



ghana: on a mission for marriages

by jayna richardson

Billy and Joy Thompson knew when they got married in 2009 that their life together would include traveling to teach and make disciples of all nations, specifically Ghana. But they didn't know that God would begin to lay a burden on their hearts to minister to marriages. After multiple trips to Ghana to plant churches, train pastors, and participate in construction projects, Billy and Joy began to realize that many Ghanaians were hungry for relationship advice. Although some of the local churches had requested marriage help, Billy and Joy at first felt they weren't ready because they hadn't been married long themselves. But they would soon sense the Lord leading them to pursue the opportunity to build marriages and families.

During a trip to Ghana in 2016, the Thompsons spoke to a group of pastors and wives about being in ministry together and shared some of their own experiences. One pastor wasn't able to bring his wife to the meeting, but he wanted her to hear the message. He brought her to Billy and Joy's hotel room on their last night in Ghana and asked if they would share the information with them. The pastor's wife seemed uninterested at first, but during an exercise in which Billy and Joy asked the couple to simply look into each other's eyes for a full minute, something broke inside her and she began to cry. The couple embraced and confessed that they were on the brink of divorce. "God sent you two for us," the wife kept saying.

"It was a turning point for them," said Billy. "We only spent about fifteen minutes with them." But those fifteen minutes made all the difference. This experience was a turning point for Billy and Joy too as they realized the great need for more marriage training in Ghana.

Back home in Tulsa, Billy and Joy found out FamilyLife's Weekend to Remember® was coming to their city. They had been to a WTR in Dallas in 2010 just after they got married, and they felt they could use a tune-up. "While there, we kept thinking that this



would be good to share in Ghana," Billy said. So they got in touch with FamilyLife to see how they could make it happen. They learned about some video-based resources that were

continued on page 4

more hope for families inside

kuwait: the first weekend to remember

Warren and Ann Abrameit, an American couple who both work as doctors, were surprised to hear from their old friends, Sameh and Mona **Page 2**

calendar of events **Page 3**

new resource: familylife's art of parenting™

FamilyLife's Art of Parenting will help parents find new ways to integrate faith into everyday parenting moments . . . **Page 4**

india: like arrows® premiere

Attendees at a recent Weekend to Remember in Goa, India, had the opportunity to participate in something very special—the world premiere of "Like Arrows" **Page 5**

romania: sharing hope

Fifteen percent of Romanians are working abroad, leaving family members and even children behind **Page 6**



kuwait: the first weekend to remember

by jayna richardson

Warren and Ann Abrameit, an American couple from Texas who both work as doctors, were surprised to hear from their old friends, Sameh and Mona. The two couples had met ten years ago in Qatar. Warren and Ann were living and working there at the time and doing ministry on the side using FamilyLife materials in English and Arabic. Although they led HomeBuilders® groups, organized small events, and got many couples involved in the ministry, they left Qatar after three years not knowing if the ministry in that area would continue.

When Sameh and Mona got in touch with the Abrameits earlier this year,



they explained that they had continued doing FamilyLife ministry using the Arabic HomeBuilders materials. They now live in Kuwait and personally lead three HomeBuilders groups per week. They asked Warren and Ann if they would be interested in leading a marriage conference there to give their groups something new and fresh.



The Abrameits, who had been trained as FamilyLife speakers years ago, contacted the FamilyLife Global office to see if anyone would be available to help speak at the event. Jim and Judy Burrows already had a trip planned to India and Dubai, but they had five days of unscheduled time in between their planned events. The five days just happened to fit perfectly within the timeframe for the event in Kuwait, which provided confirmation to Jim and Judy that God was opening the doors for this opportunity.

God continued to bless the planning that led up to this event, which was the first ever Weekend to Remember in Kuwait. The Burrowses and the Abrameits split the talks and spoke through a translator to deliver the conference in Arabic to an Egyptian congregation in Kuwait.

"The responsiveness of the crowd was amazing," says Judy. "We did a skit on communication, and couples were saying, 'That's us!' They were hungry for the material."

Because Sameh and Mona were aware of some cases of abuse among the attendees, Jim and Judy covered these topics in separate sessions for the men and women. They also conducted a breakout HomeBuilders session that introduced the audience to the HomeBuilders studies, and they participated with the Abrameits in a question and answer session following the intimacy talk. Once again, the couples were eager for honest, biblical answers and expressed gratitude for the speakers' candidness. The Abrameits also had the opportunity to talk to teens from two churches about purity using the Passport to Purity® and Passport to Identity® materials.

The Weekend to Remember was fun, informative, and effective, and couples who attended are already asking for another event next year. Sameh and Mona are also hopeful that new HomeBuilders leaders will emerge and continue spreading the ministry not only through Kuwait, but to other Egyptian fellowships throughout the Middle East.

Europe (Eastern)

Nov 9-11, 2018	Marriage conference	Crikvenica	Croatia (Slovenia team)
Nov 16-18, 2018	Marriage conference	Crikvenica	Croatia (Slovenia team)
Nov 23-25, 2018	Marriage conference	Crikvenica	Croatia (Slovenia team)
Nov 30-Dec 2, 2018	Marriage conference	Crikvenica	Croatia (Slovenia team)
Aug 11, 2018	Family club		Russia
Sep 8, 2018	Family club		Russia
Aug 3-10, 2018	Family camp	Veržej	Slovenia
Oct 5-7, 2018	Marriage conference	Rogla	Slovenia
Oct 19-21, 2018	Marriage conference (Money)	Verzej	Slovenia
Oct 26-28, 2018	Marriage conference	Njivice	Slovenia
Aug 8-12	Family camp		Ukraine

Europe (Western)

Aug 31, 2018	Prepare/Enrich conference	Zurich	Switzerland
Sep 7, 2018	Marriage course		Switzerland
Sep 15-16, 2018	Marriage seminar	Zurich	Switzerland
Nov 10-11, 2018	Marriage seminar	Zurich	Switzerland
Feb 11-12, 2019	Prepare/Enrich conference	Zurich	Switzerland
Mar 5, 2019	Prepare/Enrich conference	Zurich	Switzerland
Mar 9-10, 2019	Marriage seminar	Zurich	Switzerland
Oct 7, 2018	A Day Together	London	UK
Oct 13, 2018	A Day Together	Manchester	UK
Nov 3, 2018	A Day Together	Cambridge	UK
Nov 10, 2018	A Day Together	Dusseldorf	UK
Nov 17, 2018	A Day Together	Worthing	UK

Middle East and North Africa

Due to sensitive nature of these countries, please contact global@familylife.com for further information.

North America

United States—Phone 1-800-358-6329 or www.familylife.com for a complete listing of conferences.

Canada—Phone 1-800-247-3180 or www.familylifecanada.com for a complete listing of conferences.

Sept 21-23, 2018	Weekend Getaway (Mandarin)	Calgary, AB	Canada
Nov 2-4, 2018	Weekend Getaway	Blue Mountain, ON	Canada
Nov 16-18, 2018	Weekend Getaway	Jasper, AB	Canada
Nov 16-18, 2018	Weekend Getaway	Whistler, BC	Canada
Nov 16-18, 2018	Weekend Getaway (Mandarin)	Ottawa, ON	Canada
Mar 1-3, 2019	Weekend Getaway	Niagara Falls, ON	Canada
Mar 8-10, 2019	Weekend Getaway	Victoria, BC	Canada
Apr 5-7, 2019	Weekend Getaway	Montebello, QC	Canada
Apr 5-7, 2019	Weekend Getaway	Waskesiu Lake, SK	Canada
Apr 12-14, 2019	Weekend Getaway	Lake Louise, AB	Canada
May 3-5, 2019	Weekend Getaway	St. Andrews, NB	Canada

Asia

Sep 8-9, 2018	Art of Marriage		Singapore
Oct 4, 2018	Passport to Purity preview		Singapore
Nov 10, 2018	Art of Marriage		Singapore

Oceania

Sep 21-23, 2018	Weekend to Remember	Auckland	New Zealand
Oct 12-14, 2018	Weekend to Remember	Queenstown	New Zealand

**Quotes from
a recent event
in Canada:**

*Before we came,
the discussion of
separation was
happening. There was
no fight left in me to
work on our marriage.
I have learned/gained
a new appreciation for
my husband. We have
communicated more
than ever! We are
going home renewed
and refreshed. The
respect has returned.
This weekend has
saved our marriage!"*

- Wife 17 years

*"Our marriage was
almost broken. This
conference has
definitely given us a
new start and hope!
For that I will be
forever thankful!"*

- Wife 5 years

*"Incredible weekend
that brought us a lot of
value and a lot of fun."
- Husband 7 years*

new resource: familylife's art of parenting™

FamilyLife's Art of Parenting will help parents find new ways to integrate faith into everyday parenting moments. We can help parents make faith the core of their parenting with intentional, biblical teaching and Christ-centered plans. Parents will end the eight sessions with renewed confidence, fresh insights on parenting children of different ages, and a parenting plan unique to each child's personality and gifting.

Based on Psalm 127:4, this new eight-session small-group study is

video based and covers the following topics:

- The Goal of Parenting
- Forming Character
- Applying Discipline
- Building Relationships
- Understanding Identity
- Nurturing Identity
- Preparing for Mission
- The Power of Family

The eight engaging video sessions feature interviews with parenting experts, stories from parents who



share their own experiences, and dramatic clips from FamilyLife's feature film "Like Arrows." The kit includes a copy of the "Like Arrows" DVD and a copy of The Art of Parenting book.

ghana: on a mission for marriages *continued from page 1*

a possibility, but they quickly realized the lack of technology in Ghana would be a hindrance. "We finally realized we were going to have to wing this," Billy said.

So that's what they did. In spring of 2018, Billy and Joy went back to Ghana and turned their attention to couples in a village in the Volta region. They spent an entire day with twenty couples and a few singles from the village. There was no technology. There were no workbooks. With their WTR manuals in hand, Billy and Joy simply shared through a translator the scriptural principles they had learned in Tulsa. It was simple, but it was a big success. Couples expressed excitement and gratitude for what they were learning and begged the Thompsons to come back and do a longer event next time.

One pastor told them, "So many people are struggling, but we just don't know how to advise them." Couples in

Ghana face the difficulties of living in a culture where sex is a taboo subject and where women's opinions and roles are often undervalued, so they were hungry for biblical principles to help them navigate these and other marriage topics.

One highlight for Billy was seeing the pastor and wife who had visited their hotel room in 2016. They were still



together and had made a point to sit on the front row at the marriage conference. Joy was encouraged by a couple that came to breakfast the morning after the

event. They expressed their delight at the project Billy and Joy had assigned the couples for homework as a way to improve intimacy. "They were glowing and came in with a notepad at breakfast, asking for more," said Joy.

Billy and Joy are already looking forward to next year's trip. They're hoping to do a three-day marriage conference in that same village in March. "We feel we had a greater impact with marriage ministry than with all of the other ministry activities," said Billy. "If the family stuff isn't together, it all falls apart."

The Thompsons' experience in Ghana shows that couples who want to minister to marriages don't necessarily need a lot of specialized training or expertise. Sometimes all it takes is biblical tools and a willing heart to go where God leads.



india: like arrows® premiere by jayna richardson

Attendees at a recent Weekend to Remember in Goa, India, had the opportunity to participate in something very special—the world premiere of “Like Arrows,” FamilyLife’s new movie that follows Alice and Charlie on a parenting journey that spans fifty years.

The Weekend to Remember in Goa was organized by a volunteer couple who were trained by FamilyLife ten years ago. Most of the attendees were Cru staff. Some traveled 12 hours by train to attend.

The Weekend to Remember was a three-day event conducted in English, and FamilyLife staff Jim and Judy Burrows split the talks with an Indian couple. “Like Arrows” was shown the

first evening. Although many of the sixty attendees were tired from traveling, nearly all of them stayed for the movie. The response was very positive!

One newlywed couple said, “It was a very inspiring movie ... it shows that we have to make our life right and to be an example to our children.” The husband added that even though he and his wife don’t have kids yet, “It has convinced me to spend more time with my family after having kids and even now.”

“All throughout the movie, you can feel the invisible hand of God It’s not too late to start over.”

The movie premiere helped set the tone for an exciting and powerful

weekend. One couple at the end of the weekend said, “We wished we had this twelve years ago. It could have saved us a lot of problems.”

Jim and Judy left copies of FamilyLife’s Art of Parenting™ kit with key leaders in the country. They also conducted a training for eight additional couples following the weekend. The opportunities in India are enormous, but leaders are being raised up with passion and enthusiasm for ministering to Indian families with truth and hope for families.

“Like Arrows” will be coming to DVD September 2018.



romania: sharing hope by jayna richardson

Romania is a European country rich in history and legends, known for its forests and medieval villages as well as its notable castles and fortifications. But this country of 19.7 million people also faces many challenges. Fifteen percent of Romanians are working abroad, leaving family members and even children behind. Twenty-three million abortions have been performed in the past twenty years. Divorce rates are increasing. Romanian families are seeking help and hope.

FamilyLife Romania's vision is that more and more families in Romania would come to know God's plan for family life. Their marriage events—such as Always Romantic, One Day Together, and Weekend to Remember®—help couples to understand their roles in marriage, apply biblical principles, and take steps to serve other families.

One couple attended an event and shared, “We have been married for fourteen years. We were divorced and re-

“I think if we would have had such conferences or people close to us to be open to listen to us, this divorce could have been avoided.”

married after a five-year break. I think if we would have had such conferences or people close to us to be open to listen to us, this divorce could have been avoided. For us it is a huge encouragement to be able to help others not go through what we've been through, and this is what we



want to do from now on.”

For the FamilyLife Romania team, which consists of four full-time couples and numerous volunteers, that's what it's all about: leading couples to Christ and encouraging them to reach out to other marriages and families.

FamilyLife Romania also conducts parenting seminars in public and private schools, helping to equip parents in raising kids. They use Stepping Up® one-day events and small groups to encourage and challenge men to live godly, courageous lives. They also help singles prepare for marriage, and they work with local churches to develop their ministries to families.

Pastor Eugen Iordache, a pastor in Galati, got in touch with FamilyLife four years ago to see how they could work together. The FamilyLife team organized an Art of Marriage® in his church. Many

families attended and responded very positively. The FamilyLife team then left them with small-group materials, so the church has been able to provide ongoing family ministry to continue serving the church and community.

FamilyLife Romania has now helped churches in thirty-three cities throughout the country minister to families using relevant materials. The growth and spread of the ministry is encouraging, as is the feedback they receive from those who attend their events. Yet as new resources and strategies are developed, one thing stays the same—and it's something the entire team of FamilyLife staff and volunteers has seen for themselves: “Our Lord is the only hope for Romania.”

To God to be the glory as the seeds of hope are spread throughout Romania.