

A VARIETY OF QUESTIONS CHRISTIAN SINGLES MAY ASK THAT
REQUIRE HONEST AND/OR BIBLICAL ANSWERS

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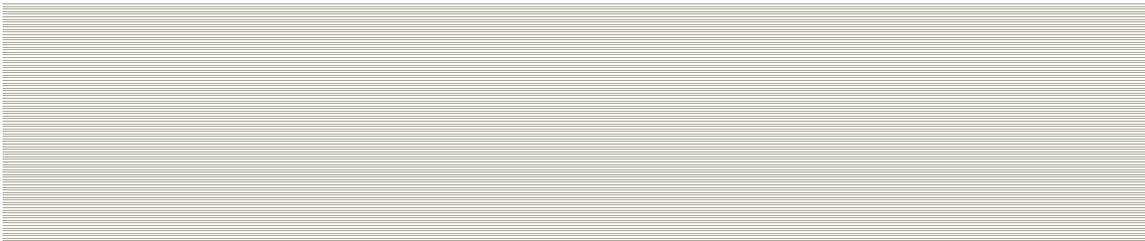
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ABSTRACT

The paper will focus on a variety of questions Christian singles may ask that require honest and/or Biblical answers from the Bible and Christian authors such as psychologists, ministers, parents, and couples that have published written material in the realm of Christian singles and/or Christian marriages.



INTRODUCTION

The apostle Paul wrote, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in Romans 12:1-2,

"(1) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (2) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."¹

A Christian man or woman is to yield their bodies as an instrument for God's service. God desires His child to be a living sacrifice. A living sacrifice involves dying to self every single day and living life for Jesus Christ. The whole body, including the mind and soul, is dedicated to the service of Jesus Christ. In so doing, the man or woman is not conforming to the world but is conforming to doing God's will. This is a daily process.

A Christian single man or woman is to do the same. They may find it difficult or even tough at times to die to self and live life for Christ. Yet, Jesus' command is to deny one's self daily and follow Him. The rewards may not

¹*The Holy Bible* (Authorized King James Version; Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999).

be imminent on earth, but whoever loses their life for the sake of Christ will actually save it. Luke 9:23-25 records Jesus' words:

"(23) And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. (24) For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. (25) For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"²

What is a Christian?

By nature, a man or woman is born a sinner. Each one is to recognize that he or she is indeed a sinner. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."³ Sin is anything that is wrong in the eyes of God (i.e. lying, stealing, lusting, disobeying, killing, committing adultery, etc.). A sinner falls short of God's glory.

Jesus said in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."⁴ God wants to have a personal relationship with each man, woman, teenager, and child. The love God has for each individual is evident in the cross of His Son Jesus Christ.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

Jesus Christ came to earth, dwelt among men, and never once sinned. The Perfect Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, willingly went to the cross and bore the sin of every single person that has lived, will live, and is living. He gave His life as the Ultimate Sacrifice. The awesome and glorious thing is that Jesus Christ arose from the dead on the third day after He died. Christ reigns and rules in victory of the sting of death. He is alive!

The fact of the matter is that Christ took the place of every sinner. Instead of a sinner having to die and pay for their consequences of sin, Christ paid the price once and for all for the penalty of sin. Romans 5:6-8 explains:

"(6) For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."⁵

A sinner must realize that consequence of sin is death. This death is separation for eternity from God. A sinner then realizes that accepting Jesus Christ into their heart leads to living and being in the presence of God for eternity. Romans 6:20-23 states:

"(20) For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. (21) What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of

⁵Ibid.

those things is death. (22) But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. (23) For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."⁶

The question may now arise, "What is a Christian?" A Christian is a man, woman, teenager, or child that realizes they are a sinner. They understand that their sin will separate them forever from God. In short, each individual is a sinner in desperate need of Jesus Christ the Savior. The only way to salvation is by God's grace through faith. Works cannot save, but faith in God does save. Ephesians 2:8-9 commands:

"(8) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast."⁷

They admit they are a sinner, believe in their heart that Jesus Christ will save them and that He is alive, confess with their mouth that Jesus Christ is Who He says He is, and commit their life to living for Him. Romans 10:9-13 provides direction:

"(9) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (10) For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (11) For the scripture saith, WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH ON HIM SHALL NOT BE ASHAMED. (12) For there is no difference

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. (13) FOR WHOSEVER SHALL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED."⁸

A man, woman, teenager, or child that is a sinner who accepts Jesus Christ into their life as their personal Lord and Savior becomes a follower of Jesus Christ and are then known as a Christian. From the moment they surrender their life to Jesus Christ, they should seek to glorify God. The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:31, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."⁹

Definitions of Terms

The terms "Christian", "Christian man", "Christian woman", "Christian individual(s)", and other terms that contain the word "Christian" that is used throughout the pages of this paper refer to a sinner saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

The terms "single Christian", "single man", "single woman", and "single individual" all refer to a man or woman that is not married.

The terms "dating", "dating relationship", "courting", "courtship", "courtship relationship", and "courting

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

relationship" refer to a one-on-one relationship between a Christian single male and a Christian single female outside the context of marriage. The relationship involves or evokes attitudes, actions, emotions, thoughts, commitments, and/or choices.¹⁰

The term "marriage" refers to a lifetime commitment between one man and one woman. This commitment is a holy bond between the two individuals. The two become one flesh. Genesis 2:24-25 states:

"(24) Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. (25) And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed."¹¹

Research Problem

The research problem in the paper will focus on a variety of questions Christian singles may ask that require honest and/or Biblical answers from the Bible and Christian authors such as psychologists, ministers, parents, and couples that have published written material in the realm of Christian singles and/or Christian marriages.

Brief Description of Choosing the Research Problem

The researcher has an interest in writing to minister

¹⁰Joshua Harris, *I Kissed Dating Goodbye: A New Attitude Toward Romance and Relationships* (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, Inc., 1997), 22-7, 37.

¹¹*The Holy Bible.*

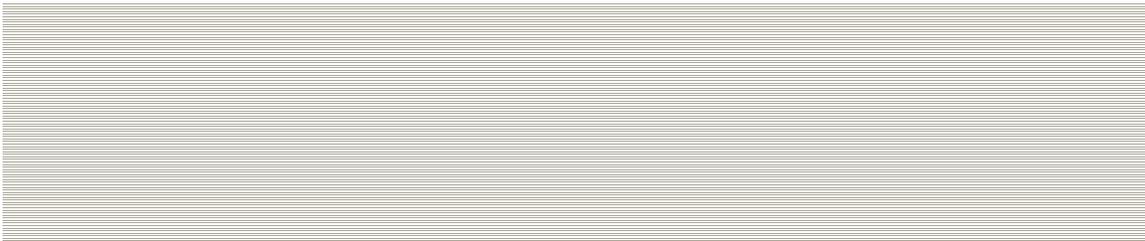
to Christian singles. Many Christian singles have questions that they would like answers to that are honest and/or Biblical. At times, an asked question receives a simple answer such as "yes, it is okay . . ." or a simple answer "no, it is not okay . . ." At times, the answers are vague and do not provide any honest and/or Biblical basis to support the simple "yes" or "no" answers.

Delimitations

In an attempt to provide insight into the research problem, the paper limited its scope to providing research in the area of Christian singles and the questions they may ask. The researcher includes random questions that are likely topics of discussion among Christian singles. The researcher chose the questions in the paper. He is single, can relate to other Christian singles, and have had these questions posed to him in some form or fashion among the ten plus years of his ministry.

Each chapter contains at least one question that relates to Christian singles. These questions are not an exhaustive list of questions. They are a small amount of questions that the researcher feels are important questions. The researcher believes that the questions in the paper are worth exploring and answering.

The exploration and answering of the questions come from researching the Bible and Christian authors such as psychologists, ministers, parents, and couples that have published written material in the realm of Christian singles and/or Christian marriages.



CHAPTER 1

THE WONDERFUL SEASON OF SINGLENESS?

The season of singleness can be a wonderful and fulfilling time in a Christian man or woman's life. The twenty-four hours in each day contain many responsibilities, decisions, expectations, and desires. He or she may feel that their season of singleness is going by at a faster rate than the twenty-four hours in a day. At the end of the day, a man or woman can have the opportunity to reflect and realize the season of singleness is indeed wonderful.

Responsibilities and Decisions?

The season of singleness contains so many responsibilities and decisions. This exciting season can serve as a training ground for a man or woman to improve their skills in taking on responsibilities and for making decisions. These skills are important to a man or woman that will eventually get married.

Rent or Own?

The decision to rent or own a place to live is important. A single man or woman will probably make this

decision before marriage. They have the joy and task of searching apartments, homes, condominiums, and town houses so that they can find their living place. Questions come into play, "How many bedrooms do I need?"; "Should I first rent and then decide to buy later?"; "Do I want to live close to my parents?"; and "Exactly what am I looking for anyway?"¹²

Neat or Messy?

A man may decide that his singleness affords him the right to be messy. A woman may want to be clean and neat during her single years. Either way, the responsibility of cleaning up the living space or keeping it dirty and the decision to be neat or messy around the house are both important decisions to make. The best decision is to clean up and be neat. If the decision is to be dirty and messy, then it could affect their future spouse during marriage.¹³

Healthy or Unhealthy Eating Habits?

A healthy eating habit benefits a man or woman's health. Unhealthy eating habits do not. Cereal for breakfast, lunch, and dinner is unhealthy. Junk food and sodas may taste good but in the end, they are bad for one's

¹²Dana Anders et al., *Single And Content: Experiencing Singleness In A Paired-Off World* (Nashville: Word Publishing, 1999), 6-10.

¹³Ibid., 31-7.

health. The best things for a man or woman to do is cook a real meal and eat real food. Meat, vegetables, and fruit are some great ingredients for a healthy eating habit.¹⁴

Exercise or Not Exercise?

God desires for a man or woman to take proper care of their bodies. The fight against the flab can be a tough battle. A regular routine of walking, running, lifting weights, and being active can improve the health. Of course, there are extremes to exercise. There is no need for a man or woman to overdo himself or herself on exercising. Just a simple, consistent exercise plan will work.¹⁵

Living Life with a Purpose?

The wonderful season of singleness reminds a single man or woman that they need to live their life with a purpose for Jesus Christ. They are not on earth just to simply waste time, take up space, and not live life for a purpose. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 7:32-34:

"(32) But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: (33) But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. (34) There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth

¹⁴Ibid., 38-43.

¹⁵Ibid., 44-8.

for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband."¹⁶

The season of singleness allows opportunities and freedoms to serve and care for the things of the Lord. The man or woman does not have to spend their time taking care of a spouse, children, or other responsibilities that come with marriage. The primary purpose of living life is to completely follow and serve Jesus Christ.¹⁷

A single is free to build relationships and show God's love in a way that a married individual cannot. The single man or woman does not have to worry about being home at a certain time, does not have to concern himself or herself with responsibilities of a spouse, and can build as many relationships as possible with less limitations.¹⁸

What Really Matters in Life?

Every single person longs for one thing in life: love. Songs are wrote and sung about love. Television shows portray characters that are involved in a love relationship. Movies usually contain a love story as part of the plot. Books try to answer questions concerning the

¹⁶*The Holy Bible.*

¹⁷Hsu, Albert Y., *Singles At The Crossroads: A Fresh Perspective On Christian Singleness* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 83-5.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 89-91.

issue of love. Magazines contain articles about love. Internet dating websites provide profiles of singles that are searching for the love of their life. In the midst of a confusing world, a question seems to be arising: "What really matters in life?"

The World Says

The world answers the question by telling an individual to do whatever it takes to fulfill one's self-pleasure of love. "If it feels good, then just do it," could sum up the world's motto. The motto is not limited to teenagers or adults. Children in grade school are learning about and acting out the world's motto.¹⁹

Ten year olds, sometimes even younger, constantly find themselves bombarded with the concept of love's self-pleasure. These children are learning about the concept on the playground, at the schoolhouse, from friends, through the media (i.e. television, movies, newspapers, radio, Internet, and books), by attending parties, and even at home. The children grow into teenagers. Eventually the teenagers grow up and become adults. The adults have children and the cycle of love's self-pleasure continues.²⁰

¹⁹Eric and Leslie Ludy, *Teaching True Love to a Sex-at-13 Generation: The Ultimate Guide for Parents* (Nashville: W Publishing Group, 2005), XV-XVII.

²⁰Ibid., XVI-XIX.

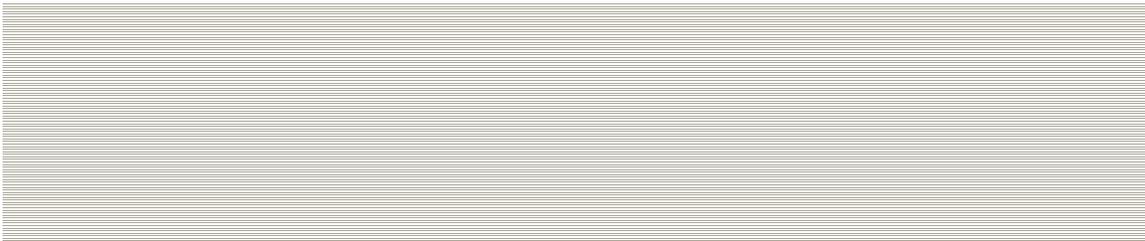
The world's motto of love's self-pleasure is an on-going battle that is raging. No one is exempt. Satan is destroying lives by using the world's motto. Jesus said Satan is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). Satan has an agenda to destroy every single child, teenager, and adult. The prince of the world (John 14:30), Satan, is using the world's motto to fulfill his agenda through warping the real meaning of love.

Jesus Says

Jesus answers the question in Mark 12, "(29b) The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: (30) And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. (31) And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."²¹ Contrary to the world's motto, Jesus' motto is to first love God and then love others. An individual must love God with their entire heart, soul, mind, and strength (Matthew 22:37).²²

²¹*The Holy Bible.*

²²Joshua Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello To Courtship* (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, Inc., 2000), 32-3.



CHAPTER 2

SHOULD A CHRISTIAN SINGLE "MISSIONARY DATE"?

Many Christian singles ask the question, "Can I date or court a non-Christian?" This is missionary dating. Missionary dating can involve a Christian single wanting to date or court a non-Christian with the intention of that person becoming a Christian. The Bible is clear that a single man or woman is date or court only a Christian. The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:14).²³

The spiritual aspect of a Christian single is the most important aspect of a dating/courting relationship. Each person must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. He is to be first in a Christian's life. In addition, Christ is to be first in a dating/courting relationship.²⁴ Saint Luke records Jesus saying, "If any man will come

²³*The Holy Bible.*

²⁴Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello To Courtship*, 197-8.

after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23b).²⁵

If one individual in a dating/courting relationship is not submitting to Christ, then problems will arise in the future. Problems such as manipulating love from one another and the feeling of a show of no love can arise. For example, the male in a relationship is not a Christian and the female is a Christian. The female will want the male to convert to Christ and she will try everything in her power to change him. The male may start acting spiritual only to please the female. The male may say the right words at just the right and manipulate the female into thinking he is going to change his lifestyle. This type of relationship is unhealthy because the female acts as the spiritual parent and the male acts as the child. The male and female are on unequal levels. He begins to rely on her and she begins to rely on him. Neither the male nor the female is relying on Christ. The two may have fun for a while but eventually the female will get tired of being the spiritual parent. Unless the male has accepted Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior, asked for forgiveness from sin, and genuinely desires to live for Christ then the relationship is destined for failure

²⁵*The Holy Bible.*

because Christ is not the focus. Reconsider dating/courting the non-Christian and end the relationship immediately. Only date a growing, maturing Christian.²⁶

There can be two dating cycles. The first dating cycle is vicious dating cycle. This cycle depicts the idea of singles moving from one relationship to another relationship because of the desire to find fulfillment in individuals. Table one depicts the vicious dating cycle.

TABLE 1. Vicious Dating Cycle²⁷

1. You are imperfect and hungry for acceptance.	2. So you date to find someone who will make you happy.	3. Your date, however, is also imperfect and hungry for acceptance.	4. You try to please each other but eventually make mistakes and disappoint each other.	5. Your disappointment causes conflict and rejection.	6. As the rejection mounts, you begin to look for someone else to please you.	7. The cycle starts over.
-------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------

The second dating cycle is Christ's Love Dating Cycle. This cycle comes from an individual finding and accepting Christ's love and unconditional acceptance. The individual finds completeness in Christ and not in individuals. Table two depicts Christ's Love Dating Cycle.

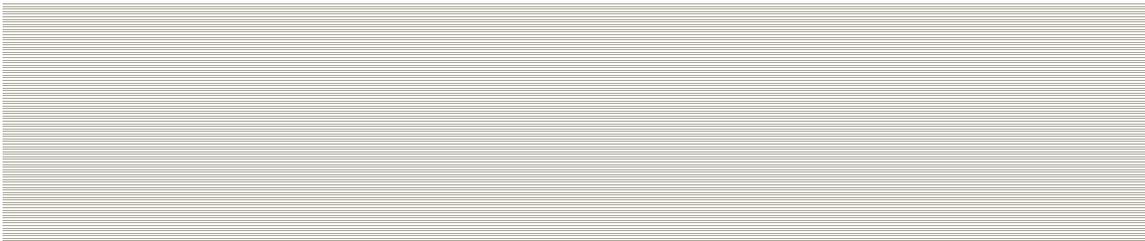
²⁶Rob Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2002), 223-8.

²⁷Ibid., 54.

TABLE 2. Christ's Love Dating Cycle²⁸

1. You are imperfect, but you are fulfilled by God's love.	2. So when you date someone, he or she no longer has to act perfectly to please you.	3. Therefore, your date is free to be himself or herself.	4. This makes him or her feel more comfortable around you.	5. When your date makes a mistake, you can forgive him or her as God forgave you.	6. In turn, your date enjoys being with you and encourages a deeper relationship.	7. A cycle of intimacy forms, and you grow closer together.
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²⁸Ibid., 55.



CHAPTER 3

WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES IN DATING/COURTING?

A Christian single may wonder what are boundaries in dating/courting. A boundary in dating/courting is a property line that sets limits in a person's life. The boundary defines an individual and serves to protect. Boundaries can be set through honest feelings by usage of words, through providing distance in a relationship, and through the support of friends in distinguishing a time limit. Individuals involved in a dating relationship or interested in a dating relationship need to set boundaries.²⁹ Colossians 2:20-23:

"(20) Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (21) (Touch not; taste not; handle not; (22) Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? (23) Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh."³⁰

The boundaries will serve as a fence that protects the individual's property and beliefs. Table three will list

²⁹Henry Cloud, and John Townsend, *Boundaries in Dating: Making Dating Work* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 28-33.

³⁰*The Holy Bible.*

some contents that are located inside individual's boundaries. The contents will help define and protect an individual.

TABLE 3. Some Contents Located Inside Individual's Boundaries³¹

1. Your love: your deepest capacity to connect and trust.
2. Your emotions: your need to own your feelings and not be controlled by someone else's feelings.
3. Your values: your need to have your life reflect what you care about most deeply
4. Your behaviors: your control over how you act in your dating relationship.
5. Your attitudes: your stances and opinions about yourself and your date.

The established boundaries will help an individual in a dating/courting relationship. The first boundary line establishes truthful trust. Honest, truthful trust is the foundation of any dating relationship. The individuals involved in a relationship should not be deceptive. If one individual does not feel the relationship is moving towards commitment, then be honest and share the feeling. Do not stay involved in a relationship just for the sake of being in a relationship.³²

³¹Cloud and Townsend, *Boundaries in Dating: Making Dating Work*, 30.

³²*Ibid.*, 35-48, 128-9.

CHAPTER 4

HOW FAR IS TOO FAR?

"How far is too far physically?" a Christian single may ask. God's standards, not an individual's feelings, are the determining factor in answering the question. The Bible has much to say about sexual standards. 1 Peter 1:13-15 challenges to live a holy life and not live according to the former lusts.³³

"(13) Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (14) As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: (15) But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."³⁴

The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4:3 to abstain from fornication or sexual promiscuity. Promiscuity can include a lack of sexual standards, doing what feels right, and going all the way in a dating relationship. God's command is to flee fornication. An individual's body is the temple of the Lord; it cost a

³³Jeremy Clark, *I Gave Dating A Chance: A Biblical Perspective To Balance The Extremes* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press, 2000), 98-103.

³⁴*The Holy Bible.*

price, and should glorify God in every aspect of life.³⁵ 1

Corinthians 6:18-20 states:

"(18) Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that commiteth fornication sinneth against his own body. (19) What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (20) For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."³⁶

Do not think that living a life of sexual purity involves only touching. The mind and heart should remain pure and free from sinful trash. The Bible says to resist the devil (James 4:7), protect against lustful looks (Job 31:1), and put on the full armour of God (Ephesians 6:13). Individuals involved in a dating/courting relationship need to have a dating plan for success and rely on God's power (Psalm 16:8). God's Word will guide an individual in establishing how far is too far.³⁷

The physical affection in a dating/courting relationship may feel right but only adds confusion towards the meaning of love. Society defines sex as love and love as sex. Individuals involved in a dating relationship

³⁵Clark, *I Gave Dating A Chance: A Biblical Perspective To Balance The Extremes*, 98-103.

³⁶*The Holy Bible*.

³⁷Clark, *I Gave Dating A Chance: A Biblical Perspective To Balance The Extremes*, 103-10.

often mistaken true love for sexual intimacy and physical attraction. Most of the time, a dating relationship begins with physical attraction and then leads to intimacy. The individuals involved in this type of relationship live only for the present. The focus then turns toward the physical aspect of the relationship.³⁸

Lust can lead to sinful actions. Relationships built on lust determine the relationship's level of seriousness by the amount of physical display of affection that the male and female display. The physical affection can cause guilt, regret, and disobedience to God.³⁹

God calls for and demands sexual purity. Proverbs 4:23, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."⁴⁰ Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"⁴¹ Guard the heart and protect from its sinfulness. The world proclaims, "Follow your heart!" God

³⁸Harris, *I Kissed Dating Goodbye: A New Attitude Toward Romance and Relationships*, 36-7.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰*The Holy Bible*.

⁴¹Ibid.

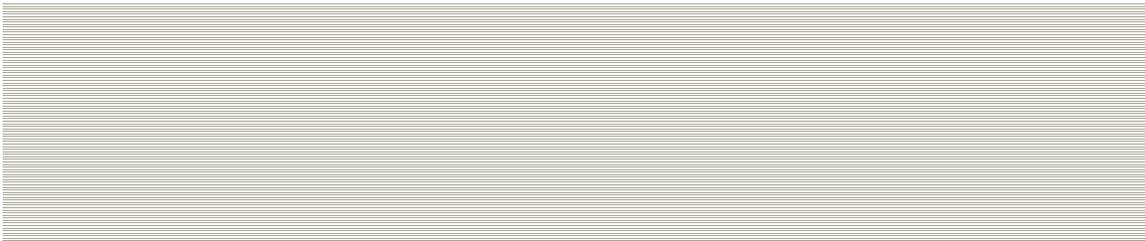
says, "Follow Me, I know everything!"⁴² 1 John 3:18-21

says:

"(18) My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. (19) And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. (20) For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. (21) Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."⁴³

⁴²Harris, *I Kissed Dating Goodbye: A New Attitude Toward Romance and Relationships*, 133-47.

⁴³*The Holy Bible*.



CHAPTER 5

WHAT SHOULD BE THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF ROMANCE?

What should be the Christian view of romance? Romance is a slow process. Non-romantic time spent together is a great way to get to know an individual. Spend time together with a group of friends, just hanging out, and enjoying each other's company are some non-romantic ways of getting to know each other.⁴⁴

A romanticized friendship comes from romantic feelings. The feelings felt in a friendship strive to turn the relationship into something that is not there, romance. A healthy romance does not strive to turn the relationship into romance but involves self-control and offers a deep, satisfying relationship. Table 4 will help in determining a healthy romance or a romanticized friendship.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Cloud and Townsend, *Boundaries in Dating: Making Dating Work*, 118-20.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 121-9.

TABLE 4. Healthy Romance versus Romanticized Friendship⁴⁶

Healthy Romance	Romanticized Friendship
Desire is based on first being rooted in love elsewhere.	Desire is based on empty neediness for the other person.
Other's freedom is valued.	Other's freedom is a problem.
Relationship draws in friends.	Relationship shut others out.
Conflicts work out okay.	Conflicts threaten the relationship.
Mutual feelings.	One person feels romantic, the other doesn't.
Friendship and romantic feelings coexist.	All-friend or all-romantic feelings; can't be both at the same time.

Pure romance is through appropriate actions and words. The male in the dating/courting relationship will want to grow in pure romance with the female. The relationship's first priority is not pure romance. Pure romance has its place in the relationship. The feelings shown are to please Christ. Non-physical expressions play an important role in the courtship. Romans 12:10, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another."⁴⁷ E-mails, cards, flowers, lunch, and other expressions of gratitude are some examples of non-physical expressions of pure romance. The male should take the initiative to make sure the relationship has pure

⁴⁶Ibid., 129.

⁴⁷The Holy Bible.

romance and to offer non-physical expressions of gratitude towards the female.⁴⁸

⁴⁸Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 89-92, 198.

CHAPTER 6

IS SEX BEFORE MARRIAGE OKAY?

The infamous question, "Is sex before marriage okay?" Sex is a precious gift from God that is reserved for marriage. Honor and glorify God with the body. Ephesians 5:3 says, "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints."⁴⁹

Chastity means abstaining from sexual activity. One rule for Christians: "Total abstention from sexual activity outside of marriage and total faithfulness inside marriage" (Proverbs 5).⁵⁰ The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 7:1-2, "(1) Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. (2) Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."⁵¹ The one rule is not up for negotiation, discussion, or alteration.

⁴⁹*The Holy Bible.*

⁵⁰Elisabeth Elliot, *Passion And Purity: Learning To Bring Your Love Life Under Christ's Control* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 2002), 124.

⁵¹*The Holy Bible.*

Sexual desire is God-given and natural. Satan seeks to distort the sexual desire by deceiving individuals into thinking that anything physically done outside the context of marriage feels good and is not bad. The deception may be as follows, "God gave the sexual desire, so go ahead and give in to the desire. He will understand. By the way, every one is doing it. You do not want to be the 'only one' to wait until marriage! What will your friends say? What will your date think about you?" Many Christian individuals believe Satan's lie. They are without honor and dignity.⁵²

The first chapter of the book of James offers insight into temptation. A Christian striving to live a sexually pure life needs to understand how temptation works. First, Satan makes temptation feel natural and good (James 1:14). The lust of the eye, heart, emotions, and thoughts tempt a Christian to sin (James 1:14-15). The eye is the window of the soul. It can seduce a Christian. To avoid the eye's seduction trap, a Christian needs to train the eye to behold only things that are pleasing to Christ.⁵³

⁵²Elliot, *Passion And Purity: Learning To Bring Your Love Life Under Christ's Control*, 127-30.

⁵³Ravi Zacharias, *I, Isaac, Take Thee, Rebekah: Moving From Romance To Lasting Love* (Nashville: W Publishing Group, 2004), 79-82.

The eye can lead to the temptation of touch. A Christian needs to be cautious when touching a member of the opposite sex, especially during dating/courting. Take the temptation of touch very seriously. The relationship will bring about times when the two individuals are alone. Be careful that the temptation of touch does not present a problem during the alone times. A good idea to think about is never be totally alone. The individuals may spend time talking at each other's house. Make sure that someone else is at the house.⁵⁴ Romans 13:13-14 states, "(13) Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. (14) But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."⁵⁵

Purity is not just about lustful thoughts, lustful actions, and inappropriate relationships. Purity is about living a pure life with the presence of Christ indwelling a Christian. A Christian's body is the temple of the Lord. Christ paid the ultimate price for sin, death on the cross. A Christian is bought with a price, the blood of Christ. Purity can be seen as glorifying God in body and spirit

⁵⁴Ibid., 82-4.

⁵⁵*The Holy Bible.*

every second, minute, and hour of every single day (1
Corinthians 6:18-20).⁵⁶

⁵⁶Zacharias, *I, Isaac, Take Thee, Rebekah: Moving From Romance To Lasting Love*, 84-5.

CHAPTER 7

WHAT IS GOD'S VIEW OF SEX?

Sex is not a sin. Billy Graham says, "It is significant that the Bible is one of the world's most outspoken books on the subject of sex. It does not try to gloss over sex in either its right or wrong aspects. The sly, secret, embarrassed, 'let's-pretend-it-doesn't-exist' attitude about sex is purely manmade."⁵⁷ God meant for sex to be shared between a husband and a wife. He intended sex to be the complete act of love in a marriage. Sex is a part of marriage. The commitment, love, respect, and joy are all attributes of a marriage. God designed sex to bring about new life.⁵⁸ Upon completion of creation, God instructed Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Genesis 1:28b).⁵⁹

A Christian is to honor and glorify God with their bodies. Strive to live a sexually pure life until marriage. Satan will use the lust of the eye, heart,

⁵⁷Billy Graham, *Peace With God: In A World of Strife And Pain You Can Have . . .* (Nashville: W Publishing Group, 1984), 240.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 239-40.

⁵⁹*The Holy Bible.*

emotions, and thoughts to tempt a Christian (James 1:14-15). The temptation will appear natural and good. Lustful thoughts and actions are not justified. A Christian's body is the temple of the Lord. Christ indwells the heart and life of His child. He paid the ultimate price for sin by dying on a cross. A Christian is bought with the blood of Christ. Resist and flee temptation.⁶⁰ "(18) Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. (19) What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (20) For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:18-20).⁶¹

The misuse of sex is a sin. Sin is a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience to God in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3). Society has distorted sex. Sinful individuals have degraded sex to nothing more than low, cheap, and filthy. This is not how God intended sex.⁶²

⁶⁰Zacharias, *I, Isaac, Take Thee, Rebekah: Moving From Romance To Lasting Love*, 79-85.

⁶¹*The Holy Bible*.

⁶²Graham, *Peace With God: In A World of Strife And Pain You Can Have . . .*, 239-40.

CHAPTER 8

DOES GOD CLEARLY DEFINE THE ROLES OF A MAN AND WOMAN?

The Bible clearly defines the roles of the man and woman. God is the Head of Christ, Christ is the Head of the man, the man is the head of the wife, the wife willingly submits to her husband, the husband loves his wife as Christ loves the Church, and both husband and wife become one in Christ (Mark 10:6-9; 1 Corinthians 11:1-3, 8-12; Ephesians 5:22-25; Colossians 3:18-19). The leadership roles are simple to understand, may be difficult to follow, and require a willingness from both individuals to live according to the Bible.⁶³

God created the man and woman to be equal. Yet, they are to be different. The man is not to complete the woman. Neither was the woman created to complete the man. God made the man and the woman to complement each other. Only Jesus Christ can complete the man or woman.⁶⁴

God specifically designed the Christian man to assume responsibility of the household. He is to be a man that

⁶³Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 235-8.

⁶⁴Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 107-12, 198-9.

asserts proper authority. A physical body needs a head to be the source of authority. The same is true in a marriage. The Christian man will be the head of the household to assert proper authority with a loving attitude over the family. This means that he is willingly submitting to Christ.⁶⁵

The Christian man is different from the Christian woman. Each is different physically, emotionally, and mentally. The man will even act different from the woman. God made these behavioral differences. The man is to be the leader and the woman is to be the follower.⁶⁶

⁶⁵Elisabeth Elliot, *The Mark Of A Man* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1981), 97-8.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 98-9.

CHAPTER 9

WHAT IS GOD'S VIEW OF MARRIAGE?

A Christian that follows and obeys God's view of sex should accept God's view of marriage. Marriage, from God's point of view, is a holy bond between a male and female. In the Garden of Eden, Adam was lonely (Genesis 2:18-25). He had no helpmate. God said that Adam should not be alone and that he needed a helpmate. Adam fell into a deep sleep. While he was sleeping, God took a rib from Adam's side. After God removed Adam's rib, He sewed Adam's side. God took the rib and made a woman. The woman's name was Eve. Adam awakens to find Eve. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (Genesis 2:23).⁶⁷

God said that man should leave his father and his mother. Man will take a wife and cleave unto her. No longer will the man and woman be two individuals. The two will become one flesh (Genesis 2:24-25).

⁶⁷*The Holy Bible.*

A wedding is a beginning for a husband and wife. A beginning for making memories, for starting a family, for experiencing a new type of love together, for learning about each other, and for growing closer. Family and friends work to make the wedding day a special day. Decorations, flowers, and food are all set in their proper places. The joy waits as the marriage ceremony draws nearer. The groom and groomsmen enter the chapel with the preacher. Each bridesmaid takes her turn walking down the aisle. Finally, all eyes turn towards the back of the church. The music begins, the door opens, and the bride stands dressed in her beautiful white wedding gown. Next to the bride stands her father. The excited guests all rises to their feet as the bride makes her entrance. The groom stands at the altar and grins from ear to ear. As the bride walks down the aisle, the groom cannot take his eyes off her. The eyes of the bride and the groom are on each other. The preacher recites the wedding vows as the groom and bride each take their turn repeating the vows. Finally, the preacher announces to the guests, "It is my honor and privilege to be the first to announce Mr. and Mrs. John Doe." The newlyweds make their way out of the church as husband and wife.⁶⁸

⁶⁸Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 123-25, 209-11.

A Christian marriage should be about pleasing God. God is the Head of Christ. Christ is the Head of the husband. The husband is the head of his wife. The wife willingly submits to her husband. The husband selflessly loves his wife as Christ loves the Church. The husband and wife becomes one in Christ (Mark 10:6-9; 1 Corinthians 11:1-3, 8-12; Ephesians 5:22-25; Colossians 3:18-19).⁶⁹

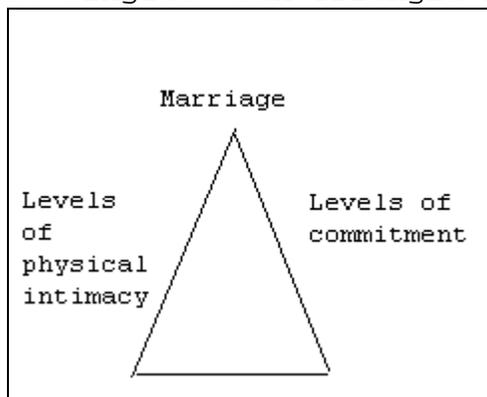
⁶⁹Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 235-8.

CHAPTER 10

SHOULD SEXUAL INTIMACY INCREASE WITH COMMITMENT?

A Christian single may pose the question, "Should sexual intimacy increase with commitment?" For many years, singles knew about the singles' sex triangle model. Respected Christian authors, counselors and professors have taught this dominant model. The singles' sex triangle teaches that the level of commitment determines the level of physical involvement. Table 5 contains the singles' sex triangle model.⁷⁰

TABLE 5. Singles' Sex Triangle Model⁷¹

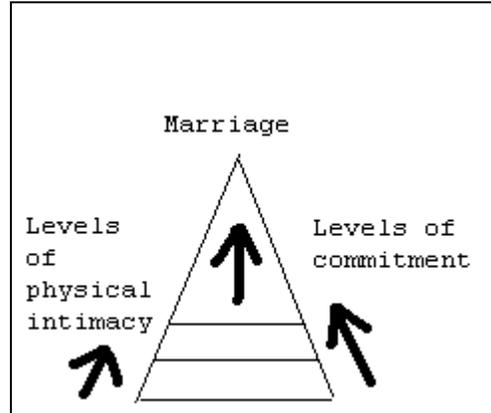


⁷⁰Rick Stedman, *Your Single Treasure: The Good News About Singles And Sexuality* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2000), 121-5.

⁷¹Ibid., 125.

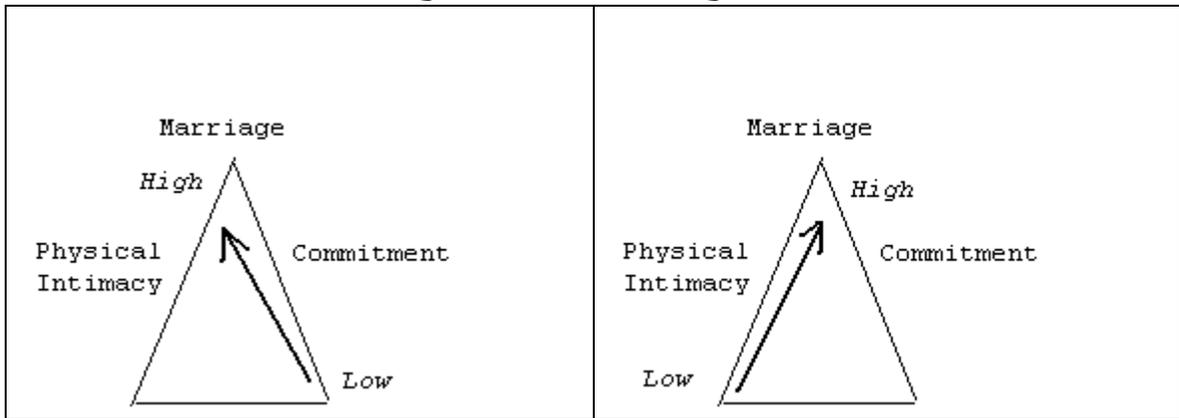
If the level of commitment grows then the level of physical involvement grows at the same pace. Sex is until marriage. Table 6 illustrates the growth.

TABLE 6. Singles' Sex Triangle Growth⁷²



The male and female each balance the physical involvement. One problem with this is the idea that the male or female may not balance the physical involvement in an appropriate manner. If both individuals are imbalanced, then the relationship may be in danger. Table 7 illustrates the imbalanced relationship.

⁷²Ibid.

TABLE 7. Singles' Sex Triangle Imbalanced⁷³

Some serious problems arise from the singles' sex triangle. One problem is that the male may have a different definition of commitment than the female. He may push the physical involvement for his pleasure. The female may desire greater commitment in the relationship than the male. She may allow the physical involvement because she feels the male is "really committed" to her. Another problem is that the commitment level between the individuals has reached the engagement stage. At this time, the male, female, or both may feel that the physical involvement should include sexual involvement. Table 8 contains two examples of the serious problems of the singles' sex triangle.⁷⁴

⁷³Ibid., 126.

⁷⁴Ibid., 126-30.

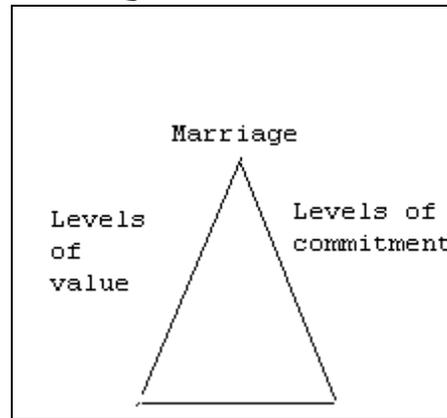
TABLE 8. Singles' Sex Triangle Problems⁷⁵

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The singles' sex triangle should be replaced with the singles' value triangle. One major ingredient was missing from the singles' sex triangle. The ingredient is to help build each individual's moral sense of self-worth and value through celibacy until marriage. This ingredient is included in the singles' value triangle. The singles' value triangle replaces the levels of physical intimacy with the levels of value. In so doing, the levels of value reminds the male and female that the God's gift of sexuality is an expensive and treasured gift. Table 9 contains the singles' value triangle.⁷⁶

⁷⁵Ibid., 128-9.

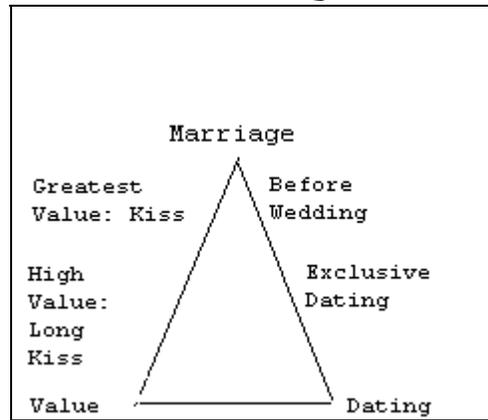
⁷⁶Ibid., 147-58.

TABLE 9. Singles' Value Triangle⁷⁷

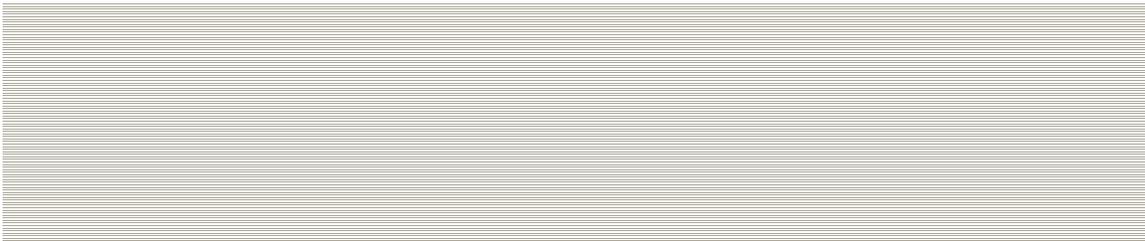
The singles' value triangle helps couples realize that the greater the level of commitment the greater the value of each other. Thus, the physical intimacy should begin to become less important. The male and female will respect each other and value the time of getting to know each other as an individual. If the relationship heads towards marriage, then the individuals in the relationship need to hold off on physical intimacy. The male and female will each save up their emotional and physical intimacy for marriage. Table 10 illustrates the diminishing of the physical intimacy of the singles' value triangle.⁷⁸

⁷⁷Ibid., 148.

⁷⁸Ibid., 152-4.

TABLE 10. Singles' Value Triangle Less-Physical Intimacy⁷⁹

⁷⁹Ibid., 153.



CHAPTER 11

HOW TO END A DATING/COURTING RELATIONSHIP?

The time may come that the relationship must end. The decision to end the relationship may be difficult to do. The following ideas can assist in ending the relationship.

Discuss With a Trusted Friend

Seek a trusted friend to help process the feelings that are associated with ending the relationship. Make sure the trusted friend does not try to convince or sway the decision. Ask the trusted friend to listen and provide honest feedback.⁸⁰

Immediately

Do not waste any more time in the relationship, immediately end the relationship. Understand that feelings may be hurt. The result may be painful. Be honest about the feelings and do not make any excuses. Now is better than later to end the relationship.⁸¹

⁸⁰Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 205.

⁸¹Ben Young, and Dr. Samuel Adams, *The One: A Realistic Guide To Choosing Your Soul Mate* (Nashville: Nelson Books, 2001), 157.

Let Christ Handle the Breakup

An individual that is ending the relationship needs to let Christ handle the breakup. Christ will comfort His child and help heal any pain that may be associated with the breakup. In the midst of the emotions' chaos, Christ provides comfort and peace (Philippians 4:6-7).⁸²

Be Tactful and Truthful

When the relationship ends, do not seek revenge. An individual does not need to be cruel or mean while ending the relationship. Hurt and pain will probably be associated with the breakup, but calm down and be truthful in sharing feelings.⁸³ An individual that tells the truth can positively shed light on the relationship and the other person. The thought of telling the truth may be frightful but can actually help the other person realize an area(s) that need to be worked out in his or her own life.⁸⁴

Courage

Be courageous. Ask Christ to distribute courage in breaking up the relationship. An individual may feel

⁸²Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 205.

⁸³Young and Dr. Samuel Adams, *The One: A Realistic Guide To Choosing Your Soul Mate*, 157.

⁸⁴Neil Clark Warren, *Date Or Soul Mate? How To Know If Someone Is Worth Pursuing In Two Dates Or Less* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2002), 153-8.

pressure to move forward towards marriage or may decide to get married out of fear of never finding another person to marry. Trust Christ's guidance.⁸⁵

No Follow-Up

Once the relationship has been ended, do not follow-up through a phone call, e-mail, or for hanging out. Move on with life. Each individual needs to put the past behind and continue living life as normal. A superficial friendship will emerge if both individuals want to be "just friends."⁸⁶

Move on With Life

The relationship is over. Life is not. Move on with life and persevere (Romans 5:3-5). Learn from the experience. Allow Christ to ease the pain, grow in Christ, and enjoy spending time with family and friends. Get actively involved, if not already, in a Bible-believing church. Continue to build character for a future relationship. Live life for Christ (Philippians 1:21).⁸⁷

God is working everything for the good of those that love Him (Romans 8:28). The circumstance is not greater

⁸⁵Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 207-8.

⁸⁶Young and Dr. Samuel Adams, *The One: A Realistic Guide To Choosing Your Soul Mate*, 158-9.

⁸⁷Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 217.

than God. Trust God's sovereignty, wisdom, love, and direction (Proverbs 3:5-6). Do not worry about tomorrow. Just trust and obey Christ for there is no other way. God will make a way when there seems to be no other way. God's plans and thoughts are of peace and to give an expected end (Jeremiah 29:11-12).⁸⁸

⁸⁸Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 213-7.

CHAPTER 12

WHAT IF PRE-MARITAL SEXUAL SIN HAS BEEN COMMITTED?

A Christian that has not abstained from sexual activity may be concerned. Some may ask the following questions: "Have I messed up my life for good?"; "Does God still love me?"; "Can I ever be forgiven?"; and "Can I make a decision to remain sexually pure from this moment on until marriage?" The answers to these questions are in the cross of Christ.⁸⁹

A Christian single may have had premarital sex once or fifty times. Now is the time to repent and turn away from this foolishness. Every time a Christian single commits the sin of premarital sex, then he or she will find it harder and harder to turn from this sin. The addiction of sex can be destructive. Turn from the sin and turn to Christ.⁹⁰

Jesus Christ died on the cross for the sin of man. A Christian that accepts Christ into their heart and life

⁸⁹Ibid., 169-73.

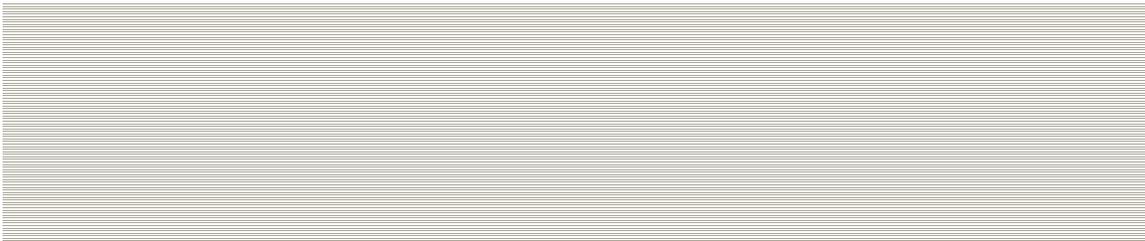
⁹⁰Ian Gregory, *No Sex Please! (Until We're Married): The No-Compromise Search For The Love Of Your Life* (Colorado Springs: Life Journey, 2005), 90-1.

receive forgiveness of sin. No, life is not over for good (Jeremiah 29:11). Yes, God still loves His child (2 Corinthians 5:17-18). Ask Christ to forgive against the sexually committed sin (1 John 1:9). Make a decision, with Christ's help and strength, to remain sexually pure until marriage (Philippians 4:13).⁹¹

Do not hide the sin from Christ. Confess the sin, ask for forgiveness, and become white as snow (Isaiah 1:18). Repent and turn from the sin. Christ can take the broken and shattered life and write a beautiful story because of His perfect love (Luke 15:11-24).⁹²

⁹¹Ibid., 173-6.

⁹²Eric Ludy, and Leslie Ludy, *When God Writes Your Love Story: The Ultimate Approach To Guy/Girl Relationships* (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, 2004), 223-31.



CHAPTER 13

WHAT ARE SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHRISTIAN MAN?

What are some characteristics of a Christian man? The Christian man must make sure that he has a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Christ is a noun and verb through experiencing and embracing Him. Every single day, he will have a desire to die to himself and live for Christ. Time spent reading, studying, and reflecting on the Bible is precious. The Bible convicts, corrects, and reproofs the Christian man of God.

Be the Christ-Built Warrior

The Christian man may have the desire to be a warrior. He may not know exactly how to do so. A Christ-built warrior focuses on strengthening and building courageous muscles in his soul and compassion muscles in his heart. No longer does one's self matter. As Christ shapes and molds the soul and heart, what matters most is what Christ thinks. Begin to see people, situations, and circumstances through Christ's eyes. The things that matter to Christ are worth protecting and defending.⁹³

⁹³Eric Ludy, *God's Gift To Women: Discovering The Lost Greatness Of Masculinity* (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, 2003), 117-39.

Protect the Covenant Life Within

The Christian warrior must look to God, the Commander and Chief. The first item a Christian warrior will want to do is protect the covenant life within him. This requires weapons, a battle plan, and complete focus of the warrior. The Commander and Chief is at work in a warrior's life. Satan, the enemy, is at work to destroy the warrior's covenant life. The enemy will use different tactics to defeat the warrior.⁹⁴

One tactic is to drug the warrior. Instead of growing and protecting the covenant life, the enemy will use computer games, hunting, money, work, school, sports, music, weightlifting, and other items to drug the warrior. Once the enemy finds out the weakness of the warrior, then the warrior becomes vulnerable to self's drugging. The selfish and sinful nature begins to rule and threatens to overthrow the Commander and Chief's rule.⁹⁵

Another tactic is distraction. This tactic can be very convincing. The warrior becomes so busy with doing good things that he neglects to spend time with the Commander and Chief. The enemy keeps sending the warrior distractions. Each distraction takes more and more time

⁹⁴Ibid., 139-40.

⁹⁵Ibid., 140-1.

away from Bible study, prayer, and fellowship with the Commander and Chief. The busyness becomes the focus. The warrior begins to ignore the Commander and Chief's rule and begins to focus on his selfish and sinful nature.⁹⁶

Artillery for Fighting the Enemy

The Christian warrior will need artillery to fight off the enemy. He must remain on constant alert. The moment the enemy begins to attack, the warrior must immediately attack back. First, spend quality time getting to know the Commander and Chief. Study the Bible and pray. Secondly, map out a battle strategy. Look for areas where the enemy attacks. Some areas may include temptation, frustration, or irritation. The next time the enemy attacks fight head-on. Find a non-Christian, pray for him, and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with him. The enemy will get extremely mad. He may leave. Not long after, the enemy will return.⁹⁷

Thirdly, the warrior must be ready to suffer pain and death in battle. He must not fear the pain of dying to himself. Every single day, live life for the Commander and Chief and fear Him. Do not live life for self and do not compromise. Make the commitment to fight the enemy by

⁹⁶Ibid., 141-7.

⁹⁷Ibid., 147-50.

dying to self for life. Fourthly, do not let the enemy set up a communication post in the thought life, heart, or mind of yourself. Take out all communication posts that the enemy may try to set up. Do not give the enemy one-inch to influence thoughts. Be on guard with the eyes and ears. Fifthly, the warrior must surround himself with other warriors. A fellowship of believers can encourage and help in overcoming the enemy. Find fellow Christian warriors to pray with and share. These warriors can even be accountability partners. There is strength in numbers. The enemy will not stand a chance. Fight for being a Christ-like warrior.⁹⁸

Be the Man of Integrity

Integrity: abiding by a code of moral values, describes inward character, and describes outward conduct. The Christian man will have a desire to stand up for what is right in the eyes of God. He does not have to waver between two opinions. If something is right, then the Christian man will stand for it without backing down. The pressure to back down may be tough. The pressure will only push a man of integrity to keep standing. The Christian man will allow his beliefs to line up with the Bible. If the Bible says that something is wrong, then the man will

⁹⁸Ibid., 150-5.

believe that it is wrong. No questions asked. Just believe.⁹⁹

Be the Man with Pure Thoughts

Psalm 139 says, "(1) O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. (2) Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off."¹⁰⁰ God knows every thought. The Christian man will have a desire to be a man with pure thoughts. Thoughts such as pride, lust, anger, envy, jealousy, and revenge may exist in the secret thought life. The enemy is battling for the mind. He uses the world, flesh, and other sinful devices to attack the thought life (Galatians 5:17). The temptation is not coming from God (James 1:13-15). The temptation is from the enemy. Resist the temptation by living in the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16). Allow the Holy Spirit to let the fruit of the Spirit grow and flourish. Realize that God provides a way out of the temptation.¹⁰¹ 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the

⁹⁹Patrick Morley, *The Young Man In The Mirror: A Rite Of Passage Into Manhood* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 107-10.

¹⁰⁰*The Holy Bible.*

¹⁰¹Morley, *The Young Man In The Mirror: A Rite Of Passage Into Manhood*, 117-27.

temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."¹⁰²

Be the Man of Proper Authority

The Christian man will allow Christ to rule and reign in his life. God is the Head of Christ, Christ is the Head of every man, the man is the head of the wife, the wife willingly submits to her husband, the husband loves his wife as Christ loves the church, and both husband and wife become one in Christ (Mark 10:6-9; 1 Corinthians 11:1-3, 8-12; Ephesians 5:22-25; Colossians 3:18-19). The leadership roles are simple to understand, may be difficult to follow, and require a willingness from the man and woman to live according to the Bible.¹⁰³

God specifically designed the Christian man to assume responsibility of the household. He is to be a man that asserts proper authority. A physical body needs a head to be the source of authority. The same is true in a marriage. The Christian man will be the head of the household to assert proper authority with a loving attitude over the family. This means that he is willingly submitting to Christ.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰²*The Holy Bible.*

¹⁰³Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 235-8.

¹⁰⁴Elliot, *The Mark Of A Man*, 97-8.

The Christian man is different from the Christian woman. Each gender is different physically, emotionally, and mentally. The man will even act different from the woman. God made these behavioral differences. The man is to be the leader and the woman is to be the follower.¹⁰⁵

Be the Man of Obedience

The Christian man needs to be a man of obedience. At times, obeying God is not easy. The enemy will try to use the selfish nature to disobey God. God instructed Abraham to leave his family, friends, and comfortable surroundings. Abraham was seventy-five years old. He was to leave and follow God. Abraham had no retirement, no medical benefits, and no vacations. God only wanted Abraham's complete obedience (Genesis 12).¹⁰⁶

The enemy will tempt the Christian man to weigh the pros and cons for completely obeying God. Make the decision to spend the energy and time handing full control of life to God. Let Him be the Guide. Humbly and willingly submit to His headship and leadership. The adventure of a lifetime will begin the moment God takes the reigns and assumes full control. There is no specific

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 98-9.

¹⁰⁶John Eldredge, *Wild At Heart: Discovering The Secret Of A Man's Soul* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), 197-203.

formula or system with God. Just simply trust Him, spend time in prayer, study the Bible, and enjoy the adventure.¹⁰⁷

Be the "H.O.T." Man

H.O.T. stands for Holy, Outrageous, and Trustworthy. The Christian man will want to be H.O.T. This type of man reveals the Biblical idea of manhood.¹⁰⁸

Holy

The Christian man is to live a holy and set apart life according to God's standards. God is looking for a man to fill the gap and be devoted to Biblical convictions (Ezekiel 22:30). Be courageous. Defend holiness. Do not "go with flow" just to please a crowd. Stay immersed in God's Word. Be a genuine man of God.¹⁰⁹

Apply the Word of God to daily living (Ezra 7:9-10). Before teaching others the Word of God, exemplify the fruit of the Spirit and Jesus' teachings. Make sure to set the priorities in order. Put God first, family second, job third, and the list goes on. Motivate others to follow suit.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 202-13.

¹⁰⁸Jeremy Clark, and Jerusha Clark, *He's HOT, She's HOT: What To Look For In The Opposite Sex* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press, 2001), 1-2, 71-4.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 74-7.

¹¹⁰Ibid., 77-9.

Outrageous

The Christian man will want to be outrageous for life. A new car will fade, a muscular body will eventually wrinkle, but qualities of an outrageous Christian life will last for eternity. Some qualities of an outrageous Christian man are to show kindness to the woman, open the door for her, compliment her appearance, be sensitive to her needs, consistently offer words of encouragement, and treat the woman like a lady. These qualities may not be easy at first, but ask God to provide help in developing and exemplifying them.¹¹¹

Outrageous includes Godly masculinity. There is nothing wrong with having a new car and a muscular body. God designed the male Christian to impress the female with His ordained masculinity. Do not impress a female with anything else. Masculinity ordained by God includes being a man of faith and family, seeking guidance and advice from older Christian men, and becoming a Godly masculine man.¹¹²

Trustworthy

The Christian man needs to be trustworthy. Trust takes time to earn. One way to earn trust is to lead by

¹¹¹Ibid., 80-2.

¹¹²Clark, *I Gave Dating A Chance: A Biblical Perspective To Balance The Extremes*, 130-2.

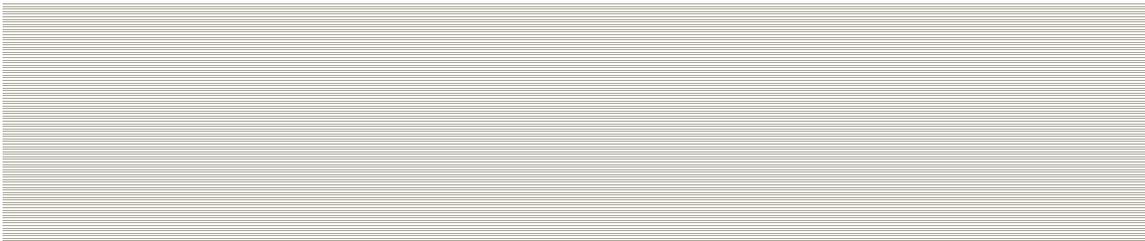
example. Adam was made first. Eve came from Adam's rib. God meant Adam to lead Eve. The same is true for the Christian man. The Christian man is to be the spiritual leader. Discuss Scripture passages, initiate Biblical fellowship, and have God-focused conversations. This will prepare the Christian man for marriage and will help earn the woman's trust.¹¹³

Another way to earn the woman's trust is to make a promise and then follow through with that promise. Do not make a promise if there is no intention of keeping it. Jesus said let a "yes" be "yes" and a "no" be "no" (Matthew 5:37).

Commitment and responsibility are other ways to earn the woman's trust. If a commitment is in place, then abide by it. Take responsibility when necessary. Show the woman that commitments and responsibilities are both important characteristics taken seriously.¹¹⁴

¹¹³Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 114-5.

¹¹⁴Clark and Clark, *He's HOT, She's HOT: What To Look For In The Opposite Sex*, 84-6.



CHAPTER 14

WHAT ARE SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHRISTIAN WOMAN?

The Christian woman must make sure that she has a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Christ is to be evident and seen as a noun and verb. This means that the Christian woman will experience and embrace Christ.

Allow self to die daily and desire to live for Christ. Spend quality time reading, studying, and reflecting on the Bible. Let the Bible convict, correct, and reproof the Christian woman. This will allow the Holy Spirit to root and grow the fruit of the Spirit in the Christian woman's life. She will then exemplify the fruit of the Spirit.

Be the Set Apart Woman in Heart

The Christian woman needs to be set apart for God's glory. To be set apart, she must remove the trash and debris that is cluttering her heart. Trash and debris can be hatred towards someone, a haunting memory, hidden sin, or emotional baggage. The trash and debris can cause pain, hurt, and tears. The Christian woman needs to seek God's forgiveness for hatred and hidden sin. She needs to ask

God to help her deal with burying the emotional baggage and haunting memory. She should seek to make things right in God's eyes. The process may take some time. If the trash and debris is properly removed then the Christian woman can become set apart for God's glory.¹¹⁵

The sacredness of the heart is the sanctuary for God to dwell and reside. The Christian woman needs to keep her heart pure and clean. God can enjoy intimate fellowship in this beautiful and holy place. Out of the heart can bring abundant joy and fulfilling intimacy with the Creator of Love.¹¹⁶

Be the Pride-less Woman

Pride can get in the way of following God's will in a person's life. The Christian woman needs to be pride-less and learn to rely totally on God. If God is truly calling then, personally answer His call. The selfish nature will want to question God's call and then turn away from it. The Christian woman will have to make a firm decision to remove the selfish nature from the throne and allow God to rule.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵Leslie Ludy, *Authentic Beauty: The Shaping Of A Set Apart Young Woman* (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, 2003), 63-72.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 63-79.

¹¹⁷Shannon Kubiak Primicerio, *Being A Girl Who Serves: How To Find Your Life By Giving It Away* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2006), 67-77.

Be the Woman Willing to Serve

The Christian woman should desire to faithfully and willingly serve the Lord. A prayer can be, "Lord, use my life to count for Your glory. I am Your servant and I am willing to serve You. Here is my life. Take it and use it how You see fit." An attitude of serving the Lord is the best attitude to have. To serve the Lord is truly fulfilling and rewarding. Serve the Lord by standing up for His Word and for what is morally and ethically right in God's eyes. Make life count for Christ. Leave a legacy that is worth following. Serve by example.¹¹⁸

Be the Woman of Proper Authority

The roles of the man and woman are in the Bible. God is the Head of Christ, Christ is the Head of the man, the man is the head of the wife, the wife willingly submits to her husband, the husband loves his wife as Christ loves the Church, and both husband and wife become one in Christ (Mark 10:6-9; 1 Corinthians 11:1-3, 8-12; Ephesians 5:22-25; Colossians 3:18-19). The leadership roles are simple to understand, may be difficult to follow, and require a willingness from both individuals to live according to the Bible.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸Ibid., 79-86.

¹¹⁹Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 235-8.

God created the man and woman to be equal. Yet, they are different. The man is to complete the woman. Neither was the woman created to complete the man. God made the man and the woman to complement each other. Only Jesus Christ can complete the man or woman.¹²⁰

Be the "H.O.T." Woman

The Christian woman wants to be H.O.T. - Holy, Outrageous, and Trustworthy. This type of woman reveals the Biblical idea of womanhood.

Holy

God has called the Christian woman to holiness. One characteristic of holiness is the desire to know God. To know God means the Christian woman hungers, thirsts, and longs for God (Psalm 42:1-2). Her relationship with God comes first. The Word of God is important. Prayer time is precious. The pursuit of God is gratifying. Every day she wants to grow closer and closer to the Lover of her soul.¹²¹

Another characteristic is virtue. Chapter thirty-one of the Book of Proverbs discusses a virtuous woman, "(10) Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. (25) Strength and honour are her clothing; and she

¹²⁰Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 107-12, 198-9.

¹²¹Clark and Clark, *He's HOT, She's HOT: What To Look For In The Opposite Sex*, 87-92.

shall rejoice in time to come. (30) Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. (31) Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."¹²² Virtue means that the Christian woman shapes her life and conforms her moral and ethical values around God's standards. Her physical appearance, emotional being, moral conduct, and speech glorify God (Romans 12:2).¹²³

A third characteristic is how the Christian woman is willing to transform and conform to God's standards and principles. She should allow older Christian women to mentor and provide Biblical guidance to her. The Christian woman will want to surround herself with these women of faith. She needs to respect their wisdom and understanding. Remember that holiness equals growth in Christ.¹²⁴

Outrageous

The Christian woman is proud of and appreciates her God-given femininity. She needs to discover her own

¹²²*The Holy Bible.*

¹²³Clark and Clark, *He's HOT, She's HOT: What To Look For In The Opposite Sex*, 93-4.

¹²⁴*Ibid.*, 94-6.

feminine qualities. She needs to then develop those qualities for God's glory, honor, and praise.¹²⁵

One way to be outrageous is through Godly charm. This type of charm involves taking interest in things outside of self. Take a genuine interest in friends and family members. Care about them and have concern about their lives. Allow the Holy Spirit to work, apply self-discipline, and ask God to develop the charm.¹²⁶

Another way the Christian woman can be outrageous is through personal grooming. Take a sincere interest in personal appearance. There is nothing wrong with focusing on external beauty. Good grooming is attractive and pleasing to God. Remember the body is His temple and deserves proper care and maintenance. Make sure the clothes worn bring glory and honor to Christ and not self. Apply the appropriate amount of makeup, lipstick, and mascara.¹²⁷

Trustworthy

The Christian woman is to be trusted. Gossip is wrong and is lethal (Ephesians 4:29). She needs to make sure that information discussed about another person helps them

¹²⁵Ibid., 96-8.

¹²⁶Ibid., 99-100.

¹²⁷Ibid., 100-1.

and does not tear them down. Do not spend time knocking another person down. Seek to build them up and pray for that person.¹²⁸

Trust comes about through listening (James 1:19). The Christian woman will want to be quick to listen and slow to respond. The listening skill is very important. A person heard feels important. Proper communication and listening skills are valuable to a healthy marriage and to a healthy friendship. The Christian woman that listens is saying that the person talking is of importance. She needs to desire to become a trustworthy person by listening and not gossiping.¹²⁹

¹²⁸Ibid., 105-6.

¹²⁹Ibid., 106-8.

CHAPTER 15

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON MISTAKES WOMEN MAKE IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH MEN?

A Christian single woman may ask the question, "What are some common mistakes we women make in relationships with men?" One mistake is that a women panic over the scarcity of Christian men. More women are involved in church than men. There are more women in the world than men. This makes some women very nervous. They are on a constant manhunt for Mr. Christian Man. At a church singles' event or at a church service, the "desperate women" will instantly search out the new single guys. Instead of plunging head first and going crazy trying to find the right Christian guy, ask the question, "Am I really trusting God during the season of singleness or am I so desperate that I will participate in a constant manhunt for Mr. Christian Man?"¹³⁰

Another common mistake among women is thinking and talking excessively about men. Single women get together and almost instantly bring up the topic of men. Even

¹³⁰Whelchel, Mary S., *Common Mistakes Singles Make: Friendships - Finances - Emotions - Family - Dating - Future Plans* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 2003), 59-62.

during Bible studies and prayer times, somehow single women will steer towards that subject. There is nothing wrong with discussing from time to time the subject of men. Do not become so obsessed that every conversation with other Christian single women focuses on men. Steer the conversation towards other topics. Discuss what God is doing in each other's lives, encouraging one another with Scripture passages, and make a conscience effort to build up each other in the Lord.¹³¹

Women thrive on emotions. They get very emotional real easy. A third mistake women make is running on emotions too much. A woman gets involved in a relationship with a man and she becomes emotionally attached to him. Her feelings are not separate from her rational thoughts. The emotions dominate the woman and prevent her from thinking clearly. A single Christian woman who meets a single Christian man and believes she is "in love with him" needs to use common sense, Biblical principles, and good counsel before falling head over heels. She needs to ask close friends and family members for their opinions and insights about the single Christian man. The woman will also need to pray and ask the Lord to open up her eyes, ears, and heart and guide in the right direction.¹³²

¹³¹Ibid., 67-9.

¹³²Ibid., 69-70.

Proverbs 15:22 says, "Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counselors they are established."¹³³

A fourth mistake women make in relationships with men is the reluctance to share honest opinions, feelings, and ideas. A woman may feel that if she is honest with a man then he may take it the wrong way. She may feel that her opinions, feelings, or ideas are not valid enough to share. She may find difficulty in expressing herself to the man. A Christian woman who is having difficulty expressing her opinions, feelings, and ideas must ask God to give her the confidence, wisdom, and words to speak.¹³⁴

A woman needs to be honest and clearly express her opinions, feelings, and ideas. Some women tend to be too open, vulnerable, and transparent. For example if a woman has known a man for a short amount of time then she may be too open by telling too much information too soon. A relationship with a man takes time to develop. Do not make the man feel uncomfortable. Allow the relationship to develop. A woman needs to ask the Lord to help in recognizing what to say and when to say it.¹³⁵ Proverbs

¹³³*The Holy Bible.*

¹³⁴Whelchel, Mary S., *Common Mistakes Singles Make: Friendships - Finances - Emotions - Family - Dating - Future Plans*, 70-1.

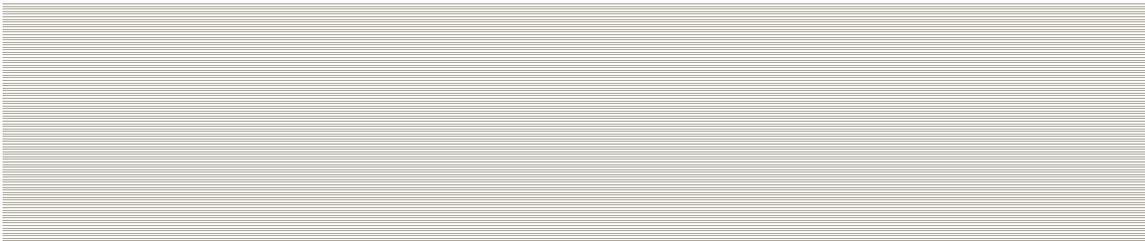
¹³⁵*Ibid.*, 72-3.

15:23, "A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!"¹³⁶ Proverbs

17:27, "He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit."¹³⁷

¹³⁶*The Holy Bible.*

¹³⁷*Ibid.*



CHAPTER 16

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON MISTAKES MEN MAKE IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH WOMEN?

Single Christian men may want to know what are some common mistakes that they make in relationships with women. For starters, men are too visually oriented. They have an idea of the type of woman they are looking for. Some men prefer a certain hair color instead of another hair color. Others prefer a certain shape or size. Maybe men want women of a certain height. Majority of the men, if they are truly honest, place high priority on women's physical appearance. A man that is only looking for a woman that meets his idea physical criteria may do so for an ego trip. He simply wants others to be impressed with the woman he is with. In some way, this elevates the man's value among other men. The man's selfishness causes pride. His motivations are for what others will think of him.¹³⁸

The single Christian man needs to seek the Lord's guidance for life. A single Christian woman that does not necessarily meet the man's physical criteria should not be

¹³⁸Whelchel, Mary S., *Common Mistakes Singles Make: Friendships - Finances - Emotions - Family - Dating - Future Plans*, 75-8.

ignored. A man that places too much emphasis on looks is in danger of choosing the wrong woman.¹³⁹

The outward qualities do not provide a detail and complete picture of that particular individual. An individual that relies completely on outward appearances is selfish. The self-absorbed individual does not consider the needs of others and prevents pure passion. Individuals involved in a dating relationship based solely upon outward appearances will end up in an unfulfilling relationship. The romance will fade away and the relationship will eventually end.¹⁴⁰

A heartfelt preference in attraction to someone of the opposite sex is not wicked. Many singles are lead to believe that a heartfelt preference is wicked. The proponents use Jeremiah 17:9 and Mark 7:21 to support their viewpoints. Those two verses refer to the old covenant. The new covenant is established in Christ's sacrificial death on the cross and resurrection from the dead. Christ now dwells in the hearts of the individuals that believe in Him by faith (Ephesians 3:17-19). As a new creation in Christ, a Christian becomes holy and righteous (2 Corinthians 5:17, 21). Christ's desires become the desires

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 65-6.

of the individual serving Christ (Ephesians 2:10). Christ guides an individual to balance romance and integrity while caring about the person they will marry. There is nothing wrong with desiring certain physical qualities along with desiring spiritual qualities.¹⁴¹

There may be something wrong with the motivations that may exist behind having those certain physical specifications. Physical appearances only last for a time. Do not place too much emphasis on looks. A relationship is more than good looks or certain physical preferences. A man may pass up a wonderful, Godly, Christian single woman just because he refuses to get to know her because she does not fit his ideal physical mold. He should ask the Lord to guide and direct him to the woman that is pleasing to the Lord.¹⁴² Proverbs 31:30 states, "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised."¹⁴³

Their fathers and mothers have taught men that expressing feelings is a sign of losing the manly image. A real man does not cry or admit his feelings. The second common mistake is the lack of showing emotions with women.

¹⁴¹Ibid., 68-71.

¹⁴²Whelchel, Mary S., *Common Mistakes Singles Make: Friendships - Finances - Emotions - Family - Dating - Future Plans*, 75-8.

¹⁴³*The Holy Bible.*

Men have the macho attitude that only wimps cry or express their emotions. A single Christian man must realize that Jesus Christ is the Ultimate Role Model. Christ cried, cared about people, physically touched individuals, showed unconditional love, openly expressed His own feelings, and treated women with respect by showing them compassion. A Christian man can learn from Christ. There is nothing wrong with expressing appropriate levels of emotions. A woman wants a man that expresses his emotions. This expression reflects a man's genuine manhood. A Christian man needs to spend time fellowshiping with Christ and asking for help in expressing emotions. He needs to feel free to openly discuss and express emotions with a woman. The benefits of doing so are rewarding. Everyday, the man's desire is to walk and act more like Jesus Christ.¹⁴⁴

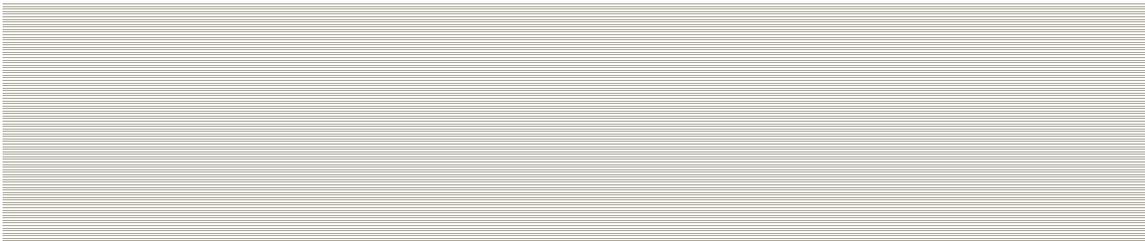
The word "commitment" makes men frightened. The third common mistake is the fear of making a commitment to women. Men are anxious about finding the right women to date or court and they even express the desire to one day get married. However, most men are very careful and cautious about making any commitment to get married. In general, men are fearful of rejection, failure, responsibilities of marriage, and of making a commitment to the wrong women.

¹⁴⁴Whelchel, Mary S., *Common Mistakes Singles Make: Friendships - Finances - Emotions - Family - Dating - Future Plans*, 78-80.

Their insecurities are normal. A Christian man must ask the Lord to give them strength to over their insecurities. Allow the Lord to take away any fear that may exist. Life is scary and at times may be unpredictable. He must sincerely pray, ask the Lord for guidance, and then follow that guidance. Spend quality time in the Word of God and in memorizing Scripture passages.¹⁴⁵ "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," writes the apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 1:7.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵Ibid., 81-2.

¹⁴⁶*The Holy Bible.*



CHAPTER 17

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR A CHRISTIAN TO OBEY GOD'S WORD?

God's Word, the Bible, is a Christian's roadmap in life. Throughout the pages of the Bible, God gives instructions and commands. A Christian should desire to obey God's Word (i.e. instructions, commands, etc.) and do so with joy in their lives.

Submission is Non-negotiable

Submission to the Bible is non-negotiable. Deuteronomy 4:2, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."¹⁴⁷ The desire to submit to the Bible comes from a willing and loving heart (John 14:15).¹⁴⁸

A life submitted to Christ requires Him moving in and self moving out. Christ takes over every thought, desire, weakness, thorn in the flesh, and attitude. A Christian may find it difficult to relinquish total control to Christ and the Holy Spirit. The selfish desires of the flesh

¹⁴⁷Ibid.

¹⁴⁸Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 34-5.

constantly fight against the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:17). The Bible instructs a Christian to walk in the Holy Spirit and not to walk according to the selfish desires (Galatians 5:16).¹⁴⁹

God Wants the Love Life

God wants total control of a Christian's love life. A Christian that surrenders their love life to Christ will find that it will cost them everything. Each day a Christian must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Christ (Luke 9:23). To give up one's life means that life is complete through following Christ (John 12:25-26).¹⁵⁰ Jim Elliot, a missionary martyred for the cause of Christ, stated, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."¹⁵¹

A Christian wants Christ to reveal definite answers to every question asked. Definite answers (i.e. tell who, how, and when) take away total dependence on Christ. Non-definite answers (i.e. does not tell who, how, and when) to a Christian's question comes about through faith and dependence on Christ. A Christian's love life must be

¹⁴⁹Ludy and Ludy, *When God Writes Your Love Story: The Ultimate Approach To Guy/Girl Relationships*, 37-50.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., 50-2.

¹⁵¹Elisabeth Elliot, *Shadow Of The Almighty: The Life And Testament Of Jim Elliot* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1979), 15.

handed over to Christ through faith and dependence on Him. Christ takes over and becomes the Author of a Christian's love life. The pen is now in Christ's hand.¹⁵²

A Christian can completely rely on Christ to mold and prepare them for their future spouse. Do not try to conform Christ into daily areas of life (i.e. friendship with a member of the opposite sex). Instead, conform daily areas of life around Christ. Focus on Christ, get to know Him in an intimate way, and do not focus on the friendship with a member of the opposite sex. Forget about abiding by a certain formula or living by a list of man-made rules when it comes to a member of the opposite sex. Sincerely and whole-heartedly chose to passionately love Christ. Ask the following question, "How far can I possibly go to bring joy to the heart of my heavenly Father in this area of my life?"¹⁵³

The Joy of a Relationship

God is the Designer of a relationship. A Christian that joyfully obeys the Bible can enjoy the amazing gift of a relationship, courtship, and marriage. God brought Adam and Eve, the first man and woman that enjoyed the gift of

¹⁵²Ludy and Ludy, *When God Writes Your Love Story: The Ultimate Approach To Guy/Girl Relationships*, 50-3.

¹⁵³*Ibid.*, 55-75.

marriage, together. Since then, men and women have experienced the joy of friendship, courtship, and marriage. A Christian's heart must trust God to prepare and guide them to go from the friendship stage to the courtship stage and then enter into the marriage stage. Until God leads from the friendship stage to the courtship stage, a Christian needs to enjoy the friendship stage of a relationship with a member of the opposite sex. Patiently wait on the Lord to guide, direct, and provide a clear direction for the relationship.¹⁵⁴

The Result: Peace and the Fruit of the Spirit

The result of a Christian's willingness to follow Christ is peace and the fruit of the Spirit. Rejoice in the Lord, bring prayer requests before Christ, and do so with thanksgiving. The outcome is peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:4-7). Christ's peace leads a Christian to live a life fulfilled with the fruit of the Spirit. The Bible says in Galatians 5:22-23, "(22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, (23) Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 43-62.

¹⁵⁵*The Holy Bible*.

CHAPTER 18

SHOULD A CHRISTIAN SINGLE BE CONTENT BEING SINGLE?

The Christian community is full of Christian single men and women. Many of these singles are trying to figure out if being single is okay. They pose the question, "Should a Christian single be content being single?" Obviously, the answer is yes. Yet, there is more to the answer than a simple "yes."

The tragedy is that single Christians try to find fulfillment in a member of the opposite sex. A Christian single woman may feel lonely that she does not have an ongoing, steady relationship with man. In a sense, she is trying to fill the void of loneliness through a man. A Christian that seeks completeness in another person or in a relationship will always bring about broken heartedness, loneliness, and emptiness. A Christian single can look at the following questions and reflect on their answers: "Am I happy and content being single?", "If I am in a relationship and that relationship ended today, would the breakup break me up?", "Do I feel that I am a nobody without having a steady relationship with a member of the opposite sex?", and "Am I accepted and love for being the

person God made me to be?" A single person needs to take time asking themselves some honest and tough questions.¹⁵⁶

The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 7:24, "Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God."¹⁵⁷ Be content being in the season of life that God has placed you in. Maybe the Lord's will is for marriage and maybe His will is not for marriage. God may be calling some Christian singles to be single their entire lives. Try not to focus on dating as being the number one priority in life. Jesus Christ and Him alone should be number one. Honor God and trust Him for His plans in life. This does not mean that life is going to be miserable and lonely. Instead, life in Christ is complete and free of heartache.¹⁵⁸

A Christian single does not need to date just for the sake of dating. A man may feel attraction towards a female. The same may be true with the female. This does not mean that the Lord's will involves the two individuals dating each other. A Christian single may feel that he or she is bored and wants to date just for fun. This can prove to be detrimental. On the other side, a Christian

¹⁵⁶JoAnna Harris, *You Didn't Complete Me: When "The One" Turns Out To Be Just Someone* (Nashville: W Publishing Group, 2004), 139-51.

¹⁵⁷*The Holy Bible*.

¹⁵⁸Jeff Taylor, *Friendlationships: From Like, To Like Like, To Love In Your Twenties* (Orlando: Relevante Books, 2005), 45-7.

single may feel pity towards another single individual. The pitying leads to dating. These two scenarios have absolutely no place in beginning a relationship with a member of the opposite sex. Once again, be content and allow the Lord to lead in life.¹⁵⁹ 1 Corinthians 7:27, "Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife."¹⁶⁰

A Christian single does not need to keep looking for the right person to be with until they ask the Lord to make them who Christ wants them to become (1 Corinthians 7:32-35). The single Christian will focus on their relationship with Christ and will make sure that their life lines up with the Word of God. Married couples can have a tough time trying to please God and each other. At times doing so can be a challenge. A single man or woman can use their season of singleness to develop a routine of studying the Word of God and spending time in prayer that they can take with them into marriage. The goal is to glorify God and not bring glory to self.¹⁶¹

The belief that being in a relationship is a free of problems is nothing more than a myth. Singles have their

¹⁵⁹Ibid., 47.

¹⁶⁰*The Holy Bible.*

¹⁶¹Taylor, *Friendships: From Like, To Like Like, To Love In Your Twenties*, 47-9.

own set of problems. A relationship only brings about more problems. This does not mean that being in a relationship is wrong. However, being in a relationship to escape problems is wrong. If problems seem to mount, then a man or woman is to cast all cares upon the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 5:7 commands, "Cast all your care upon him; for he careth for you."¹⁶² Do not run from the problems but simply deal with them. Make sure the personal relationship with Christ is growing on a daily basis. Then and only then will a single man or woman be as effective as they can be in a relationship.¹⁶³

Church is a place to worship and serve the Lord. This can be a great place to meet and interact with other Christian singles. Sadly, many Christian men and women attend church for the wrong reasons. A man may search and try different churches until he finds the church with the best looking single women. He then "feels" the Lord leading him to attend that terrific church. His motives are not to worship and serve the Lord but to hang out with the beautiful Christian single women. From the start, the man's heart was not in the correct place.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶²*The Holy Bible.*

¹⁶³Taylor, *Friendships: From Like, To Like Like, To Love In Your Twenties*, 49-50.

¹⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 50-1.

Instead of attending church to see what cute guy or what gorgeous girl is present, attend church for the sole purpose of worshipping and serving the Lord. The Christian single that does so will have a clean heart with pure motives. In the process, the Lord may send a Christian single person their way. If the Lord does do so, then the desire to purely worship and serve the Lord will not go away.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

CHAPTER 19

HOW CAN A CHRISTIAN SINGLE STRENGTHEN ACTS OF SELFLESSNESS?

A Christian single may struggle in the area of selflessness. He or she may ask, "How can a Christian single strengthen their acts of selflessness in a relationship?" In a friendship with a member of the opposite sex, a Christian needs to always have the other person's best interest in mind. The following questions can assist in determining acts of selflessness: "Is starting the relationship best for him?"; "Are my actions encouraging her to love God more?"; "Am I communicating clearly and in a way that helps him?"; and "Will kissing her be what is best for her in the long run?"¹⁶⁶

Selflessness, Godly Wisdom, and Courtship

A single Christian can strengthen their acts of selflessness in a relationship with a member of the opposite sex through Godly wisdom. Proverbs 4:5-7 says, "(5) Get wisdom, get understanding; neither decline from the words of my mouth. (6) Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. (7)

¹⁶⁶Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 36.

Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."¹⁶⁷ Wisdom comes by fearing the Lord (Proverbs 9:10). The art of patience, pursuing a purposeful relationship, and basing emotions in reality are ways in which wisdom can strengthen selflessness.

Wisdom Urges Patience in a Relationship

A single Christian interested in a member of the opposite sex needs to learn about patience. Wisdom urges patience (Proverbs 19:11). Patience is important in determining the right time to start a relationship and unfurl at a healthy pace.¹⁶⁸

A patient Christian that waits on Christ is expressing their faithfulness in Him (Psalm 38:15). The faithfulness can result in God sending the right person at the right time to begin a relationship that can lead to marriage. A Christian must take their time and savor the friendship with the opposite sex.¹⁶⁹

An impatient Christian can quickly turn a relationship from friendship to romance without commitment. The quickness prevents the individuals from enjoying God's

¹⁶⁷*The Holy Bible.*

¹⁶⁸Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 50-2.

¹⁶⁹*Ibid.*

unfolding love story. This leads towards emotional and physical intimacy.¹⁷⁰

Wisdom Pursues a Purposeful Relationship

A Christian male and female that both feel God is moving their relationship from friendship to courtship will want to pursue a purposeful relationship built upon wisdom. The term courtship is not about a list of rules and regulations. It is an old fashioned term that evokes chivalry (i.e. loyalty, courtesy, and good manners) and romance. Courtship is a time in the relationship a male and female can seriously pursue the possibility of marriage. The individuals are committing that they will not play games with each other's hearts but will be honest in expressing their feelings.¹⁷¹

The season of courtship can allow the friendship to strengthen and deepen. Each individual can spend quality time learning about the other's values and goals. Interaction on a spiritual level can grow and take place. The time spent during courtship can grow the individuals closer to each other. The purpose is clear: Find out if God desires the individuals to get married. This is

¹⁷⁰Ibid., 52-3.

¹⁷¹Ibid., 29-32, 53-6.

through sound wisdom and discretion (Proverbs 3:21).¹⁷²

"(5) Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. (6) In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths," states Proverbs 3:5-6.¹⁷³

The season of courtship should be a time when physical intimacy is refrained. Physical intimacy can detour the relationship from its purpose. Individuals that become romantically involved do so just to have a good time and are foolish.¹⁷⁴ Proverbs 7 tells the story of a man and woman that are not married acting foolish all night long. "(18) Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves. (21) With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him," states Proverbs 7:18 and 21.¹⁷⁵

Wisdom Says Base Emotions and Perceptions in Reality

The season of courtship needs to be a time that each individual wisely base his or her emotions and perceptions in reality. Emotions are as follows, "A physical expression of how we perceive the status of something that

¹⁷²Ibid., 54.

¹⁷³*The Holy Bible.*

¹⁷⁴Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 53-4.

¹⁷⁵*The Holy Bible.*

we value. Anger, gladness, fear, sadness, joy, jealousy, hatred are all combinations of our perception and our values."¹⁷⁶

Do not rush the emotions on perception. Inaccurate information about the other individual can cause a false sense of knowledge. The false knowledge can lead to a fantasy relationship were the individuals do not know each other's real values, motives, and goals. Emotions based on perception are acts of foolishness.¹⁷⁷ Proverbs 19:2-3, "(2) Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good; and he that hasteth with his feet sinneth. (3) The foolishness of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the LORD."¹⁷⁸

The relationship's values need to be Godly and the perceptions of the other person need to be as accurate as possible. Appropriate and healthy emotions will be the result. Spend time around each other's families, friends, church settings, and other real-life settings. Observe their actions, reactions, decisions, emotions, and communications in these real-life settings. This will

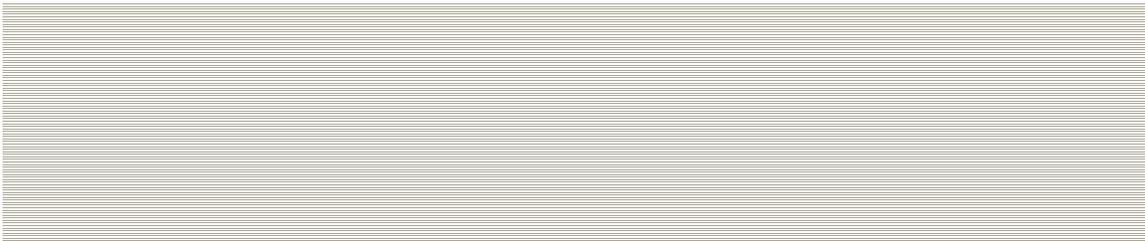
¹⁷⁶Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 56.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., 56-8.

¹⁷⁸*The Holy Bible*.

result in accurate and factual information concerning the other person's emotions and perceptions.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 56-7.



CHAPTER 20

WHAT WILL SATISFY A SINGLE CHRISTIAN?

Satisfaction is something everyone is searching to find. Christian singles are longing for satisfaction in life. Shortsightedness can afflict a Christian single. A single Christian woman may have a close friend engaged. The newly engaged friend is so excited and sharing the news with everyone. The single Christian woman's shortsightedness longs for satisfaction through contentment in a relationship with a single Christian man. Though she may be happy for her new engaged friend, the single Christian woman wants to find instant satisfaction through her wants and desires. Until she receives the satisfaction, the single Christian woman will long and yearn for what she does not have.¹⁸⁰

The majority of Christian singles are similar to the single Christian woman discussed in the preceding paragraph. As time goes on, the opportunities for marriage and parenthood slip by. The search for satisfaction continues as each new day ends. At the conclusion of the

¹⁸⁰Risk, William P., *Dating & Waiting: Looking For Love In All The Right Places* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2000), 44-7.

day, there is still no satisfaction. While sitting alone, a Christian single may have a pity party. He or she may ask himself or herself, "What is wrong with my life, I will never find someone to marry?"¹⁸¹

King Solomon was the wisest man that ever lived. He had great wealth, riches, prosperity, wives, and whatever his soul desired. In spite of all of the materialism possessions that King Solomon possessed, he longed for satisfaction. He asked the same questions that are being asked today by Christian singles: "What will fulfill me?", "What will make my life meaningful?", and "What am I looking for?"¹⁸² In the book of Ecclesiastes, King Solomon declared that all is vanity. "(1) The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. (2) Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. (3) What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?" King Solomon penned in the first chapter of Ecclesiastes.¹⁸³

Does Wisdom Bring Satisfaction?

Can wisdom bring satisfaction? Wisdom is something that is valued, treasured, and even coveted. The

¹⁸¹Ibid., 47-8.

¹⁸²Ibid., 48-9.

¹⁸³*The Holy Bible.*

intellectual knowledge and insight can allow a wise person to analyze and find solutions to the problems of life. A smart, intelligent, and wise individual must be completely satisfied. That is simply wrong. Wisdom may bring temporary satisfaction, but it will not bring complete satisfaction.¹⁸⁴ King Solomon declared in Ecclesiastes 1:17-18, "(17) And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. (18) For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow."¹⁸⁵

Does Pleasure Bring Satisfaction?

Since wisdom does not bring satisfaction, can pleasure bring satisfaction to a Christian single? Pleasure is in just about every area in life. Every Christian single wants to have a good time in life. They may try all forms of entertainment in search of satisfaction. For a limited time, temporary satisfaction is through experiencing pleasure. Eventually, the pleasure experience will run out. The desire for complete satisfaction is still present.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴Risk, William P., *Dating & Waiting: Looking For Love In All The Right Places*, 49-51.

¹⁸⁵*The Holy Bible*.

¹⁸⁶Risk, William P., *Dating & Waiting: Looking For Love In All The Right Places*, 51.

King Solomon had access to every type of entertainment and pleasure that his soul wanted to experience. He experienced more forms of pleasure than most Christian singles will ever experience (Ecclesiastes 2:1-17). Yet, he declared that pleasure does not bring complete satisfaction. "(1) I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity. (2) I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it?" wrote King Solomon in the second chapter of the book of Ecclesiastes.¹⁸⁷

Does Wealth and Possessions Bring Satisfaction?

Christian singles may work and thrive in the business world. They may gain wealth and material possessions. A single Christian man may have the newest fastest sports car and have a six-figure income. A single Christian woman may be an executive in her company; she may have a corner office with a view, live in an upscale condominium, and have a wonderful income. If either the man or the woman is trying to find satisfaction through work, money, or any type of possessions then they will not succeed. Yes, the wealth may seem terrific for the time being. Yes, the material possessions may be fun and exciting for a while. No, the wealth and material possessions will not bring

¹⁸⁷*The Holy Bible.*

complete satisfaction. In the end, the Christian single man and woman will still have an unsatisfied and unfulfilling life.¹⁸⁸

King Solomon had the wealth and the possessions that anyone could ever imagine. His kingdom was great, powerful, and wealthy. His accomplishments were impressive. The palaces he lived contained gold, silver, and other valuable treasures. At his command were soldiers, slaves, and servants. King Solomon explained in Ecclesiastes 2:

"(4) I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: (5) I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits: (6) I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees: (7) I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me: (8) I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. (9) So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. (10) And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. (11) Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun."¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸Risk, William P., *Dating & Waiting: Looking For Love In All The Right Places*, 51-2.

¹⁸⁹*The Holy Bible*.

The God-Shaped Void

Every person, including singles, has a God-shaped void within their heart. The void is empty and desires filling through complete satisfaction. The heart's void craves for any thing that will bring about satisfaction. A Christian single may be tempted to fall into the lie that being in a relationship, having wealth, living a material-rich life, or even experiencing pleasure will bring complete satisfaction. No human relationship or no material possession can fill the God-shaped void. The conclusion is that all is vanity and empty.¹⁹⁰

A Christian single may know Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior. They may even go to church, study the Word of God, and spend time in prayer. Until the Christian single realizes that only God can fill the God-shaped void within their heart, then they will live a miserable and defeated life. Jesus Christ is the Bread and Water of Life. He will give comfort and rest to the weary. In Christ and Christ alone is complete satisfaction found. John 6:35, "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."; Matthew 11:28-30, "(28) Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,

¹⁹⁰Risk, William P., *Dating & Waiting: Looking For Love In All The Right Places*, 54-7.

and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."; and Colossians 2:10, "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."¹⁹¹ In the twelfth and final chapter of the book of Ecclesiastes, King Solomon declares, "(13) Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."¹⁹²

¹⁹¹*The Holy Bible.*

¹⁹²*Ibid.*

CHAPTER 21

WHAT IS COURTSHIP?

Courtship is a season that a Christian male and female seriously explore with the possibility of marriage. The individuals will be honest and direct in expressing their feelings. Each individual will desire the relationship to have a clear understanding of doing God's will.¹⁹³

The season of courtship is a time that the individuals fall in love with each other for who they are as a person. The natural feeling of falling in love is with deep respect, friendship, and commitment. A clear understanding that physical intimacy is not part of the natural feeling of falling in love is agreeable between the two. Physical intimacy can distract and detour the relationship.¹⁹⁴

Base Emotions and Perceptions in Reality

The season of courtship needs to be a time that each individual wisely bases his or her emotions and perceptions in reality. Spend time around each other's families, friends, church settings, and other real-life settings.

¹⁹³Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 29-32, 53-6.

¹⁹⁴Ibid.

Observe their actions, reactions, decisions, emotions, and communications in these real-life settings. This will result in accurate and factual information concerning the other person's emotions and perceptions.¹⁹⁵

Humble Embrace of Community

Courtship needs the involvement and support of parents, family, friends, pastors, and others. These people should be Godly, filled with God-given wisdom, supportive, caring, and who dearly love at least one individual involved in the courtship. The people involved in the courtship are teammates. The teammates provide a sense of reality for the courtship, protection, and accountability. The humble embrace of community can multiply the joy of the individuals in the courtship. Each individual in the courtship can be confident that he or she is obeying and honoring God.¹⁹⁶

Commitment to Guard the Sacredness of Sex

Sex is a precious gift from God that is reserved for marriage. The individuals in the courtship need to make a commitment to guard the sacredness of sex by abstaining from sexual activity.¹⁹⁷ They should seek to honor and

¹⁹⁵Ibid., 56-57.

¹⁹⁶Ibid., 123-139.

¹⁹⁷Ibid., 37-38.

glorify God with their bodies by living a life of purity. Purity can be interpreted as glorifying God in body and spirit every second, minute, and hour of every day.¹⁹⁸

A Deep Satisfaction in God

Christian individuals in a courtship need to each find a deep satisfaction in God. Each individual must come to the realization that only God, not each other, can fill the deep desire of the soul's longing for satisfaction.¹⁹⁹ A Christian individual that seeks completeness in another person will become brokenhearted and empty. Jesus Christ will never leave or forsake His child.²⁰⁰ A Christian individual must spend time on their knees in prayer before God.²⁰¹

Courtship Overview and Dating Overview

The word court in Webster's dictionary is as follows: "court (kort) v; 1. to seek the affections of, esp: to seek to win a pledge of marriage from; 2. to engage in social activities leading to engagement and marriage."²⁰²

¹⁹⁸Zacharias, *I, Isaac, Take Thee, Rebekah: Moving From Romance To Lasting Love*, 84-5.

¹⁹⁹Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 38.

²⁰⁰Harris, *You Didn't Complete Me: When "The One" Turns Out To Be Just Someone*, 149-51.

²⁰¹Zacharias, *I, Isaac, Take Thee, Rebekah*, 118-121.

²⁰²Christopher D. Hudson et al., *Come Here Often? The Indispensable Guide To Dating Dos And Don'ts* (Uhrichsville, Ohio: Barbour Publisher, 2005), 175.

Webster's dictionary defines the word date: "date (dat) n; 1. an appointment for a specified time, esp: a social engagement between two persons of opposite sex; 2. a person of the opposite sex with whom one has a social engagement."²⁰³ Table 11 will provide an overview of courting and dating.

TABLE 11. Courting and Dating Overview²⁰⁴

	Dating Overview	Courtship Overview
<i>How old are people when they start?</i>	Varies - usually sometime during high school	When they are ready to get married - usually sometime after high school
<i>How does it start?</i>	Usually two people are romantically attracted to each other, and one asks the other to go out on a date.	Two people have already gotten to know each other in a group setting (church, work, volunteer ministries, etc.) and think the other person might make a good spouse. Romantic interest is usually there but is not the driving force.
<i>How does the couple spend time together?</i>	Sometimes in group dates and sometimes at each other's homes. Usually most of their time "dating" is spent alone together doing things like going to dinner, going on walks, seeing concerts or movies, etc.	A couple does their "courting" in a group settings, basically by spending time with each other's families.
<i>Role of parents and family?</i>	Lots of variety. Girl's parents may want to meet the guy	Critical to courtship. They oversee, watch, and help arrange the

²⁰³Ibid.

²⁰⁴Ibid., 182.

	before they go out, or they may not. Most parents like to casually get to know the person their son or daughter is seeing, and so may include them in family activities.	advancement of the relationship.
<i>The goal?</i>	Varies. It can be simply having fun, growing close, or planning for marriage.	Marriage.

The Courtship Process

Courtship is a process. It does not happen overnight. A Christian single man or woman must have faith to wait on the Lord. His timing is perfect. Psalm 27:13-14 encourages, "(13) I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. (14) Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD."²⁰⁵ Tables 12-14 provide an overview of the courtship process.

²⁰⁵*The Holy Bible.*

TABLE 12. Courtship Process (Phases 1-3)²⁰⁶

COURTSHIP PROCESS	PHASE 1: IDENTITY IN CHRIST	PHASE 2: MINISTRY INVOLVEMENT	PHASE 3: FOUNDATION BUILDING
SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT	<p>Commit yourself to being sold out to Christ. Be involved in activities that instill spiritual growth. Learn to be fully engaged to Christ before entertaining the idea of a relationship with another person.</p> <p>Be confident of who you are in Christ and gaining acceptance, worth, and identity in Christ instead of in another person.</p>	<p>Be involved in ministry opportunities to utilize the talents and gifts God has given you. Learn what it means to serve, love, sacrifice, and yield your rights to others as Christ did for you.</p>	<p>Anticipate marriage and lay the foundation for a secure Christian home by completing practical preparations in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Spiritual maturity -Godly character -Accountability -Emotional health -Financial stability -Vocational training -Parent training -Household training -Commitment
EMOTIONAL COMMITMENT	None.	None.	<p>Before becoming emotionally intimate with someone else, rid yourself of emotional baggage left over from childhood and past dating relationships. Recognize that unresolved sin will influence your emotional health.</p>
PHYSICAL COMMITMENT	None.	None.	None.
TIME ALONE PER PHASE	None.	None.	None.

²⁰⁶Dr. Don Rannikar, *Choosing God's Best: Wisdom For Lifelong Romance* (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, 1998), 30.

TABLE 13. Courtship Process Continued (Phase 4: Friendship Stage)²⁰⁷

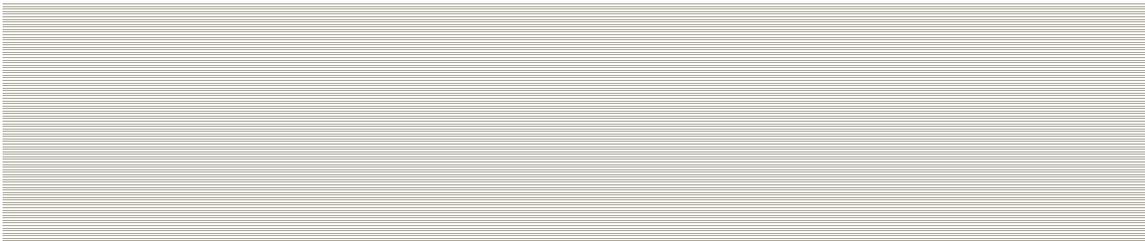
ACQUAINTANCE	CASUAL FRIENDSHIP	CLOSE FRIENDSHIP	INTIMATE FRIENDSHIP
Focus on being totally content and feeling complete as a single engaged to Christ. Develop a life vision and direction about serving God through ministry opportunities. Avoid spiritual involvement with another individual at this point except for witnessing the Gospel of Jesus.	May be involved in a church activity with another individual. Discuss Christ and His kingdom in group settings or Bible studies, but avoid deep spiritual one-on-one talk.	Share with each other God's vision for your lives. Discover each other's spiritual gifts, maturity level, and desire to serve God. Experience deeper spiritual talk but limited intimate one-on-one talk.	Begin intimate spiritual talk related at the deepest level. Discuss possibility of marriage and the purpose and process of courtship as it relates to your love for God. Discuss need for spiritual covering and accountability.
No emotional intimacy. Casual interaction. Limited shared feelings. No one-on-one activities.	No emotional intimacy, but share surface feelings. Share close friends or activities. No one-on-one activities.	Share deeper feelings but limit emotional involvement. Focus on external social activities instead of one-on-one intimate interaction.	Share each other's innermost thoughts, fears, failures, and hopes. Support each other in times of crisis and pain; share times of joy. Limit one-on-one emotional interaction.
None.	None.	Side hugs (no full "body slam" hugs).	Side hugs plus holding hands
None.	None.	None.	20 hours

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

TABLE 14. Courtship Process Continued (Phase 5-7)²⁰⁸

PHASE 5: COURTSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY	PHASE 6: ENGAGEMENT	PHASE 7: MARRIAGE
Begin the process of becoming one spiritually. Spend one-on-one time together through shared prayer time and church attendance. Commit your courtship to glorifying Christ and helping each other grow in Christ.	Continue the process of becoming one spiritually through shared prayer, Bible study, and church attendance. Discuss which church and Sunday school to attend as well as activities and ministry opportunities. Develop a vision for the marriage reflecting Christ and His church.	Experience quality improvement by becoming one through prayer, Bible study, church involvement, and ministry opportunities. Relate at the deepest spiritual level. Make marriage and family decisions as one in Christ.
Begin pre-engagement counseling. Seek your parents (or other Godly counsel) to hold each other accountable. Discuss and write down boundaries and limits of relationship. Increase one-on-one emotional time together.	Begin becoming one emotionally. Spend one-on-one time sharing deep emotional feelings. Develop deep levels of communication. Understand male/female differences and roles within a Biblical marriage.	Continue to become one emotionally. Commit and plan on one-on-one time every day by sharing feelings and reflecting Christ's love through grace, mercy, and forgiveness to one another.
Side hugs, holding hands, and short kisses. Only limited cuddling.	Increase holding hands, kissing, and cuddling with caution. Hand-to-body touching but not intimate body areas.	Begin the process of becoming one physically. Share hugs, hold hands, kiss, touch sexual body areas (may experience a need to wait a number of days after the wedding for intercourse).
80 Hours	190 Hours	FOREVER

²⁰⁸Ibid.



CHAPTER 22

WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME FOR MARRIAGE?

Christian singles that are involved in a courtship, or a relationship, want to know when is the right time to get married. Chapter 21 discusses the concept of courting. This chapter will provide insight into a courting relationship where the individuals feel that the next step is marriage. For starters, take time to ask questions and receive the appropriate answers. Seek God in determining if the relationship needs to end or move closer to marriage.

Is the Relationship Centered On Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is to be first in a Christian's life (Luke 9:23). Each individual in the relationship must submit to Christ. Then the relationship will center on Jesus Christ.²⁰⁹

The spiritual aspect of the relationship is the most important aspect of the courtship. Only Jesus Christ can offer unconditional love. If one individual in the relationship is not submitting to Christ, then problems

²⁰⁹Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 197-198.

will arise in the future. Problems such as manipulating love from one another and the feeling of the lack of love can arise.²¹⁰

Each person must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. If one of the individuals is not a follower of Jesus Christ, then the relationship needs to end (2 Corinthians 6:14). For example, the male in the relationship may act spiritual only to please the female. The male may say the right words. Unless he has accepted Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior, asked for forgiveness from sin, and genuinely desires to live for Christ then the relationship is destined for failure because Christ is not the center. Reconsider the relationship until he gets his life right with Christ.²¹¹

Growing in Friendship, Communication, Fellowship, and Romance?

Individuals involved in courtship need to ask themselves if they are growing in friendship, communication, fellowship, and romance. These areas are very important in a relationship. Take time to evaluate and reflect.²¹²

²¹⁰Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 224-5.

²¹¹Ibid., 226-228.

²¹²Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 198.

Friendship

Friendship between the individuals should be deepening. Are there activities, interests, and things that both individuals enjoy doing together? Does each person have fun spending time with one another?²¹³

Communication

Communication in a relationship is very important. For the majority of the time, the female in the relationship value time spent in quality communication. The friendship can grow if correct communication is present. How does each individual in the relationship communicate with one another? Does one individual feel frustrated because he or she does all of the communicating?²¹⁴

Communication involves both individuals talking and listening at appropriate times. The concept of listening is not just hearing what the other individual is saying. An individual that listens understands and hears the communicated message. The communication in the relationship will probably need improvement. Does each

²¹³Ibid., 86-87, 198.

²¹⁴Neil Clark Warren, *Date Or Soul Mate? How To Know If Someone Is Worth Pursuing In Two Dates Or Less*, 188.

individual realize his or her own need to improve? How has the communication level increased thus far?²¹⁵

Fellowship

Fellowship with each other includes the Bible. Jesus Christ, as stated earlier, must be first in the relationship. The individuals in the courtship can pray together, study the Bible together, and share the Bible with others. The male in the relationship is responsible for leading in Biblical fellowship. His role is to make sure that the relationship consistently spends quality time fellowshiping with the Lord.²¹⁶

The individuals in the courtship can fellowship by reading Christian books together, discussing sermons, visiting elderly people, working with a non-profit organization, and encouraging each other to grow in righteousness. Does the fellowship bring each individual closer to God? How is the fellowship with each other growing the relationship?²¹⁷

Romance

Pure romance is through appropriate actions and words. The male in the relationship will want to grow in pure

²¹⁵Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 198.

²¹⁶Ibid., 87-88.

²¹⁷Ibid., 88-89, 198.

romance with the female. The courtship's first priority is not pure romance. Pure romance has its place in the courtship. The feelings need expression in a way that pleases Christ. Nonphysical expressions play an important role in the courtship (Romans 12:10). E-mails, cards, flowers, lunch, and other expressions of gratitude are some examples of nonphysical expressions of pure romance. The male should take the initiative to make sure the courtship has pure romance and to offer nonphysical expressions of gratitude to the female.²¹⁸

Can Conflict Be Resolved?

Conflict will take place in a courtship. It is unavoidable. At times, an individual's selfish desire of the flesh takes over. Tempers may flare, attitudes may become hostile, and feelings may get hurt because of conflict. A simple disagreement can turn into an argument. Can the conflict be resolved together?²¹⁹

Conflict resolution is important for the individuals in a relationship to survive and thrive. Each individual should take appropriate responsibility in solving the conflict as quickly as possible. The positive attitude to

²¹⁸Ibid., 89-92, 198.

²¹⁹Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 228-229.

resolve the conflict by talking things through is necessary in a relationship.²²⁰

Once the conflict is resolved, then the individuals need to determine if the issue is over for good or if the issue will surface later. Just because one individual says the right thing to settle the conflict does not mean the conflict is resolved. Take time to get rid of the root of the conflict so that it does not grow back.²²¹

Many marriage counselors say that the avoidance of conflict is the number one predictor of divorce in a marriage. Many couples seek to avoid the conflict and hope that it just goes away. The longer the conflict goes unresolved the bigger the fight will be. A relationship can be successful if the individuals discuss ways to strengthen each other through their differences.²²²

Can conflict be resolved in a healthy manner? What is each individual's attitude towards resolving conflict? Is there any conflict that needs to be rooted out before moving closer to marriage? Does each individual take responsibility for striving to resolve conflict?

²²⁰Neil Clark Warren, *Date . . . Or Soul Mate? How To Know if Someone is Worth Pursuing in Two Dates or Less*, 188-189.

²²¹Zacharias, *I, Isaac, Take Thee, Rebekah*, 103-107.

²²²Hayley DiMarco, and Michael DiMarco, *Marriable: Taking The Desperate Out Of Dating* (Grand Rapids: Fleming h. Revell, 2005), 178.

Face the Realization of Responsibility?

The maturity level of each individual in the courtship plays an important role. The relationship comes with responsibilities. Each individual must evaluate him or herself and see if they are mature enough to put aside the flesh's selfishness and selflessly take on the responsibilities of being a spouse, becoming one in Christ through marriage, and possibly becoming a parent one day.²²³

The words "I do" bring about a completely new meaning to responsibilities. For example, the male becomes the family's provider. He is to take care of meeting the needs of his wife and eventually the needs of their children. Each individual takes on his or her appropriate roles. Has discussion taken place concerning the reality of marriage? Does the male and female each understand the role they will play in the marriage? What area(s) of maturing needs to take place first before saying "I do"?²²⁴

Teammates Support the Idea of Marriage?

The assembled teammates play a very important role in observing and communicating to the individuals in a courtship. Each individual should spend time around the other's families, friends, and real-life settings. The

²²³Zacharias, *I, Isaac, Take Thee, Rebekah*, 97.

²²⁴*Ibid.*, 98-100.

teammates will provide honest feedback and comments. Do any of the teammates not support the idea of the individuals moving towards marriage? Why is this so? What do they suggest?²²⁵

The helpful insights that the teammates provide need serious consideration. Remember the teammates assembled provide a sense of reality. Their view of the relationship is from the outside. One or more of the teammates may see danger ahead based on the time they have spent observing each individual in the courtship. If a danger item is of concern, then focus on the facts. Do not hide the truth. Seek to discuss the matter in an appropriate way. The support and encouragement of the teammates, family, and friends will be very beneficial. Do not isolate the relationship that it becomes an island all by itself.²²⁶

Ready for Holiness?

Marriage is to make the individuals holy. An individual may view marriage as meeting their needs, receiving the love they deserve, and making them happy. This view is incorrect. God designed marriage to make an individual shift from the selfish nature to the selfless

²²⁵Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 199.

²²⁶Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 231-232.

nature by living for the other person. The commitment to marriage is twenty-four hours per day, seven days a week, and three hundred sixty five days a year (including leap year).²²⁷

Commitment Phobic?

An individual with commitment phobic fears that making a commitment will result in losing control of their life. Marriage is a commitment for life. Each individual is making a decision to commit to each other for better or for worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, and till death parts them when they each say "I Do". Does either individual suffer from commitment phobic? What does the word commitment mean to the man? What does the word commitment mean to the woman? How much time in the courtship is for discussion about commitment? Has each individual understood the marriage vows that result in saying "I Do"?²²⁸

Patient or Impatient?

Two individuals that are considering marriage need to evaluate each other's patience in handling issues. Each individual comes to the relationship with his or her own

²²⁷Young and Dr. Samuel Adams, *The One: A Realistic Guide To Choosing Your Soul Mate*, 177-80.

²²⁸*Ibid.*, 182-185.

personality. If one or both of the individuals are impatient, then the blame game may take place. Maybe the male is a very patient individual. The female is the impatient one in the relationship. The blame game takes place when the female expresses to the male that she is impatient. An argument follows the blame game. Each individual is defensive in protecting his or her position.²²⁹

Patience comes from God. Each individual must ask God to give them patience to sort out problems that will arise. A patient attitude reflects God's love. An impatient attitude reflects an individual's selfish attitude. Has an impatient attitude been a problem? Who is the impatient individual? Are individuals impatient or patient? Is an impatient attitude resulting in a blame game?²³⁰

Any Heavy Baggage?

Heavy baggage from the past can destroy a marriage. One individual may bring consequences of past relationships into the present relationship.²³¹ Baggage can come from different life experiences. Addiction, depression, abuse,

²²⁹Joey O'Connor, *I Love You Unconditionally . . . On One Condition: Everyday Choices For An Extraordinary Marriage* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 2004), 91-2.

²³⁰Ibid., 92-95.

²³¹Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 202-203.

debt, emotional hurt, and other baggage issues can become very heavy. Marriage will not make heavy baggage disappear. Only Christ can lift the heavy baggage from an individual's life.²³²

Is any heavy baggage weighing down the relationship? What heavy baggage from the past is one or both of the individuals carrying around? Christ has been given the opportunity to lift the heavy baggage?

Personality Differences?

Two individuals that have different personalities may find difficulty in marriage. One individual may have an outgoing personality, enjoy being around friends, spend time with immediate family members, work with an ambitious attitude, and love to laugh. The other individual may be the total opposite. The individuals may "be in love," but eventually one or both individuals will become dissatisfied and frustrated.²³³

Are there personality differences between the individuals? Have the differences caused any problems? What measures are in place to solve the personality

²³²Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 230-231.

²³³Neil Clark Warren, *Date . . . Or Soul Mate? How To Know if Someone is Worth Pursuing in Two Dates or Less*, 183-185.

differences? Has the attitude of "being in love" interfered with having a clear focus of the relationship?

Raised in Different Family Atmospheres?

Cultural differences can bring about challenges. If one individual is around a Chinese family atmosphere and the other individual is around an American family atmosphere, then differences may need discussion. The same is true if one was around a wealthy family and the other individual was around a poor family. Maybe the male individual is close to his parents and family while the female is distant from hers.²³⁴

The different family atmospheres need open and honest discussion before marriage. The male that is close to his family will want to spend time around them even after marriage. Has the female considered this? Does she feel jealous and envious toward the male and toward his family? Each other's family and background is very important in a marriage. A full understanding of the in-law's roles should be a topic of discussion. What questions are available about each other's family background? Are there any areas of concern about the roles of the in-laws?²³⁵

²³⁴Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 201-202.

²³⁵Neil Clark Warren, *Date . . . Or Soul Mate? How To Know if Someone is Worth Pursuing in Two Dates or Less*, 180.

Pre-Marital Counseling?

Pre-marital counseling needs to take place as soon as possible in a courtship. Individuals tend to either do away with pre-marital counseling or approach the counseling with a casual attitude. A casual attitude reflects individuals that half-heartedly believe they only need a few weeks of pre-marital counseling with a pastor or counselor. The individuals are concerned that the pastor or counselor will try to destroy their relationship by pointing out "unnecessary areas of concern."²³⁶

Take pre-marital counseling very seriously. Allow more than a few weeks with a pastor or counselor. Take quality time to invest with them. The pastor or counselor will discuss important issues, warn what to expect after the honeymoon is over, and prepare for any disillusionments that may exist about marriage.²³⁷

Has either individual taken a casual attitude towards pre-marital counseling? Why has not pre-marital counseling begun? Does the fear of a counselor or pastor trying to destroy the relationship prevent pre-marital counseling?

²³⁶Adams and Young, *The One: A Realistic Guide to Choosing Your Soul Mate*, 171-172.

²³⁷*Ibid.*, 172-173.

Roles Defined?

The roles in the relationship need to be properly defined according to the Bible. God is the Head of Christ, Christ is the Head of every man, the man is the head of the wife, the wife willingly submits to her husband, the husband loves his wife as Christ loves the church, and both husband and wife become one in Christ (Mark 10:6-9; 1 Corinthians 11:1-3, 8-12; Ephesians 5:22-25; Colossians 3:18-19). The leadership roles are simple to understand, may be difficult to follow, and require a willingness from both individuals to live according to the Bible.²³⁸

God created the male and female to be equal. Yet, they were created to be different. The male is to complete the female. Neither was the female created to complete the male. God made the male and the female to complement each other. Only Christ can complete an individual.²³⁹

Have the roles been properly defined in the relationship? Does the male take on the responsibility of the spiritual leader? How does the female react to submitting to the male? Has each individual willingly made a decision to live according to the Bible? Does the female

²³⁸Eagar, *Dating With Pure Passion: More Than Rules, More Than Courtship, More Than a Formula*, 235-238.

²³⁹Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 107-112, 198-199.

complement the male and the male complement the female? Is each individual complete in Christ?

To Marry or Not to Marry?

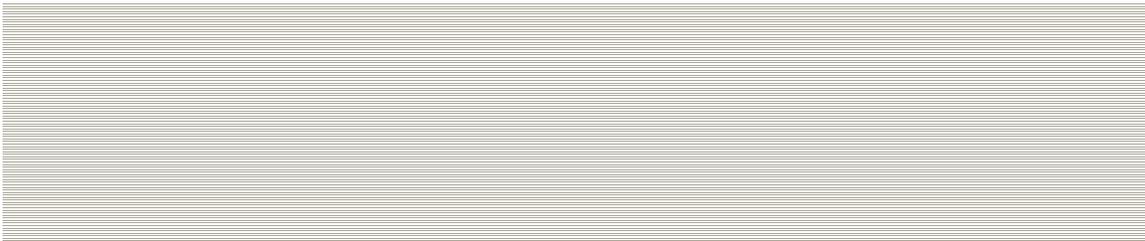
Marriage is a real commitment between real individuals for a real lifetime. Marriage is not a fairy tale and is serious. Each individual must seek the Lord's guidance, seek the wisdom of teammates, evaluate the answers to important questions, observe real-life settings, and understand that marriage is a lifetime commitment that is made before God.

The male individual must make the choice to marry or not marry the female. The same holds true for the female. The Bible contains an in depth passage that speaks about getting married (1 Corinthians 7:25-40). The decision may not be an easy one to make. Time may need to be spent thinking about the responsibility of marriage.²⁴⁰

The time spent pondering marriage requires soul-searching. Each individual needs to ask themselves questions. A few questions could be as follows: "Is this the person I want to spend the rest of my life with?"; "Do I sincerely believe that marrying this person is God's will for my life?"; "Am I ready to face marriage's responsibilities?"; "Were the teammates honest in saying I

²⁴⁰Ibid., 203-204.

should wait to marry this individual?"; "Can I truly say the relationship is centered around Christ?"; "Have I evaluated growth in the areas of friendship, communication, fellowship, and romance?"; "Can conflicts be resolved together by rooting out the problem?"; "Am I mature enough for marriage?"; "Do I comprehend that marriage is twenty-four hours per day, seven days a week, and three hundred sixty five days a year (including leap year)?"; "Does the person I am going to marry suffer from commitment phobic?"; "Are we patient or impatient with each other?"; "Have I allowed Christ to take away all of my heavy baggage?"; "Are our personalities different or similar?"; "Does each of our family's atmosphere pose any problems between the two of us?"; "What did the pastor or counselor suggest during pre-marital counseling?"; "Is there any truth to the pastor or counselor's suggestion?"; "Do I deserve better?"; "Are we doing what is best for each other by getting married?"; and "Do I marry or not marry this person?"



CHAPTER 23

HOW CAN A CHRISTIAN SINGLE TRULY SERVE GOD?

Christian singles may struggle with the issue of how God can use them during their season of singleness. They may pose the question, "How can a Christian single truly serve God?" The best answer to this question is to observe and learn from individuals in the Bible who were single at a particular time in their adult lives.

Paul: The Gift of Singleness

The apostle Paul said that singleness is a gift from God. He writes in 1 Corinthians 7:7, "For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that."²⁴¹ Paul's focus was not on whether he was married or single. His focus was on serving the Lord in whatever season of life he found himself. Most scholars believe that Paul was single. As a single man, Paul served the Lord with his whole heart, mind, soul, and being (1 Corinthians 7:32-35). He refused to have a pity party and believe the lie that God could not use him unless he

²⁴¹*The Holy Bible.*

married. As a missionary, Paul was able to travel and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.²⁴²

The season of singleness allows a Christian single to spend quality time with the Lord and serving Him. Studies conducted in 2003 reported that only one-third of singles in the United States attended church services in any given week. The remaining two-thirds were either having a pity party or they were out searching for Mr. or Mrs. Right. Imagine how many of the thirty-three percent of singles attending a weekly church service are Christians. If only half of them were Christian singles, then they were probably seeking to serve the Lord by giving their lives away to Him. They went against the world's flow of soaking in self-pity or selfishness and decided to lead a life of selflessness. Some of their comments may be as follows: "I am thankful that I have learned much about depending solely on the Lord and in desiring to serve Him with my life."; "I thank the Lord that I am currently in the season of singleness. My walk with the Lord is growing on a daily basis."; "The gift of singleness is a blessing. I am able to minister through different ministries of the church. There are times that I am able to go and serve the Lord at

²⁴²Hoffeditz, David M., *They Were Single Too: 8 Biblical Role Models* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2005), 7-16.

a moment's notice."; and "I truly understand what it means to find life in Christ by giving it away."²⁴³

Anna: Left At the Altar

Anna is found briefly in Saint Luke 2:22-40. She was a widow for many years. Her devotion in life was to faithfully serve the Lord and long for Israel's redemption. Anna was old, husbandless, and apparently childless. Widows were typically poor (Luke 21:2-4; Acts 6:1), rejected by society (Psalm 94:6; Ezekiel 22:7; Mark 12:40), and were treated with injustice (Luke 18:1-5). In spite of all of the negative attributes that could have been associated with Anna, she did not set around and have a self-pity party.²⁴⁴

A Christian single needs to abide in Christ. He or she must place all trust and confidence in their Lord and Savior (Hebrews 4:15-16). They should also seek to serve the Lord and others instead of having others serve them (Luke 2:37b). Remain focused on praising the Lord at all times. A Christian single can take the focus off self and turn the focus toward giving praise to their Heavenly Father. With every single breath, a Christian single man

²⁴³Ibid., 16-21.

²⁴⁴Ibid., 24-6.

or woman can joyfully live an abundant life in Christ (John 10:10b).

Martha: Living Life in the Fast Lane

Saint Luke 10:38-42 recalls Martha living life in the fast lane. Jesus had come to visit Mary and Martha. Mary spent time at Jesus' feet. Serving and taking care of offering hospitality burdened Martha down. In short, she distracted herself by the busyness of life and the cares of the world. Martha found distraction in the act of doing instead of honoring the Doer, Jesus Christ. Her attitude reflected an attitude that Jesus needed her to prepare Him a meal and meet His needs. Martha felt as if she was self-sufficient in serving the Lord instead of spending quality time at Jesus' feet. If Martha's heart was not in tune with Jesus, then all her service to Him was in vain. She should have been at her Master's feet and absorbing His words.²⁴⁵

A Christian single may have the idea that they must always be about serving the Lord or working a hectic schedule. At times, they may find difficulty in seeking physical, emotional, and spiritual rest. God designed the Sabbath day for rest. A hectic schedule can take away from spending quality time at Jesus' feet. A Christian single

²⁴⁵Ibid., 37-46.

must have a consistent schedule that allows time for rest, relaxation, and refreshing. This schedule will allow time to humbly sit at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ.²⁴⁶

Jeremiah: All Alone

Loneliness plagues Christian singles. The thought of being single, not having a spouse to love, enjoying the married life, and the thought of growing old alone haunts them. The prophet Jeremiah can relate to loneliness. His family was banished from the religious establishment, at birth God called Jeremiah to serve as a prophet, and to prophesy to a devastated people. The religious rulers and other opponents tried killing Jeremiah, putting him in prison, beating him, and other horrific means of trying to silence this God-called prophet (Jeremiah 26:10-19; 36:26; 37:11-38:6). The Lord also told Jeremiah to not take a wife or have any children (Jeremiah 16:2), to not attend social events (Jeremiah 16:5-9), and to serve the Lord through the toughest of times. Jeremiah's nickname is the "weeping prophet."²⁴⁷ At one point in his life, the prophet Jeremiah cried out, "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was

²⁴⁶Ibid., 46-51.

²⁴⁷Ibid., 53-6.

in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."²⁴⁸

A Christian single that struggles with loneliness, anxious thoughts, and fears can learn some valuable lessons from the prophet Jeremiah's life. Jeremiah's calling came from God, which included serving Him and prophesying in His name (Jeremiah 1:5). During the times of loneliness and other struggles, Jeremiah could turn to the comfort and fact that God had specifically called him and God knows Jeremiah's name. A Christian single can rest assured that God knows them and has chosen them before birth (Ephesians 1:4-6). They can turn to God for comfort.²⁴⁹

Jeremiah trusted the Lord, even through the toughest of times (32:16-25). He understood that the Lord would never leave nor forsake him. The same holds true for a Christian single. He or she can understand that the Lord will be there for them through the toughest of times and He will never leave nor forsake them (Hebrews 13:5-6).²⁵⁰

Ruth: Shattered Dreams

Many Christian singles have experienced shattered dreams through various relationships and other painful

²⁴⁸*The Holy Bible.*

²⁴⁹Hoffeditz, David M., *They Were Single Too: 8 Biblical Role Models*, 56-8.

²⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 60-3.

experiences. They may find difficulty in recovering. Questions may be asked, "Why did this happen to me?"; "Could I have help prevented the situation by doing something differently?"; and "Now what do I do?" The Bible tells the story about a woman by the name of Ruth. She experienced shattered dreams and painful experiences. Naomi married Elimelech had two sons by him. The family moved to Moab. Her two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, each got married in Moab. One son married a woman named Ruth and the other son married a woman named Orpah. Elimelech, Mahlon, and Chilion all died. Orpah chose to go back to her family. Naomi had only one daughter-in-law, Ruth, which remained with her as family. Both Naomi and Ruth's life, dreams, and desires were instantly shattered.²⁵¹

Ruth faithfully remained with her mother-in-law and remained faithful to the God of Israel. Instead of turning back to her own homeland, Ruth unselfishly and willingly decided to cling to Naomi. Ruth gave up the possibility of having another spouse and the security of having her own children. At times, Naomi seemed unappreciative of Ruth (Ruth 1:21). However, Ruth was obedient to follow Naomi's instructions and listen to her. In the end, God rewarded Ruth with a husband named Boaz and with a son named Obed.²⁵²

²⁵¹Ibid., 69-71.

²⁵²Ibid., 70-5.

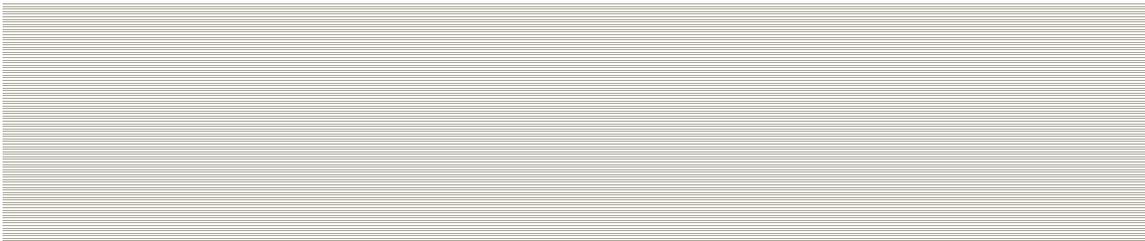
A Christian single can learn some valuable lessons from Ruth's life. The first lesson is the reward of a faithful commitment to willingly serve God. Ruth had the reputation of being a "worthy" woman because of her faithfulness (Ruth 3:11). A Christian single that is faithful to willingly serve the Lord will allow others to see this lived out in their life. He or she will not focus on the disappointments of life but on the willingness to faithfully serve Christ through the disappointments.²⁵³

Another valuable lesson is the opportunity to bless others. Ruth could have allowed her heartaches to break her. Instead, she allowed them to make her. Unlike her mother-in-law, Ruth used her difficult situations to bless others. An example is her desire to marry Boaz and her willingness to have a son for him, Obed. Her obedience not only blessed her husband and mother-in-law but she blessed the entire nation of Israel. Through Obed came the lineage of David, which ultimately blessed the entire world through Jesus Christ. Christ is an offspring of David. A Christian single should look at his or hers heartaches as an opportunity to make them and bless others. They can show gracious acts of kindness and impart Christ's loving-

²⁵³Ibid., 77-80.

kindness. The impact they can have may affect their community, country, and possibly the world.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁴Ibid., 79-83.



CHAPTER 24

HOW CAN A CHRISTIAN SINGLE KNOW GOD'S WILL?

A Christian single man or woman may be confused about discerning God's will. They may ask the question, "How can I know God's will?" This question is not easy to answer. The study of Scripture provides insight on the matter. God can be seen as guiding through a Christian's rational decision-making. He is not apart from the rational decision-making. God's active participation in a Christian's decision-making can be viewed as sanctified thinking.²⁵⁵

Heart or Mind?

Some Christians believe that they can know God's will more through the heart than the mind. If a Christian man is trying to discern God's will for marriage, then some Christian may tell him, "If you believe in your heart that the young lady is the one you should marry, then marry her. You should know instinctively that she is the one. Do not try to explain your reason. If you can give a reason for

²⁵⁵M. Blaine Smith, *Should I Get Married?* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 38-40.

your choice then God must not be leading you." The decision to marry just because the heart is leading can lead to heartache. The decision to listen to the heart is the intuitive approach.²⁵⁶

The intuitive approach alone may work for a few Christian singles. A Christian single must be cautious in listening solely to their heart. The heart can be deceitful (Jeremiah 17:9). Now a Christian single must realize that this approach is not always the direct voice of the Holy Spirit. The mind should rationally think about the decision to get married. Think about the pros and cons of marrying the individual. A single Christian's mind should be focused on Christ. Then Christ will have the opportunity to allow the Christian's mind to be clear and make important decisions (Isaiah 26:3).²⁵⁷

Will God Show a Special Sign?

A Christian single woman may be seeking God's will about marrying the man of her dreams. She may be wandering if God will show her a special sign. Others may tell her that she should ask God to reveal to her some sign of approval or disapproval to marry. The desire for a special sign comes from Gideon's experience in the Old Testament

²⁵⁶Ibid.

²⁵⁷Ibid., 39-42.

(Judges 6). He asked the Lord to reveal a sign to him on two different occasions. The Lord did just as Gideon had asked. Some Christians may get a sign from the Lord, but there is no evidence in the Bible that God is required to provide some type of a sign.²⁵⁸

Majority of the individuals in the New Testament found out God's will by thinking logically. Apart from Joseph and Mary, there is no evidence in the New Testament that a man and woman got married because of seeing some sign. A Christian single should not sit around and just wait for the Lord to reveal to them a sign. God has distributed discernment to His children. A Christian that follows Christ should have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16). He or she can put their ultimate trust in Christ and know that He will guide in the decision-making process.²⁵⁹

Should Someone Else Make the Decision?

A Christian single man or woman may find difficulty in making his or her own decisions. They may want their parents, pastor, or some other authority-figure to make a decision for them. If the man or woman is confused about

²⁵⁸Ibid., 42-4.

²⁵⁹Ibid., 44-5.

getting married to each other, then why should they not allow someone else make the decision for them.²⁶⁰

God does give parents and desires for the children to obey their parents (Colossians 3:20). In the same sense, Godly pastors can lead in counseling and offering their advice. The same can be true for another authority-figure. A Christian single man or woman needs to seek the advice and counsel of Godly parents, pastors, and other authority-figures but they do not need those individuals to make a lifelong decision for them. The decision to discern and know God's will is the sole responsibility of a Christian man or woman.²⁶¹

How to Know for Certain

A single individual may ask, "How do I know for certain that this is God's will for my life to marry this person?" Jesus Christ only wants the best for His child. Christ in John 10:4-5, 9-10, and 27-28 states:

"(4) And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. (5) And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. (9) I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. (10) The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

²⁶⁰Ibid., 45-6.

²⁶¹Ibid., 46-7.

(27) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: (28) And I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."²⁶²

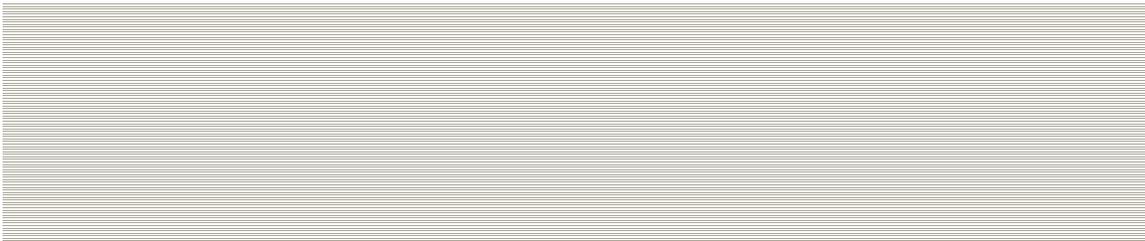
A Christian single that truly desires God's will for their life and prayerfully seeks it, can be confident that He will guide in the decision-making process. The Shepherd is Jesus Christ and He will lead His sheep in the safe direction. The sheep must follow the Shepherd by faith. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."²⁶³

This does not mean that the Christian single will have complete certainty about getting married. He or she must pray, seek the Lord's guidance, and then move forward. The step of faith requires unwavering confidence. Each step will lead to the decision that is in the Christian man or woman's best interest.²⁶⁴

²⁶²*The Holy Bible.*

²⁶³*Ibid.*

²⁶⁴Smith, *Should I Get Married?*, 48-55.



CHAPTER 25

WHAT IS THE EMBRACE OF A COMMUNITY?

Courtship needs the support and involvement of family, friends, pastors, and others. Proverbs 12:15 says, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise."²⁶⁵ A Christian single may ask, "What exactly is meant by the embrace of a community in a courtship?"

Choosing a Team

Individuals desiring courtship that possibly leads to marriage need to develop a team. The team should consist of Godly individuals that can provide accountability, perspective into the relationship, confirmation, and wisdom in discerning God's will. The team can consist of parents, family members, friends, pastors, and others.

Parents Make Good Teammates

Godly parents make good teammates because they can offer wisdom, guidance, honesty, prayer, accountability,

²⁶⁵The Holy Bible.

and their blessing on the relationship.²⁶⁶ God gave parents. Their God-given wisdom is of great honor and appreciation (Exodus 20:12). The decision to heed parents' wisdom honors God (Proverbs 23:22-25).²⁶⁷

Other Teammates

Some individuals have received the blessing of having Godly parents. Many individuals have no relationship with one or both parent. Either way, individuals pursuing courtship need other teammates. God promises that He is a Father to the fatherless (Psalm 68:5). He provides members of the body of Christ that can participate as teammates.²⁶⁸

A pastor, minister, grandmother, grandfather, mentor, friend, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, Sunday school teacher, respective adult, and teacher can all be participants on the team. These people should be Godly, filled with God-given wisdom, supportive, caring, and who dearly love at least one individual involved in the relationship. Their participation should include day-to-day insight when possible into the reality of the courtship. The teammates can see life from the

²⁶⁶Zacharias, *I, Isaac, Take Thee, Rebekah: Moving From Romance To Lasting Love*, 19-22.

²⁶⁷Ludy, *When God Writes Your Love Story: The Ultimate Approach to guy/girl relationships*, 205-206.

²⁶⁸Ludy, *When God Writes Your Love Story: The Ultimate Approach to guy/girl relationships*, 214.

outside and provide honest suggestions that are healthy to each individual in the relationship.²⁶⁹ Proverbs 15:22 states, "Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counselors they are established."²⁷⁰

Benefits of a Community of Teammates

Individuals in a courtship need encouragement and strength from their community of teammates. The courtship is a commitment to explore the possibility of marriage. Three important things that a community of teammates provides during courtship are: 1.) Sense of Reality; 2.) Protection; and 3.) Accountability.²⁷¹

Sense of Reality

A community of teammates provides a sense of reality. Courtship's emotions and feelings can cloud the accuracy of reality. One benefit of reality is an outside view of the relationship. If one or more teammates notice an area of concern, then the matter needs discussion in an appropriate way. Another benefit of reality is the real-life observations of each individual in the relationship. One-on-one time spent together is good. This time does not accurately provide a picture of each individual. Balance

²⁶⁹Ibid., 210; 214-218.

²⁷⁰*The Holy Bible.*

²⁷¹Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 128-139.

the time spent in one-on-one settings and settings with the teammates.²⁷²

Time spent in the company of teammates in real-life settings provide observations into each other's temperaments, abilities, behaviors, attitudes, and values. As time progresses, each individual in the relationship can begin to get to know who each other really is. Ask each teammate to provide reality checks, comments, suggestions, opinions, and counsel sessions as the relationship moves forward towards the possibility of marriage.²⁷³

Protection

A community of teammates can provide protection, especially for the woman. A woman tends to be more vulnerable than a man is. The woman involved in courtship needs to have Godly men in her life to protect her from emotional abuse, physical abuse, mistreatment, and being with the wrong man. The male teammates can serve as protectors, leaders, and encouragers.²⁷⁴

Accountability

A community of teammates can provide accountability. Accountability challenges the individuals in the courtship

²⁷²Ibid., 128-131.

²⁷³Ibid.

²⁷⁴Ibid., 132-133.

to live righteously, question certain actions, inquire about convictions, and avoid deception of the heart.²⁷⁵

Jeremiah 17:9 states, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"²⁷⁶

The heart can be deceitful. Christian teammates can help a courtship remain sexually, mentally, emotionally, and physically pure. They can ask questions: "How is your behavior?"; "What have the two of you been doing lately?"; "Why are you spending so much time alone with each other?"; "Have you been seeking the Lord in prayer and Bible reading on a daily basis?"; and "Does your actions honor and glorify Christ?"²⁷⁷

Outcome

The outcome of embracing and having a community of teammates can multiply the joy of the individuals in the courtship. The joy can bring excitement and closeness to everyone involved. Each individual in the courtship can be confident that he or she is obeying and honoring God. If the courtship leads to marriage, then the wedding will be a shared celebration with teammates and attendees. The

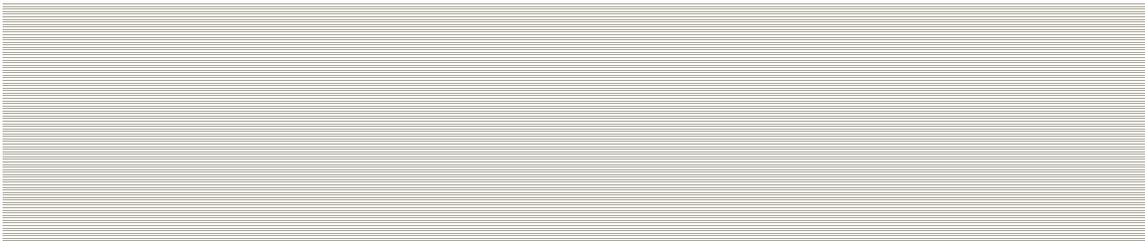
²⁷⁵Ibid., 135.

²⁷⁶*The Holy Bible.*

²⁷⁷Harris, *Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*, 136.

wedding will be a wonderful memory that will be shared throughout the years and serve as an example to others.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁸Ibid., 136-139.



CHAPTER 26

WHAT ARE SOME CAUSES THAT LEAD TO ENDING A RELATIONSHIP?

Individuals in a courtship may come to a point that they feel the relationship needs to end. The relationship is not heading towards marriage and each individual may or may not be aware of this. The question asked, "What are some causes that lead to ending a relationship?"

Causes That Lead to Ending the Relationship

One or both of the individuals in a courtship may be "hanging on" to the relationship. The reality is that the relationship needs to end. The reasons for ending a relationship will vary, but the following are some examples that the relationship is not moving towards marriage.

Doubt

If one or both of the individuals have any type of doubt about the relationship and where it is heading, then the relationship needs to end. Be honest about the doubt. Admit that doubt is a big concern now. No one is under any obligation or pressure into getting married.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁹Ibid., 204-5.

Spiritually Out of Sync

After evaluating the spiritual life of the other person, the male or female may conclude that the other person is spiritually out-of-sync. Christ is not the center of the relationship. The female may have been pretending to be spiritual but she did not live out her faith. Clearly, the relationship is destined for failure.²⁸⁰

Major Character Flaws

The relationship is suffering in one or more of the following areas: friendship, communication, fellowship, or romance. One or both individuals will recognize major character flaws in each other and possibly in their own lives. The friendship could be growing apart. In-depth communication is lacking in the relationship. Fellowship through Bible study and prayer time is not genuine. Pure romance is nonexistent and does not appear to be of importance to one or both individuals. These character flaws are major and the relationship is suffering.²⁸¹

Conflict Cannot Be Resolved

Conflict is a major problem. Every time temper

²⁸⁰Adams and Young, *The One: A Realistic Guide to Choosing Your Soul Mate*, 152-153.

²⁸¹*Ibid.*, 153-154.

flares, one of the individuals refuses to get to the root of the problem. Arguments are taking place on a regular basis. In public and in private, quarrels can arise over small issues. The relationship feels like a battlefield instead of a healthy courtship. Evidence has proven repeatedly that the unhealthy courtship does not contain a positive attitude in resolving conflict.²⁸²

Not Ready to Accept Responsibility and Commitment Phobic

After thinking about all of the responsibilities that are involved in marriage, one of the individuals may feel that they are not ready to accept those responsibilities. This could be the result of immaturity or refusing to put aside the flesh's selfish nature. The thought of being responsible for a spouse and eventually children is too overwhelming. The male may not be ready to accept responsibility as the family's provider and suffers from commitment phobic. Some maturing needs to take place, thus the relationship is finished.²⁸³

Teammates Are Not Supportive

One, two, or all of the teammates that are involved do not support the individuals in the courtship getting

²⁸²Ibid., 154.

²⁸³Zacharias, *I, Isaac, Take Thee, Rebekah*, 97-100.

married. Observations in real-life settings and a view of the relationship from the outside may cause the teammates to develop their conclusion. Items of concern brought forward are inappropriately up for discussion and answer. After the individuals in the courtship have analyzed the teammates' comments, the decision is to dissolve the relationship.

Too Much Heavy Baggage

Heavy baggage is causing consequences in the relationship. The baggage is too much for the individuals to cope with. One of the individuals has refused to let go of the baggage and let Christ lift the heavy load. The courtship has not helped in doing away with the baggage and marriage will only present more problems.

Difference in Personalities

The outgoing and ambitious individual is not getting along with the non-outgoing and non-ambitious individual. One person's personality seems to clash with the other's personality. The opposite personalities do not attract and are frustrating to both individuals.

Family Atmospheres Too Different

The cultural differences, the upbringing differences, and closeness of one's own family are excessively

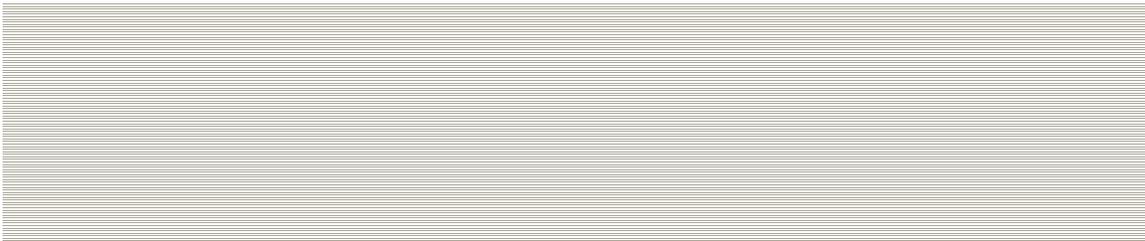
different. The male cannot accept the differences of the two cultures. The female is jealous of the male's relationship with his family. For the benefit of the individual's, marriage is out of the question.

Pre-Marital Counseling

Pre-marital counseling revealed some important issues that were exposed. Maybe the casual attitude of one of the individuals meant that he or she would approach marriage with the same attitude. The pastor or counselor's words are true. The relationship is nothing more than a disillusion.

Definitions of Roles

The roles were properly defined but one of the individuals is unwilling to submit to their role in marriage. Maybe the female feels that a twenty-first century wife is to assume the leadership role. The male may feel that the female does not complement him in the relationship. One or both of the individuals are unwilling to live according to their respective roles.



CHAPTER 27

ARE THERE ANY MYTHS OF MARRIAGE?

Many Christian singles plan on getting married one day. They have different ideas of what marriage is about. Therefore, they ask, "Are there any myths of marriage?" The answer is yes. There are myths of marriage. These myths need facing with honesty by both the Christian single man and woman.

Myth Number One

Myth number one: The husband and wife expect the exact things from the marriage. A young marriage will have a rough start if this myth is unimportant. Christian singles that are going to get married need to heed the warning: Discuss the unspoken rules and unconscious roles before saying "I Do."²⁸⁴

Unspoken Rules

Each individual has their own perspective of marriage, but they seem to never discuss their ideas before getting

²⁸⁴Dr. Les Parrott, III, and Dr. Leslie Parrott, *Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts: Seven Questions To Ask Before (And After) You Marry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 15-21.

married. These ideas, known unspoken rules, will cause problems in the future. The couple assumes that because they have some things in common then they must have the same things in common about what to expect from marriage, including the unspoken rules.²⁸⁵

The Christian single man and the Christian single woman each have unspoken rules. For example, the man's family may have a custom that includes spending quality time together as a family at Thanksgiving and Christmas. The woman grew up in a family where each member is not close and do not spend quality time together. The man cherishes and treasures the time spent with his family while the woman does not think about spending time with hers. Now, the man and woman have not discussed how and where they will spend the holidays after getting married. In addition, they may not have discussed if spending quality time with each other's family is of importance. Each other may enter the marriage without discussing this issue as well as other, important issues. They assume that these unspoken rules are understandable between them. Problems will arise after marriage if the unspoken rules are not out in the open before marriage.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵Ibid., 17-8.

²⁸⁶Ibid., 16-9.

Unconscious Roles

Unconscious roles are involuntarily and unconsciously roles of acting out as a result of instinct because of a man or woman's personal upbringing and background. Each other's parents and other role models were influential. This influence will carry over into marriage.²⁸⁷

A newly married man may act as the planner and dictator because his father was the planner and dictator in his family. The man's new wife may be aggravated and upset with him because her mother was the planner and her father was not a dictator. Conflict arises because the newly married man and woman are at odds over their involuntarily and unconscious roles. They had never discussed the unconscious roles before marriage. Now, the newly married couple fights and fusses on a regular basis. The marriage is different from their expectations. Before getting married, a man and woman must make a conscious decision to openly and honestly discuss each other's upbringing and roles in marriage. This will help the marriage.²⁸⁸

Myth Number Two

The number two myth is as follows: Everything that is good in the marriage will only get better as time goes on.

²⁸⁷Ibid., 19-20.

²⁸⁸Ibid., 20-1.

The emotional honeymoon will not last forever. Eventually, the honeymoon fades and the real characteristics of the man and woman will begin to take root. Marriage is enjoyable but does include some tradeoffs. The tradeoffs may include the man or woman facing the reality of growing up, taking on new responsibilities, leaving their parents, starting life with a new person, and facing the realization that the marriage includes for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, for richer or for poorer, and until death parts the two.²⁸⁹

The marriage may begin on a high, emotional, happy start with the man and woman putting forward their best image. As time goes on, the man and woman will begin to descend the high, emotional, happy start and will begin to show who they really are as a human being. The husband must realize that he married a real human being and she is not going to be the perfect spouse. The wife must come to the realization that her husband will disappoint her and that he is not perfect. The fact is that the marriage built upon Jesus Christ will stand in the midst of storms and will grow the husband and wife into deeper intimacy. A Christian single must face the reality that an idealized image of his or her future-spouse may not be reality.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁹Ibid., 21-2.

²⁹⁰Ibid., 22-4.

Myth Number Three

Myth number three: The bad things in life will go away after marriage. A Christian single woman may deeply desire to get married because she wants to escape or avoid the pains of her life. She really believes that her Prince Charming will come into her life, they will get married, and live happily ever after. All of the hurts, difficulties, tragedies, and wounds of life will magically disappear after she says "I Do" on her wedding day. In short, life will be a bed of roses. All of this is misconception and nothing more than a fairy tale.²⁹¹

A Christian single must realize that marriage is a way of living. This is a fact and not a fairy tale. Marriage will not make any past hurts, failures, disappoints, or fears just simply go away. The wounds will still be there after saying "I Do." A husband or wife can assist in nurturing, loving, and helping deal with the wounds of life. The healing process only takes place after the wounds are exposed, uncovered, and properly taken care of. This process may take days, weeks, months, or even years. The wedding day is the day a new adventure begins, including the difficulties that life may bring.²⁹²

²⁹¹Ibid., 24-5.

²⁹²Ibid., 25-6.

Myth Number Four

Myth number four: Completeness and wholeness is found in a husband or in a wife. Many Christian singles are anxious to get married because they truly believe that a spouse will complete them. A man or woman will become solely dependent on the other person simply because they are insecure or have a sense of inferiority. If a husband or wife feels that their spouse is not completing them or making them whole, then they must have not married the right person.²⁹³

Marriage will not complete or make an individual whole. God designed marriage so that the husband can nourish and encourage his wife and the wife can do the same for her husband. At least three distinct marriage relationships exist: A-frame marriage is where at least one spouse is solely dependent of the other spouse; H-frame marriage is where the husband is independent of the wife and the wife is independent of the husband; and the M-frame marriage is where the husband and wife are interdependent upon one another. Table 12 will explain further these three marriage relationships.²⁹⁴

²⁹³Ibid., 26-7.

²⁹⁴Ibid., 26-8.

TABLE 15. Three Marriage Relationships²⁹⁵

<p><i>A-frame Marriage:</i> Symbolized by the capital letter "A." The husband and wife have a strong identity as a couple but they have very little individual self-esteem. Like the long lines in the letter "A", they lean on one another. The relationship is structured so that if one lets go, the other falls. That is exactly what happens when one partner outgrows his or her dependency needs.</p>
<p><i>H-frame Marriage:</i> The "H-frame" marriage is structured like a capital letter "H." The husband and wife stand virtually alone, each one is self-sufficient and neither influenced much by the other. There is little or no couple identity and little emotional connection. If one lets go, the other hardly feels a thing.</p>
<p><i>M-frame Marriage:</i> The letter "M" represents the "M-frame" marriage. The husband and wife are interdependent on each other. Each one has high self-esteem and is committed to helping the other grow. They could stand on their own, but they choose to be together and stand as one. The relationship involves mutual influence and emotional support. This type of marriage exhibits a meaningful couple identity. If one lets go, the other feels a loss but recovers the balance.</p>

²⁹⁵Ibid., 28.

CHAPTER 28

WHAT IS THE SINGLES' CYCLE AND HOW TO AVOID IT?

Many singles make very poor choices. Their choices are predictable because they fall into the trap of the Singles' Cycle. The Singles' Cycle is a cycle that keeps revolving in a circle because the same choices are made time after time. Table 16 is a description of the Singles' Cycle.²⁹⁶

TABLE 16. Singles' Cycle²⁹⁷

- | |
|-------------------|
| 1. Blessing |
| 2. Ungratefulness |
| 3. Depression |
| 4. Poor Choices |
| 5. Discipline |
| 6. Deliverance |

Blessing

God's goodness extends to a Christian single. He has provided everything needed to live a Godly and holy life.²⁹⁸
2 Peter 1:3, "According as his divine power hath given unto

²⁹⁶Dr. Don Rannikar, *Choosing God's Best: Wisdom For Lifelong Romance*, 75-81.

²⁹⁷Ibid., 79-81.

²⁹⁸Ibid., 79.

us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."²⁹⁹

Ungratefulness

A Christian single becomes ungrateful and unthankful because of discontentment. Discontentment brings about anger, unhappiness, annoyance, and irritation. Discontentment is a result of possibly being alone on a Saturday night, having a recently engaged friend, or the feeling of being lonely. The ungrateful and discontent single may ask, "God, why am I lonely? What about my future? How come You have not sent me a wife? All of my friends have either a fiancé or a spouse and I do not have either one. Lord, have you forgotten about me? I am angry, unhappy, and irritated." He or she feels as if God has not provided enough for them.³⁰⁰

Depression

Self-pity and self-blame can lead to depression. A Christian single may sit around and think about their past relationships that could have lead to marriage. He or she may even begin to think that something is wrong with them

²⁹⁹*The Holy Bible.*

³⁰⁰Dr. Don Rannikar, *Choosing God's Best: Wisdom For Lifelong Romance*, 79-80.

because they are still single. Depression can be serious and can lead to blaming God for the current condition.³⁰¹

Poor Choices

A Christian single may become so discontent that they begin to take matters into their own hands. God is of less importance as the man or woman decides that enough is enough. They want to make their own decisions because God does not seem to know what He is doing. The discontent single man may decide to lower his standards just to begin a relationship with a good-looking woman of his choice. He starts making poor choices and decisions that have consequences, whether emotional or physical.³⁰²

The discontent single woman starts feeling that she dresses too old-fashioned and needs to change her image. She may even begin having eating disorders just to try to look a certain way. She neglects her friends and seeks new friends that hang out in the wrong places. God soon becomes distant from her mind.³⁰³ "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the

³⁰¹Ibid., 80.

³⁰²Ibid.

³⁰³Ibid.

other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon," Jesus says in Matthew 6:24.³⁰⁴

Discipline

As time goes on, a Christian single receives conviction from the Holy Spirit. He or she will begin to feel sorry for the wrong decisions and choices. Satan begins to throw the sins in front of their faces. He tells them that God does not want them anymore and that God will not forgive. The Holy Spirit brings about Godly conviction and sorrow. The Christian man or woman seeks the Lord for deliverance from their sins.³⁰⁵ Proverbs 3:11-12, "(11) My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: (12) For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."³⁰⁶

Deliverance

A Christian single must come to a realization that God is all that they need. By their own will, a man or woman determines to be thankful and appreciative of God's blessings upon them. They turn their discontentment into

³⁰⁴*The Holy Bible.*

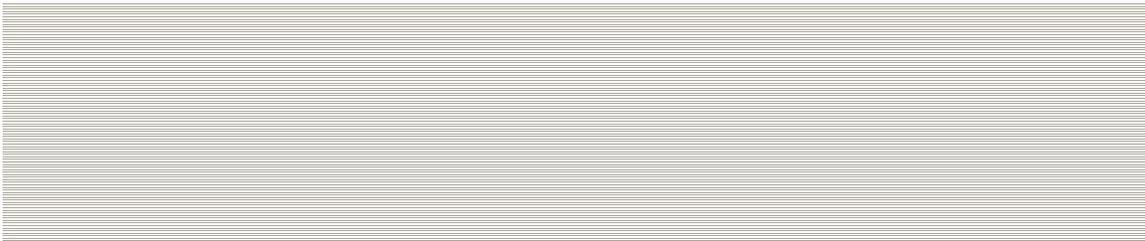
³⁰⁵Dr. Don Rannikar, *Choosing God's Best: Wisdom For Lifelong Romance*, 80.

³⁰⁶*The Holy Bible.*

contentment. Instead of having a pity-party, the Christian single has spirit of thankfulness. The decision is to relinquish total control over life into Jesus Christ's hands. This decision leads to a life of joy and happiness. The man or woman views every circumstance, whether good or bad, as a part of their Christian journey. They ask for and receive deliverance from the same old routine of the Singles' Cycle.³⁰⁷ The apostle Paul declares in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, "(16) Rejoice evermore. (17) Pray without ceasing. (18) In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."³⁰⁸

³⁰⁷Dr. Don Rannikar, *Choosing God's Best: Wisdom For Lifelong Romance*, 80-1.

³⁰⁸*The Holy Bible.*



CHAPTER 29

WHY IS THE HOLY SPIRIT SO IMPORTANT IN LIFE?

A Christian single may be curious as to the importance of the Holy Spirit's role in their life. They may ask the question, "Why is the Holy Spirit so important in my life?" The Holy Spirit, if invited to do so, can be a Christian's Relationship Counselor and Personal Mentor.³⁰⁹

What the Holy Spirit Can Do

The Holy Spirit brings power in the life of a Christian (Acts 1:8). He also guides in truth. John 16:13 records Jesus saying, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."³¹⁰ The Holy Spirit can guide a Christian as to whom to date or court. He leads in setting boundaries and in handling a relationship.³¹¹

³⁰⁹Christopher L. Burge, and Pamela Toussaint, *His Rules: God's Practical Road Map For Becoming And Attracting Mr. Or Mrs. Right* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press, 2005), 15-6.

³¹⁰*The Holy Bible.*

³¹¹Burge and Toussaint, *His Rules: God's Practical Road Map For Becoming And Attracting Mr. Or Mrs. Right*, 16-7.

"(15) If ye love me, keep my commandments. (16) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever," Jesus says in John 14:15-16.³¹² Christ said that the Holy Spirit would always be with a Christian. The Holy Spirit functions in several different roles. Table 17 lists a few of those functions.

TABLE 17. Functions of the Holy Spirit³¹³

REGENERATES	"(3) Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (5) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:3, 5
INDWELLS	"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Romans 8:11
ANOINTS	"(20) But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. (27) But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." 1 John 2:20, 27
BAPTIZES	"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38
GUIDES	"(13) Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for

³¹²*The Holy Bible.*

³¹³*Ibid.*

	he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. (14) He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." John 16:13-14
EMPOWERS	"But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin." Micah 3:8
SANCTIFIES	"That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." Romans 15:16
BEARS WITNESS	"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Romans 8:16
COMFORTS	"(16) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; (26) But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:16, 26
GIVES DISCERNMENT	"(10) But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. (11) For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." 1 Corinthians 2:10-11
BEARS FRUIT	"(22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, (23) Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Galatians 5:22-23
GIVES GIFTS	"(4) Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. (7) But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. (11) But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." 1 Corinthians 12: 4, 7, 11
INTERCESSOR	"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the

	uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:25
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The primary role of the Holy Spirit is to uncover the truth for a Christian. The Holy Spirit will guide in the right direction. His ability allows a Christian man or woman to discern about people and relationships.

The Holy Spirit Provides Inner Self-Portrait

A Christian must ask and allow the Holy Spirit to help with a Spirit-led inner self-exam. The Holy Spirit can provide an honest examination of strengths and weaknesses. He can also provide a sense of things that need to change.³¹⁴

The Holy Spirit may reveal that a Christian man or woman has a low self-esteem or poor self-image. He made also reveal how a man may need to change some habits. A woman may find out that her attitude needs adjusting. The sooner the Holy Spirit is allowed to take a inner self-exam, the faster a Christian can conform his or her life to be more like Christ. As a Christian single becomes more like Christ, then he or she will be able to have a better understanding of relationships and marriage. The key is to

³¹⁴Burge and Toussaint, *His Rules: God's Practical Road Map For Becoming And Attracting Mr. Or Mrs. Right*, 18-9.

sit in the presence of the Lord, stay quiet, and listen to the Holy Spirit.³¹⁵

The Holy Spirit Cultivates a Relationship

The Holy Spirit has something to say to each Christian. A Christian man or woman must take quality time to sit, be quiet, and listen to the Holy Spirit.

Consistent quality time on a daily basis is the key to living a life that is pleasing to Christ. To recognize the voice of the Lord, a Christian needs to pay attention and carefully listen. Table 18 offers some specific ways that a Christian man or woman can cultivate and strengthen their relationship with God through the Holy Spirit.³¹⁶

TABLE 18. Ways To Cultivate and Strengthen a Relationship³¹⁷

<p>1. <i>Praise God:</i> Thank the Lord for what He has done. Praise Him in the day time, the night time, and throughout the day. "(27) Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant. (28) And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long," Psalm 35:27-28.</p>
<p>2. <i>Truly Confess Sin:</i> Ask the Lord to forgive for sins that have been committed. These sins may be sins that have been committed against someone else or against God Himself. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses," Mark 11:25. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John 1:9</p>
<p>3. <i>Study and Read the Bible:</i> The Bible is the best book to read. Each day read a chapter from the book of Proverbs that corresponds to</p>

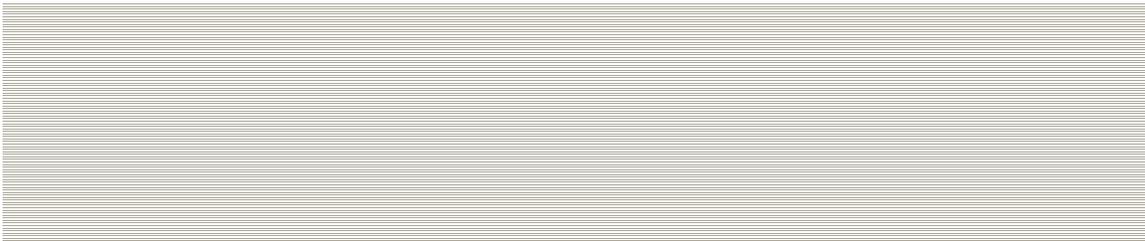
³¹⁵Ibid., 20-1.

³¹⁶Ibid., 21-4.

³¹⁷Ibid., 22-4.

the day's date. Also, each day have a consistent schedule whereby the Bible is read. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," 2 Timothy 2:15.

4. *Talk and Listen to God:* Time spent with God includes talking and listening to Him. Talk about anything and everything to God. Let God talk back about anything and everything. Conclude the time with thanksgiving to God. "(23) My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed. (24) My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt," Psalm 71:23-24. "And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice," 1 Kings 19:12.



CHAPTER 30

IF A COUPLE HAS GONE ALL THE WAY, HOW CAN THEY SLOW DOWN?

A Christian single man and woman may be in a relationship. Their relationship with each other includes "going all the way." This simply means that they have had premarital sex. The couple knows that God designed sex only within the context of marriage. The Holy Spirit has convicted them of their sin. They respond by saying and asking the question, "Yes, we have gone all the way but now we want to honor God, slow down, and commit to be sexually pure until marriage. How can we each do this?"³¹⁸

The Scenario

The following scenario sets the scene. The man grew up in a strong, Christian home. He was a member of a Southern Baptist church, the youth group, and even participated in True Love Waits. At the age of eight, he gave his life to Jesus Christ. Time came for the man to leave home and go away to college. He was determined to be on fire for the Lord and live out his faith in college.

³¹⁸Robbie Castleman, *True Love In A World Of False Hope: Sex, Romance, & Real People* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 110-5.

The Christian young woman had grown up in a non-Christian home. In tenth grade, some friends invited her to a youth Bible study at a local Southern Baptist church one Wednesday night. After some consideration, she went to the Bible study. At the age of eighteen, the woman committed her life to Jesus Christ. Some women in the church helped her grow in her faith. For two years, she went to the local community college. She was a member of the Baptist Student Union (BSU), on the BSU leadership team, and even participated in True Love Waits. After community college, she transferred to a four-year college. The woman was determined to live her life for Jesus Christ and to save sex for marriage.

The Christian man and woman met at the four-year college while attending a Bible study. Each was a strong Christian. They shared their desire to remain virgins until marriage. After going out with each for a year, one night the two became too physically involved and "went all the way." The physical involvement caused emotional hurt, regret, disrupted their spiritual lives, ruined trust, and invoked the feeling of hopelessness. They were not happy, but each believed that there was a way to start over. The problem was that they had no clue how to do so.

The Way to Start Over As a Couple

The man and woman still love each other but they want to honor God with their love life. The journey to start over included the willingness of each of them to make the choice to turn away from their past and look forward to a new future. This decision can be a tough decision to make and may be very hard on the couple. The reason is that lust would creep into each of their minds. The only way to turn from the lust and from the desire to be physically intimate was to radically change their habits and behaviors. The following are some ways that can assist in changing habits and behaviors.³¹⁹

Keep All Four Feet on the Floor

Self-control for the couple includes keeping all four feet on the floor. This means that if the couple plans to study together or go out on a date, then all four feet must remain on the floor at all times. The man and woman must remember: No cuddling, no lying on the couch together, and no sitting in each other's laps. This will help in providing less temptation. The temptation will still be great but simply keep all four feet on the ground and ask the Lord to provide strength for sexual restraint.³²⁰

³¹⁹Ibid., 116.

³²⁰Ibid., 100-2.

Keep All Clothes On

A Christian man and woman must remember to keep their clothes on. This sounds a bit silly, but the temptation grows greater and greater with the more amount of skin that is exposed. Keep the shirt and pants on. The woman needs to realize that the man is tempted more through vision of what he sees. She needs to wear modest and Christ-honoring clothes (1 Timothy 2:9). Short shorts, low-cut blouses, and tight clothes are off limits to a Christian woman who is seeking to honor Christ with her body. The man needs to keep his hands and eyes from going places on the woman's body that is off limits (Job 31:1). Remember that the body is the temple of the Lord. Seek to glorify Him in every situation (1 Corinthians 6:18-20).³²¹

Keep Touch to a Minimum

The power of touch can be great. Places on the body that are "private" are not be touched. These places are off limits. If a man receives a touch from a woman, then she may be causing him great temptation and lustful thoughts. The same could be true for the woman. A Christian man and woman need to be honest with other by saying, "Let us limit the amount of touch that we give to each other. Touching me causes lustful thoughts and stirs

³²¹Ibid., 102-4.

up the wrong actions. Thanks for understanding." The touch can include hugs, holding hands, putting hands on the legs, and rubbing the hair. Appropriate and Godly affection includes other ways than just touching each other.³²²

Keep Kissing to a Minimum

A Christian man and woman may decide to avoid kissing, because certain passions arise when they kiss. If the decision is to kiss, then keep kissing to a minimum. Maybe just offer a simple kiss on the cheek or forehead. Under no circumstance, whatsoever is French kissing allowed. This type of kissing is only for marriage.³²³

Start Over By Just-Getting-To-Know Each Other

The hurt and pain will take time to heal. In the meantime, the Christian man and woman need to start over by creating a just-getting-to-know each other atmosphere. This atmosphere literally takes the couple back to the beginning of the relationship when they did not know much about each other. The man can call the woman and ask her out on a date. He may say, "Hi, I am John Doe. We met the other day and I was wondering if you would like to go get

³²²Ibid., 104-7.

³²³Ibid., 107.

something to eat with me this Thursday night? (Listen and wait for a response; if the response is "yes" then proceed.) Great, I will pick you up at 6 o'clock. Have a great evening and I will see you Thursday evening. Good bye."³²⁴

The man and woman need to use extreme politeness to each other: "Thank you for opening the door"; "You are more than welcome"; and "Please go first." By starting over and by using extreme politeness, the couple is re-creating "verbal virginity." Verbal virginity is the verbal words that help in reassuring the real intentions and desires to recapture a Godly relationship.³²⁵

Avoid Dangerous Situations

Different situations can provide environments for sexual temptations. A Christian man and woman need to rethink putting themselves into dangerous situations that can lead to a relapse of sexual sin. The man and woman may need to spend time together only when other people are around. They may need to limit the amount of time spent together. One thing is for sure, each needs his, or hers own accountability partner or partners.³²⁶

³²⁴Ibid., 116-7.

³²⁵Ibid., 117.

³²⁶Ibid., 117-9.

CHAPTER 31

WHERE ARE ALL OF THE GOOD, CHRISTIAN MEN OR WOMEN?

A Christian man may be completely frustrated that he cannot seem to find anymore "good, Christian women." He proclaims, "Where in the world have all of the good, Christian women gone? I do not think that there is a woman out there that believes the same as I or has the same convictions. Frankly, I will probably stay single for the rest of my entire life!" Him and his friends sit around and mope about their current conditions and the lack of godly women.³²⁷

A Godly, Christian woman is about to give up her dreams of ever getting married because she believes that there are no more good, spiritual, Godly men. There are some men that she is attracted to but they are not Godly, Christian men. She cries out, "All of the Godly men are taken. I cannot seem to find any Christian man that has morals or values. The men that I know only want one thing from a woman, and it is not commitment. Apparently, I will grow to be an old maid!"

³²⁷Dr. Henry Cloud, *How To Get A Date Worth Keeping: Be Dating In Six Months Or Your Money Back* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 47-8.

The Problem

The problem is not that there are no more Godly, Christian men or woman. The world is full of men and women who are Godly, Christian, and that have morals and values. The problem lies within the Christian single man or woman's heart. Proverbs 4:23 states, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."³²⁸ This Scripture passage says that the external life comes from a diligent heart. Diligent can mean careful and attentive. A Christian man or woman needs to have a careful and attentive heart. Out of this heart comes the issue of life. The "issue(s)" of a not being able to find any Godly individuals of the opposite sex may have something to do with the complaining man or woman's heart.³²⁹

Some issues could include never meeting anyone new. The fear of actually having to introduce one's self to a total stranger shows a lack of confidence. A Christian man may be terrified to approach and begin a friendship with a new woman. He gets nervous, tongue tied, scared, sweaty, and nauseated just thinking about talking to her. Every time he gets enough courage and guts up to actually say something to the woman, he cowardly backs down and refuses

³²⁸*The Holy Bible.*

³²⁹Dr. Henry Cloud, *How To Get A Date Worth Keeping: Be Dating In Six Months Or Your Money Back*, 49-50.

to proceed. The man lacks inner self-confidence. His problems are internal fears and not opening up his heart and life to connecting with members of the opposite sex.³³⁰

The Solution

A Christian single man or woman may recognize that they are experiencing internal fears, lacking in self-confidence, and just not connecting with members of the opposite sex. They believe that the inside affects the outside and are now ready to solve their problem by moving towards the next step. That step includes growing and changing in a way that will bring wisdom and new circumstances to the man or woman by working from inside to outside.³³¹

Intentionally Meet New People

A Christian single man or woman needs to intentionally meet new members of the opposite sex on a regular basis. The meaning behind meeting these new people is not to necessarily date, court, or hang out with them. The reason is to open up the man or woman to talking, interacting, and connecting with perfect strangers. This can serve as a practice field for working on interpersonal relationship

³³⁰Ibid., 50-2.

³³¹Ibid., 52-3.

skills. As time goes on, the process of meeting new people will become easier. Eventually, the man or woman will begin to find himself or herself and realize that talking to new people is not so bad after all.³³²

The decision to meet new people will not always be easy. The man or woman needs to find a close friend or family member that will check up on them each week. To begin with, the process of meeting new people may be tough. However, hang in there and "just do it." The interaction between members of the opposite sex may just present a chance for the man or woman to find someone that they might be interested in getting to know further. This may not always be the case, though. Be open to different reactions, rejections, and responses. The outcome may just be surprising.³³³

Join a Support Team

A support team is a group of Christian friends and/or family members that encourage each other, pray for one another, offer comfort, and keep each other accountable. As a team, each member wants the other members to grow in Christ. A Christian single man or woman needs to be an active member of a support team. They need to be honest

³³²Ibid., 54-60.

³³³Ibid.

about their weaknesses, ask for honest feedback, be willing to confront tough issues, and not afraid of correction from fellow members.³³⁴

Forget Love at First Sight

Love at first sight is more of a myth than fact. This is nothing more than mere emotions and feelings. A man may be attracted to a woman. He may not pursue her simply because of his lack of love at first sight. The woman may be the man's type and they may enjoy each other's friendship, but the man is willing to write her off because of the love at first sight myth. Get over the myth and enjoy meeting new members of the opposite sex.³³⁵

Be Honest About One's Self

First impressions count. A Christian woman will dress up, wear make-up, fix her hair, and make sure to look her best when she first begins a relationship with a Christian man. The man will act macho, put on a clean shirt, and even brush his hair. The two want to make sure that their first impressions are good and long lasting. They even go as far as to comply with each other's beliefs just to be pleasing and pretend to be someone that they are not. As

³³⁴Ibid., 82-6.

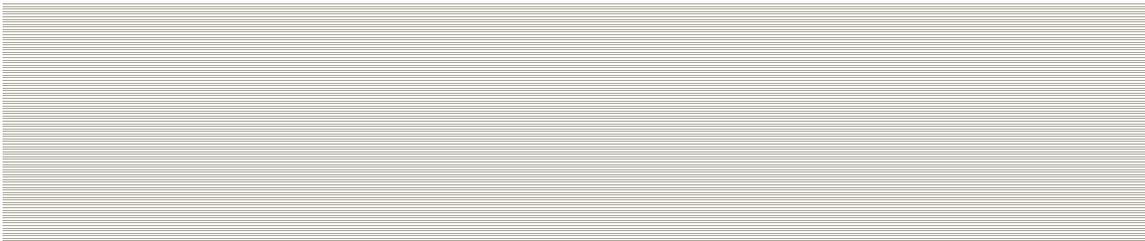
³³⁵Ibid., 102-5.

time goes on, their "real" personalities and beliefs begin to surface. The impressions were just to put on a show. They were not completely honest upfront about themselves. This eventually leads to problems in the relationship.

From the beginning, the man or woman just needs to be himself or herself. They do not need to act a certain way, believe a certain belief, or try to be someone that they are not. This false persona is unhealthy to the relationship. A healthy relationship is about honesty, integrity and just being one's self.

The Outcome

The aforementioned solutions to solving the problem are suggestions that may or may not lead a Christian single man or woman to their future spouse. The solutions provide an outcome to improve relationship skills. In the end, the thing that really matters most is the man or woman trusting the Lord Jesus Christ to lead and direct their lives. They need to seek Him through personal devotion time every single day. As time goes on, a Christian man or woman will mature and develop into the person Christ desires them to be. The journey may not be easy, but it can be very rewarding.



CHAPTER 32

CONCLUSION

The research problem in the paper focused on a variety of questions Christian singles may ask that require honest and/or Biblical answers from the Bible and Christian authors such as psychologists, ministers, parents, and couples that have published written material in the realm of Christian singles and/or Christian marriages. A variety of questions explored and answered were done so without giving a simple answer such as "yes, it is okay . . ." or a simple answer "no, it is not okay . . ."

To the best of his knowledge, the researcher answered the questions honestly and/or Biblically. He tried to not provide vague answers.

One Final Word

There are endless other questions that could be asked by Christian singles. The main idea to keep in mind is for a Christian man or woman to allow God to write their life story. The adventure of living life during the season of singleness is wide open for traveling. Pursue God in such a way that every day brings more and more of a hunger to

spend quality, intimate time alone with Him. God has an amazing plan for each Christian single man or woman. They must be willing to allow Him to lead each step. As with anything in a Christian's life, God's Word should have the final word. Jeremiah 29:11-13 declares:

"(11) For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. (12) Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. (13) And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."³³⁶

³³⁶*The Holy Bible.*

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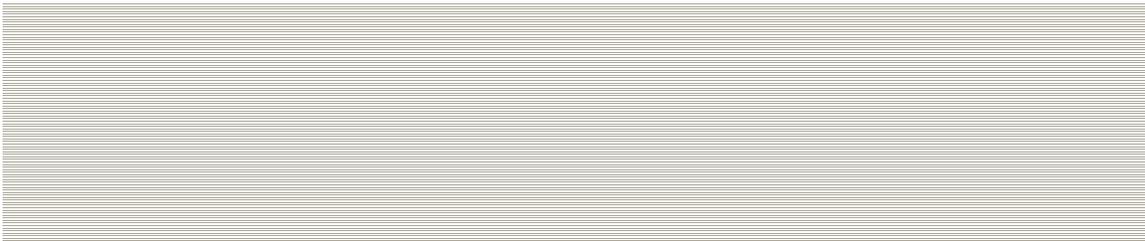
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PERSONAL PROFILE

The personal profile is a brief autobiography of me, Jad Khalaf. Several different selective topics will give insight into my life: my conversion experience, family spiritual pilgrimage, education, and ministry experience.

Conversion Experience, Family, Spiritual Pilgrimage, and Call to Ministry

My father was born Jamal Mahyoub Khalaf in Ramallah, Israel, on January 30, 1954. He grew up in Ramallah and then came to the United States in 1970. At the age of sixteen, dad landed in Chicago, Illinois, with one hundred dollars in his hand. My mom was born Elizabeth Ezie Holloway in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on April 8, 1958. She grew up in Pearl, Mississippi. Dad traveled from Chicago to Houston, Texas, and then made his way to Jackson, Mississippi. In March 1973, Dad and mom met in Jackson, Mississippi. They dated for three years and they were married on August 1, 1976. Dad and mom each gave their life to Christ shortly after getting married. On January 6, 1979, Jim and Libby Khalaf (my parents) were proud to welcome their firstborn son into the world. After marrying

each other and then giving their life to Christ, dad and mom both committed to raising a family in the Lord Jesus Christ and according to the Holy Bible. Therefore, when I was born, they were overwhelmed with joy. Justin, my only other sibling, was born on December 13, 1982. Needless to say, dad and mom were blessed that the Lord gave them another son. Justin and I both grew up in a Christian home with loving and caring parents.

On June 18, 2005, Justin married Erica Johnsey at Wildwood Baptist Church in Clinton, Mississippi. The Lord has not sent me a wife yet. My parents have always prayed for my wife and my brother's wife. I have prayed for my wife and I know that the Lord has the most beautiful, Godly, conservative, virgin, maturing-in-the-Lord young lady that I have ever or will ever lay eyes on for me to marry. He is still working on me and still working on her. In His perfect time, the Lord will allow our paths to cross. Until then, I will continue praying and serving the Lord during the season of singleness. I am allowing the Lord to write a-one-of-a-kind love story.

At the age of thirteen, I was attending a Lay Renewal at First Baptist Church (FBC) of McComb, Mississippi (my home church). The preacher preached and then gave an invitation. While sitting in the pew, the Holy Spirit

convicted me of my sin and of my need of salvation. I tapped mom on the knee and said, "Mom, I want to be saved." With tears of joy in her eyes, she led me out of the sanctuary. We both proceeded down the hall and made our way into room 113. I knelt beside mom while she led me in a sinner's prayer of repentance. The very moment I asked Jesus Christ to come into my heart and be my Lord and Savior, He did. Wow! A change immediately took place in my life. I rose up from my knees and I knew I had become a child of the King. We both walked back into the sanctuary. Immediately I walked to the front of the church, took the pastor by the hand, and told him what had just taken place. That night will forever remain in my mind. I joined FBC that night (though I had been raised in Southern Baptist Churches, this was the first church I joined as a Christian) and asked to follow in Believer's baptism. Shortly thereafter, the pastor baptized me at FBC.

When I was sixteen years old, I felt that God was calling me into the ministry. I shared this with my parents. At that point, my family agreed to pray about the apparent calling that God was placing in my heart. At seventeen, I surrendered my life to full-time Christian ministry. I still did not know exactly what area of ministry to serve. After much prayer, God revealed that

worldwide evangelism is the area of ministry to serve. I am overwhelmed that God has called me to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every country, in every nation, on every continent. On September 1, 1996, at the age of seventeen, the Lord opened the door to preach my first sermon. The Lord continues to provide preaching engagements.

In January 1997, the Lord opened the door for me to preach at West McComb Baptist Church (WMBC) in McComb, Mississippi. Mike Pennock, pastor of (WMBC) at the time, called me to his office. Mike shared that the deacons of WMBC wanted to pray about licensing me into the Gospel Ministry. The Khalaf family, WMBC, and myself all agreed to ask the Lord for His guidance concerning this issue. On January 4, 1998, WMBC licensed me into the Gospel Ministry.

After WMBC licensed me into the Gospel Ministry, Pennock called me back to his office. He then shared that the deacons of WMBC agreed to pray about ordaining me into the Gospel Ministry as a Southern Baptist Minister. The Khalaf family, WMBC, and myself all prayed for one year. On January 24, 1999, WMBC ordained me into the Gospel Ministry as a Southern Baptist Minister.

God has definitely called and equipped me for the ministry of worldwide evangelism. Every time I stand to proclaim and preach the Word of God, I am both humbled and honored.

I believe the Word of God is inerrant, infallible, and inspired. Until the Lord calls me Home, I will unashamedly, unapologetically, and boldly preach the Word of God to every country, in every nation, on every continent. One of my favorite Scripture passages is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Education

In 1997 I graduated high school from Parklane Academy in McComb, Mississippi. I then attended Southwest Mississippi Community College in Summit, Mississippi, and graduated from there in May 1999 with an Associate of Arts degree. Then I went to Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi, and graduated from there in May 2001 with a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Christian Studies and Philosophy and a minor in Communications. The Lord laid on my heart to attend New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS) in New Orleans, Louisiana.

I started classes in August 2001 and graduated with ninety-two hours, including three New Testament Greek classes and three Old Testament Hebrew classes, in December 2002 with a Masters of Divinity in Evangelistic Church Growth. From January to December 2003, I worked on the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree at NOBTS with a major

in Evangelism and a minor in Preaching and earned twenty-eight hours of classes. In December 2006, I transferred the twenty-eight hours of classes from NOBTS to Louisiana Baptist University and Theological Seminary (LBU). I started work on the Ph.D. at LBU in February 2007.

Ministry Experience

Since September 1, 1996, God has allowed me the opportunity to preach over one hundred and fifty times in places such as Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, Hawaii, El Salvador, Ukraine. Youth rallies, youth revivals, week-long church revivals, one day church revivals, and guest preacher are just some of the events I have been privileged to preach. Though many churches have asked me to be their pastor, the Lord never called me to pastor a church. The calling on my life is worldwide evangelism.

Throughout the years, I joined many organizations. The following list will provide those organizations I have joined and that I am considered an active member: The Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists with support from the North American Mission Board, the Conference of Mississippi Baptist Evangelists (COMBE), and the Southern Gospel Promoters Association. In 2005, I served as Vice-President of COMBE. In 2006, I served as President of COMBE. On behalf of COMBE, I was in communication with Don

Lum, the Director for the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC). As COMBE President, I strove to help the evangelists in Mississippi work alongside Lum and the MBC.

The Southern Gospel Promoters Association consists of approximately ninety-two Southern Gospel music promoters. The promoters promote Southern Gospel music throughout the United States of America. The association works with Southern Gospel booking agents, Southern Gospel artists, and other individuals in the Southern Gospel music industry. On September 30, 2005, I held my first major Southern Gospel concert. I planned the event, paid for the event, organized the event, and was in charge of the entire evening. The Crabb family was the main group of the evening. I sung several songs that night and I had the opportunity to share the Gospel with those in attendance. Over five hundred people attended. The concert cost approximately twelve thousand dollars. Tickets sold covered most of the event. I love Southern Gospel music and will continue to promote the music I love.

Conclusion

Prayerfully this brief autobiography has given some insight into my life. The Word of God says that there is a time and season for life. My life is in God's hands. The

following is my life's motto: May the desires of my heart become reality, knowing that with God all things are possible. I will uplift the name of Jesus Christ everywhere I go. When people look at my life, may they see Jesus living through me. I pray that the lost will receive salvation in Jesus Christ, the saved will grow closer to the Lord, and the Lord will receive all the Glory, all the Honor, and all the Praise! Please visit www.JadKhalaf.com

