

✠ FRONTLINE



MARRIAGE WORKSHOP

A sepia-toned illustration of a rural landscape. In the foreground, a vineyard with rows of grapevines is visible, separated from a dirt road by a wooden fence. The road leads into the distance, flanked by fields and trees. In the background, rolling hills are visible under a sky with soft clouds. The word "Welcome" is superimposed in the center of the image.

Welcome

Discussion

1. How has your view of marriage changed since your wedding day?

Discussion

2. If “sex begins in the kitchen”, what practical steps can couples take to improve their relational intimacy in everyday interactions, and how might these steps address specific barriers to sexual intimacy you’ve observed in your own or others’ marriages?



Session2

Marriage as Gift

*“²³There “This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man.”*

Genesis 2:23

“Marriage is a unique expression of Christ and the church. Marriage was created so we could fully image God in the world. To be accurate image bearers, we need to exist in relationships of commitment and love. Jesus is the image of God, and his relationship with us, his church, is a model we’re to follow. Marriage, in particular, mirrors Jesus’ relationship with us in unique ways. It’s a lifelong relationship based on a promise of love and grace that creates oneness.”

Winston T. Smith - *Marriage Matters*



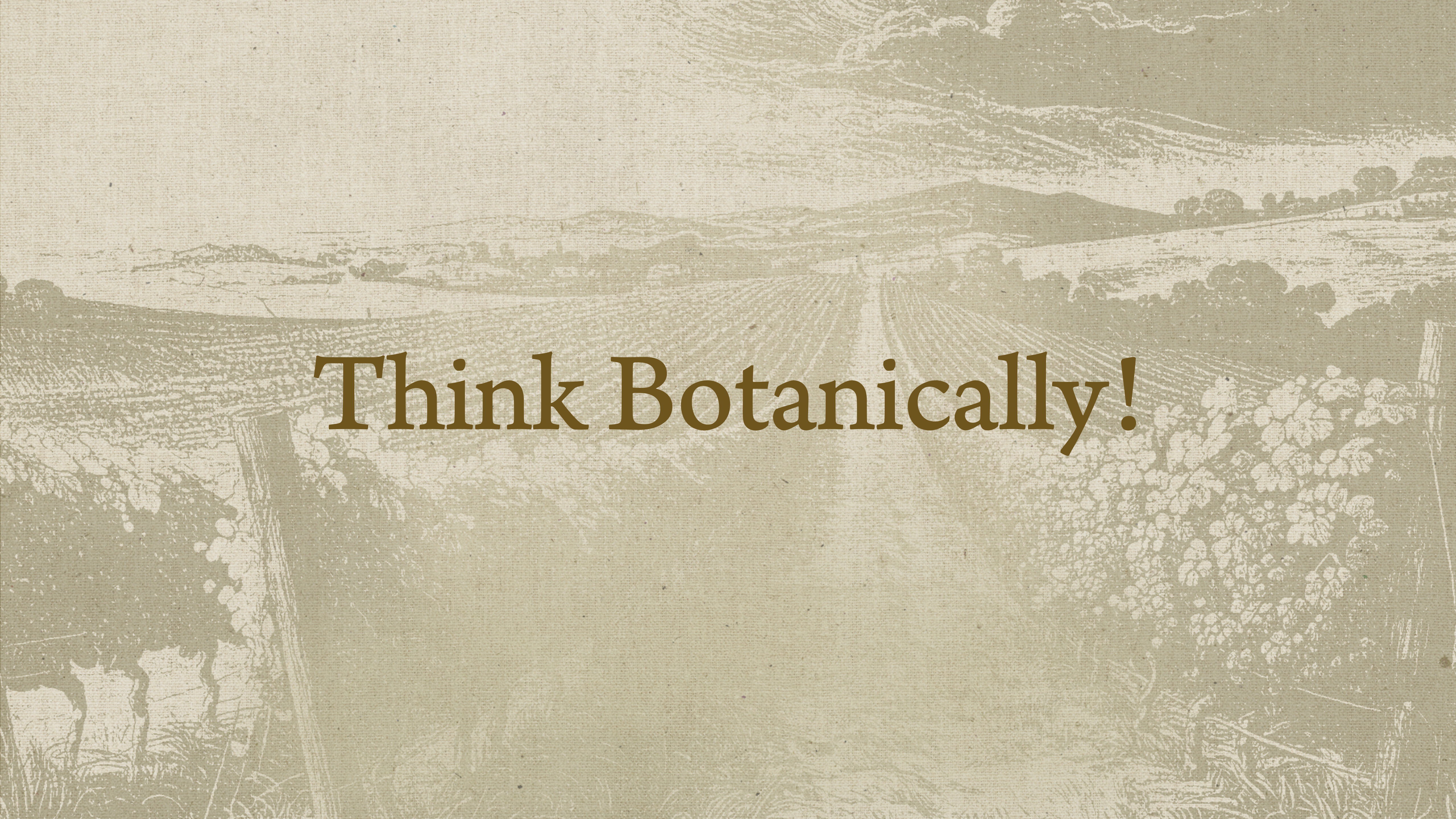
MARRIAGE
WORKSHOP

A sepia-toned illustration of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a vineyard with rows of grapevines. A wooden fence runs along the left side of the vineyard. In the background, there are rolling hills and a small cluster of buildings on a hillside. The sky is filled with clouds.

Marriage as Gift

Questions to Explore:

- How do we experience marriage as a gift?
- How do we honor and cultivate/steward marriage as a gift?



Think Botanically!

“³⁰I went past the field of a sluggard, past the vineyard of someone who has no sense; ³¹thorns had come up everywhere, the ground was covered with weeds, and the stone wall was in ruins. ³²I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw: ³³A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— ³⁴and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.”

Proverbs 24:30-34

“¹Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways! ²You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be blessed, and it shall be well with you. ³Your wife will be like a fruitful [and flourishing] vine within your house and your children will be like olive shoots around your table.”

Psalm 128:1-3



Hus-band-ry

“Care & Cultivation”



Gift vs. Entitlement

“Intimacy is made up of at least two critical ingredients: being known and being safe. We experience intimacy when we feel known and understood as well as safe, accepted, or cared for by our spouse. A breakdown of intimacy, therefore, usually means that one or both of us doesn’t feel understood or safe.”

Winston T. Smith - *Marriage Matters*



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Gift vs. Entitlement:

Example 1:

“You are a gift to me!”

vs.

“You are here for my good!”

Gift vs. Entitlement:

Example 2:

Honor

vs.

Consumerism

“³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

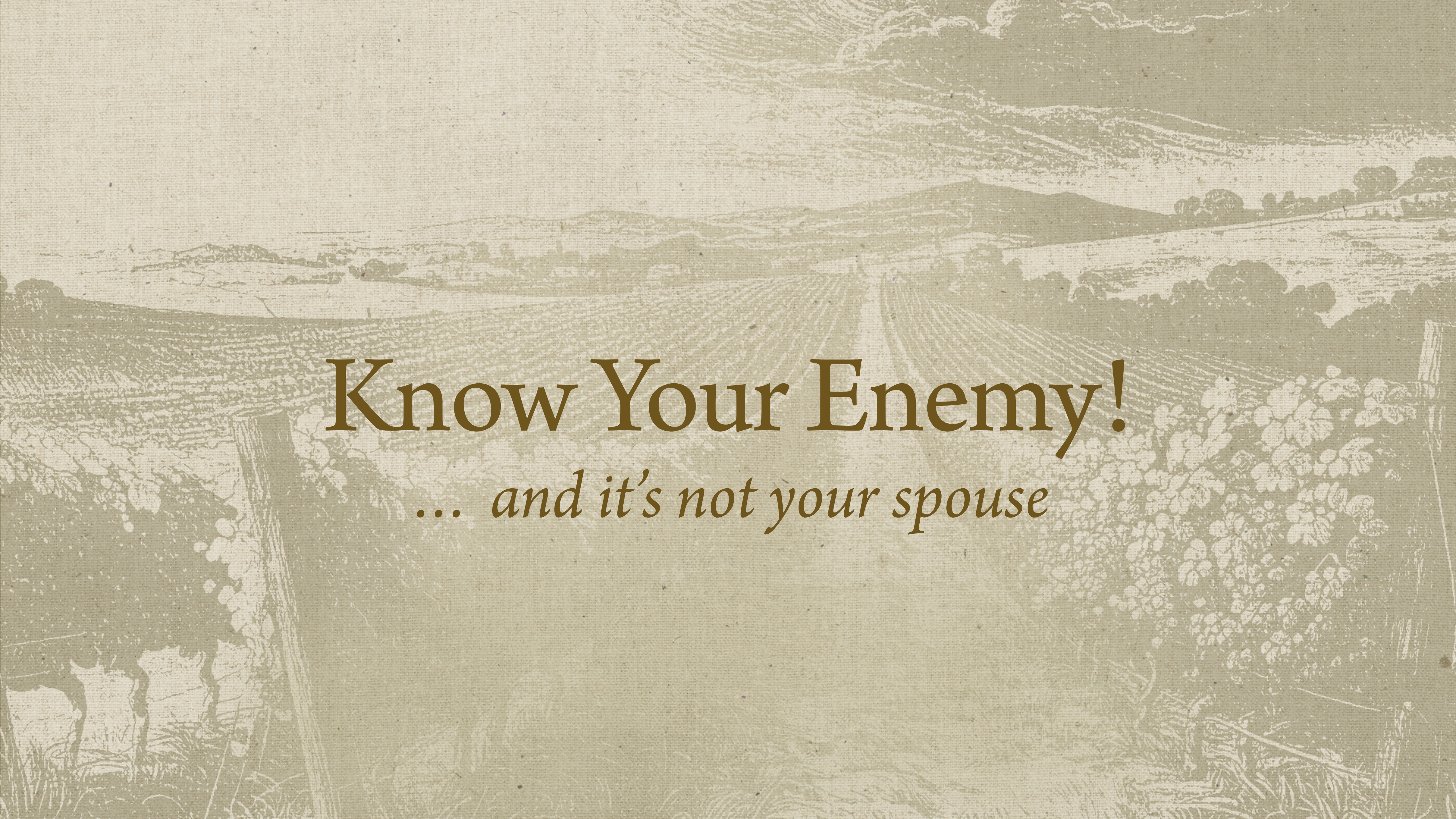
Philippians 2:3-4

“⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Philippians 2:5-8



“Close the door on your world and enter into the world of your spouse and sit at a little two-person bench. Look around you and see what the world looks like through their eyes.”

A sepia-toned illustration of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a vineyard with rows of grapevines. Beyond the vineyard, a body of water, possibly a lake or a wide river, stretches across the middle ground. In the background, there are rolling hills and a small cluster of buildings on a distant shore. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. The overall tone is peaceful and pastoral.

Know Your Enemy!

... and it's not your spouse

Know Your Enemy:

- Comparison and envy.

“⁵The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. ⁶The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance. ⁷I bless the Lord who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. ⁸I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.”

Psalm 16:5-8

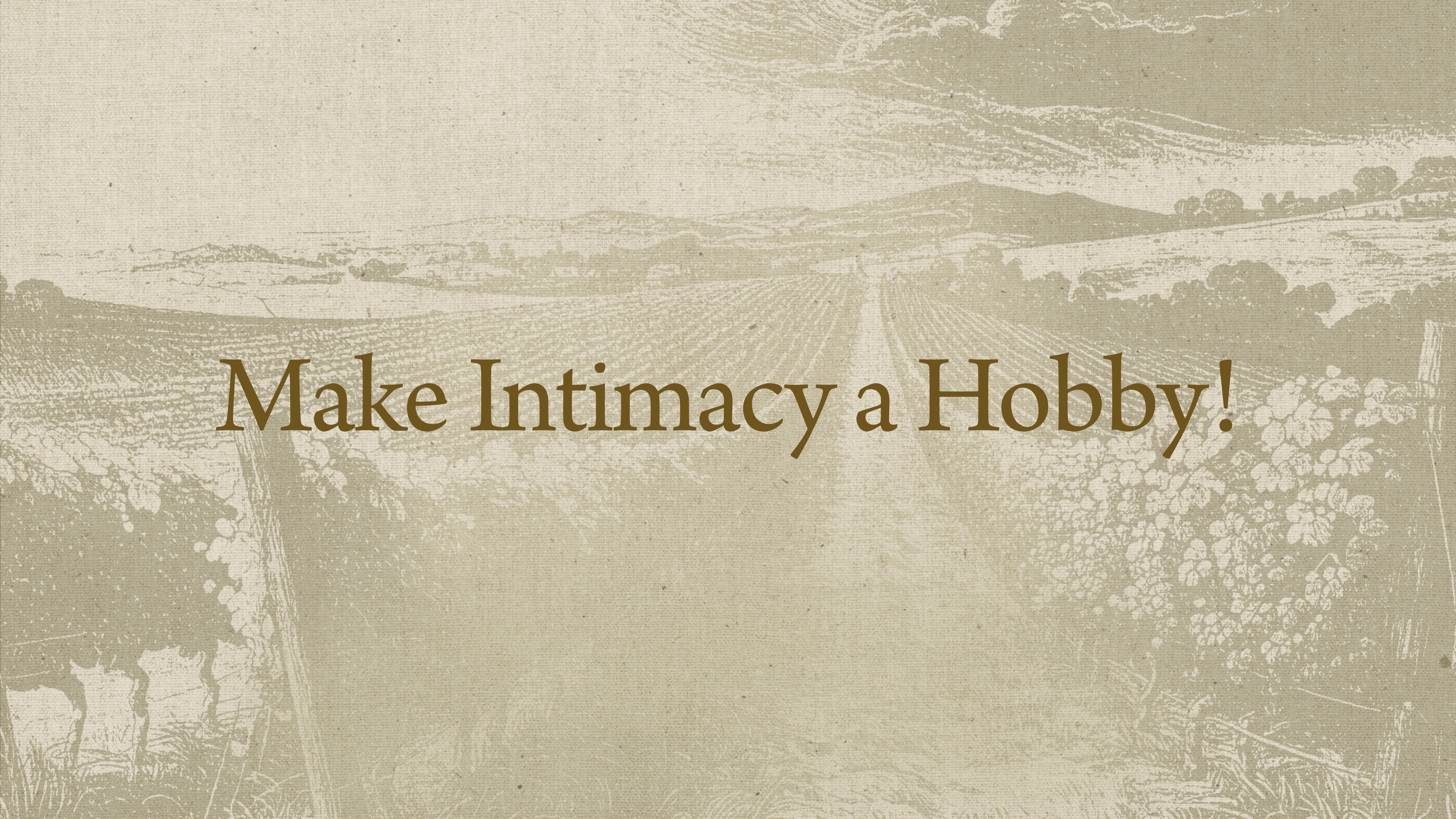
Know Your Enemy:

- Comparison and envy.
- Take your marriage very seriously!
- Don't take your marriage so seriously!

“Your phone has already replaced your camera,
your clock, your watch...Don't let it replace
your marriage.”



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A sepia-toned illustration of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a vineyard with rows of grapevines. A dirt path or road runs through the middle ground, leading towards rolling hills in the background. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. The overall tone is nostalgic and peaceful.

Make Intimacy a Hobby!

“If you build an intimacy into your marriage that reflects God’s love, then you have every reason to believe that it will show up in the bedroom as a wonderful celebration.”

Winston T. Smith - *Marriage Matters*



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40 ideas for the perfect date



“Sex is an outward, physical, connection that should express and reinforce an inner connection.”

Winston T. Smith - *Marriage Matters*



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Couples' Discussion

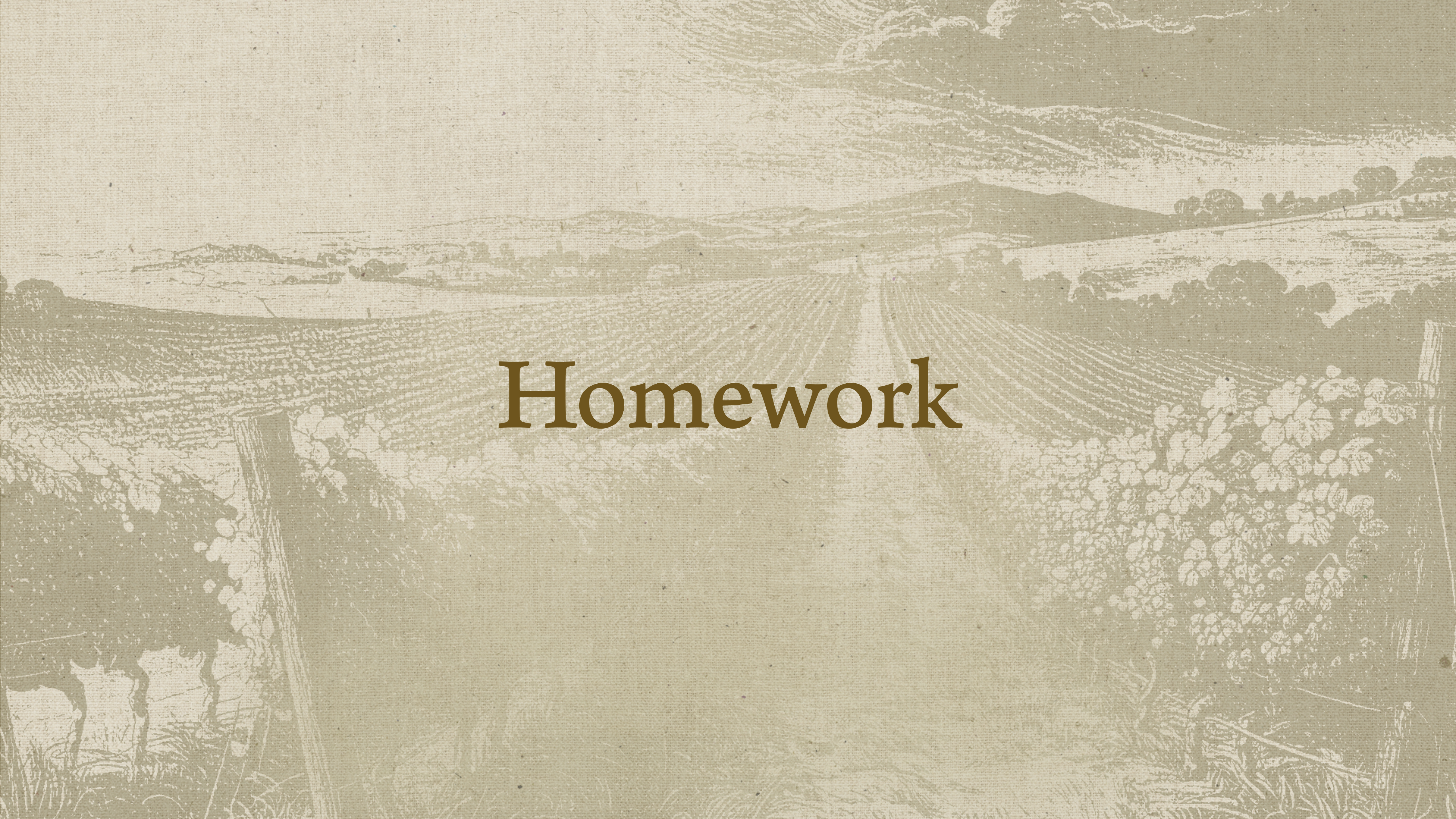
1. How does Psalm 128/Proverbs 24:30 speak to us? How are we creating and contending for the spiritual atmosphere of our home? Husband, how are you cultivating an environment for your wife (and children) to flourish?
2. What areas of our marriage might we be neglecting and feel the opportunity to embrace and grow in these areas? What is keeping us from cultivating this environment of blessing to our family?

Couples' Discussion

3. Husband, how are you pursuing your wife emotionally through non-sexual touch, heart-level communication, and thousands of little touches with no expectations that it will lead to the bedroom?
4. Wife, as one who is fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139) how can you embrace your identity as someone created highly spiritual and also highly sensual? How can you receive sexuality as a gift to you and not just for your husband?

Couples' Discussion

5. What sexual struggles are you experiencing in the marriage bed? What might these struggles reveal about your character outside of the bedroom?
6. Three key areas of marriage that often get neglected are fun, friendship and intimacy. How can you intentionally foster these in your marriage?

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Homework

Homework

1. Choose a version of the “Marriage as Gift” project.
2. Read David Powlison’s *Love Speaks Many Languages Fluently*.
3. Be ready to discuss next week!

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