



Seeking God's Will God's Way

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INTRODUCTION

When God wanted to give the ultimate picture of His relationship with His church, He chose the marriage relationship. Every time that some believing couple comes before the marriage altar in a Christian ceremony, Jesus Christ is being preached through their lives. Whatever they bring to that altar may be the only picture of Christ that some lost person ever sees. With this privilege comes enormous responsibility. As young people pursue God's will in marriage it is vitally important that he or she is fully aware of God's way to that goal. Ephesians 5:27 gives us God's expectations through the picture of Christ: "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Marriage is a picture of Christ and the Church. Everything that Christ desires in His church ought to be found in a bride. All that Christ exemplifies in His courtship of His church should be found in a groom. Every step that a young person takes toward the marriage altar should follow as it were the very steps of Christ – arriving at that altar knowing that you have found the will of God and have no regrets.

This has always been the goal of Christian marriage – but culture today runs entirely contrary to that goal. Each parent and child must make a choice: "Will I trust culture, depending on my feelings and giving way to pressure, or will I walk with God by faith, finding His will while keeping myself for the one He has for me?"

MISSING THE GOAL

Should we trust culture?

*"In the summer of 1990 a special commission of prominent political, medical, education, and business leaders issued a report, titled Code Blue, on the health of America's teenagers. They wrote that 'never before has one generation of American teenagers been less healthy, less cared for, or less prepared for life than their parents were at the same age.' According to the Commission, the explanation for teenagers' deteriorating condition lies with their behavior."*¹

In 1960, 70% of marriages were first marriages. ²
 In 1990, _____ of marriages were first marriages. ³

In 1945, 80% of children grew up in two-married-parents families. ⁴
 In 1980, _____ of children grew up in two-married-parents families. ⁵

One in _____ young people lose their virginity before the age of 13. ⁶

"Children feel they should behave like the adults they see, use their language, wear their clothing, do the things they do. Parents didn't used to swear in front of their children; now children swear. The veil between adulthood and childhood grows ever more transparent. We think it's adorable to see a 9-year-old girl in a strapless dress and makeup, then we wonder why we have a pregnant 13-year-old" (Milwaukee Journal).

Age	Fornication ⁸
15	33%
16 male	58%
16 female	32%
17 male	67%
17 female	51%
18 male	79%
18 female	70%

In 1955, 12% of teenage girls were sexually active. ⁸
 In 1988, _____ of teenage girls were sexually active. ⁹

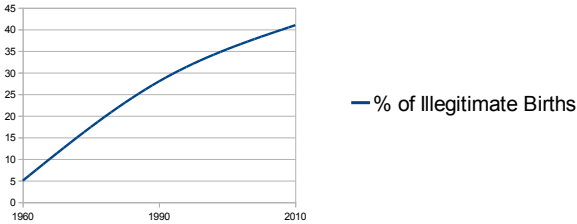
"Thirty years ago girls were sexually active at half the rate of boys. Today. . . rates for young women lag only a few percentage points behind those of young men." ¹⁰

In 1955, there were 5 known venereal diseases. ¹¹
 In 1988, there were _____ known venereal diseases. ¹²

In 1972, 1 in 20 teenage girls had a pregnancy. ¹³
 In 1990, 1 in 10 teenage girls had a pregnancy. ¹⁴
 Every day nearly _____ teenagers get pregnant. ¹⁵

In 1955, 7% of births to teenagers were out of wedlock. ¹⁶
 In 1988, _____ of births to teenagers were out of wedlock. ¹⁷
 In 2012, 89% of births to teenagers were out of wedlock. ¹⁸

In 1960, 5% of all births were illegitimate. ¹⁹
 In 1990, _____ of all births were illegitimate, a 400% increase. ²⁰
 In 2010, 41% of all births were illegitimate, an 800% increase since 1960. ²¹
 In 2010, more than 1 out of every 3 babies born in Wisconsin was to an unmarried mother. ²²



"The United States has the highest adolescent pregnancy, abortion, and birth rate in the developed world, with 43% of all adolescent females estimated to experience at least one pregnancy before they reach age 20." ²³

In 2009, 80% of evangelical teenagers had lost their virginity by age 18.²⁴

Age Girl Began Dating	% That Fell Into Fornication ²³
12	91%
13	56%
14	53%
15	41%
16	20%

In 1970, there were 523,000 unmarried households. ²⁵

In 1993, there were _____ unmarried households. ²⁶

In 2007, there were 6,008,007 unmarried households. ²⁷

In 1960, there were 393,000 divorces. ²⁸

In 1993, there were _____ divorces, a tripling in number. ²⁹

Every day there are _____ divorces in America. ³⁰

In 1900, there was one divorce for every _____ marriages. ³¹

In 1980, there was one divorce for every _____ marriages.

Today, that rate has worsened slightly. ³²

Between 1980 and 2012, the marriage rate in Wisconsin fell 38 percent. ³³

"Seeking to test the Freudian notion that civilization is a byproduct of repressed sexuality, the scholar J. D. Unwin studied 86 different societies. His findings startled many scholars--above all, Unwin himself--because all 86 demonstrated a direct tie between monogamy and 'expansive energy' of civilization.

"Unwin had no Christian convictions and applied no moral judgment: 'I offer no opinion about rightness or wrongness.' Nevertheless he had to conclude, 'In human records there is no instance of a society retaining its energy after a complete new generation has inherited a tradition which does not insist on pre-nuptial and post-nuptial continence.'

"For Roman, Greek, Sumerian, Moorish, Babylonian, and Anglo-Saxon civilizations, Unwin had several hundred years of history to draw on. He found with no exceptions that those societies flourished during eras that valued sexual fidelity. Inevitably, sexual mores would loosen and the societies would subsequently decline, only to rise again when they returned to more rigid sexual standards." ³⁴

How far away is our society from total collapse, when its ethic is as described by Barbara Ehrenreich in a recent Time essay, "Sex, preferably among affectionate and consenting adults, belongs squarely in the realm of play"?

The recent rise of social media has also triggered alarms. A study completed in April 2014 discovered the following:

Heavy users of social networking are 100% more likely to think about separating from their marriage partner than non users.³⁵

There is a direct correlation between increase in social media use and increase in the divorce rate.³⁶

Over 80 percent of divorce attorneys have seen a rise in cases using social networking.³⁷

Just how inept is the religion of America at influencing our culture? George Gallup, Jr. told a group of Southern Baptists, "There is no doubt that religion is growing, but we find little difference in behavior between those who go to church and those who don't."³⁸

Has the final "new generation" of Americans that Unwin mentioned already been born?

End Notes

- 1-3 William Bennett's The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators, 1993.
- 4-5 Barbara Whitehead, Atlantic Monthly, April 1993, Dan Quayle Was Right
- 6 U.S. News and World Report, June 10, 1991, "Goings-on behind bedroom doors."
- 7 Advocates for Youth, social agency, Jan. 1994 report
- 8-9 Dept. of Health and Human Services
- 10 Focus on the Family, May 1994, "Are You Ready for Your Teens to Date?"
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- 28-29 Dept. of Health and Human Services
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- 33 Beckstrom
- 34 Philip Yancey, Christianity Today, Dec. 12, 1994, "The Lost Sex Study."
- 35-37 Sebastián Valenzuela, Daniel Halpern, and James E. Katz, "Social network sites, marriage well-being and divorce: Survey and state-level evidence from the United States." 2014.
- 38 Moody Monthly, July/August 1984.

HOW THE MESS CAME TO BE

This examination of the history of our culture is not for the purpose of proving our thesis concerning a biblical pattern for courtship. The reliance on human practices themselves to prove the moral rightness or wrongness of those same practices is a tenet of humanistic social science, not of the Bible. Rather, this broad overview is to show that:

- The Christians who largely defined and influenced our culture once held to similar biblical beliefs and practices concerning courtship; the ideas are not unique
- The courtship traditions of the first three centuries of our culture in many ways held to biblical standards
- The influences from which modern dating developed were clearly unbiblical and ungodly, even anti-Christian
- Modern dating had wrong principles and patterns from its very beginning

Elements of the Puritan/Pilgrim pattern

- Priority of spiritual maturity
- Parental control
- Marriage intentions only
- Protection from all physical involvement
- Continuing respect for Biblical model

New England law: Parents were given "the care and power . . . for disposing of their children in marriage."

Through the 1700's

Control

_____ control

"The restraints of the seventeenth century . . . were enforced by community and familial authorities" (Rothman, 54). Those "restraints" continued well through the eighteenth century, as well, and even into the nineteenth.

Intentions

Serious _____ intentions

Timing

When fully _____ for marriage

"Before a man could marry, he had to possess the means to support a wife and children. A man could marry only when his father was willing to divide the family's lands and to forego the son's labor on the farm" (Rothman, 27).

Environment

In the _____ or community/family settings (i.e., -church)

Physical Standard

_____ before marriage; fornication was a great reproach

Notice (as in statement below) that marriage was described physically as giving one's hand. It seems even the holding of the hand was reserved for marriage.

"Of the men and women who kept journals and wrote letters, most left no record of physical relationships" (Rothman, 45).

Key Qualification

Practical examination of _____

"According to advice books, the selection of a wife required as much discipline, frugality, and study as the choice of a career" (Rothman, 31).

"Men and women remained wary of passion. An equally dangerous counterfeit was romance. Both men and women used 'romantic' to describe feelings that were childish, uncontrolled, and unreliable. In serious courtships, romance was suspect. Romantic connoted a lack not merely of seriousness but of maturity" (Rothman, 38-40).

Secondary Qualification

"The veto power that children had exercised in the seventeenth century was based on the Puritan belief in the importance of affection in marriage. In 1792, a Massachusetts mother told her daughter she should not wish any friend of hers to give their hand where they could not give their heart. In her words, we hear an echo of the Puritan insistence on children choosing mates whom they could love " (Rothman, 30-31).

Through the 1800's

Important Considerations

The _____ Movement in philosophy

Reformation	God's propositional Word = truth
Age of Enlightenment	Logic = truth/behavior (logic & rules excluded)
Romantic Movement	Feelings = truth/behavior
Biblical Pattern	Belief/faith = truth/behavior/emotions

Novels

"Much of the fiction published in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had an implicit message for women: it taught them to act on their feelings" (Rothman, 41).

Control

Parental control continued but _____ towards mere approval as romantic love became the key qualification

Intentions

Directed towards marriage

Timing

Mostly when ready to look towards marriage

Environment

Mostly in the home, but seeking more privacy as romanticism became the guide

Physical Standard

Very little physical contact; perhaps kissing in engagement period

"There may be little evidence of sexual activity before marriage in many Victorian courtships" (Lystra, 57).

In the nineteenth century, "what happened might be called the 'invention of petting'" (Rothman, 54). However, this was not publicly accepted.

"I have heard that some young women allow men to touch them, to hold their hands! My dear girls, never indulge such frivolous actions."

1904 Northwestern College Dean of Women

A 1907 Ladies Home Journal advisor said "it was beginning to seem that young men and women between 15 and 20 'expected' hand holding and kissing. The advisor believed a couple should 'by no means' hold hands until betrothed" (Bailey, 79).

The 1915 Dean of Women at the University of Wisconsin "lamented the 'tidal wave of irresponsible joyousness' that had come to the college campuses in the 1890's with the influx of youth who believed 'college life' was 'more fun for your money.' She warned that the problem of 'inexperienced, unrestrained young men and women thrown together socially without adequate guidance' was critical, and something must be done to control students" (Bailey, 79).

Key Qualification

_____ attraction

"By 1830, romantic love was fast becoming the necessary condition for marriage in the American middle class" (Lystra, 28).

"While romantic love was unstable in the sense of its duration or staying power, it had compelling effects on individual lives" (Lystra, 55).

"A drastic change in world view occurred that made individual perception a law unto itself in mate selection. Love became defined as the sharing of an essential self which was autonomous, private, and beyond the social conventions of everyday roles. Consequently, parental estimations of the prospective mate's ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of a spouse were largely irrelevant to couples who saw marriage as, initially, the union of romantic selves" (Lystra, 158).

The Early 1900's

Important Considerations

Emergence of _____ culture

In 1900, 7% of 14 to 17 year olds were in high school; in 1960, 90% were in high school (Bailey, 7).

"Dating provided a way to manage the social demands of the peer society" (Rothman, 290).

_____ and luxury

"Of the thirty girls charged with 'sex crimes' in Middletown in 1924, nineteen committed the offense in an automobile" (Rothman, 294).

"Go to a motion picture and let yourself go" (Saturday Evening Post advertisement).

"The 'constant public watching of lovemaking on the screen' had noticeable effect" (Rothman, 293).

_____ dancing

"The new dances 'fostered an unheard of closeness between partners'" (Rothman, 292).

Humanistic _____ science studies

In the absence of strong spiritual leadership and principled belief, these "experts" and psychologists became the shapers of society.

Pattern

_____ dating

"A new system, created and regulated by young people themselves, 'elaborated two basic rituals of social interaction--dating and petting'" (Rothman, 289).

"In the twenties and early thirties the social pattern was one of multiple or polygamous dating. They dated each other for the fun of it" (George Cole in Rothman, 301).

"There are many problems with a system that fosters the belief that a man can come to understand women by dating fifty-six different girls in nine months, that prepares youth for a lifetime of monogamous marriage by stressing an ideal of promiscuous popularity" (Bailey, 55).

Control

Parental control continuing but _____ and peer control rising

"What they did was develop a systematic, peer-controlled approach to the social and sexual relationships of late adolescence and early adulthood" (Rothman, 289).

Intentions

Personal _____ and fun

"To have as much privacy and at the same time as much excitement as possible" (Robert Angell in Rothman, 292).

Timing

When _____ is sensed, when wanting to have fun, when pressed by the peer group; as soon as early teen years

Environment

_____ of the home

"One of the chief characteristics, and attractions, of a date was that it took place away from home" (Rothman, 291).

Physical Standard

_____ involvement made physical okay

"Assault on 'the moral code of the country.'"

"'Petting' is the rule rather than the exception in all classes of society."

"Dating was the context within which most youthful petting took place."

"The first surveys of sexual behavior found that women born after 1900 were almost twice as likely as those born before 1900 to forego the sweetness of waiting."

"Virginity had ceased to be an absolute requirement in a bride."

Rothman

Key Qualification

Personal and _____ attraction

The Middle and Latter 1900's

Pattern

Going _____

"By the 1950's, Americans began to acquire dating and petting experience as young teenagers. Except for school, dating was the most time-consuming activity, beginning in junior high or even elementary school. By the time middleclass children entered junior high school, they were full participants in the first stages of dating ritual" (Rothman, 302).

"By the early 1950's, going steady had acquired a totally different meaning. It was no longer the way a marriageable couple signaled their deepening intentions. Instead, going steady was something 12 yr. olds could do, 15 yr. olds did. Few steady couples expected to marry each other, but, for the duration, they acted as if they were married. Going steady had become a sort of play-marriage, a mimicry of the actual marriage of their slightly older peers" (Bailey, 49).

Control

Becoming _____ controlled by individual youths themselves

Intentions

Personal _____ and fun

Timing

As early as older _____ grades

Environment

_____ of home

Physical Standard

Emotional involvement made _____ okay

"Sexual behavior was 'made respectable by going steady'" (Rothman, 304).

"Ira Reiss speculated in 1966, 'We may well witness soon an increase in many forms of sexual behavior. The stage is set for another upward cycle of increasing sexual behavior and sexual acceptance.' Reiss was soon proved right. The percentage of 17 year olds who had lost their virginity doubled between the 1950's and 1970's" (Rothman, 307).

"[Fornication] is a conventionally assumed part of long-term relationships (even among teenagers . . .) and a clear possibility on first dates" (Bailey, 142).

"The usual sequence was to 'slide from dating into shacking up into marriage'" (Rothman, 310).

"We are seeing a return to traditional values and practices-- people want to know the background of the next person they sleep with" (Newsweek).

Key Qualification

Personal, emotional attraction; _____ desire

"The new ethic of individual freedom that evolved rejected the confinement of stereotypical gender and family roles. Instead, it celebrated the natural individual, unspoiled and unfettered by the constraints of society. It was, in fact, a revival of the Rousseauian and romantic image of man as naturally good and creative, pitted in battle against a hostile and oppressive society, a conception of self as grounded in impulse rather than in the social roles that make up order. Sex, instead of being seen as a potentially disruptive force that needed to be controlled, became a natural instinct, essentially good if it was not repressed and perverted by societal or religious taboos. As such it could be allowed full expression in (almost) all its natural manifestations. The new ideology gave equal legitimacy to sex inside and outside of marriage. It thus paved the way for an unprecedented rise in premarital sexual activity" (Schonrock, 5-6).

The Early 2000's

Important Considerations

The rise of the _____ and social networking

Total societal connectivity from an early age through _____ and mobile devices

Legalization and acceptance of _____ and other practices formerly considered unthinkable by society at large.

A pseudo-morality among young people wishing to appear moral while explaining away previous moral taboos.

Pattern

Casual _____

Control

Essentially none except from the children; everyone doing what is _____ in his own eyes

Intentions

Personal pleasure and _____

Timing

As early as older _____ grades

Environment

Anywhere. What would never have gone on out of the home before now goes on even in the homes of Evangelical Christians.

Physical Standard

Emotional not even necessary to make anything okay; physical involvement _____.

Key Qualification

Personal, emotional attraction; _____ desire

HISTORICAL COMPARISON OF AMERICAN COURTSHIP AND MODERN DATING

<i>Time period</i>	1700's	1800's
INFLUENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puritan beliefs • Bible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romantic movement • Novels
PATTERN	Courtship	Courtship
CONTROL	Parental	Parental (Declining)
INTENTIONS	Serious	Serious
TIMING	When prepared for marriage	When prepared for marriage
ENVIRONMENT	Home	Home, but more privacy sought
PHYSICAL STANDARD	No or very little touching	Very little touching, but petting becoming okay
KEY QUALIFICATION	Character; Secondary affection	Romantic attraction

Early 1900's	Middle & Later 1900's	Early 2000's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humanism • Youth Culture • Materialism • Automobiles • Movies • Dancing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing moral decline • World War II • Rebellion of the 1960s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet and social networking • Thorough cultural acceptance of immoral behavior
Promiscuous Dating	Going Steady	Casual Relationship
Individual and peer (Rising)	Individual and peer	Individual and peer
Pleasure	Pleasure	Pleasure
When attracted; latter teen years	When attracted or desired; early and pre-teen years	When attracted or desired; early and pre-teen years
Outside of home	Outside of home	Anywhere
Physical involvement Okay	Anything okay	Anything okay
Romantic attraction	Romantic attraction; lustful desire	Romantic attraction; lustful desire

WHAT IS IT WE'RE AFTER—MARRIAGE

The goal is a pure, permanent, godly, God-led, God-honoring marriage at God's time (Eph 5:27).

Basic Definition of Marriage

A man leaving his father and mother and cleaving to his wife and the two becoming one flesh (Gen 2:24).

Principle #1: _____

- Genesis 2:18
- Genesis 2:23-25
- Ephesians 5:31

ONE = Spiritually, Emotionally,
and Physically

Principle #2: _____

- Malachi 2:14 & Proverbs 2:17
- Marriage is a _____.
 - The covenantal promise is what _____ a marriage.
 - The covenantal promise is a vow before _____ and _____.
 - The marriage covenant is _____.
- The idea of a vow is mocked with the following "promises" heard today:
 - "As long as our _____ shall last"
 - "As long as we can _____ together"

Principle #3: _____

- Malachi 2:15
- Marriage is for the producing of a _____ seed.

Principle #4: _____

- Ephesians 5:31-32
- Marriage is designed by God to form a _____ picture of Christ's relationship to the church.

A DANGEROUS WAY OF GETTING THERE — DATING PRINCIPLES

Today, the accepted approach to relationship building is dating. This has become so ingrained into culture that even strong evangelical believers consider it the normal approach to finding the right one. But is this approach biblically acceptable for someone who really wants to obey God? A careful examination of dating and its principles is enlightening.

Definition

The _____ developing by a man and woman of a _____ relationship for _____ emotional satisfaction through the means of thoughts, looks, notes, talks, or events.

Further Descriptions

"Dating differs from previous courtship practices in the following ways: '(1) The introduction of the man to the woman by a member of the family is not considered necessary. (2) There is no chaperon. (3) There is no commitment on the part of the male or female to continue the relationship beyond the date itself. (4) The date is planned by the adolescents themselves, and not by their elders. (5) Physical intimacies such as hand-holding, petting, kissing, and sexuality are expected rather than forbidden'" (Lloyd Saxton in West, 10).

"'Going steady' is something new in dating practice. In former generations a courting pair might be 'keeping steady company,' but this usually meant that they were serious enough about each other to be planning marriage. Going steady nowadays frequently implies no such commitment to the future" (Duvall, 214).

"Dating is a relationship expressing freedom, lack of commitment or public obligation for any sort of future action" (Samuel Lowrie in Rothman, 300).

"Dating is a proving ground for love. Loves arrive and are given a whirl on the dating merry-go-round that is common during the teen

and young adult years. Most of these loves will last only a short while. Each new special friend, each new relationship, each new feeling, helps the person gain experience in the wonders of human interaction and insight into himself. As loves come and go, the emotional repertoire of the individual developed to the point where he or she is increasingly capable of loving widely and deeply in the many ways that are important for fulfillment" (Duvall, 181).

Principle #1: _____

The courting history described above clearly reveals that the pleasure of _____ intimacy has been the driving motive to join the dating system.

"Love that hinges solely on sensual attraction reflects only self-gratification. People have invented a whole lexicon of false terminology to express distortions of life-truths. For example, people say they 'love' fish. What do they do with the fish they love? First, they snuff out its life. Then they cut it up, bake it, broil it, fry it, chew it, and swallow it. Do they really love fish? Most certainly not! They love themselves and seek self-gratification. The poor fish serves only to achieve this end. The term love often has the same connotation when used to refer to the opposite sex. In such cases, it means, 'I love him or her for the pleasure and self-gratification he or she is able to give me'" (Lebovits, 13).

That pleasure is the main reason for joining the dating game is revealed by the main reasons why couples break up:

- The relationship gets _____ or too hard to maintain
- Someone _____ comes along
- A partner no longer meets his/her _____
- _____ or misunderstandings
- Romantic feelings and excitement have _____

How many of these reasons are heard daily in divorce courts across our nation?

Principle #2: _____ Choice

This principle grows out of a basic humanistic assumption that a young person's heart is basically good and he/she will make the right choice, even if mature individuals don't see it their way.

The boy or girl goes after the person they find most _____ attractive or available at the point when they feel the impulse for romantic involvement.

There is little or no _____ control or _____.

The modern dating system is a parent _____ his responsibility.

Principle #3: _____ Relationships

The clear dating principle is that _____ relationships, and many of them, are desirable and good.

Note some recent quotes from evangelical literature:

"It is obvious and natural that a teen can have only one boyfriend or girlfriend at a time. And they may choose to date that person steadily."

"The purpose of dating in high school is to get to know as many girls and boys as possible."

Might not it be that this repeated breaking up is more preparation for handling the impulses towards and the pains of divorce rather than the commitment of marriage?

Principle #4: _____ Aloneness
and Intimacies

Promoting _____ and sexual involvement is at the core of the dating system. The history and statistics reveal the sad truth.

The drives and desires of the _____ control the young persons.

Even the sincere Christian young person involved in the dating game has naively set himself up for great temptation.

Although these principles specifically deal with dating, it is interesting how closely they parallel how people use social networking today.

DATING PROBLEMS

The World offers several basic substitutes for God's plan including Dating and Social Networking. Both of these are built on a self-centered mindset.

In a 1961 Readers' Digest condensation of a recent Life article, sociologist James Bossard noted that "the trouble with American marriage is American courtship." He sometimes felt that American parents permit and even encourage their children to select their mates in just about the worst of all possible ways.

Sin Problems

- Mental (Proverbs 6:25; Matthew 5:27-30)
(Social Networking opens a big can of worms here!)
- Emotional

God made man male and female. In other words, our sexuality is at the core of our humanness. It is a vital way we reflect the image of God and bring glory to Him. It is very clear that our sexual nature is not just physical but a part of our very souls; it is deeply tied to our emotions. There is a need, desire, joy inside a man or woman to love and be loved, to own and be owned, to care for and be cared for, to understand and be understood, to know and be known, and these needs can only be deeply, satisfyingly fulfilled by a member of the opposite sex. This is the soul and heart of a man that was made to be united with the soul and heart of a woman. When we speak of emotional purity, we are speaking of this created aspect of each man and woman, and the need to preserve one's heart and soul and mind for one person, one's life-long marriage partner. The Romantic philosophers recognized this aspect of human personality; in fact, they gloried in it. They "proposed that one might have, and appropriately cultivate, emotional love-feelings for one who was not their spouse. This might take place both before and after one was married. Those who continued to hold to the sanctity of the physical relationship

within marriage portrayed the emotion-only love affairs as noble, extolling secret romances in which the parties fanned the flame of their passion without giving release to physical affections." Is it not absurd to imagine a marriage counseling situation in which a husband doesn't understand why his wife is so upset that he is in love with another woman when he has not even physically touched her?

Social Networking again comes in as a factor here even more than mental!

"Virginity is inward as well as outward (Prov. 6:25). Virginity is not simply physical. Virginity is heart purity. Virginity also does not consist in denying yourself what you really would like to do outside of marriage; virginity is an inheritance that is brought into a marriage" (West, 7-8).

- Physical

What does physical _____, beginning with hand-holding, communicate in a dating relationship?

- Commitment to the other
- Desire for the other
- Togetherness
- Romantic feelings
- Enjoyed specifically because one is aware of the sexual nature of and attraction to the other of opposite gender
- Stimulation, pleasure
- Pure sexual, physical desire for the other
- There is a natural progression as more stimulation is discovered and sought, and the beginning forms are no longer satisfying.

Are not all of these to be reserved for the relationship the Bible calls marriage?

Key Passages: I Cor. 6:16, I Thess. 4:3-6, I Tim. 5:2b, Lev. 18:6-9, I Cor. 6:18, I Cor. 7:1

“Observation and experience so clearly indicates that of all people it is a dating couple that ought to avoid all physical touching; a moment’s touching can be the striking of a match. Both parties are so sexually/emotionally charged. One man’s testimony is this: ‘I discovered on more than one occasion that even if I was totally pure in my motives for engaging in physical-emotional intimacy with a woman and even if we had shown no romantic interest in one another before this contact, if the intimacy was deep enough or the emotional messages strong enough, I subsequently had to make explicit denials that I had any further romantic, sexual intentions toward her.’ Another writer stated, ‘When we begin to develop intimacy with someone, there’s going to be a natural tendency toward a sexual expression. Any time you become emotionally involved with a person, you’re moving into the arena of sexual temptation. You’re touching one of the springs from which our sexuality comes to the surface’” (Holzman, 128).

We have played with _____ views of human sexuality.

In a male/female romantic relationship, is not the _____ body subject to sexual stimulation?

Is it not unthinkable for a married man to walk around holding the hand of a woman who is not his wife? Yet dating couples do this all the time, holding the hand of someone who is not their mate and probably will be someone else's!

- Fornication (Col. 3:5; Heb. 13:4)
- _____ (I Thes. 4:3-8)
 - Emotional
 - Physical
- Breaking of the _____ (Ex. 20)
 - Thou shalt have no other gods before me (idolatry)
 - Honor thy father and thy mother (rebellion)
 - Thou shalt not steal
 - Thou shalt not commit adultery
 - Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife

- Searing of the _____ through continual yielding to sinful temptation (I Tim. 1:19)
- Developing of _____ woman and _____ man (Prov. 2:10-22)
- Other _____ sins
 - Jealousy
 - Bitterness
 - Anger

Developmental Problems

- Loss of social development in _____ relationships
- Loss of _____ development
 - Instability and insecurity
 - Feelings of rejection either from breaking up or lack of boyfriend/girlfriend
 - Broken hearts and deep hurts/scars that will last a lifetime
 - Tender, initial, or deep loves that linger for years after being broken off; may even last a lifetime, a wishful tie to someone in the past; there are emotional bonds that remain long after you are married to someone else
 - A callousness develops after the first painful breaking up that protects from future pain and makes future breaking up more easy to handle
 - Creates mini-marriage, mini-divorce, maximum pain
 - Feelings of betrayal
 - Loss of ability to trust others, have confidence in others
 - Confusion
 - Suicidal thoughts
 - Guilt

Why is breaking up so painful and difficult? Because the boyfriend/girlfriend relationship is just like marriage:

- Both involve ownership
 - Both are mutual relationships
 - Both are exclusive relationships
 - Both include physical-sexual intimacy
 - Participants in both relationships sense they have some kind of obligation to keep going together. It is considered inappropriate and dishonorable to terminate one of these relationships. Staying together is certainly perceived as honorable, while breaking up is not.
 - Both relationships require some sort of spoken end. They don't just die away. Marriage requires a legal decree; a dating relationship also must have something said, or else it isn't known whether the relationship is terminated or they just had a bad argument.
 - *"Change in both relationships occurs suddenly, noticeably, and, except in extreme circumstances, with the knowledge of both partners."* Holzman, 6-8.
- Loss of _____ development
 - Loss of _____ development
 - Distraction from singlemindedness
 - Guilt
 - Loss of blessing
 - Judgment from God for defrauding
 - Backsliding from focus not on God, pulled down by weaker date, in despair over breaking up, etc.
 - No time for exertion in spiritual/ministry realms
 - Loss of normal _____

Dating relationship is so all-consuming that other normal considerations and factors of growing up have little influence.

Family Problems

- None or very little _____ involvement
- _____ role is obliterated
- Break in relationship with and _____ in parents
- Breakdown in relationship with God.
- Unable to truly find God's will because of resisting God-ordained channels of authority.

The stage is set for failure within the home – a young lady who does not submit to her parents will not submit to her husband. A young man who gets out from under the leadership of his parents is setting his home up for disaster. He has undermined the basis of his authority, which is to be under authority.

Peer Problems

- _____ of other young ladies, not as sisters in Christ
- Tale-bearing and _____
- _____ friendships with those of same and opposite sex
- _____ among peer and youth groups

Social Problems

- _____ rape
- _____
- _____ pregnancy
- _____

Marriage Problems

*"Whatever we have been doing these days hasn't been helping the church. Young people keep falling by the wayside, and we say 'It's just Christian dating.' I say that Christian dating is robbing from marriage what God **intended to be part of the marriage relationship.** [All] we save for marriage today is complete cohabitation, complete sexual privilege, having children" (Pastor Reb Bradley, CA).*

_____ God's design for marriage by cheapening marriage privileges; lack of appreciation for marriage because its privileges (physical, emotional intimacies) were all enjoyed beforehand

One's _____ love and desire, which often is always remembered, does not belong to one's mate

_____ habits of treating those of opposite sex carried into marriage

Inability to _____ mate, jealousy

_____ of past loves, causing unwanted thoughts or a wandering heart; comparison of mate to past dates

Mate cheated out of the gift of _____, both of body and of heart

False ideas of marriage _____

"Those who follow today's dating pattern reckon first with personal attraction and probe afterward to find out about intrinsic qualities. Herein lies the source of the pitfalls. Once the ingredient of attraction is involved, there is little chance that a person's judgment concerning the long list of necessary inner assets will not be blurred and prejudiced. Why do many people, even in today's secular world, labor under the misconception that finding a mate is connected solely with the mysterious, transcendental workings of 'destiny' and not with a practical set of criteria? The source of this misconception is the very human tendency to romanticize. The idyllic picture of romance

and love, painted by contemporary literature and the media, has also contributed to the present-day misconception. Today's youth are brainwashed. It is foolishly believed that someone who will love with all his heart is everything" (Lebovits, 10-12).

- Self-centered desires
- Ideas of "romance" based on lust, the sweetness of stolen water and the pleasantness of secret bread (Prov. 9:17)
- False commitment
- Loss of innocent childhood vision of what marriage is all about

"Common sense would argue that when people select mates entirely on their own and know each other for a relatively long period of time before marriage, the frequency of divorce should be lower than it was fifty or sixty years ago, when parents had a voice in choosing mates for their children. Precisely the opposite is true" (Lebovits, 4).

During the time of the Persian Gulf War, someone queried General Schwartzkopf concerning the military prowess of Saddam Husein. The general responded, "Well, he's neither a strategist, nor is he a tactician. Nor is he a general, nor is he a soldier. Other than that, he is a great military man." "Dating is wonderful, isn't it? It isn't safe for kid's purity, their spiritual growth, their relationship with their parents, their future happiness, their spiritual fellowship, it violates biblical principles, follows no biblical pattern, it is creating all kinds of problems, but other than that, dating is an outstanding thing!" (Pastor S.M. Davis, IL).

COURTSHIP EXAMPLES

_____ and _____ (Genesis. 2:18-22)

- God noticed the need for a helpmeet, not Adam (18)
- Adam began doing God's will concerning his life's work (19-20)
- God prepared Eve for Adam while Adam was asleep (21)
- God brought Eve to Adam (22)
- Adam loved her (23)
- The two cleaved together (24)
- The two became one flesh (24)

OT _____

Following points by Gower

- Betrothal=to fix upon by agreement or appointment, to meet at a date at an appointed time
- Parental, especially paternal, control
- Consent of children
- Friend of the bridegroom negotiated
- Dowry paid
- Formal ceremonies
- Legal documents
- Called husband and wife

- Man exempt from military service
- If betrothed husband died, the woman was considered a widow
- Broken only on grounds of adultery
- Breaking required legal divorce
- Lasted about 1 year
- For purpose of preparation for wedding

Shidduchim

- Shidduchim = The process of dating and courtship for the purpose of marriage

“A shidduch involves establishing, through preliminary investigation, that the person under consideration has the basic qualities for a feasible match. Only after a person is satisfied that this is so, does he meet that other person in order to ascertain if all the personal factors, including the important element of attraction are there.... The process preceding dating, and dating itself, are viewed as serious matters that should be handled by the mind rather than runaway emotions of the heart and surface assessments of the eye” Lebovits, 10.

The Marriage _____

- Groom enters first
- Bride given away
- Permission to kiss the bride

_____ & _____ (Gen. 24)

- Godly man, Isaac (vs. 63-meditating in the field)
- Parental initiation, control (vs. 2-9)
- Prayer, seeking God's will and blessing, supernatural guidance, God's working (vs. 12-14)
- Test of character of Rebekah, practical character examination, man's working (vs. 13-28)
- Sense of God's leading (vs. 26-27)
- Parental confirmation (vs. 51-51, 60)
- Consent of bride (vs. 58)
- Leaving home (vs. 61)
- Tranquil, comforting union (vs. 67)

_____ and the _____

- Security and growth of betrothal period (II Cor. 11:2)
- Purpose of marriage—reveal truth about Christ and the church (Eph. 5:32)
- Father chose bride (Eph. 1:4)
- Father sent Friend of the Groom (John 3:29)
- Father sent Son (Matt. 18:11)
- Son obeyed Father's will (John 5:19, 30)

COURTSHIP PRINCIPLES

“For we walk by faith, not by sight” (II Corinthians 5:7).

The world's method to finding the right one is based very much on the senses and emotion. By contrast, God's plan is based on faith. The purpose of following God's plan is not really even about finding the right person. Instead, God's plan for you is to become the right person – that is, entirely God's in heart, mind, and body. The following faith-based principles act as a guide into finding God's will at God's time.

Definition

Two fathers _____ and _____ the introduction of their marriageable children to their families and to each other for the sole purpose of confirming _____ concerning their marriage while maintaining all _____.

Principle #1: Purity

- This is the key motive behind courtship; it is the desire to save oneself completely for the oneness of marriage.
- This principle acknowledges that purity is not the natural state to which the human heart resorts. Purity must be deliberately and carefully guarded. Young people on their own are extremely vulnerable and must be protected and directed by God-ordained authority. The heart of man is cursed; it is deceitful and desperately wicked beyond understanding.
- This purity must be maintained throughout one's entire personality: singlemindedness, singleheartedness, and an untouched body.

Principle #2: Parental Responsibility

- Parental authority and direction is the God-ordained means for young people to find their life's mates.
- Parental responsibility lasts till marriage.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).

Key Passages:

Exodus 20:12
Matthew 22:37-40
Matthew 15:3-6 (4)
Ephesians 6:1-2

- The responsibility of the father to the son (Galatians 4:1-2)
- The responsibility of the father to the daughter (Numbers 30:3-8, I Corinthians 7:36-38)

Hudson Taylor and his wife Maria Dyer provide an example. In their courtship, "both were clear in their convictions that the blessings of God rested upon obedience to parents." Hudson Taylor wrote later in life in reference to parental approval for missionary work, "I have never known disobedience to the definite command of a parent, even if that parent were mistaken, that was not followed by retribution. Conquer through the Lord. He can open any door." Hudson Taylor's *Spiritual Secret*, 88.

One month from the day Adoniram Judson met Nancy Hasseltine, he "formally commenced an acquaintanceship with her, which meant that he formally declared his intentions as a suitor." Upon receiving her rather moderate approval, he immediately wrote her father seeking his approval. *To the Golden Shore*, 82-83.

Principle #3: Preparedness

This is the initial pre-requisite for courtship. It follows directly from the belief that God has designed intimate male/female relationships to occur only in the bounds of marriage; and therefore, one must not begin pursuing such a relationship unless fully prepared to handle the responsibilities.

Young _____ (Prov. 24:27)

- Spiritually
- Maturity
- Direction/cause for his life
- Vocationally
- Financially (no debt, housing)
- Fatherhood

Young _____

- Spiritually
- Maturity
- Being a wife
- Home-making
- Motherhood

Principle #4: Patience

Isaiah 64:4

Psalms 139:16

Genesis 2:18-22

- God noticed the need for a helpmeet, not Adam
- Adam began fulfilling God's will concerning his life's work
- God prepared Eve for Adam while Adam was asleep

- God brought Eve to Adam

I Corinthians 7

The heart of a young person ought to be characterized by a certain rest in the Lord concerning marrying.

What is patience? Actively growing in your walk with the Lord so that your life is simply filled up with God. Your single life is an opportunity to be entirely consumed with the Lord – to love Him with all your heart, serve Him with all your strength, and follow Him with unwavering faith.

Isaiah 40:31: wait = to expect

The heart of a young person ought to be characterized by a certain rest in the Lord concerning marrying. As the heart is given to the Lord and to the parents, the young person is able to serve the Lord actively, effectively, and with freedom.

Summary

It is possible for someone to think the idea of courtship is great and think they believe it and practice it yet still end up with all the problems of this world's corrupt system. Usually, the problem comes down to one simple area: parental responsibility. The core difference between biblical courtship and dating is when the young person is fully surrendered to the Lord and parents and will not begin any relationship apart from definite parental leadership. This is not a sign of weakness or backwardness on the part of the young person. It is a step of faith that God will work through the authorities that He put into your life. Faith is what makes God's plan for marriage function in your life.

COURTSHIP PRACTICES

Period #1: _____

Goal

Develop full godly _____ and please the Lord through ministry.

Length

Extends to the point where one's training and preparation for life is done or very near conclusion.

Parental Responsibility (Eph. 6:3-4)

- _____
- Consistent _____
- Consistent _____ and love
- Develop _____ and _____ skills
- **Get your child's _____!** (Prov. 23:26)

Young people mature and gain understanding of marriage and male-female relationships through four vital family relationships:

- Father / Son
- Mother / Son
- Father / Daughter
- Mother / Daughter

Period #2: _____ to _____

Prayer for God's perfect will

- Should begin when the child is young
- Young adult should pray openly with parents about specific possibilities
- There should be a regular surrender to the perfect will of God.

Avoidance of a shopping mentality--parents and child need to look for clear supernatural leading from the Lord.

When there is some leading specifically it is wise to get counsel from spiritual authority as well as trusted people who know the potential person well.

The child needs to communicate openly with parents and trusted counselors but be careful to keep it confidential.

Both parents and child need to seek the Lord for clarity and genuine freedom.

Period #3: _____

Goal

Confirm _____ concerning whom to marry while maintaining all purity of heart, mind, and body

Length

_____ according to the situation and God's leading in the hearts of those involved; distance and accessibility are factors; it needs to be short enough to not produce undue emotional attachment but long enough to gain full confidence in God's will; parents need to be committed to whatever personal sacrifice it takes to get the matter solved as quickly as God permits.

Details

The father of the young man leads in _____; an awareness of God's leading to a potential wife becomes apparent to parents of a young man and the young man himself; upon discussion and parental consensus, the father of the young man approaches the father of the girl. If there is not a father able to function in this way, their pastor or a trusted spiritual leader could be a substitute.

An awareness of God's leading to a potential husband might become apparent to parents of a young lady or to the young lady herself; parents and daughter may discuss the matter; however, they should wait for God to lead further and make the parents of the young man or the young man aware of God's leading. It is vital that the young lady and parents rest fully in the Lord to intervene and not try to gain the young man's attention.

The father of a young girl should not allow a courtship to begin unless he sees clearly that a young man and his father have prayed and sought God's will concerning the matter, have examined the character of the girl, and are confident in God's leading to the point of courtship. He and his wife then should spend time praying and seeking counsel before they approach their daughter about the possibility. Once they have freedom, they should get their daughter's heart and then together seek the Lord for clear direction for the beginning of the courtship.

The father of the young lady leads in _____; if the father of the girl approves, both families begin to work together to discern God's will; father of the girl plays a key role since he is the one who must give away his daughter.

The time in which the young man and young lady are together is exclusively in the presence of one of the families. The interaction is not only in specially planned events but also in the realm of normal everyday life. The input of siblings is very important. Parental knowledge of the potential mate is more important than the young persons' knowledge of each other.

The young man and young lady are never _____ together, including being alone in a crowd of strangers. This is not only for physical protection, but emotional as well.

The young man and woman do not _____ at all. Both individuals clearly understand that they are seeking God's will and do not want to defraud one another in any way. The young lady still belongs completely to her father; the young man has no rights towards her. They are still saving themselves for the one who is to be their mate. A great aid to this is that everything that occurs or is spoken is discussed with that young person's parents.

This period ought not to _____ without a good measure of peace and confidence in God's leading.

Period #4: _____

Goal

_____ for marriage

Length

Only as long as it takes to fully _____ for the marriage; not too short as to feel rushed and not too long as to be frustrated.

Details

This period is to be understood in the context of biblical betrothal, unlike our common engagements of today which are like a more serious trial period (40% of which are broken). This commitment to marrying is very serious, to be broken only in the rarest of cases. This is a time in which the young people do not have to insecurely focus on maintaining their relationship, but rather they can wholeheartedly prepare for marriage, building up their knowledge and care for one another with all confidence and security. The decision to marry is made together by the parents and young people; it is based on confidence in God's will, confidence in the character of the future mate, confidence in the rightness of the situation, and confidence that no biblical principles are being violated (i.e., divorce, rebellion, etc.).

Upon approval of his own parents, the young man approaches the father of the young lady and asks for his final permission to marry his daughter.

The time of preparation begins:

For the young _____

- Win young lady's heart, develop communication skills and understanding; develop oneness of spirit
- Further character development, with input and direction from future father-in-law
- Finish schooling/training
- Prepare his house (ex.-debt retirement)
- Prepare for wedding ceremonies and honeymoon (least important)

For the young _____

- Prepare to love and help young man, develop communication skills and understanding; develop oneness of spirit
- Finish schooling/training
- Prepare to leave home
- Prepare for new home
- Prepare for wedding ceremonies (least important)

For _____

- Make sure all parent-child problems of the past are solved
- Insure couple is successful in their communication to and understanding of one another
- Parents share with the future in-law their awareness of the intricacies of their son or daughter

- Draw future in-law into family
- Share marriage/life counsel with couple
- Develop further association with in-law family
- Prepare for child to leave home
- Prepare for wedding ceremonies (least important)

For _____

- Pastoral counseling and accountability
- Insure that couple is successful in problem-solving communication
- Prepare for wedding ceremonies

Time together continues to be characterized by much time with families. A young person alone with the in-law parents/family is excellent. The couple is together enough to achieve the purpose of preparation for marriage but not so much as to fall into meeting selfish needs or developing a romantic concept of love. Too much time together can be harmful spiritually. More than ever, the couple ought not to be "out" alone; however, time together in private is necessary at this stage and is best achieved in close proximity to the family (i.e., in a room, out on a porch, for a walk on the family's property). This is the most dangerous time for physical defrauding since the couple is growing together emotionally and the urge for expression of physical affection will be growing. Family observation will help the couple avoid that which they would later regret. The couple ought to continue to refrain from all touching.

Reminder

The individuals are not yet each others'; they still belong to their parents, especially the young lady. They must be careful to not defraud each other physically, but they do have the right and responsibility to develop a deeper knowledge of each other, a

oneness of spirit. Parental involvement, guidance, and awareness is still VERY important, beneficial, and desirable in this stage.

Period #5: _____

Goal

_____ God together through pleasing one another, rearing a godly seed, and ministering in His service.

Length

"Till _____ do us part!"

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

ANSWER KEY

Page 5

50%
50%
5
70%
50

Page 6

3,000
65%
28%

Page 7

3.5 Million
1.2 Million
3,000
250
2

Page 10

Parental
Marriage
Prepared
Home
None
Character

Page 11

Affection
Romantic

Page 12

Declined

Page 13

Romantic
Youth

Page 14

Humanism
Materialism
Cars
Movies
Close
Social
Promiscuous

Page 15

Individual
Pleasure

Attraction
Out
Emotional

Page 16

Emotional
Steady

Page 17

Completely
Pleasure
Elementary
Outside
Anything

Page 18

Lustful
Internet
Computers
Homosexuality

Page 19

Relationships
Right
Fun
Elementary
Expected
Lustful

Page 22

Partnership
Promise
Covenant
Consummates
God / Man
Permanent
Love
Last

Page 23

Procreation
Godly
Picture
Holy

Page 24

Independent
Temporary
Romantic
Personal

Page 25

Pleasure
Romantic
Boring
Better
Needs
Quarrels
Disappeared

Page 26

Personal
Personally
Authoritative
Accountability
Forfeiting
Periodic
Temporary

Page 27

Physical
Lust
Flesh

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Impurity

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Intimacy

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Naive
Whole
Defrauding
Law

Page 31

Conscience
Strange / Evil
Spirit
Family
Emotional

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Intellectual
Spiritual
Maturity

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Parental
Father's

Trust
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Initiating
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Man
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Marriage
Serve
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