a greater convergence of all of those operations than does the prospect of divorce.

What does God think of divorce?

Nowhere in Scripture does God recommend divorce as a solution to marital conflict. His attitude toward divorce is probably best summed up in Malachi 2:1 – He hates it. Jesus reaffirms that disdain in Matthew 19:3-6, "What God has joined together, let no one separate." He went on to say, in verse 8, that "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning." In other words, throughout both Testaments, God never thought much of divorce

as a way to resolve family problems.

Under the Old Covenant, God gave one reason to terminate a marriage – an adulterous spouse. The marriage was terminated because the adulterer was executed. (Deuteronomy 22) Seeking to avoid the death penalty, many people would restrict their sexual immorality to activities just short of actual adultery. Deuteronomy 24 clearly states that men would divorce their wives for such an indecency. Since she could not be lawfully executed, she became "defiled" in any future marriage, in that there was no legitimacy for the divorce in the first place. The intent of that passage is not to condone divorce, but to prohibit remarrying an illegitimately divorced person.

At some point in time, however, execution was replaced by divorce as an acceptable way of dealing with adultery. It seems as though the adulterer or adulteress was simply treated as if he or she were dead, insofar as the marriage was concerned.

Jesus' teaching on divorce supports such a concept. He states that divorce is never acceptable unless one's spouse is guilty of sexual immorality. (Matthew 5:32) Notice this exception to God's ideal of "one man, one woman, for life" is simply permitted, not recommended or commanded. It is also important to note that the type of sexual immorality that Jesus discussed was an immoral physical sexual act between two people. Pornography is addictive, destructive and should never be considered as appropriate behavior, but lust is not portrayed in Scripture as a divorceable offense.

Paul's teaching on divorce allows one more exception to this no-divorce policy in situations where one spouse is a Christian and the other is not. He contends that if an unbelieving spouse leaves, the believer should not feel obligated to pursue him/her, but to "let it be so. The brother or sister is not bound in such circumstances." (1 Corinthians 7:12-16) However, as that passage clearly states, no exception is allowed if the non-believing partner wants to remain in the marriage.

What about remarriage?

God's Word indicates that a believer has a right to remarry when the divorce transpired under one of three sets of circumstances.

1 – When a divorce occurred prior to salvation. Paul says that "if anyone is

in Christ, the new creation has come; the old has gone, the new is here." (2 Corinthians 5:17) The old life with its old sins are completely removed through the grace of Christ.

2 – When a divorce occurred because one's spouse is guilty of sexual immorality and is unwilling to repent and live faithfully with the marriage partner. In Matthew 5:32, Jesus indicates that both permissible divorce and remarriage revolves around the immorality issue.

3 – When a divorce occurred as a result of Paul's 1 Corinthians 7 exception – when a non-believing spouse willfully and permanently deserts the believing partner. The believer is "not bound in such circumstances," and remarriage is not a violation of God's Word.

What's your next step?

If you've never been married, don't get married until you're sure you've found God's choice for a life partner – use your head, not just your heart. Understanding God's intolerance for divorce, except in these few specific circumstances, should cause you to choose a spouse carefully. A lengthy courtship can be the best strategy, where both you and your prospective spouse prayerfully seek to understand each other in light of God's Word.

If yours is a troubled marriage and your difficulty is not the result of adultery, take your time and prayerfully seek God's will for your future. Marriage is perhaps the best laboratory for developing Christian character. Most Christians who seek divorce do so as the result of an emotional decision, not a thoughtful one. Studying the Scriptures, continually acknowledging our dependence on God in prayer, and seeking the encouragement and counsel of Christian friends and church leaders, allows us to turn marital conflict into an arena for personal and family growth.

Being human and therefore equipped with the uncanny ability to rationalize, you may be tempted to search for a way out rather than a way through, which would only lead to further frustration rather than your long desired resolution. Remember, both the Old Testament and the teaching of Christ clearly shows that divorce and subsequent remarriage can lead to a proliferation of adultery in God's eyes in future relationships. (Deuteronomy 24, Matthew 5:32)

However, if remaining in your relationship poses a threat to your

children's or your physical safety, do not feel obligated to remain in that environment. Separation in such circumstances may become necessary. But, as is the case with any separation, praying for and working toward individual rehabilitation and eventual reconciliation should continue to be your focus.

If you do have a biblical reason to terminate the marriage, still take your time and seek God's leading. If your partner is an adulterer, don't assume that God wants you to seek a divorce. If your spouse desires forgiveness, even though you've been deeply hurt, your job is to forgive and work toward complete healing in your relationship. Often times it takes time to discern God's leading so, before you begin divorce proceedings, be sure you're not short-circuiting a healing of God that is still in progress.

If your divorce qualifies as biblical and you're considering remarriage, be extremely cautious. Only remarry another committed believer (1 Corinthians 7:39) and take whatever time is required to insure your new marriage will have the best possible chance for success. Remember, in our society, 60% of second marriages and 73% of third marriages end in divorce (www.divorce.usu.edu). So carefully identify what shortcomings led to the tragedy of your first divorce and prepare to avoid them in the future.

If you've experienced divorce for unbiblical reasons and you and your former spouse are Christians and have still not remarried, you should pray for and work toward reconciliation. God loves to work miracles, so give Him the chance. Submit yourself to the counsel of God's Word, mature Christian friends and church leaders, and then pray that the Holy Spirit would grant you both a fresh attitude of forgiveness and healing.

If your divorce was for unbiblical reasons and you've since remarried, stay put. Don't leave your present marriage or try to break up your former spouse's present marriage. As one author put it, "You can't unscramble an egg." Humbly admit your mistake, confess your sin, stay in your present marriage and seek to honor God from now on.

God designed the church to help stimulate believers to holy living. (Hebrews 10:24-25) Our hope is that God's people will want to live in obedience to His Word, even when their emotions tell them something else. To knowingly reject God's direction is frighteningly arrogant. God promises to resist such pride but give grace to the humble. (James 4:6) However, as was the case in Moses' day, believers' hearts can still harden

to the Spirit of God and teaching of His Word. When that happens, HDC's leaders will respond in a way that is consistent with the Scriptures and our core values. We will continue to pray for and encourage those involved, but we will also take a firm stand on Biblical principles.

What should a divorced person expect from HDC?

We hope that everyone attending HDC would feel the security of being loved and welcomed. There are, however, some areas of involvement that require a level of commitment that some participants in our ministry are not yet ready to make. That does not diminish our love for any within our church family, and those areas will still be available to them if or when they decide to engage them. Should a participant in HDC's ministry pursue a divorce for reasons that have no biblical validity, they can expect the following.

Expect a warm welcome: worship services and large events – During HDC's weekend worship services and large events, we gather as an imperfect family where all desperately need God's grace. It is our hope that God's Word will challenge all areas of our lives as we encounter Jesus and strive to become more like Him. We say, "Come as you are but don't leave that way," because we all have a lot of growing up to do.

When we share in the communion service (the Lord's Table) we follow Paul's admonition in 1 Corinthians 11:23-30 – to examine ourselves before we participate in the symbolic meal. Communion is to be celebrated with a clear conscience before God, as we agree with Him about our sin and renew our commitment to honor him in each area of our lives, including those relating to marriage. Likewise, in Romans 6:3-11, the Apostle Paul reminds us that, in water baptism, we are identifying with Christ's effort to redeem us from our sin. Therefore, those who desire to participate in either communion or water baptism should first desire repentance, reflected in an attitude of humility and a willingness to make whatever lifestyle changes are necessary to honor the Lord.

Expect to be challenged: small groups – Small groups are where we do life together. As we gather with other members of our groups, we are regularly challenged about lifestyle choices, by friends who care about our spiritual journey. We would expect the people in your group to lovingly challenge, encourage and pray for you about any area of your life that falls short of God's plan for His children.

Expect some restrictions: positions of leadership – Should a participant of HDC's ministry pursue a divorce for reasons that have no biblical validity, he/she will be asked to resign any position of visible leadership or authority, but would be allowed to continue in fellowship.

Expect accountability: church membership – When you become an official member of HDC, you become a part of a team committed to the task of worldchange. When you sign the *Membership Agreement* you are indicating a desire to be accountable to other members of the church family, to honor God in all areas of your life – spiritual, financial, relational and sexual. Membership affords you opportunities to serve and lead through your lifestyle and your giftedness, encouraging others to serve God at that high level as well.

Church discipline – Our prayer is that the ministry of the Word and encouragement of the Body of Christ would give helpful direction and prevent further damage. However, should the tragedy of a failed marriage lead to a proliferation of adultery through the pursuit of a new relationship or remarriage, then the church discipline process, outlined both in Matthew 18 and HDC's Constitution, will go into effect.

COHABITATION

Why marriage is different from cohabitation

Dennis Rainey – *I have a growing concern that the Christian community has passively watched the "dumbing down" of the marriage covenant. Marriage has become little more than an upgraded social contract between two people – not a holy covenant between a man and a woman and their God for a lifetime. In the Old Testament days a covenant was solemn and binding. When two people entered into a covenant with one another, a goat or lamb would be slain and its carcass would be cut in half. With the two halves separated and lying on the ground, the two people who had formed the covenant would solemnize their promise by walking between the two halves saying, "May God do so to me [cut me in half] if I ever break this covenant with you and God!"*

Jack Hayford – *The covenant of marriage is the single most important human bond that holds all of God's work on the planet together. It is no small wonder that the Lord is passionate about the sanctity of marriage and the stability of the home. This covenant of marriage is based on the covenant God has made with us. It is in the power of His promise to mankind that our personal covenant of marriage can be kept against the forces that would destroy homes and ruin lives.*

In the Bible, a covenant is a blood bond of life and death—it's an "all or nothing" commitment. You could say that it's a contract on steroids—and the Bible says that our two most intimate relationships, our relationship with God and our relationship with a spouse, are both founded on covenants. God could have simply said that He loved us and would never abandon us—that certainly would have been enough because God only tells the truth. But He established a *covenant relationship* with us—to underscore the level of His commitment. Then He gave Mankind a perpetual social monument, to remind us about His abiding love—the covenant of marriage.

We live in a *contractual* culture, that is, everywhere you look you run into fine print. Without signing a contract you can't get cell phone service or television reception. You can't lease or purchase a car without signing a contract. You can't even work out at a gym without signing a contract. And if you want to get married, the same rule applies—you have to fill out legal paperwork, sign your name in the presence of a county official and then bring it to a religious or civic official who also has to sign it and send it back to the place where you received it within ten days after the ceremony—or you're still single!

Over the last 24 hours, 6,646 American married couples have divorced. Studies show that 50 percent of all married couples either end up getting divorces or their relationship throws them into a state of wishing they would (www.divorce.usu.edu). Many people need no other reason than that to choose cohabitation over marriage. I mean, how would you like to sign any other agreement if you knew that there was a 50 percent chance of failure? Would you sign a contract to lease or buy a car if you knew that it would not run 50 percent of the time; or sign a contract for cell phone service knowing that 50 percent of your calls wouldn't go through; or sign that contract (known as a credit card receipt) to fly in an airplane if you knew that you only had a 50 percent chance of landing safely?

Most of the couples who choose to live together before they marry or choose cohabitation rather than marriage, make their decision believing that marriage is just another contract. Actually, their logic is sound—but it's based on a faulty premise. In the eyes of the state, marriage might be a simple contract, but in the eyes of God it is not a contract—it's a covenant. And marriage was not designed by the state—it was designed by God long before the state existed. When we enter into a contract, we enter into a conditional agreement and sign it for *our* protection. A covenant can be either conditional or unconditional, but is an agreement created for the

benefit of the *other* party.

The marriage covenant not only transcends the world's contracts, it transcends our desires and fears. Whenever a man's and a woman's love reaches the point where sexual intimacy or starting a family becomes part of the discussion, God insists that we first enter into a marriage covenant. HDC celebrates this divine design for social stability and personal growth, as reflected in our *Statement of Faith*:

"We believe that marriage, although legally recognized by the state, had already been established by God to provide a healthy and safe environment for personal and spiritual growth. We believe that the Bible defines marriage as a lifelong union between one man and one woman and is the only context for biblical sexual expression."

What should a cohabitating couple expect at HDC?

We hope that everyone attending HDC would feel the security of being loved and welcomed. There are, however, some areas of involvement that require a level of commitment that some participants in our ministry are not yet ready to make. That does not diminish our love for any within our church family, and those areas will still be available to them if or when they decide to engage them.

Expect a warm welcome: worship services and large events—During HDC's weekend worship services and large events, we gather as an imperfect family where all desperately need God's grace. It is our hope that God's Word will challenge all areas of our lives as we encounter Jesus and strive to become more like Him. We say, "Come as you are but don't leave that way," because we all have a lot of growing up to do.

When we share in the communion service (the Lord's Table) we follow Paul's admonition in 1 Corinthians 11:23-30—to examine ourselves before we participate in the symbolic meal. Communion is to be celebrated with a clear conscience before God, as we agree with Him about our sin and renew our commitment to honor him in each area of our lives, including those relating to marriage. Likewise, in Romans 6:3-11, the Apostle Paul reminds us that, in water baptism, we are identifying with Christ's effort to redeem us from our sin. Therefore, those who desire to participate in either communion or water baptism should first desire repentance, reflected in an attitude of humility and a willingness to make whatever lifestyle changes are necessary to honor the Lord.

Expect to be challenged: small groups – Small groups are where we do life together. As we gather with other members of our groups, we are regularly challenged about lifestyle choices, by friends who care about our spiritual journey. We would expect the people in your group to lovingly challenge, encourage and pray for you about any area of your life that falls short of God’s plan for His children.

Expect some restrictions: targeted classes and events – Our targeted marriage classes and events are designed for couples who have chosen to enter the covenant relationship of marriage, and desire to learn how they can better reach their worlds for Christ through their marriage relationship.

Our *Premarital Classes* are designed for couples who are single, not cohabitating couples who are seeking to become legally married. The *Marriage Lifepath* and *Married Couple’s Retreat* are designed for couples in covenant marriage relationships that are also legally recognized by the state.

Expect accountability: church membership – When you become an official member of HDC, you become a part of a team committed to the task of worldchange. When you sign the *Membership Agreement* you are indicating a desire to be accountable to other members of the church family, to honor God in all areas of your life – spiritual, financial, relational and sexual. Membership affords you opportunities to serve and lead through your lifestyle and your giftedness, encouraging others to serve God at that high level as well.

Church discipline – Our prayer is that the ministry of the Word and encouragement of the Body of Christ would give helpful direction and prevent personal and relational damage. However, should an official member of the church (having signed HDC’s *Membership Agreement*) decide to pursue cohabitation, then the church discipline process, outlined both in Matthew 18 and HDC’s Constitution, will go into effect.

Premarital Application Background Interview

Date _____

- Personal Information

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Ph # (Hm) _____ (Wk) _____ (Cell) _____

Vocation _____

Are you engaged? Yes No

If so, what is your anticipated wedding date? _____

- History of the Relationship

1. How did you meet? How long have you been dating each other?

2. How do your family and friends feel about your relationship?

3. Have you ever broken off your relationship?

4. Why did this happen?

5. Why did you get back together?

6. Why are you considering marriage?

-Previous Marriages

7. Have you been married before? If so, were you widowed or divorced?

If you were divorced...

- Why did it end? Was it adultery, abandonment or some other reason?

- When was your divorce finalized?

- Has your previous partner remarried?

- Do you have any children from this previous marriage?

- Spiritual Background

1. Tell me about your church and spiritual background.

2. When and where did you become a Christian? When and where did you put your faith in Jesus? It doesn't have to be an exact date; your age at the time you made your decision will be fine.

3. What effect has Jesus Christ had on your life?

- How would you describe your relationship with Jesus Christ right now?

- Moral Guidelines

1. As couples grow closer to each other emotionally and spiritually, the natural response is to move closer to each other physically. God intends this area of our lives to be enjoyed to the fullest, but within the context of marriage (see Hebrews 13:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8). In fact, we devote an entire session of the course to this topic.

Why do you think God would design sex to be enjoyed only within the context of marriage? Do you see any benefits to waiting?

2. Because the Scriptures are our authority and blueprint, because we care about you and because of the normal sexual pressures you face, we will ask you at different times in the weeks ahead how you are doing in this area. We sincerely want to see you build a strong foundation from the start in your marriage. How do you feel about this?

3. Are you willing to abstain from sexual involvement until your marriage?

4. What boundaries have you put in place in order to remain physically pure?

5. Are you living together? Yes No

Premarital Application Background Interview

Date _____

- Personal Information

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Ph # (Hm) _____ (Wk) _____ (Cell) _____

Vocation _____

Are you engaged? Yes No

If so, what is your anticipated wedding date? _____

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2. When and where did you become a Christian? When and where did you put your faith in Jesus? It doesn't have to be an exact date; your age at the time you made your decision will be fine.

3. What effect has Jesus Christ had on your life?

- How would you describe your relationship with Jesus Christ right now?

- Moral Guidelines

1. As couples grow closer to each other emotionally and spiritually, the natural response is to move closer to each other physically. God intends this area of our lives to be enjoyed to the fullest, but within the context of marriage (see Hebrews 13:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8). In fact, we devote an entire session of the course to this topic.

Why do you think God would design sex to be enjoyed only within the context of marriage? Do you see any benefits to waiting?

2. Because the Scriptures are our authority and blueprint, because we care about you and because of the normal sexual pressures you face, we will ask you at different times in the weeks ahead how you are doing in this area. We sincerely want to see you build a strong foundation from the start in your marriage. How do you feel about this?

3. Are you willing to abstain from sexual involvement until your marriage?

4. What boundaries have you put in place in order to remain physically pure?

5. Are you living together? Yes No