

MARRIAGE & MINISTRY

Study Guide — Based on the Girl Get Real Podcast Transcript with Diana Murphy

Core theme: When marriage is healthy, ministry is strengthened. The transcript emphasizes that a spouse, communication, unity, submission to God's design, and learning to serve one another are foundational to ministry.

How to Use This Guide

Read each section slowly, discuss the questions with your spouse or small group, and identify one practical change you can make. This guide intentionally follows the themes and language of the conversation rather than adding outside teaching.

1. THE PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE MINISTRY

The marriage conference began from the conviction that family is central to the church. The conversation describes a progression: strong marriages strengthen families; strong families strengthen churches; and healthy marriages can help the kingdom grow and flourish.

Key idea: Marriage ministry is not simply another church program. It is an investment in the relationships that help form healthy families and, ultimately, healthy churches.

Transcript emphasis: “Our families are as strong as our marriages, our churches are as strong as our family.”

Discussion Questions

- Why does the transcript connect the health of marriages to the health of families and churches?
- What does it look like to “nourish what’s there” in a marriage?
- How might a church unintentionally treat marriage ministry as optional when the transcript presents it as foundational?

2. YOUR FAMILY IS YOUR FIRST MINISTRY

A central lesson in the conversation is that ministry activity can become a problem when it causes a person to neglect the home. Diana describes learning that being willing to serve, seeing needs, and having gifts does not automatically mean that every opportunity is hers to accept.

Key principle: “Everything that I can do doesn’t mean that I should do it.”

The transcript warns against a “see a need, fill a need” mindset when it is disconnected from God's direction, the season of life, or communication with one's spouse.

Reflection

- What ministry responsibilities are currently competing for your attention?
- Are there things you are doing simply because you see a need and know you can help?
- Could any good activity be crowding out your first ministry—your family?

3. BALANCE REQUIRES THE HOLY SPIRIT AND COMMUNICATION

The transcript does not present a one-size-fits-all formula for balancing marriage and ministry. Instead, it emphasizes seeking the Holy Spirit and communicating with one's spouse before acting on ministry opportunities.

Three-part pattern from the conversation:

1	See the need	Recognize that someone may genuinely need help.
2	Seek guidance	Ask the Holy Spirit whether you should step into that need.
3	Communicate	Bring the opportunity to your spouse and seek unity before moving forward.

Key warning: Ministry done without communication can create resentment, bitterness, chaos, and the feeling that ministry matters more than the marriage.

Discussion Questions

- How does communication protect a marriage from ministry-related resentment?
- What does it mean in practical terms to seek your spouse's input before saying yes to ministry?
- Where are you most tempted to act first and communicate later?

4. UNITY: “WE ARE ONE NOW”

One of the strongest statements in the transcript is that marriage changes the way ministry should be approached. Diana describes moving from an individual mindset to recognizing that she and her husband are one.

Key idea: Unity in marriage affects the way ministry flows through the couple. The conversation describes being “out of sync” with a spouse as potentially harmful—not only to the marriage but also to the people being ministered to.

Transcript emphasis: “My marriage is what fuels my ministry.”

Think About It

- What does unity look like beyond simply agreeing with your spouse?
- How could being “out of sync” with your spouse affect the people you are trying to serve?
- What conversations need to happen in your marriage so that ministry becomes something you carry together rather than separately?

5. MARRIAGE REVEALS YOUR BLIND SPOTS

The conversation presents marriage as a classroom. Conflict, confrontation, uncomfortable conversations, and differences can reveal attitudes and behaviors that are difficult to see in ourselves.

Diana describes discovering pride and selfishness even while doing things that looked kind, helpful, and sacrificial to everyone else. Her husband helped her recognize that good-looking service can still be out of alignment when the household is being neglected.

Key principle: Your spouse may see something in you that others cannot see because marriage brings you into close, ongoing relationship.

Personal Inventory

- What blind spots has your spouse helped you recognize?
- Do you receive correction from your spouse as an attack or as an opportunity to grow?
- Are there “good” things you are doing that may still be unhealthy because of how they affect your family?

6. LEARNING COMPASSION THROUGH MARRIAGE

Because spouses are often different, marriage becomes a training ground for learning patience, compassion, listening, and understanding. The transcript says that learning to relate to a spouse who struggles differently can prepare us to relate compassionately to people outside the marriage.

Key idea: Ministry is people connecting with people—listening, being patient, understanding the person behind the information, and responding to their actual struggle.

Application

- What difference between you and your spouse is hardest for you to appreciate?
- How has your marriage taught you to listen differently?
- How could the patience you are learning at home improve the way you minister to others?

7. DON'T ASSUME YOUR MARRIAGE IS “GOOD ENOUGH”

The younger couple in the conversation arrived at the marriage conference assuming they were doing well and did not need much help. The experience exposed weaknesses in communication and ministry boundaries.

Key principle: “Marriages always need sharpening.”

The transcript encourages couples to build a foundation before the difficult season arrives. Marriage difficulties are not presented as proof that a marriage has failed; rather, couples can prepare for “rocky times” by establishing communication, connection, and shared foundations.

Discussion Questions

- What areas of your marriage need sharpening even if things are currently going well?
- What foundation are you building now for future difficult seasons?
- What would it look like to seek help before a crisis instead of after one?

8. SERVING YOUR SPOUSE

A major moment at the marriage conference involved husbands and wives washing one another's feet. The conversation connects the act with humility, service, love, and allowing a spouse to serve.

The discussion especially highlights the difficulty strong, independent people can have with receiving help. The act of allowing a husband to serve was described as a meaningful invitation: "Please serve me." The resulting moment was experienced as a breakthrough for the couples involved.

Key principle: Serving your spouse is not only about what you do for them. Sometimes it is also about allowing them to do for you what only a spouse can do.

Reflection Questions

- Do you find it easier to serve than to be served? Why?
- Are you unintentionally communicating, "I don't need you," to your spouse?
- What is one way you can intentionally allow your spouse to serve you this week?

9. NEEDING ONE ANOTHER IS NOT WEAKNESS

The conversation explores independence, particularly the struggle of believing, "I can do everything myself." The breakthrough came through recognizing that marriage includes a healthy dependence on one's spouse and that spouses have unique things to offer one another.

Key idea: There are things a spouse can provide that no one else can provide in the same way. Recognizing that need can deepen intimacy and strengthen the marriage.

Important distinction

The conversation explicitly clarifies that this does not mean a wife cannot have a job or be capable and independent in every practical sense. The focus is on understanding one's role in marriage, honoring the marriage relationship, and communicating love and respect.

Personal Application

- What do you value most about what your spouse uniquely brings to your life?
- Where has independence become an obstacle to intimacy?
- How can you communicate to your spouse, "I need you," in a healthy and genuine way?

10. WHEN MARRIAGE GETS RIGHT, MINISTRY GETS BETTER

The conversation repeatedly returns to one conclusion: ministry should not be built at the expense of marriage. Instead, a healthy marriage can become a source of strength for ministry.

Transcript emphasis: "When my marriage got right, my ministry got even better."

Closing principle: Marriage and ministry almost coincide when a couple submits to the way the Lord has designed marriage. According to the conversation, alignment at home creates room for ministry to flourish.

Final Discussion

- What is God showing you about your marriage through this study?
- What ministry activity, commitment, or habit needs to be reconsidered?

- What conversation do you need to have with your spouse this week?
- What is one specific action you will take to strengthen your marriage before strengthening your ministry?

PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

Choose one area and write a specific action. Keep it simple enough to begin this week.

Area	My Action Step	When?
Communication		
Time together		
Ministry boundaries		
Serving my spouse		
Receiving from my spouse		
Seeking the Holy Spirit		
Unity / shared decisions		

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Your family is your first ministry.
- Seeing a need does not automatically mean you are the person who should fill it.
- Seek the Holy Spirit and communicate with your spouse before taking on ministry responsibilities.
- Marriage can reveal blind spots, pride, selfishness, and areas where growth is needed.
- Learning to love, listen to, and understand your spouse can prepare you to minister to people who are different from you.
- Healthy marriage requires humility, service, communication, and unity.
- Allowing your spouse to serve you can be an expression of love and trust.
- Marriage needs continual sharpening—even when everything seems fine.
- A strong marriage can strengthen and fuel effective ministry.

Source note: This study guide is based solely on the supplied Girl Get Real podcast transcript featuring Diana Murphy. It preserves the conversation's themes and framing and is not intended to add outside teaching or resolve theological questions beyond what was discussed in the transcript.