

## PART II: COURTSHIP: THE BRIDGE FROM SINGLENESS TO MARRIAGE

### I. Purposeful Relationship

- a. We now move from singleness to relationship in our series.
- b. Courtship defined: The period in an individual's life (a) where he or she is not yet married (b) but in a purposeful relationship that is intending to seek marriage in the near future (c) with a certain believer (d) of the opposite sex, (e) and during this season is exercising Godly wisdom, discernment and prayer in discovering to the best of their ability if the two are compatible with one another where the possibility of marriage then seems to be God's will, (f) who both show indications of desire and character to live out a God-centered, Biblically-principled marriage.
- c. Note: We use the term relationship, courtship, dating and "being boyfriend/girlfriend" synonymously though some Christians make a distinction with those terms.
- d. Practicing Godly wisdom, discernment and precepts
  - e. Asks the question: What does God's Word has to say about this phase in my life?
  - f. Desire to seek to honor the LORD in everything they do.

They wish to get an "A" in these three Areas:

    - i. Alignment:
      1. Meaning they want to have God's standards, morals and wisdom be their own.
      2. It is an issue of renewing the mind (**Romans 12:1-2**)
    - ii. Action:
      1. Meaning they want to act according to God's will that has been internalized in their life.
      2. It is an issue of being not only a hearer, but a doer of God's Word (**James 1:22**).
    - iii. Attitude:
      1. Meaning they want to have the right motivation.
      2. Motivation matters! Remember people can do the right thing outwardly but do it with the wrong motivation like the older brother in the prodigal son in **Luke 15**; therefore we want to do what is right with the right motivation.
- g. Courtship means it involve those not married
  - i. Since courtship involves relationship with those not married remember sex is to be only within the marriage bed (**Hebrews 13:4**)
  - ii. During the season of courtship there will be sexual temptation between two individuals interested in each other.
  - iii. Consider the importance of boundaries which we will discuss more in-depth in a future message.
- h. Courtship means it involve being in a purposeful relationship
  - i. Purpose of courtship: It should be purposeful to see if that other individual is the one that God has called you two to be married.
  - ii. Biblical Proof
    1. Reason #1: Marriage is a good thing from the Lord. Therefore we want to seek for it God's Way.

- a. *“He who finds a wife finds a good thing  
And <sup>(B)</sup>obtains favor from the LORD.” (Proverbs 18:22)*
    - i. For the man, finding a wife is a good thing!
    - ii. When he does find a woman to be his wife, he is seeking marriage!
    - iii. So marriage is a good thing!
  - b. If marriage is a good gift from God, it is good to seek marriage and seek it according to God’s way through the process of biblical courtship.
2. Reason #2: If courtship is not for the purpose of pursuing a possible marriage that will glorify God then our relationship then will pursue wrong goals.
- a. We have already look at bad reasons to be in a relationship.
  - b. As a reminder sometimes people in the world and sadly in the church date another person for the following reason:
    - i. Receiving attention
    - ii. Affection (feelings)
    - iii. Significance
    - iv. Security
  - c. But those needs are found in Christ and not relationships.
  - d. If one try to find those things apart from Christ they are going to be disappointed.
  - e. Also if one find these things in relationship instead of Christ they will pursuing idols and idolatry is sin.
3. Reason #3: If courtship is not for the purpose of pursuing a godly marriage then it opens the door to sexual sins.
- a. Remember sexual immorality is a sin.
  - b. Over time in a relationship people will grow in their passion for one another.
  - c. If there is no end of marriage then that passion will spill over into sexual immorality outside of marriage.
  - d. Therefore we should not date just to date.
4. Reason #4: Scriptural have examples of people in the Bible in “relationship” that headed towards marriage.
- a. Isaac loved Rebekah and married her (**Genesis 24:63-67**)
    - i. Was outside meditating: *“Issac went out to meditate in the field toward evening” (v.63a)*
      1. Implication: Issac was a spiritual man
    - ii. Seeing a caravan of women heading towards him
      1. First look at **v.61**: *“Then Rebekah arose with her maids, and they mounted the camels and followed the man. So the servants took Rebekah and departed.”*
      2. Then **v. 63b**: *“...and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, camels were coming.”*

- iii. Eye catching moment (v.64)
    - 1. *“Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Issac she dismounted from the camel.”*
  - iv. He was interested in her and married her (v.66-67)
  - b. Jacob loved Rachel and married her (Genesis 29)
    - i. Background (v.4-8)
    - ii. When Jacob sees Rachel (v.9-12)
      - 1. Boy meets girl: *“While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess.”* (v.9)
      - 2. His reaction
        - a. *“When Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother’s brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother’s brother, Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well and watered the flock of Laban his mother’s brother.”* (v.10)
        - b. He kissed her (v.11a)
        - c. He lifted his voice (v.11b)
        - d. He wept (v.11c)
        - e. He told her *“that he was a relative of her father and that he was Rebekah’s son”* (v.12a)
      - 3. Her response: *“and she ran and told her father.”* (v.13)
      - 4. He works for seven years to get her hand in marriage (v.18, 20)
        - a. Jacob set the requirement (v.18)
        - b. What was it like for Jacob (v.20)
    - c. Ruth
      - i. **Ruth 3** shows that the entire ordeal was the process heading towards marriage
- iii. Practice
  - 1. “Pursue clarity more than intimacy.”<sup>1</sup>
    - a. People often think of dating as the time of primarily seeking intimacy. It is not.
    - b. Instead the primary purpose is to seek clarity.
    - c. What are you seeking clarity on? Whether you and the other person should be married for the purpose of glorify God.
    - d. Be warned: “Cheap intimacy feels real for the moment, but you get what you pay for.”<sup>2</sup>
  - 2. Ask yourself these questions honestly:

<sup>1</sup> Marshall Segal, *Not Yet Married* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2017), 109.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall Segal, *Not Yet Married* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2017), 110.

- a. Am I looking for a relationship for any other reason besides considering the possibility of the relationship heading towards marriage?
  - b. Can you see yourself marrying this individual and the God of the Bible would be pleased and glorify by it?
3. Do the two of you have serious discussions about various facets of marriage?
  - a. Not just wedding plans
  - b. Questions about each other's commitment to God and commitment to what God's plan looks like.
  - c. Each other's spiritual life
  - d. Family background
4. If the purpose of courtship is marriage then you must resolve that if the relationship does not work out, you need to have the courage to call it off:
  - a. Because it is the right thing to do
    - i. If the purpose of Godly relationship is marriage, and the possibility of Godly marriage is nihil, then there is no purpose to the relationship and the right thing to do is call it off.
      1. It would allow that person to be set free for God's plan in their life (singleness, marrying someone else, etc).
      2. It would allow yourself to be set free for God's plan in your life as well (singleness, marrying someone else, etc).
  - b. And do so graciously, as Joseph was going to do with Mary (**Matthew 1:18-23**)
    - i. Joseph and Mary were engaged (**v.18**)
    - ii. When Joseph saw his engagement with Mary was not going to work out, he called the relationship off (**v.19**)
    - iii. He was "*being a righteous man*" by "*not wanting to shame her*" (**v.19**)
    - iv. Though he called off the relationship, the angel never rebuked him for it (**v.20-23**)
    - v. It is possible to call off a relationship and be righteous before the Lord!