

LEADER'S GUIDE

WEEK 6

Us In



Mind

by Ted Lowe

HOW CHANGING YOUR THOUGHTS
CAN CHANGE YOUR MARRIAGE

Intentional Thought: Love First

ATTEND ANY MARRIAGE CEREMONY, and chances are you will hear some version of the traditional wedding vows. There are promises to remain faithful in sickness and health, in riches and in poverty—you get the idea. It's all very moving.

But let's be honest. Get a few years into the marriage, and this abstract idea of "good times and bad", doesn't seem particularly practical. What about when you're unloading the dishwasher for the millionth time? Or picking up your spouse's clothes scattered on the bathroom floor? Or changing your partner's oil? Or handling the finances? What about all the day-to-day stuff you do for your spouse that just gets plain...old, tiring, and annoying?

Maybe love is far more about the small self-giving actions for each other than the big promises made. No one mentions those things in their vows. As you wrap up your time in this book, encourage your group to bring the lofty ideas of "love" down to the practical things that make up life.

Loving first, in a self-giving way as Jesus demonstrated, means loving in the mundane, un-extraordinary, boring ways that may not ever get noticed, but have a profound impact—on you, your spouse, and your marriage.

Response

Ice Breaker

What is one wish you have for your marriage in the next five years? (This can be fun or serious!)

Discuss

1. Who have you seen model "love first" in their marriage?
2. What are three practical ways you can "love first" when it comes to the relationship with your spouse?
3. What are three ways you have seen your spouse love you first?
4. What resistance do you feel to "loving first"? What do you think it costs you to live this way?
5. Of the five intentional thoughts we worked through, what is the one that is hardest for you? Which one comes the most easily? What do you think you and your spouse do the best on together?
6. What is something you hope to do differently in your marriage as a result of these past several weeks meeting together?

