



4Dates 4Weeks

Part 3 – We’re Together for Life, But Want More

Pastor Ted Cunningham

Today is a little bit more serious and today, we’re contending for marriages. All week, I’ve been praying that the Lord would meet couples today, that the Lord would meet couples in their walk with each other, but, more importantly, calling them to a walk with him.

I felt the heaviness in the first service. I know it’s called 4Dates4Weeks, but’s the whole reason we’re doing this series is to get couples to begin experiencing high levels of marital satisfaction. I know we’re contending today, and I encourage our church family, church at home family to be praying even during this message.

I also want to tell you we will be talking about sexual intimacy in this message. I know, at our home, it’s a very open conversation with a 15-year-old and a 17-year-old, and it has been since they were very young. I know every home needs to make that decision so you may get to a point... I promise you it’s not going to get too graphic. I guarded my lips to the best of my ability with that in the first service, but I just want to give parents plenty of warning that if this is something you feel you need to take your kids and check them in, this would be a great time to experience our children’s ministries here or to show them something on the tablet in another room. That’s all on you.

I just want to say I know many of you right now are contending for a Christian nation. In that, I don’t want you to ever forget we’re not raising our children in a Christian culture. From the digital age and all that they are exposed to, Mom and Dad, don’t react to the culture. Be the primary author of your child’s heart. By the way, you already are. You are already the first ones to write messages on the hearts of your children.

We’re going to take it so far today and then we’ll stop at some point, but as Ricky Ricardo would say, “You’re gonna have some explaining to do,” and we’ll leave that to you. We’ll let that be on Mom and Dad. Understand that this is your responsibility. Our church wants to echo what we hope you’re already teaching in the home.

The message is called **We’re Together for Life, But Want More**. So, there are two parts to this. I think the church, by and large, has done a great job... I’m not talking about this church, but just The church. As I visit churches around the nation and as I have other friends in ministry, I think the “We’re together for life” part, the exclusivity that we’ll talk about in a second, we do well at. We’re together. Until either the Lord returns or calls one of us home; we’ve made that commitment.

Amy and I celebrate 25 years of marriage this year. We hope to see a 50th wedding anniversary, but we don't want cards at our 50th wedding anniversary party that say, "You made it!" "Good for you! You endured one another." "You got here." That's not what we are looking for. We're looking for more. We want more.

That's why we're doing 4Dates4Weeks. We're together for life... Some of you have made that commitment and the word divorce is not in your vocabulary but you know you're looking for more.

Your marriage is doing one of two things. You saw this graphic a couple of years ago, I may have even shown it last year. But it's the decide or drift. You're either choosing to enjoy life together and making the decision to stay on that road, or you've stopped deciding and you drift. I have never met a couple that made the decision to drift. They didn't wake up and go, "We no longer want to enjoy life together so we're going to drift..." I've not met that couple. It's they stopped deciding, they stopped being intentional with what was once natural.

We said it early on. What was natural early on must be intentional (and intense) later on, and it can become and feel natural again. Most all relationships start off the same in attraction and chemistry. If you do a study or take a poll of couples who are happily married and couples who divorced, they're going to say relational attraction and chemistry and satisfaction was about the same early on.

It's the connection we're talking about – getting on the bus together and going down one of two roads. You're either deciding, daily **deciding** to enjoy life together... And as different seasons and stages hit your marriage, you're going to live in **discovery**. We've looked at this. We all go through different seasons and stages. We're all going through a season called a global pandemic. You're going to have children and you're going to have different stages of their life. It's different parenting a toddler than parenting teenager.

You're going to go through different stages and you're going to become different people. Why? Because bills change you, kids change you, pandemics change you, and we want to live in curiosity and fascination because we made the decision to, knowing I'm not the same person at 25 years of marriage as I was as a newlywed. Amy's worked on me a lot in the last 25 years. She's changed me a lot. But I'm not the same person. And guess what? In another ten years, I won't be the same person. When I'm an empty nester... Empty nesting I'm sure is going to look very different than having a home with teenagers.

When I get older and have to do more visits to the doctor, when I have to spend a part time job basically taking care of my physical health, that will change me. It's going to change my wife. But we're in **discovery, devotion, dedication**. Some of you are on this road, you've made the decision you're not going anywhere. You're together for life and you want more as the seasons and stages hit your marriage.

There are others who when the seasons or stages hit their marriage, they're no longer deciding; they're **drifting** and every change brings with it a new piece of **disillusionment** or a new feeling of

disillusionment, a new, “This isn’t what I signed up for.” “This is not the person I married.” “This is not what I want.” Rather than curiosity and fascination, we live with disillusionment and **disconnection**.

I want to give good news today. If you are on this road – drift, disillusionment, disconnection – and headed toward divorce, please hear me. We believe that because of Jesus being raised from the dead and the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same power that can raise your dead life and save your soul, that same power can raise your dead marriage.

One elder told me this morning, “You can choose today to turn the bus around. You can make the decision to turn the bus around and get back on the road to decision.” And it can happen in a moment. I’m working with a lot of couples right now. We’re trying to get that bus moving back to decision, discovery, devotion, and dedication. We’re looking at the factors and skills as they both pursue their relationship with the Lord, focusing on these factors and skills, but this is what I love about working with couples: know that at any moment, the Lord can do a miracle. I’ve watched it. I’ve watched it happen. I’ve watched the couple break in counseling. I’ve watched them leave mad at each other, but then I get a call a couple of days later it’s like, “God has done something. I can’t fully explain it and I can’t fully put words to it.” This is the path this church desires for every couple of this church and in this community.

Today, we want to look at two big ideas from the scripture: **Exclusivity and Intimacy**.

Exclusivity is that we’re together for life. Exclusivity says, “I am yours. I’m with you until the end. Until the Lord returns or calls one of us home.” In hillbilly terms, “You’re stuck with me. I’m not going anywhere.”

Intimacy, though, that’s the “I want more. I want to grow closer emotionally and physically.” Today, we’re talking to the spouse who feels abandoned emotionally. We’re talking to the spouse who feels abandoned physically, and what you can do to get back on the path.

I’ll be honest with you... Last week we laughed a lot together. The laughs are very few in this message. We were discussing it in the back after the 8:30. “Can you add a little bit more...” “Yeah, add a little bit here and there.” I don’t about you, but I feel the heaviness with this. I like what they said back there. “I don’t think you have to take the heaviness of every couple you’re working with on and into this message.” I get that and I appreciate that. But many of you right now are feeling the heaviness for the family member that you’re thinking about. It’s not your marriage you’re thinking about; you’re thinking of someone else.

I want to start with talking about exclusivity, which, again, I think the church prioritizes exclusivity, teaching couples that marriage is between a man and a woman for a lifetime. I want to look at three benefits, three keys to exclusivity that the scripture calls us to.

The first one is that **exclusivity creates security**. There is a real blessing to be in a marriage to know “I’m going to go through some difficult seasons and stages and I’m not always going to have my best moments as a person, but to know you’re not going anywhere, to know you’re going to put up with me...”

I asked a guy years ago when he was talking to me about my marriage. I thought it was the best response I ever heard. I asked the guy, "Do you know why I have a good marriage?" He goes, "Yeah." I go, "Wow, okay, why?" He goes, "Amy." Well, okay. But the security in that, the rest in that. The laying your head on the pillow at night knowing... That's where it starts today. That you would be exclusive in your marriage and in your love for your spouse. If you have young, budding love, and you ask somebody from this church to do your wedding, we get very serious about this. I even put in vows sometimes, "Until the Lord returns or calls one of you home."

In the Song of Solomon 2, we read... I love the Shulamite woman's words. **16 My beloved is mine and I am his...** That's a statement of exclusivity in the Song of Solomon. ... **he browses among the lilies.** Some scholars would say that there were many to choose from and there were many options for Solomon, but he's going exclusive with her. He's choosing her. Exclusivity says that, right? Exclusivity says, "I choose you." In a moment, we're going to see that intimacy says, "I want you." Exclusivity says, "I'm with you until the end and we're going to work through everything we have to work through." Intimacy says, "I want this. I want to grow closer to you."

Exclusivity protects us sexually. The scripture is going to be very clear and very explicit in this passage that we read in Proverbs 5 - **15 Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well. 16 Should your springs overflow in the streets... You've got some explaining to do at lunch. ...your streams of water in the public squares? 17 Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers.**

18 May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. This is why we celebrate young, budding love here. We celebrate the wife of your youth. Amy and I will be married 25 years this year and I have gained a pound with every year of marriage. When we married, I weighed 160, so do the math. As your pastor, I just lied to you. I've gained a little more than a pound a year. But my Driver's License still says 185. It was funny... I'll never forget going to the DMV... But for years, my license for years said 175. When I bumped up to 185 and I was getting my new license, she goes, "Is your height still the same?" "Yeah." "Weight 175?" I went, "Yeah." She gave me a look, so I went ahead and bumped that up to 185. I don't when I have to get it again.

But this is what I love about exclusivity as we talk about intimacy in a moment. Rejoicing with one another because guess what? Your body is going to go through different seasons and stages. You ain't gonna be the same person at 70. I love all you people doing cross fit, but it ain't going to last forever. I love what the one mom said when her daughter wanted to get a sparrow tattoo on her arm. Her mom was fighting her. "You ain't getting a sparrow on your arm." The daughter asked why not. The mom said, "Because in a few years, it's going to be a crow." That's Ecclesiastes 12. Your body begins breaking down. But we are to rejoice in the wife of your youth.

19 A loving doe, a graceful deer... Guys, hear me ...**may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be intoxicated with her love.** Who is this passage talking to? This is a dad talking to his son. I've seen some people leave with small children and totally honor that, 100%. But, Dad, this is a conversation for you to lead out with. **20 Why, my son, be intoxicated with another man's wife?** Go exclusive with one woman for one lifetime. **Why embrace the bosom of a wayward woman?**

All of what we're talking about today, the third part of exclusivity – **exclusivity honors God**. Matthew 19: 6 says clearly... We read this last week. **6 "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."** That's exclusivity. Many of you have committed to that. Many of you are in a stalled out, drifting marriage and not going anywhere because you continue to honor God in your decisions. And we honor you for that decision.

But here's what we know about exclusivity – **exclusivity is a foundation, it is not a guarantee**. Commitment to exclusivity, which many of you have made, does not guarantee intimacy. So, we want to move from exclusivity along to intimacy as well. Maybe you're seen this. As we talk about growing in your relationship with others, you've heard of the horizontal and vertical. We have a graphic with this with marriage too and many of you have seen it. It's been in all sorts of marriage books, if you've read marriage books or if you've been to marriage conferences, you've seen this illustration. The husband-and-wife relationship. If you want to grow closer to each other – we looked at this with the unity candle last week in 4Dates4Weeks – you pursue your relationship with the Lord. For some of you, this is where all of this is starting today.

We're going to get to some practical steps at the end, but right now, let us stay focused on your relationship with the Lord. To be very honest, many of you are exclusive in your marriage. You don't have a thriving marriage, you don't have a great marriage, you say we are in drift, but the reason you're still together is because your desire is to honor the Lord, and you're growing in your relationship with the Lord. So, the idea is that you're growing in your relationship with the Lord... And the closer you get to the Lord, the more intimacy that you have with God draws you closer together as a couple. But if I can add into this where I think some couples stall out. The foundation of this is the exclusivity, but I meet with a lot of couples who stall out. One or both spouses stall out in their relationship with the Lord and ultimately in their relationship with each other.

I meet with couples where one spouse is pursuing their relationship with the Lord and they are running at a sprint and the other spouse has stalled out. We don't want couples to just say we're together for life, we want couples to say we're going for more. That's the intimacy that you need to be pursuing in your walk with the Lord and your relationship with God and ultimately in your relationship with each other.

We asked several widows and widowers in our church to just share their story with us. Here's what I love about the singles of our church and I love about the widows and the widowers of our church. They desire to be great back-up singers to the duets that are in here and the duets that are watching online. I'd like you to hear some encouragement, some practical steps that you can take from Stephanie.

Video plays: My name is Stephanie Switzer and I met Rick on a blind date in 1999. We were together for 14 years married. He passed away suddenly January 26, 2016, leaving me and his daughters behind. I have some advice that I'd like to give some couples.

Some of the advice I would give a newly engaged or newly married couple would be if you're in an argument, does it really matter who's right? I would encourage you, if you are in an argument, to stop and say three things you love about each other. Rick and I would always do that. It's really hard to be

mad at somebody when you're counting all the ways that you love them. I really touched home with Ted and last week's service. The daily delay, the weekly withdrawal, the annual abandon. We were good about the daily delay – we would talk about everything that would happen – but I really wish we had done the weekly withdrawal more and the annual abandon.

Everything we did, we did as a family. That was on me. Rick wanted to go out and do things on our own as a couple and I was like, "No, we're a family; we should go out and do this as a family." Now that I don't have that, I really wish that we had gotten together singularly or with other couples as adults and had that time to ourselves because not having that now makes me miss that. And you should invest in your relationship because if your focus has been on these kids for so long, make sure you have something left when they leave the nest because ultimately, you're going to be across from each other at the breakfast table and if you don't have anything to talk about from your daily delay and weekly withdrawal and your annual abandon, you're not going to have anything to say to each other.

Having somebody that has your back through life is invaluable. And being part of a couple is truly liberating to have somebody help you make decisions. Some advice I'd give to my peers would be even if you've been married for quite a while, don't take that person for granted. They may not always be there and just turn to your spouse right now and look them in the eye and then think of walking out the church doors and not ever having that feeling again.

What's gotten me through this is having the church, having God the focal point of my life, coming back to a closer personal journey. And there are some things that I wish we would have done in our marriage. Just remember that God is the center of everything. If you don't have God in your relationship, you're not going to have a healthy relationship with each other because that is the center point of every family.

Ted Cunningham: Would you help me thank Stephanie, church for sharing. We appreciate that, Stephanie.

We've been talking about couples in drift, but that drift happens also in our walk with Christ. It's one of the reasons we're supposed to have elders leading the church because elders are to keep a church from moving into drift. And we can learn a lot about a church in drift from Revelation and from the Church at Ephesus. It's interesting when you think about a couple in drift. Sometimes you're like, *Man they got it going on. These are two hard-working people, they seem to be great parents, you see all sorts of great family time that they spend together, and they seem to be killing it.* Sometimes you don't even notice that they are in drift.

That's really what you see when you read about Ephesus and the Lord's word to Ephesus. They are doing great things. They're doing a lot of great things, but they have forsaken the love that they had at first. They don't have what they once had. And we read this of a church in drift. This is a great encouragement for what they are doing until you get to what he has against them.

2 I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. 3 You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. 4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. “The love for me is not as fiery as it once was.” That’s why I’m encouraging you. If you’re marriage is adrift, the first place you start today is your walk with the Lord.

Have you drifted in your walk with the Lord? There are a lot of things that can take us down that path. Jobs can, the pursuit of money, other relationships, even if you’ve not even been in one, but you’re just fantasizing about what life would be like with another person. How do you, as the one elder said today, turn the bus around? How do you get back to the love you once had?

There are three steps in Verse 5 for this church, and it works for us.

1. **5 Consider how far you have fallen!** So back to thinking about what was natural when you were first in love. I can say this for couples. Touching was natural. It was easy. No one has to tell an engaged or newlywed couple, “You guys should touch more. You guys should hold hands more. You should have more non-sexual touching.” You don’t have to do that. We don’t have to teach newlyweds or engaged couples, “You should spend more quality time together. You should talk on the phone more.” So, that’s the first step. Just consider what you once had. T

2. **And then, Repent...** To turn the bus around. For many in here today, we’re praying that the Lord leads you to a place where you repent your sins before him and then before each other.

3. **and do the things you did at first.** What was natural early on, you are now intentional with later on. And if you are intentional with it later on, it can feel natural again.

If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

You’ve heard the definition before that intimacy is being fully known and fully accepted. We want to look at two ways that works in marriage today.

Intimacy is being fully known and fully accepted emotionally. In the Song of Solomon 2, Solomon is calling out the Shulamite woman. They are not yet married, but he wants to get to know her and he wants to connect with her emotionally. He says, **14 My dove...**

This is my little pet name for Amy. I took it straight from the Bible. She likes to have conversations with me three rooms away, and it’s exhausting. Raise your hand if your wife likes to have conversations with you three rooms away and she thinks her voice carries, but Rhonda, he can’t hear you. So, what I do, from three rooms away, is just go, “Coo, coo.” I call her out because she’s **...in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding places on the mountainside...** She’s a gentle, tender dove. Let’ me say that again, guys. She’s a gentle, tender dove. And he wants to get to know her.

Part two of this verse – *...show me your face, let me hear your voice...* He is saying, “I want to get to know you.” That was natural early on. And if I can just call it out in some of the men in here. Your wife feels emotionally disconnected from you because you are no longer desiring to call her out. You’ve lost the desire to get to know her. You’re like, “I know her. I told her when we married that I love her and if anything changes, I’d let her know.” That’s terrible.

Do you know why you don’t know her? I’ll tell you why you don’t know her. How many times do we say this? I feel like a broken record. It’s because you’re going through different seasons and stages. Many of you know it. The pandemic has changed you. The loss of your business changed you. Something broke in your spouse and they’re not as talkative as they once were. Take the lead on this and begin to call your spouse out. Show them your face.

Then the third part of this verse is key, guys. And it’s something we have to learn more than anything – safety. When she begins to share, when the dove starts coming out of the mountainside and starts creeping out, the response is not, “I can’t believe you said that. Why would you feel that? Why would you say that?” No, *...for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.* Safety.

I know there are singles in here that feel lonely, but there are also spouses in here that feel lonely. The research I’ve done over the years has said sometimes the loneliness in marriage is even more painful than the loneliness that person experienced as a single. When a spouse is emotionally disconnected... And loneliness is when one or both of you can feel abandoned emotionally.

Intimacy is being fully known and fully accepted physically. In Song of Solomon 1 and 2, they are dating, they’re courting. In Chapter 3, they get married. And then in Chapter 4, they have a honeymoon. I’m not going to share the passages of scripture for the sake of time and content, but I would encourage you to read Verse 1-6 of Song of Solomon 4. It’s the Shulamite woman – now bride; they’re married – exposing her naked body to Solomon. And when he sees her naked body, this is what he says, *You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you.* Every woman in here wants to hear from her husband, “There is no flaw in you.”

Amy, I think she’s watching right now at The Gathering place. She knows I love to give her compliments. Ladies, I want to help you with this one little tidbit. Receive the compliment. “You look good today.” “No I don’t.” “I like your hair today.” “Well, you’re just saying that.”

I joke with Amy all the time because sometimes she doesn’t... This may be too much information we didn’t discuss, but I wanted to put it out there. She knows. I’ve said this before. But like when her hair is more curly, almost like an 80s perm like after a shower... I met her with more that perm look in her hair 27 years ago. I’m like, “Oh, I like that.” She’ll go, “I haven’t done my hair yet.” I go, “Can you just hike those bangs up a little bit for me?” Ladies, I see this so often. I watch men try to praise the beauty of their wife in a sincere way and women shoot them down. Receive it. Men, give it. Ladies receive it.

Loneliness in marriage. There are many lonely marriage beds in here. Loneliness is when one or both of you feel abandoned physically. And the marriage bed isn’t infrequent; it’s gone completely cold. There is no intimacy.

We read this in the Song of Solomon 5, after the honeymoon. If you read Song of Solomon 5, between Verses 1-2, some time has taken place. In Verse 2, it's been a little while now since the honeymoon and this is a dream sequence that she is having. It's talking directly about loneliness and the being together physically. **2 I slept but my heart was awake.** The Shulamite bride says. **Listen! My beloved is knocking: "Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one.** For us in the Ozarks, that feels weird, but it's a term of affection in Hebrew poetry. **My head is drenched with dew, my hair with the dampness of the night."** So, Solomon has been outside, but now he's coming in and he wants to be with his bride.

She says... And I'm going to try not to put tone in this. He wants to be with her physically and she says, **3 I have taken off my robe—must I put it on again? I have washed my feet—must I soil them again?** What she's saying is, "I have gotten ready for bed, go away. I don't want to be with you." Guys, another warning for us is to not stand there at the door and keep pounding. How do you respond when you initiate and you put the bid for connection out there and are rejected? We have that in the scripture.

4 My beloved thrust his hand through the latch-opening; my heart began to pound for him. Some scholars have said that is arousal, but most scholars do not believe that is arousal. They believe that is a sign of compassion. If anything is more frustrating in marriage counseling, it's when one spouse moves to the center and opens up her heart to her husband and he backs away from that. And then she begins to shut down and move away as he opens up. You see this all the time, this back and forth. "I'm ready to do something and to see God move in our marriage, but why should now why be the time and why should you be the one that gets to decide that... Sometimes I want to go, "If you both could just show up together at the same time."

But Solomon backs away. And in that, she moves toward him. **5 I arose to open for my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with flowing myrrh, on the handles of the bolt. 6 I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had left; he was gone.** Most agree what we see here is the perfect response to rejection and that is just kindness and gentleness and space. Not standing at the door and continuing to pound until she lets you in.

My heart sank at his departure. I looked for him but did not find him. I called him but he did not answer. And then she goes out into the city looking for him.

So, what do you do? If you're both going to be pursuing your relationship... I have to end with this idea. If you're both going to pursue your relationship with Christ, you're going to make the gospel the center of your life and now the center of your marriage, and you're moving in intimacy with God, toward intimacy with God.

If you feel emotionally disconnected from your spouse, make bids for connection. This is Dr. John Gottman's term. A bid for connection can be just something as subtle as a non-sexual touch. It can be something as subtle as a sigh. It can be a walk-by in the house where you just glance at one another. A lot of times, men think that when that bid for connection is made, they have to interpret the bid. Don't worry about interpreting the bid, just acknowledge the bid. **Turn toward the bid.**

You're like, "Every time I turn toward the bid, it's going to take 30 minutes of long conversation." But some of you are emotionally disconnected right now and you're no longer receiving one another's bids. Continue to make bids. Maybe not as many. You're like, "Ted, I can't handle the rejection." **If your bids for connection are rejected, whether that's emotionally or physically, respond in kindness**, not criticism, not stonewalling, not belittling, not withdrawal. There are a lot of guys who feel their wife's heart has a brick wall around it and they are going to get through that brick wall, and they are going to go up and beat that wall down. Every attempt you make to take down your wife's wall adds another layer to it. Make bids for connection. Receive the bids for connection. When the bids are rejected, give space, respond in kindness and gentleness.

This is key. **If your marriage bed is lonely, pursue emotional connection first.** My friend, Michael Sytsma is a Wesleyan pastor who turned sex therapist. He once told me, "Ninety percent of the problems in the bedroom are solved outside the bedroom." By that, what he's saying is there are cases where it is something physical going on that they need to work through, but, Ted, it's solved outside the bedroom." You're not going to solve the problem of the bedroom in your bedroom. You're going to solve them by pursuing emotional connection first.

That is the whole reason why we're doing 4Dates4Weeks. We want a couple that's in drift, that's in disillusionment to go, "Okay, we can do this." This is low-hanging fruit. I work with couples who are on the path of disillusionment, disconnection, headed toward separation and divorce. I try to help them do dates. It's something that can happen. Sometimes it's a 30-minute date, an hour date for separated couples of how they can honor one another gate that's in that wall and how they can provide emotional safety when they step into the gate. And if the wife lets him in for a few moments that he doesn't take advantage of that, but he honors the gate and he honors the heart and then he's able to step back out.

Next week, we're going to talk to you about Marriage 911 and we're going to ask many of you who are on the path of decision and discovery, dedication, devotion, that you would consider being a Marriage 911 mentor in our church. Others, we're going to ask you to participate by showing up as husband and wife to that program that our church offers.

We also have scholarships for marriage intensive. We filled the gap a couple of weeks ago by asking Pam Hazel to create a one-day marriage intensive. We felt like there was a big gap between one hour every week or every other week and a marriage intensive of four days, so we're going to provide a one-day marriage intensive for couples. The church is going to offer scholarship for that as well.

If your bus is headed down drift lane, that you would be participating in the simplicity of a date night. For those who are already on the path of decision, we're doing 4Dates4Weeks, so you can continue enjoying life together and continue feeding into your marriage. And you'll have a thriving marriage, not just a marriage of exclusivity, but a marriage of intimacy.

I'm going to ask Mickey and Mackenzi Pittman to step up now and share with you all the great adventurous dates. You all want to know who the winner is. Lots of crazy went on. We're going to give out the prize for Most Adventurous Date and then challenge them with Most Romantic. Mickey is going

to share with you his plans for Most Romantic Date this week, and it better be better than Wendy's, buddy.

Mickey: Our plans are \$1.50 Frosties.

Mackenzi: Last week, Ted shared that Katie and I are on a committee that was tasked with stalking... I mean following your dates. We've seen a lot of really fun ones through Most Creative Date and this week with Most Adventurous Date.

Mickey: We saw some great ones. A lot of axe throwing. A lot of hikes, even in the rain. There was a polar bear plunge where a couple jumped in Lake Taneycommo. I'm pretty sure if I planned that, I'd be on the lonely marriage couch not the marriage bed.

Mackenzi: That's true. So, we're excited. The winner of this week's challenge will get two Canopy Ziplining tours at Wolf Mountain and then a \$50.00 to Black Sheep Burger in Springfield, which is really delicious. This couple that won this week really stood out to us because one husband fulfilled his wife's lifelong dream of swimming with sharks. So, Brendan and Bekah House are this week's winners. They were in the 8:30 service, but we are really excited for them, so give them a round of applause.

Mickey: So, like Ted said, fellas, it is time to bring it. It is time for the romantic date so be planning. Most romantic will win the prize next week.

Mackenzi: So, you guys are dismissed. Happy dating. And we'll see you next Sunday.