

Social Roles & Relationships

Student Manual

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Lesson 1

Introduction to Relationships

I. Man was created as a _____.

A. As such man was created with _____ others.

1. We were not meant to exist in _____ on this planet (Gen. 2:18).
2. We cannot fulfill our God-given _____ without others (Gen.1:26-28).
3. We all live in _____ to others.
 - a. The word “relationship” refers to state of being _____ to others.
 - b. The word “relationship” means “the fact or condition of being related or connected, or that by which things are connected either objectively or in the mind.” Relationship speaks of _____.

B. As such every man is in some way connected to and interdependent on other people.

1. People are _____.

To be connected is to be _____, associated with or united with (Eph. 4:16).

a. There are many things that can cause us to be connected.

- Humankind
- Nationality
- Race
- Language
- Geography—Province, State, City, Neighborhood, Complex, House
- Trade, Job, Career, Business Connections, Profession, Partnerships
- Hobbies, Interests, Activities
- Heritage—Parents, Grandparents, Brothers, Sisters, Cousins, Etc.
- Religious Faith—Brother, Sister, Pastor, Ministry, Etc.

b. It is customary to _____ people or to describe ourselves by our relationships or connections.

2. People are _____.

To be interdependent is rely on others for maintenance and _____.

- C. As such every man's success depends on maintaining _____ relationships with others (Eccl. 4:7-12).

When we fully realize this we will be more _____ about how we handle the relationships in our life.

1. Sometimes we handle our relationships carelessly as if we they were _____.
2. We can do things that weaken our connections to people or we can do things that _____ them.
3. It is good for us to evaluate just _____ we need others.
4. We must guard against an independent spirit that does not appreciate the value that others _____ our lives.

II. Jesus had a lot to say about our relationships.

- A. He is concerned that we have a love relationship _____ (Mt. 22:34-40).
- B. He is concerned that we have a love relationship with our _____ (John 13:34-35).
- C. He put a high priority on our keeping our relationships _____ (Mt. 5:23-24).

III. Satan resists the development of healthy relationships.

- A. He knows that our relationship to others is a key to _____.
- B. He does every thing that he can to _____ the development and the maintenance of healthy relationships.
1. He promotes attitudes in us that _____ away.
 2. He minimizes how much we really _____ other people.
 3. He fosters misunderstandings and communication breakdown to keep us _____.
 4. He leads us to believe that the work involved in cultivating healthy relationships is not _____.
 5. He plants seeds of _____ in our heart toward others.

6. He causes us to be _____ of others and their motives.

IV. Modern society hinders the development of healthy relationships.

A. People are _____.

B. People are less _____ orientated.

C. People are affected by _____.

D. People have been _____ by technology.

E. People are more _____ independent.

F. People have become _____ rather than participants.

V. Relationships are vitally important if the Church is to fulfill God's eternal purpose.

The Church's success is based on the right relationship of its membership and a commitment to community. This is seen in the various pictures of the Church that are found in the Bible.

A. A Body

In this Body there are many members who are interrelated and interdependent each having its own significant contribution to the success of the whole.

B. A Family

In this Family there are many brothers and sisters who are interconnected as one family unit.

C. A Temple

In this Temple there are many living stones that are to be fitly framed together for a common purpose, each stone covering and supporting the other stones in the building.

D. An Army

In this Army there are many soldiers fighting shoulder to shoulder against a common enemy.

E. A Vine

In this Vine there are many branches each one linked together for the purpose of bringing forth God-ordained fruit.

F. A Flock

In this Flock there are many sheep under the one true shepherd. As the sheep flock together they find safety and protection.

VI. God is interested in strengthening us and our relationships for His purpose.

- A. Our relationship to Him.
- B. Our relationship to our parents and those older than us.
- C. Our relationship to our peers.
- D. Our relationship to the opposite sex.

Lesson 2 Relationship to God

Before we can talk about our earthly relationships, it is critical to discuss the foundation for all relationships. The foundation for all other relationships is our _____.

I. The Bible clearly teaches that we must seek God _____.

- A. Jesus taught that the first and the greatest commandment is to _____
_____ God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength (Mt. 22:37-40).
- B. Jesus taught that when we put God and His kingdom first the _____ of
life will take care of themselves (Mt. 6:25-34, esp. verse 33).
- C. Jesus taught that having good works and correct doctrine must be grounded in a
_____ relationship to God (Rev. 2:2-4).

II. Having a proper relationship with God serves as our foundation for our relationships with _____.

We cannot love our neighbor as ourselves unless we first love God with all of our hearts (Mt. 22:37-40).

- A. The “agape” love of God that comes through our personal relationship to God makes it possible for us put off the sin issues in our lives that can have a
_____ on all of our relationships (Eph. 4:22-5:7; Col. 3:8-17).

Some of the primary qualities that affect relationships in a negative way include:

1. Deception
2. Lying
3. Anger
4. Dishonesty
5. Corrupt Communication
6. Bad Habits, Addictions or Compulsive Behavior
7. Bitterness
8. Covetousness
9. Pride

- B. The “agape” love of God that comes through our personal relationship to God makes the dynamics of _____ possible.

Some of the primary virtues that make all relationships succeed include:

- a. Faithfulness
- b. Forgiveness
- c. Selflessness
- d. Compassion
- e. Kindness
- f. Gentleness
- g. Patience
- h. Holiness
- i. Humility

C. The “agape” love of God that comes through our personal relationship to God makes it possible for all other relationships to _____.

1. It makes you a better son or daughter.
2. It makes you a better husband or wife.
3. It makes you a better father or mother.
4. It makes you a better grandparent.
5. It makes you a better neighbor.
6. It makes you a better friend.
7. It makes you a better employee or employer.
8. It makes you a better citizen.

D. The “agape” love of God that comes through our personal relationship to God changes the way in which we relate to _____ (John 13:34).

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

III. There are different levels of relationship that we can have with God.

There are different _____ that we can have with God. The deeper that we allow this relationship to go the more positive affect that it has on all of our other relationships.

A. A _____ Relationship (John 12:26; 13:13)

As our Master,

1. He expects _____ to His commands.
2. He expects _____ service.

3. He will hold us _____ for what He has placed in our hands.

B. A _____ Relationship (Gal. 4:6-7)

As our Father,

1. He wants to provide _____ and direction for us.
2. He wants to provide for our natural and spiritual _____.
3. He will faithfully _____ us when we need it.
4. He has laid up an _____ for us.

C. A _____ Relationship (Mt. 12:49-50; Heb. 2:11; Pro. 18:24)

As a brother,

1. He wants to be right by our side in _____ (Pro. 17:17).
2. He wants to stand with us through our _____.

D. A _____ Relationship (John 15:15)

As our friend,

1. He wants to prove or demonstrate His _____.
2. He wants to encourage us and _____.
3. He wants to share His _____ with us.
4. He wants to sharpen us and make us _____ than we are now.
5. He wants to have his heart _____ with our heart (Amos 3:3).

E. A _____ Relationship (Eph. 5:22-33)

As a husband,

1. He wants to prove that He will _____ us or forsake us.
2. He wants to walk hand in hand with us down the _____.
3. He wants to have intimate _____ with us.
4. He wants to be joined with us for _____.

Lesson 3

Relating to Authority

Part of God’s restoration in our lives involves bringing us back into right relationship to authority. God has established various levels of authority in our lives. Many of the problems that we face in life have to do with an improper relationship to these authorities. If we are to have successful human relationships it is critical that we allow God to assist us in getting this aspect of our lives into biblical order.

I. What is authority?

Authority is the right to command or act, the right to govern or rule and the right to exercise power. “Authority is the right and capacity of an individual to perform what he wills and who, by virtue of _____ or office, can command obedience” (H.D. McDonald, *Elwell Evangelical Dictionary*)

II. What is the purpose of authority?

God has established authorities in our lives for several reasons.

- A. Authority has been established by God to help us properly _____.
- B. Authority has been given by God to help us develop wisdom, understanding, knowledge and _____ (Luke 2:49-52).
- C. Authority has been given by God to help _____ from exploitation (Ps. 91:1-13).

According to Psalm 91, we are protected because:

- 1. We are dwelling in the _____ of the Most High (vs. 1).
 - 2. We are abiding under _____ of the Almighty (vs. 1).
 - 3. We are taking refuge under _____ (vs. 4).
 - 4. We have made the Lord our _____ (vs. 9).
- D. Authority has been given by God to come along side of us to give _____ and direction to the critical decisions of our life (Pro. 6:20-23).
 - E. Authority has been established by God to maintain order and to assist us in _____.

“Everyone is under certain God-ordained authorities, such as parents, government, and the church. The purpose of God-ordained authority is to provide protection, direction, instruction, and provision.” –Bill Gothard

III. What authorities must I relate to as a Christian?

A. Absolute Authority

God is the source of all authority (Rom. 13:1-2). His authority is absolute and He demands complete submission and obedience. God has all absolute authority for several reasons.

1. God _____ the world and everything in it (Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11).
2. God _____ the earth and everything in it (Ps. 24:1).
3. God has _____ to everything that lives (Acts 17:24-28).
4. God _____ the earth and everything in it by His word (Ps. 119:89-91; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:3).

B. Delegated or Limited Authorities

God has delegated His authority on the earth to human channels. God fully expects us to respond to these channels of His authority the same way that we would respond to Him (Luke 9:48; John 5:23, 43).

There are five levels of delegated authority.

1. God has delegated authority to the _____ to rule over his or her own soul (Pro. 4:23).
2. God has delegated authority in the natural _____.
 - a. There is authority carried by the _____ together (Ex. 20:12; Pro. 6:20-21; 30:17; Luke 2:51; Rom. 1:30; Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20).
 - b. There is additional authority carried by the _____ and father (Gen. 3:16; Mal.1:6; I Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-24; Col. 3:18; Tit. 2:5; I Pet. 1:3-6).
3. God has delegated authority in the realm of _____ (Rom 13:1-7; I Pet 2:13-17; Mt. 22:15-21).
 - a. We are commanded to be subject to the _____ and give honor to whom honor is due (Tit. 3:1-2).
 - b. We are commanded to honor the _____.

4. God has delegated authority in the _____ (Acts 20:28; I Th. 5:12-13; I Tim 5:17; Heb. 13:17; I Pet. 5:1-5).
5. God wants us to respond to the authority structure related to our _____ (Mal 1:6; Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:22-23; I Tim 6:1-2; Tit. 2:9-10; I Pet. 2:18).

IV. What does biblical submission to authority look like?

Submission is “voluntarily placing yourself under the protection of divinely appointed authority.” –Bill Gothard

- A. Submission is coming under the _____ of those appointed over you from the heart (Eph. 6:6).
- B. Submission involves _____ your authorities in spirit and in truth (Mt. 7:21-23; Luke 6:46).
- C. Submission involves responding to your authorities as you would _____ Himself (Eph. 5:22; 6:5, 7).
- D. Submission automatically involves a certain level of _____ and the concept of stewardship (Mt. 24:45-51; 25:14-30).

V. How does Satan promote rebellion to authority?

Satan knows that our success as individuals and our success as local churches is based on effective leadership. Satan is against authority because he knows that without effective leadership the church will not be built and our lives will not reach their intended destination (Eph. 4:7-16). For this reason God puts the sin of rebellion on the same level as “_____” (I Sam. 15:23). What does Satan do?

- A. He fosters an _____ in us (Phil. 2:20-21).
- B. He promotes _____ that conflict with authority (Gal. 6:2).
 1. Pride
 2. Ambition
 3. Self-righteousness
 4. Anger
 5. Self-will
 6. Envy
 7. Bitterness

- C. He promotes misunderstandings and _____ between us and our authorities (Mark 6:2-3).
- D. He tries to convince us that our authorities do not _____ us and they do not have our best interest in mind.
- E. He creates an atmosphere of _____ relative to our authorities (II Pet. 2:10).
- F. He convinces us that we are free from authorities that do not live up to _____ of righteousness (Jude 8-10).
- G. He plants seeds of _____ in our hearts that can lead to a casting off of our authorities.
- H. He prompts us to _____ of things that undermine the value of authority.

IV. What are the limits of authority?

All delegated authority has its limits. Ultimately we must obey God above all other delegated authorities (Acts 5:29). When any authority on earth asks us to violate the clear word of God, we will have to disobey that authority. However, we can still disobey with a submissive and _____ toward that person.

“The only circumstance that disobedience to authority is justifiable by scripture is if it conflicts with the laws of God. Authority should be cooperated with except in those situations where laws depart from the basic moral and righteous principles of God’s Word.” –Dr. Dale A. Robbins

V. How do I restore proper relationship to God’s delegated authorities in my life?

- A. Take _____ for closing the gap between you and the authority figures in your life.
 1. _____ for wrong attitudes against authority.
 2. _____ for those in authority (I Tim. 2:1-2).
 3. _____ those in authority
 4. Open fresh lines of _____.
 5. _____ for past attitudes.
 6. Ask God for _____ for old problems.

7. Seek _____ from your authorities.

B. Work through each of the authority relationships in your life beginning with your _____.

Lesson 4

Relating to the Body of Christ

I. What happens when we become part of the family of God?

When God calls us into the family of God He calls us into relationship _____. In the family of God we have relationship to the following:

a. We have a relationship to our Heavenly _____.

In the Church, God is our Father (Ps. 68:5; 89:26; Is. 64:8; Mt. 5:16). As a true father God is faithful to fulfill all of the responsibilities of a father to His children.

1. As a true father God has provided the _____ that has brought about our birth into the family of God (I Pet. 1:23). That seed is the incorruptible seed of the Word of God.
2. As a true father God has provided an _____ for His offspring. He has laid up for their future (Acts 26:18; Eph. 1:11).
3. As a true father God is responsible to _____ us when we need it.

b. We have a relationship to an elder _____.

In the Church we have an elder brother, the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 2:14-17).

1. Christ is the unique Son over His own house (Heb. 3:6).
2. He is the firstborn (Rom. 8:29) and _____ son in the family (I Pet. 2:21).
3. He is our _____ redeemer who has paid the price to restore our lost inheritance.
4. He is our _____, the one who has gone before us and the one on whom we can rely as we go through all of life's problems.

c. We have a relationship to fellow _____.

In the Church all true believers are the children of the family.

1. As members of the family we are all partakers of the same _____ (John 6:53).
2. As members of the family we all take on the family _____ (Eph. 3:14-15).

3. As members of the family we all bear the family _____ or image (Eph. 4:13; I Cor. 15:49).
4. As children of the family we must fulfill all the _____ and responsibilities of brothers and sisters which are outlined in the Word of God.

II. How does Paul demonstrate a good example of brother and sister relationship?

- A. Paul didn't see people as problems; he had a _____ for others (Phil. 1:3-8; 2:26-27; I Th. 2:1-12).
 1. Paul always referred to others as " _____ " (Eph. 6:21; Phil. 4:1; Col. 4:9, 14; Philemon 2, 16).
 2. Paul wasn't afraid to get _____ to people and get emotionally involved with them (Philemon 12-13).
 3. Paul even had a genuine love for those he had _____ (Col. 2:1, margin "care").
- B. Paul realized a _____ on others; he knew he was not self-sufficient (Phil. 2:25; Col. 1:7; 4:7, 10-11; Philemon 2, 11, 17, 24).
 1. Paul always had _____ to say about people. He did not neglect to compliment them on their strengths (Eph. 1:2; 6:21; Col. 1:2, 4, 7; 2:5; 4:12-13; Philemon 5, 7).
 2. Paul never failed to exalt and _____ support ministries even though their role may have been minor (Phil 1:1; 2:25, 29-30; Col. 1:1).
 3. Paul depended on the _____ of others (Phil 1:19).
 4. Paul never took others for granted, but was always _____ for their contribution to his ministry, and he was faithful to tell them (Phil. 4:14, 18).
- C. Paul lived and _____ for others (Phil 2:17-18).
 1. Paul spent time in _____ for others (Phil 1:4, 9; Col. 1:3, 9; Philemon 4).
 2. Paul was willing to make _____ sacrifices for others (Philemon 18-19).
 3. Paul made most decisions in his life on the basis of how it would affect _____ (Phil. 1:24-26; 4:17; Philemon 13-14).

D. Paul was very much concerned about seeing others realize their _____
_____ in God (Phil. 4:3; Col. 4:17).

1. Paul had confidence in others (Eph. 6:22; Philemon 21).
2. Paul was not afraid to get specific with people if it would help them (Phil. 4:2).

III. What serves as the basis for brother and sister relationship in the Body of Christ?

Brother and sister relationships are based on the “_____” love of God.

A. There are at least four different types of love that were part of Greek culture. Unfortunately in English we only have one word for “love.”

1. There is _____ love (*eros*).
2. There is _____ love (*philos*) (Mt. 11:19; Luke 11:5-8; John 15:13-15).
3. There is _____ love (*sterge*).
4. There is _____ love (*agape*) (John 15:9-10; II Cor. 5:14; I John 4:7-8)

B. God wants to birth a _____ of love in His body. We are commanded to love in the following ways:

1. With a _____ (I Pet. 1:22).
2. With unfeigned or _____ love (II Cor. 6:6; Rom. 12:9).
3. With _____ love (Rom. 12:10). Brotherly
4. With _____ love (I Pet. 1:22).
5. With _____ love (I Th. 3:12).

IV. Brother and sister relationships are mutually uplifting or edifying.

A. These relationships should involve _____ each other spiritually. This involves:

1. Stirring one another up (Heb. 10:24).
2. Encouraging or exhorting one another (Rom. 1:12; Heb. 3:12-13).

3. Comforting one another (I Th. 5:14-15; Gal. 6:2).
 4. Building up one another (Rom. 14:19; 1 Th. 5:11).
 5. Praying for one another (Jam. 5:16).
 6. Bearing each other's burdens (Gal. 6:2).
 7. Teaching and admonishing one another (Col. 3:16).
- B. These relationships should involve _____ each other naturally.
1. Serving and sacrificing for others (I John 3:16).
 2. Meeting the practical needs of others (I John 3:17-18).
 3. Ministering to others financially (Rom. 12:13).
 4. Exchanging of skills with others (Eph. 4:28).
 5. Rushing to the "emergency" needs of others (Tit. 3:14-NAS).
 6. Showing hospitality to others (Rom. 12:13; I Peter 4:9).
 7. Doing good to others (Gal. 6:9-10).
- C. These relationships should involve spending time with each other _____.
1. Eating together (Acts 2:46).
 2. Thinking together (Phil. 2:2).
 3. Rejoicing together (I Cor. 12:26; Rom. 12:15).

Lesson 5-6 Cultivating Friendship

I. What is a friend?

- A. The dictionary defines a friend as “one who cherishes kind regard for another person; an intimate and trustworthy _____.”
- B. There are other definitions that have been put forward for a friend.
1. A friend is someone with whom you dare to be _____ (C. Raymond Beran).
 2. A friend is someone who understands your past, believes in your future, and accepts you today _____ (Unknown).
 3. A friend is one who knows all about you and likes you _____ (Elbert Hubbard).
 4. A friend is a person with whom I may think _____ (Ralph Waldo Emerson).
 5. A real friend is one who warms you by his presence, trusts you with his secrets, and remembers you _____ (Unknown).
 6. A friend is:
 2. A push when you have stopped.
 3. A word when you are lonely.
 4. A guide when you are searching.
 5. A smile when you are sad.
 6. A song when you are glad. –Unknown

II. What are the various levels of friendship?

There are at least four levels of friendship or relationship:

A. _____

1. The word “acquaintance” is defined as follows:

“A person with whom you are familiar or conversant.”

2. An acquaintance is someone that you see _____, that you know on a very surface or public level and that you can identify by name and general information.

B. _____ Friends

1. The word “casual” is defined as follows:

“Occurring at irregular intervals, accidentally or _____.”

2. A casual friend is someone with whom you share common interests and with whom you participate in common activities. You bump into them occasionally, more by chance than by design. You may know very little about them except for those commonly shared areas or experiences.

C. _____ Friends

1. The word “close” is defined as follows:

“Affectionately associated with or trusted.”

2. A close friend is someone with whom you share common life goals, mutual projects and personal conversations relative to family, values and beliefs. A close friend is someone that you trust and toward whom you feel a strong level of _____.

D. _____ Friends

1. The word “intimate” is defined as:

“Closely connected on a personal, confidential and innermost level.”

2. An intimate friend is reserved for only the very closest of friends and is based on _____. This includes a mutual commitment to build each other up, to love in spite of weaknesses and to sharpen character through personal accountability.

This is the relationship that David had with Jonathan (I Sam. 18:1-4).

III. What is the purpose of friendship?

- A. A person who has no friends is missing out on some of the greatest blessing of life (Ps. 142:1-4).

This verse teaches that:

1. A person without friends has no one to whom to tell his _____.
2. A person without friends has no one to turn to when he is _____.
3. A person without friends has no one to _____ when enemies come against him.
4. A person without friends has no one to _____ when he needs help.
5. A person without friends has no one to care for him _____.

B. A person who has friends is blessed (Eccl. 4:9-12).

This verse teaches that:

1. A person who has friends has someone _____ in his or her labor.
2. A person who has friends has someone to _____ when he or she falls.
3. A person who has friends has someone to bring _____ to his or her life.
4. A person who has friends has someone to help him or her _____.

C. A friend is someone who can refresh our souls.

1. By _____ their life with us in fellowship and relationship.
2. By _____ for us in our times of difficulty.
3. By _____ with us in the purposes of God through mutual edification and accountability.

IV. What does the Bible teach us about friendship?

A. The Book of Proverbs has much to say about friendship.

1. True friendships in life are _____ (Pro. 18:24, Amp.).
 “A friend to everybody and to nobody is the same thing” –Spanish Proverb
 “He who has many friends, has none.” –Aristotle (384-322 B.C.)
2. A true friend stands with you in times of _____ (Pro. 17:17).
3. A true friend is not in the relationship for the _____ reasons (Pro. 19:4, 6).

4. A true friend's counsel is very _____ (Pro. 27:9).
 5. A true friend will tell you what you _____ not what you want to hear (Pro. 27:5-6).
 6. A true friend will clash with you at times for your personal _____ (Pro. 27:17).
 7. A true friend is _____ at all times (Pro. 11:13; 17:17; 18:24, NLT).
 8. A true friendship can be _____ by slander, whispering and not keeping confidences (Pro.16:28; 17:9).
- B. Jesus had something to say about friendship.
1. A friend lays his _____ for the relationship (John 15:13).
 2. A friend knows the _____ (John 15:15).
- C. The rest of the Bible adds to the concept of friendship.
1. A true friend will know you as they know _____ (Deut. 13:6b).
 2. A true friend will show you kindness when you are _____ (Job 6:14, NIV).
 3. A true friend will be an _____ or intercessor to plead your cause (Job 16:21, NIV).
 4. A true friend will be there _____ you when you stumble (Eccl. 4:10).

V. How do friendships happen?

- A. Friendships must be _____.
- B. Friendships must be _____.
- C. Friendships have to be _____.
- D. Friendships _____ to build.

- E. Friendships will be _____.
- F. Friendships must be _____.
- G. Friendships are to be _____.

VI. What are some qualities to look for in a friend?

Quotes:

“Friendships form among people who strengthen each other.” –Franklin Owen

“He who looks for advantage out of friendship strips it of all its nobility.”
 –Seneca (4 B.C. -65 A.D.)

Here are five key qualities that you look for in friends.

- A. Those who _____ (Ps. 119:63, NIV).
- B. Those who can keep _____.
- C. Those who possess the _____ the Spirit (Gal.5:23-24).
- D. Those who _____.
- E. Those who share your _____.

VII. What are some qualities to avoid in a friend?

We must choose our friends wisely because we will be known by our friends or the company we keep (Pro. 12:26; 13:20; I Cor. 15:33; Ps. 106:19-20).

Here are five key qualities that you do not want in your friends.

- A. _____ or Hot-tempered People (Pro. 22:24-25)
- B. _____ People (Eph. 5:11; Jam. 4:4)
- C. _____ People (Pro. 12:26; II Cor. 6:14-15; Gal. 5:19-21)
- D. _____ People (II Tim. 3:1-5)
- E. _____, Unrepentant “Christian” People (Mt. 18:15-17; II Th. 3:6).

These are people who profess to be Christian but who live a lifestyle characterized by some of the following:

1. Covetousness—Inordinately desirous or greedy.
2. Idolatry—Inordinately fond of anything above the Lord.
3. Railing—Abusive and scornful in their language.
4. Drunkenness—Habitually drinking to excess.
5. Extortion—Obtaining gain by dishonest means.
6. Fornication—Involved in illicit sexual relationships.
7. Hardness of Heart—Refusing to reconcile an offense with a brother.

With these types of people we are encouraged not to eat with them or keep company with them (I Cor. 5:11; II Th. 3:14-15).

VIII. What are some skills that will help you to develop and foster good friendships?

Quotes:

“Friendship is like money, easier made than kept.” –Samuel Butler (1612-1680)

“Promises may get friends, but it is performance that must nurse and keep them.”
– Owen Fellthan (1602-1668)

“Friendship is usually treated as a tough and everlasting thing which will survive all manner of bad treatment. But it may die in an hour of a single unwise word; its conditions of existence are that it should be dealt with delicately and tenderly. It is a plant and not a roadside thistle. We must not expect our friend to be above humanity.” – Ouida (1839-1908)

A. Becoming a good _____.

1. Learn how to start a conversation and keep it going.
 - a. Give a warm greeting.
 - b. Wear a smile.
 - c. Ask questions.
 - d. Work to remember details.
 - e. Repeat their name several times in conversation.
 - f. Notice things that stand out about the person or their environment.
 - g. Compliment them (sincerely) on some area of achievement.
 - h. Play off of their responses with more clarifying questions.

- i. Paraphrase back to them what you believe they are saying (in your own words).
 - j. Find out what the person is interested in and explore it.
 - k. Discover things you may have in common.
 - l. Avoid highly controversial subjects until you get to know them better.
 - m. If you must disagree, do it agreeably.
 - n. Do not interrupt.
 - o. Recognize when the conversation is over.
 - p. Remember the depth of conversation is based on the depth of friendship.
2. Be willing to give and to _____ information.
 3. Do things together that require a certain amount of _____ (e.g. going for coffee, walks, golf, etc).
 4. Learn how to communicate creatively to further feed the friendship.
 - a. Phone
 - b. Email
 - c. SMS
 - d. Fax
 - e. Answering Machine
 - f. Occasional Card or Note

B. Becoming a good _____.

1. Pay careful attention when they speak.
2. Maintain good eye contact with them as they speak.
3. Respect their point of view.
4. Do not react to what they say.
5. Do not feel that you must adjust every factual detail with which you disagree.
6. Give responses that indicate your interest.
7. Don't walk away until the conversation comes to resolve.

C. Becoming a physical and moral support.

1. This means _____ them as your friend.
2. This means attending to their physical and emotional _____.
3. This means providing a _____ when they want to vent.

4. This means putting up with them when they are _____.
5. This means being cautious in _____ willing to overlook some of their imperfections.
6. This means encouraging them when they are _____.
7. This means being ready to assist them _____.
8. This means providing a shoulder for them to _____.
9. This means _____ them for their positive actions and accomplishments.
10. This means rejoicing with their _____.
11. This means _____ for them when they need it.
12. This means helping them _____ of their life.
13. This means _____ them with thoughtful gifts and remembrances.
14. This means staying true to them when they _____ you.
15. This means giving them the _____ when unexpected things come up and things do not work out as planned.
16. This means relaxing, slipping off your shoes, loosening your tie, kicking back on the couch and just “hanging out” with them.

IX. What does accountability look like in an intimate relationship?

A. Accountability involves _____.

This means being willing to share some of your _____. This includes such things as:

1. Life goals, visions and ambitions
2. Inner fears, values and beliefs
3. Personal challenges
4. Temptations and spiritual battles

B. Accountability involves a commitment to absolute _____.

C. Accountability involves apologizing when you are _____.

D. Accountability involves a high level of _____ and confidentiality.

E. Accountability involves giving _____ the tough questions.

The following 26 questions are excerpted from *Rebuilding Your Broken World* by Gordon MacDonald.

1. How is your relationship to God right now?

2. What have you read in the Bible in the past week?
3. What has God said to you in this reading?
4. Where do you find yourself resisting Him these days?
5. What specific things are you praying for in regard to others?
6. What specific things are you praying for in regard to yourself?
7. What are the specific tasks facing you right now that you consider incomplete?
8. What habits intimidate you?
9. What have you read in the secular press this week?
10. What general reading are you doing?
11. What have you done to play?
12. How are you doing with your spouse? Kids?
13. If I were to ask your spouse about your state of mind, state if spirit or state of energy level, what would be the response?
14. Are you sensing any spiritual attacks from the enemy right now?
15. If Satan were to try to invalidate you as a person or as a servant of the Lord, how might he do it?
16. What is the state of your sexual perspective? Tempted? Dealing with fantasies? Wrong entertainment?
17. Where are you financially right now? Things under control? Under anxiety? In serious debt?
18. Are there any unresolved conflicts in your circle of relationships right now?
19. When was the last time you spent time with a good friend of your own gender?
20. What kind of time have you spent with anyone who is a non-Christian this past month?
21. What challenges do you think you are going to face in the coming week? Month?
22. What would you say are your fears at this present time?
23. Are you sleeping well?
24. What three things are you most thankful for?
25. Do you like yourself at this point in your pilgrimage?
26. What are your greatest confusions about your relationship with God?

X. Do all friendships last forever?

- A. Sometimes relationships change due to _____.
- B. Sometimes relationships change due to the change of _____.
1. _____.

2. _____.
3. _____.
4. _____.

C. Sometimes relationships change due to other factors.

1. _____ .
2. _____.
3. _____.

Good friends are worth fighting for, because they are the things that make our life rich and full.

Friendship from A to Z

What is a friend? Someone who...

A ccepts you as you are,
B elieves in "you",
C alls you just to say "HI",
D oesn't give up on you,
E nvisions the whole of you (even the unfinished parts),
F orgives your mistakes,
G ives unconditionally,
H elps you,
I nspires you to be the best you can be,
J ust happy to be with you,
K eeps you close at heart,
L oves you for who you are,
M akes a difference in your life,
N ever judges,
O ffers support,
P icks you up,
Q uiets your fears,
R aises your spirits,
S ays nice things about you,
T ells you the truth when you need to hear it,
U nderstands you,
V alues you,
W alks beside you,
X -plains things you don't understand,
Y ells when you won't listen and
Z aps you back to reality.

--Author Unknown

Lesson 8

Maintaining Moral Purity in Relationships

I. What is the moral climate of our day?

Today we are facing a moral attack such as the world has not seen since the rise of Christianity.

- A. Through the _____ and dress industry.
- B. Through the _____ and entertainment industry.
- C. Through the perpetuation of the philosophies of Darwinism and secular humanism which teach that:
 - 1. Man is just a higher form of _____ life.
 - 2. Man is _____.
 - 3. Man is not _____ to a higher law.
- D. Through the proliferation of _____ and sex education.
- E. Through the open acceptance of homosexuality and other non-biblical relationships as legitimate _____ lifestyles.
- F. Through the development of the _____ where all manner of perversion can be brought into the privacy of one's home.

II. What is the responsibility of the believer when it comes to confronting our culture?

- A. We must separate or _____ ourselves from a misguided culture (Acts 2:40).
- B. We must _____ the spirit of immorality that is sweeping over the world.

It takes a strong person to resist this onslaught and overcome. A weak person or a person with no moral walls in place will be swept away. If we are to be successful in resisting we must do four things.

- 1. We must see the _____ resist.
- 2. We must have a plan of _____.
- 3. We must not fight _____.
- 4. We must give the enemy _____ to gain a foothold.

5. We must understand _____ to impurity.

III. What are the steps down on the road to moral impurity?

Moral sin has a progression that must be recognized and acknowledged (Jam. 1:14-15).

A. Step One: Impurity begins in the _____ (Jam. 1:14; Mt. 15:19).

B. Step Two: Impurity is fed passively through _____ (Mt. 5:27-29; II Pet.2:14 - “eyes full of adulteries”).

1. This kind of looking is a _____ looking.

2. These kind of activities are easy to justify because they are _____ areas of involvement.

3. This kind of activity must be recognized for _____.

C. Step Three: Impurity progresses by _____ the sensual appetite.

1. The Bible refers to this appetite as the “_____of the flesh” (1 John 2:16).

2. There are many things we can use _____ the craving (Rom. 6:11-14)..

- Pornographic material (especially the Internet)
- Videos/movies
- Fantasizing
- Improper reading material
- Night spots/nude or semi-nude dancers
- Filthy talk/jesting

D. Step Four: Impurity matures further through sexual _____.

1. Galatians 6:1 speaks of someone who is “caught in a sin” or “_____ in a fault.”

- a. This is an act of weakness.
- b. It speaks of a slip.
- c. It speaks of being taken by surprise.

2. We are surprised, but in reality, we have _____.

3. Some of the sins of experimentation may include:
 - a. Falling with members of our own household, those under our _____ (Heb. 13:3; Mt. 18:6).
 - b. Falling with someone we _____ know.
 - c. Falling with someone _____.

- E. Step Five: Impurity ends up in a _____ of adultery (I Cor. 6:9-10).
 1. This person now _____ and begins to seduce others for his own self-gratification (II Pet. 2:14, NLT).
 2. This person has become reprobate, perverse and degenerate (Rom. 1:24-32).
 3. God is going to actively resist this person (Heb. 13:4).

IV. What are the consequences of moral failure?

Moral sin has some serious consequences that must be understood (Pro. 5:3-9; 6:24-35; 7:4-27).

For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil; 4 But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. 5 Her feet go down to death, her steps lay hold of hell. 6 Lest you ponder her path of life-- her ways are unstable; you do not know them. 7 Therefore hear me now, my children, and do not depart from the words of my mouth. 8 Remove your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house, 9 Lest you give your honor to others, and your years to the cruel one... Proverbs 5:3-9

These commands and this teaching will keep you from the immoral woman, from the smooth tongue of an adulterous woman. 25 Don't lust for her beauty. Don't let her coyness seduce you. 26 For a prostitute will bring you to poverty, and sleeping with another man's wife may cost you your very life. 27 Can a man scoop fire into his lap and not be burned? 28 Can he walk on hot coals and not blister his feet? 29 So it is with the man who sleeps with another man's wife. He who embraces her will not go unpunished. 30 Excuses might be found for a thief who steals because he is starving. 31 But if he is caught, he will be fined seven times as much as he stole, even if it means selling everything in his house to pay it back. 32 But the man who commits adultery is an utter fool, for he destroys his own soul. 33 Wounds and constant disgrace are his lot. His shame will never be erased. 34 For the woman's husband will be furious in his jealousy, and he will have no mercy in his day of vengeance. 35 There is no compensation or bribe that will satisfy him. Proverbs 6:24-35, NLT

Love wisdom like a sister; make insight a beloved member of your family. 5 Let them hold you back from an affair with an immoral woman, from listening to the flattery of an adulterous woman. 6 I was looking out the window of my house one day 7 and saw a simpleminded young man who lacked common sense. 8 He was crossing the street near the house of an immoral woman. He was strolling down the path by her house 9 at twilight, as the day was fading, as the dark of night set in. 10 The woman approached him, dressed seductively and sly of heart. 11 She was the brash, rebellious type who never stays at home. 12 She is often seen in the streets and markets, soliciting at every corner. 13 She threw her arms around him and kissed him, and with a brazen look she said, 14 “I’ve offered my sacrifices and just finished my vows. 15 It’s you I was looking for! I came out to find you, and here you are! 16 My bed is spread with colored sheets of finest linen imported from Egypt. 17 I’ve perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. 18 Come, let’s drink our fill of love until morning. Let’s enjoy each other’s caresses, 9 for my husband is not home. He’s away on a long trip. 20 He has taken a wallet full of money with him, and he won’t return until later in the month.” 21 So she seduced him with her pretty speech. With her flattery she enticed him. 22 He followed her at once, like an ox going to the slaughter or like a trapped stag, 23 awaiting the arrow that would pierce its heart. He was like a bird flying into a snare, little knowing it would cost him his life. 24 Listen to me, my sons, and pay attention to my words. 25 Don’t let your hearts stray away toward her. Don’t wander down her wayward path. 26 For she has been the ruin of many; numerous men have been her victims. 27 Her house is the road to the grave. Her bedroom is the den of death. Proverbs 7:4-27, NLT

The man who participates in immoral conduct does eight things:

- A. He _____ his own soul (Pro. 6:32).
- B. He will experience a shame that will _____ (Pro. 6:33).
- C. He will be scarred for _____ (Pro. 6:33).
- D. He destroys _____ of God (II Cor. 3:13-20).
- E. He _____ those he loves (Pro. 2:17).
- F. He will grieve his friends and _____ his friendships (II Cor. 12:21).
- G. At the end of his life he will _____ (Pro. 5:11, NIV).
- H. He will experience _____ (Pro. 7:27; 14:12).

V. How can moral sin be conquered by the believer?

- A. We must take the battle _____ (I Pet. 2:11).
- B. We must _____ of any areas in which we have stumbled (Ps. 51:1-13).
- C. We must be willing to _____ that cause temptation.
- D. We must deal with our _____ (Phil. 4:18).
- E. We must make a covenant with _____ (Job 31:1, NLT).
- F. We must be willing to solicit the help of _____.
 - 1. Your wife
 - 2. A friend
 - 3. A small group leader
 - 4. A pastor
- G. We must _____ to cultivate a healthy marriage.
- H. We must _____ all impurity in the future, never over-estimating our strength (II Tim. 2:22; 1 Cor. 10:12).
- I. We must keep busy doing the work of the Lord, serving others and extending the Kingdom of God (Phil. 3:13-14; Heb. 12:1-2).

VI. What is the price tag of moral failure?

The price for moral sin is _____.

- A. It causes us to lose our _____ (Heb. 12:16-17, NLT; I Chr. 5:1).
- B. It causes us to become a _____ (I Cor. 9:27).
- C. It diminishes the effectiveness of the church (Ps. 24:3-5; Eph. 5:25-27).

Lesson 9-10

Romantic Relationships

I. Why is a fresh look at the area of romance and dating so important?

- A. Because of the _____ of romance put forth modern society.
- B. Because of the problems that arise when God's concepts are not observed (Hos. 4:6).
 - 1. Broken and wounded relationships due to past dating experiences.
 - a. This can include wounded _____.
 - b. This can include wounded _____.
 - c. This can include personal _____ scars.
 - 2. Loss of moral _____. This of course can lead to more serious things including:
 - a. Loss of virginity and long term guilt
 - b. Unwanted pregnancies
 - c. High risk of sexually transmitted disease
 - d. Abortion

II. What is a steady dating relationship?

- A. It is a relationship based on solid _____.
- B. It is a relationship that is _____ to God's guidance and control.
- C. It is a relationship that is, by its very definition, exclusive in nature. That is this kind of relationship should only be pursued with _____ at a time.
- D. It is a relationship that should be entered into _____.
- E. It is a relationship established to pursue a possible _____ choice (Pro. 18:22; 31:10).

III. What concepts should form the basis for a dating relationship?

- A. A romantic relationship can only be considered with another _____ (I Cor. 6:15-17; II Cor. 6:14-18).

- B. A romantic relationship should arise out of a lifestyle of serving others and of developing a _____ of successful friendships.

If a person does not have healthy relationships with members of the opposite sex as brothers or sisters in Christ...

1. They will tend to see every relationship with a view to _____.
 2. They will tend to rush straight to the _____ aspect of the relationship.
 3. They can limit their exposure and, therefore, limit their _____ for a marriage partner.
 4. They can become very possessive of and overly _____ on the one person.
 5. They will usually have a limited ability to _____ on a heart level.
 6. They will make premature and _____ statements reflecting the emotional level of the relationship.
- C. A _____ friendship should be developed before entertaining the idea of pursuing a romantic relationship.
- D. Genuine prayer and _____ seeking of the Lord should be involved in moving any relationship into a romantic relationship.
- E. The possibility of a _____ should temper all romantic relationships.
- F. For wisdom and safety, a romantic relationship should be under natural (parental) and spiritual (pastoral) _____.
- G. A romantic relationship should be developed _____ and naturally.

IV. How should a romantic relationship begin?

It should begin with a _____ to allow a romantic relationship to develop based on an established friendship, honest communication and mutual desires. The following are elements that should be considered in the decision to develop a healthy romantic relationship:

- A. Evaluate the _____ and present relationship.

How strong is it? How well do we know each other? How well do we communicate? What fruit have we seen in our friendship?

B. Assess your _____ as believers.

Are we spiritually compatible? Do we have similar life goals and ambitions? Do we have a similar value system?

C. Determine if there is a _____ desire to develop a romantic relationship.

D. Consider the _____ element.

Is it the right time? Is the relationship ready for a romantic element? Is such a relationship consistent with my life goals at this time?

E. Make the decision a matter of _____ consideration.

What does God think about it? Have you actually prayed about it? Do you really want to pray about it?

F. Hold the decision tentatively until it has been submitted to your _____ for counsel.

G. _____ the relationship to God.

H. Set your mutual dating _____ by combining your individual ones and determining to live by the stricter.

I. Make sure the following mutual commitments are clear:

1. There is _____ commitment to marriage.
2. The commitment to guard one's own feelings.
3. The commitment to protect the other person's feelings.
4. The commitment to communicate _____.
5. The commitment to submit the relationship and possible marriage decision to the Lord.

V. **How do I put myself in a place of being “marriage material”?**

Much of the following outline is taken from unpublished notes by Wendell Smith.

A. _____ how you should see.

1. This means correcting _____ about marriage.
 - a. Marriage is not for _____.
 - b. It is possible to live a _____ and fruitful life without marriage.
 - c. One's life is not _____ until they find a spouse.
 - d. You can have a _____ expression without being married.
 - e. You do not have to be _____ without having a spouse.
 - f. You are not _____ until you get married.
 - g. Marriage is good and not to be _____.

2. This means finding the _____.

The key to life is having a vital and living relationship with Jesus and His Body—the Church.

3. This means knowing _____ you believe.

This means knowing what God says relative to the world of dating and marriage and developing some personal _____ consistent with this area of life.

4. This means recognizing God as your source and your _____.

This means trusting God for your future and _____ His plan for your life whether it includes marriage or not.

5. This means having a right view of ourselves (proper self-image).

This means being confident of who we are in Christ and finding our _____ in what God says about us.

6. This means having a right view of singleness.

You must see your singleness as a special time when you can focus on the Lord and enter into His perfect will without the distraction of family relationships. You must see it as an _____ and not a _____ (I Cor. 7:32-35).

B. _____ who you should be.

1. This means focusing in your _____ as a Christian.

- a. This means being the kind of person that someone would _____ marry.

- b. This means cultivating the fruit of the Spirit especially in our _____ toward people and life in general.
 - c. This means living a life that honors, respects and submits to _____.
- 2. This means that we learn to be a _____ of the Church.
- 3. This means living a life of _____ and significance as a single.
- C. _____ what you should do.
 - 1. This means getting _____ and active.
 - 2. This means _____ life in your present situation.
 - 3. This means being _____.
 - a. This means handling your _____ properly.
 - b. This means pursuing a stable _____.
 - c. This means taking care of yourself _____.
 - 4. This means guarding your _____ diligently (Pro. 4:23).
 - a. This means doing the battle in our _____.
 - b. This means not allowing yourself to _____ for the sake of a marriage possibility.
 - a. This means _____ fornication (See previous lesson).

Note: Some of the above material was extracted from a book no longer in print titled *Principles of Family Life*, which was published by City Bible Publishing and was authored by a team of writers including but not limited to the author of this teaching.

Lesson 11-12

Dating and Engagement

I. What are some of the things that complicate the issue of dating in our day?

- A. Dating is not specifically _____ in the Bible.
- B. Children see a totally _____ of sex and male/female relationships on TV, in the movies and among schoolmates.
- C. Parents themselves have had _____ on biblical principles that might apply to the dating scene.
- D. Some parents think that matchmaking and early dating is _____ and they foster it or promote it early in their child's life.
- E. Parents find it difficult to resist the _____ of their own teenagers.

II. What are some biblical concepts that apply to this area of dating and relationships?

- A. God wants us to be free from any premarital _____ encounters and promiscuity (I Th. 4:3-8).

Sexual immorality by biblical definition includes the following:

- 1. Licentiousness sometimes translated "lewdness", which is the _____ of sensual desires (e.g. kissing, petting, inappropriate touching, indecent bodily movements, even homosexual acts, See: I Pet. 4:1-6; II Pet. 2:7; Eph. 4:17-24).
 - 2. Passion of lust (Col. 3:5-6; I Th. 4:5).
 - 3. Evil Desires (Col. 3:5-6; Rom. 7:8)
 - 4. Fornication, which is any form of sex before marriage (I Cor. 6:13, 18-20; Gal. 5:19).
- B. God does want us to get married, but some how He wants us to do so without sinning in the process.
 - 1. The example of Mary and Joseph (Mt. 1:18). They were betrothed or engaged to be married, but they did not come together in a sexual way until _____ they were married.
 - 2. When we take advantage of another person sexually outside of marriage, the Bible speaks of this as _____ them (I Th. 4:6). Defrauding is "using

taking advantage of or injuring” someone else for your own gratification. It involves taking something that does not _____.

- C. The romantic desires that we have within us are given to us by God and are meant to _____ toward marriage, which is part of God’s eternal purpose (Pro. 5:15-20).
1. These desires must be brought under the control of the Holy Spirit (I Tim. 5:1-2; I Th. 4:7-8).
 2. These desires can only be righteously fulfilled in marriage (Pro. 5:15-20, NLT).

III. Why do some singles end up getting involved in immoral relationship?

- A. Because they think that having sex proves _____.
- B. Because “_____” is doing it.
- C. Because for young women it is the expected _____.
- D. Because it seems necessary to make one _____.
- E. Because it is seen as a _____.
- F. Because it is an easy step from _____ of physical activity.

IV. What is God’s pattern for developing relationships?

In God’s pattern for developing relationship...

- A. The relationship starts by being one in _____.
1. No one could ever marry someone that is not a Christian because there can be no unity of spirit (II Cor. 6:14).
2. If you cannot marry an unbeliever, you must not _____ an unbeliever.

We must begin all relationships with the opposite sex as brothers and sisters in Christ. All of the admonitions concerning how to treat a brother or sister apply to this relationship (love, honor, seek best interest, be considerate, etc.).

Activities that promote a unity of the spirit include church services, youth group, Bible studies, group fellowship, and Christian service projects.

- B. The relationship develops by becoming one in _____ realm.
1. This involves becoming one in our mind, will and emotions.

2. This could be described as cultivating deepening levels of friendship. The levels of relationship include:
 - a. Acquaintances
 - b. Casual Friends
 - c. Close Friends
 - d. Intimate Friends

3. It is when the relationship reaches the “close friend” level that you are in a position to begin exploring the idea of a romantic relationship.

Activities in this period should be limited to non-romantic type activities that still involve others, family members and friends (sports, hobbies, family outings, concerts, plays, eating out, horseback riding, bowling, safari, zoo, museums, skating and group activities).

- C. The third level involves the coming together in the physical realm. This realm is reserved for _____ marriage.

A summary of God’s dating plan can be seen in the following chart:

	God’s Dating Plan	Improper Dating Plan
Basis	God centered relationships based on wholesome attraction, common commitment to God, and Christian friendship	Self-centered relationships based on natural attraction, feelings and sensual desires
Founda- tion	Moral absolutes found in the Bible—Principles	Situational ethics and a lack of absolutes—Feelings
Goals	Mutual Edification—Giving	Mutual Gratification—Receiving
Focus	Focus on becoming one in spirit and soul	Focus on physical activity and experimentation
Pacing	Relationship takes time to grow through the stages, getting to know one another	Relationship moves quickly, bypassing levels to take advantage of the other
Relation- ship to Others	Relationship inclusive of the Body of Christ	Relationship exclusive of the Body of Christ
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger relationship to Lord • Stronger relationship to others • Healthy self-image • Character development for the better 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weakened relationship to God • Weakened relationship to others • Unhealthy self-image • Character change for the worse • Influence others to sin

Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good example to others • Peace • Joy • Strong foundation for marriage • Abundant Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion, strife, pain • Sorrow and regret • Bad foundation for marriage. • Death
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Run from anything that stimulates youthful lust. Follow anything that makes you want to do right. Pursue faith and love and peace, and enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts. II Timothy 2:22

V. What areas should be considered in making a marriage choice?

A. Spiritual Life

When considering a potential mate, one should give primary considerations to their relationship to God, including the strength of their personal commitment, ability to flow together in spiritual things, involvement in prayer and the Word, and spiritual growth and witness.

B. Character/Personality

A person’s character qualities, personality traits, habit patterns and ability to change, should be considered.

C. Interpersonal Relationships

Much insight can be gained from a person’s interpersonal relationships. Apart from your own relationships to them, you should take into account their relationship to their parents, the church, their friends and family, as well as their ability to communicate, to handle irritations, to resolve conflicts, and their social fluidity and response to authority.

D. Natural Life

Also to be considered are a person’s age, education, domestic life, work stability, financial freedom and recreational interests.

E. Life Purpose

Attention should be given to career direction, ministry direction, purposefulness, goals and flexibility, especially to discern whether these areas are compatible with yours.

VI. How should engagement be handled?

The purpose of engagement is to provide _____ from the state of being single to the state of being married.

A. Engagement begins with the couple's _____ commitment to marry.

This commitment should be made in the light of:

1. A serious time of seeking _____ for his approval.
2. The heartfelt approval of both the natural and _____ coverings (authorities) involved.

B. It is advisable to go through the Pre-Engagement Questionnaire that is appended to these notes to be sure that all of the important issues have been addressed (See Appendix 3).

C. There are certain things of a public nature that will make the engagement _____. These things include the following:

1. A public announcement
2. An engagement ring
3. The setting of a wedding date

D. The length of the engagement should be determined by a consideration of the following:

1. The time needed to make necessary arrangements for the wedding.
2. Family and friends having enough time to prepare for the wedding.
3. The financial status of the couple.
4. Special considerations such as job or schooling that may come to bear on the situation.

E. Though all doubts should be dealt with before an official engagement is made, engagement should not be viewed as being entirely irrevocable.

Note: Some of the above material was extracted from a book no longer in print titled *Principles of Family Life*, which was published by City Bible Publishing and was authored by a team of writers including but not limited to the author of this teaching.

Appendix 1—Dating Standards

The following is a sample statement of personal dating standards written by a single young man who attended Portland Bible College in 1993:

My Creed

The words of wisdom contained in this creed have been spoken to me by the Holy Spirit through my father, youth pastor, and various teachers here at P.B.C. as well as past experience. It is because of the conviction of the Holy Spirit that I commit to stand by these principles no matter what the consequences, and I believe that it is by the grace of Jesus that I will be able to discipline myself to stand by them.

Firstly I will define, in my own words, these two terms:

Date:

A date is to have a social engagement with a woman, individually or in a group setting, with the expressed purpose of conversation which should lead to a better understanding of her personality, desires, lifestyle, background, spiritual life/calling, and dreams. The purpose of the date is to determine if she is someone that I should court.

Courting:

Courting requires a commitment from both individuals to maintain a relationship, for an unspecified amount of time, to be totally open with each other so as to test the coherency of our personalities, desires, lifestyle, background, spiritual life/calling, and dreams. Courting is done with the purpose of determining suitability of marriage. This is also called “going steady” or “seeing each other.” I commit to being in a courtship relationship with only one person in any season of time.

The standards that I set for a date:

1. I will not go out on a date with any woman without first considering and praying about it for a period of 30 days. During that period I will seek to be as open as possible to the Holy Spirit and anything that He may want to say to me regarding pursuing a relationship with this individual. The reason for this standard is to force me to become friends with this individual before allowing myself to become romantically involved with her. It is also set forth so that I am sure that this individual is someone whom I really like and not just a whim.
2. I will not go out on a date with any woman without the expressed permission of her father (or her guardian). In some cases I will ask that he read a copy of this Creed and spend that same 30 days in prayer concerning the possibility of my relationship with his daughter.

3. To the best of my ability I will not “allow physical lust to intrude” upon my mind while on a date. My rule will be: No contact, meaning that I will not touch her (e.g. holding hands, placing my arm around her, elbow loving her) on any date. Not ever.

The standards that I set for courting:

1. I will not begin a courting type relationship with a woman without the permission and approval of her father.
2. I will not begin a courting type relationship without seeking the counsel of my father and I will not begin such a relationship without his permission and approval.
3. I will also seek the counsel of at least two men of God to whom I am in submission (e.g. an elder or pastor over me).
4. Physical contact in the courting period shall be limited to such things as holding hands, and placing an arm around. My standard shall be NO physical contact which would cause physical desires to be aroused on her or my part.
5. It is my conviction that I should refrain from any long term prayer times when alone with a young lady whom I am romantically involved with.
6. Courting is never to imply engagement but it is my expressed desire that any long term courting relationship (greater than six months) would lead into engagement and then marriage.

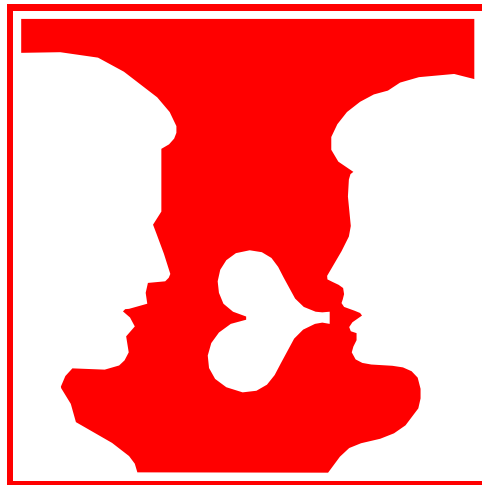
The standards that I set for engagement:

1. If at any time in a courting relationship I wish to pursue the possibility of marriage I will first spend another one to two months in prayer and fasting; seeking God’s will for me and her.
2. Then I will next ask her father and mother for their permission to marry their daughter.
3. Then I will ask my father and mother for their permission to marry this individual.
4. Finally I will seek the counsel of two to three godly men whom I am in submission to. I will ask for their input into the situation and their evaluation of the possibility of our marriage.
5. During the engagement time I will not do anything physically which would violate my conscience. I haven’t been engaged before so it is hard to say what this would include but I will not engage in passionate kissing or anything which would cause physical feelings or desires to go beyond control in her or me.

Name Withheld

A PRE-ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

A Guide for Couples and their Counselor



By Bill Scheidler

Pre-Engagement Questionnaire

The following questionnaire is designed as a counseling tool for pastors and a tool for Christian couples to help them evaluate their own readiness for marriage. It is meant to assist couples in considering the level of their relationship in a spirit of honesty, openness and true understanding. The questionnaire may be used with a pastoral advisor to help clarify the direction of and the speed with which the relationships should progress. Many of the questions have no right or wrong answer, but are only given to insure that the right kinds of questions are being addressed in the relationship.

ARE WE QUALIFIED TO MARRY?

A. Are we on the same level spiritually (II Corinthians 6:14-16)? _____

1. Born again? No ____ Yes ____ How long? _____

2. Baptized in the Spirit No ____ Yes ____ When? _____

3. Baptized in water? No ____ Yes ____ When? _____

4. Living a life committed to Christ and the service of others? No ____ Yes ____

5. Committed to a local church? No ____ Yes ____ Where? _____

B. Give three reasons why you want to marry: _____

C. Are we qualified to get married? Do we have a past marriage relationship that is not biblically resolved? _____

1. Any children from a past relationship? No ____ Yes ____

2. Is there a past marriage and divorce? No ____ Yes ____

3. If yes, was the divorce biblical? No ____ Yes ____ Unsure ____
4. If yes, am I biblically free to marry? No ____ Yes ____ Unsure ____

Explain your situation: _____

D. How do my parents and spiritual leaders *honestly* feel about our relationship and potential marriage? Check all that apply.

- | Mother | Father | Pastor / Elder |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eager for it | <input type="checkbox"/> Eager for it | <input type="checkbox"/> Eager for it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved about it | <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved about it | <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved about it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Against it | <input type="checkbox"/> Against it | <input type="checkbox"/> Against it |

If any authorities have reservations about the relationship, what are their concerns? _

E. Is it God's will for us to marry? (Comment on answers)

1. Do I have the gift of singleness (I Corinthians 7:1-9, 17-40)?
 No ____ Yes _____
2. Do we have the same long-term goals? (Amos 3:3)? _____

3. Does God have an active part in our relationship? _____

4. Have I prayed **sincerely** about this relationship? No ____ Yes _____

What has God said? _____

5. Would marriage hinder or help your usefulness to the Lord and fulfillment of His will? Help ____ Hinder ____ In what way? _____

ARE WE MATURE ENOUGH TO MARRY?

- A. Have we been able to solve problems biblically? No ____ Yes ____

1. What problems or disagreements have you had during your courtship?

2. How did you resolve them? _____

3. Do you feel that they are completely settled now? _____

4. Do you feel that either of you ever uses wrong means to get your own way?

No ____ Yes ____

- a. Is one a bully? No ____ Yes ____ Which one? _____

- b. Does one manipulate? No ____ Yes ____ Which one? _____

- c. Does one avoid facing problems? No ____ Yes ____

Which one? _____

- d. Do you let things slide until forgotten? No ____ Yes ____
 - e. Do you store up resentments? No ____ Yes ____
 - f. Does one of you sulk? No ____ Yes ____ Which one? _____
 - g. Does one blame shift or make excuses? No ____ Yes ____
Which one? _____
5. Do you use biblical skills to solve problems?
- a. Do you bring things up and talk them through? No ____ Yes ____
 - b. Do you find it easy to express your true feelings to your partner?
No ____ Yes ____
 - c. Do you go to Christ for help? No ____ Yes ____
 - d. Do you ask forgiveness for your failures? No ____ Yes ____
 - e. Do you offer forgiveness to the other? No ____ Yes ____
 - f. Do you pray together? No ____ Yes ____
 - g. Do you keep lines of communication open? No ____ Yes ____
- B. Have we experienced maturity in our relationship? No ____ Yes ____
- 1. Does either manifest patterns of sin in his or her life? No ____ Yes ____
 - 2. Is either tempting the other sexually? No ____ Yes ____
Which one? _____
 - 3. Is either critical toward the other in a verbal or physical way?
No ____ Yes ____ Which one? _____
 - 4. Do I lie to the other in this relationship? Never ____ Occasionally ____
Often ____
 - 5. Does either spend money impulsively? No ____ Yes ____
Which one? _____
 - 6. Do we have a good relationship with our parents? Comment _____

7. Do I have any extreme fears? No ____ Yes ____ Comment _____

8. Do you detect strong feelings of jealousy in your partner? No ____ Yes ____

Is it a problem for you? _____

ARE WE WILLING AND READY TO “LEAVE” OTHER ATTACHMENTS?

A. Are we willing to emotionally break with our parents? No ____ Yes ____

B. Are we able to financially break from our parents? No ____ Yes ____

C. Are we willing to put the relationship before all other possessions?

No ____ Yes ____ Comment: _____

D. Are we willing to give up the right to make independent decisions?

No ____ Yes ____ Comment: _____

E. Are we willing to adjust our relationship to other singles of the opposite sex?

No ____ Yes ____

ARE WE READY TO “CLEAVE” TO EACH OTHER?

A. Are we willing to become accountable to the other? No ____ Yes ____

B. Are our lives going in the same direction?

1. What are my career goals? _____

2. What are my ministry goals? _____

3. What are the ministry goals of my desired spouse? _____

C. What basic lifestyle are we expecting? Summarize in a brief paragraph.

1. What income level? _____

2. What work hours? _____

3. What television habits? _____

4. What types of entertainment? _____

5. What types of recreation? _____

6. What kind of church life / commitment? _____

7. What church do we plan to attend? _____

D. Do we agree philosophically?

1. Do we have any theological differences? No ____ Yes ____ What areas?

2. Do we agree on male / female roles in the home? No ____ Yes ____

Comment: _____

3. Do we both plan on working outside the home? No ____ Yes ____ Comment:

4. What will be our financial priorities? _____

5. Do we want to have children? No ____ Yes ____ How many? _____

6. What are your views on contraceptives and which partner should use them?

7. Do we agree on styles of child discipline? No ____ Yes ____ Comment:

8. What is our attitude toward credit buying? _____

9. How do we envision our relationship to relatives? _____

10. Are there any factors that might make the relationship difficult? _____

ARE WE READY TO ACCEPT EACH OTHER JUST AS WE ARE?

QUALITY	MY POTENTIAL SPOUSE			ME		
	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely
1. Strong godly character						
2. Fully trustworthy						
3. Brings out best in others						
4. A servant spirit						
5. A hard worker						
6. Self-sacrificing for others						
7. Financially responsible						
8. Plans ahead						
9. Good self-image						
10. Generous						
11. Courteous to others						
12. Builds others up						
13. Fun to be around						
14. Generally optimistic						

15. Complimentary						
16. Easy to talk to						
17. Faithful on the job						
18. Respectful of authority						
19. Not angry quickly						
20. Calm under pressure						

A. If my potential spouse never changed, am I willing to accept them as they presently are?

No ____ Yes ____ Comment: _____

B. Am I confident that this is **the right time** for us to be contemplating marriage?

No ____ Yes ____ Anticipated wedding date? _____