

Faithfulness in Singleness Week #3 – Singleness and Relationships, January 29th, 2023

1. Intro

2. Discipleship Relationships

- a. There is a temptation to avoid other people or to avoid more intentional relationships where you are held accountable.
- b. Don't only hang out with people who are like you or who do the same things as you. Don't only have relationships that are easy and make you feel good.
- c. Be willing to have someone speak truth into your life and to show you where you need to grow and change.
- d. Seek out someone who is godlier and maybe older than you to disciple you or to help hold you accountable in a certain area. Titus 2:1-4
 - i. It may seem awkward but that is okay
 - ii. Be ready to answer tough or embarrassing questions
 - iii. For you ladies, maybe you can ask a mom with kids if you can go over and help her with house chores or with the kids while she discipless you.
 - iv. Men, ask someone to meet you before work or during lunch time. Be creative with your time to make discipleship happen.
 - v. If they forget to follow up or to set up another time to meet, you be the one to follow up and set the meeting time.

- e. Be intentional in your conversations with others. Ask questions that will lead to further godliness.

- f. Invest time into being equipped so that you can be a more faithful disciple-maker. Maybe someone your same age, younger, or older. Seek to dispense the truth and wisdom you have been given to others around you. (more practical suggestions for how to do so are in the book “Zealous”)

3. Dating

“When looking for a spouse, you want to find someone who loves Christ more than [they] love you.” Chris Muller

- a. How do you Know Who You Should Marry?
 - 1. Courting or dating? There is no biblical description or prescription for either. The purpose should not be just to have fun or to find an emotional and sexual partner. The purpose is to see if the two people should get married.

 - 2. The Benjamite, Ruth, Samson, or Abraham’s servant’s method?
 - a. Why can we not look to these as viable options for choosing a spouse?

 - 3. What Should I Be Looking For?
 - a. Someone who is saved (1 Cor 7:39; Eph 5:22-33)
 - a. It can be easy and tempting to compromise biblical standards and date or marry someone who is an unbeliever or someone who professes Christ but has very little evidence.

 - b. Doing so will only lead to pain and struggle and a life filled with hardship.

 - b. Someone who is proven in ministry (serving, discipling others, being poured into by others)
 - a. It is also important to know what other people around you think of the person, and what they think of you

 - c. Someone who lives by the gospel and shares the gospel

- d. Someone who lives out their role as a man or a woman according to God's Word
 - e. Someone who loves God, His Word, His church, and others
 - f. Someone who is demonstrating the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23)
 - g. Someone who is seeking to live out 1 Cor 13:4-7
 - h. Someone who is maintaining biblical purity (1 Tim 5:2; Heb 13:4)
 - a. Avoid someone who makes future promises they are not ready to keep. Many men will say things like "I love you and I can't imagine life without you" only to try and get something that is intended for marriage.
4. What are the Parent's Responsibilities?
- a. Parents generally can help to provide wisdom on who their child should marry. Many times, someone can be spared a very difficult marriage because their parents objected to the spouse.
 - b. Other times, however, parents can seek to deny the marriage for no objective reason.
 - c. There may be times where marriage can be pursued without the parents' consent and peace may not be possible.
5. Physical and Emotional Standards
- a. 1 Cor 7:3-4 – "The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does*; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*."
 - b. Paul is writing to those who are married. Unmarried people are not to do and act like married couples.
 - c. The "problem is that premature physical involvement stirs one's emotions and desires in such a way that it is very hard to

objectively evaluate whether this person has the godly character for a suitable spouse. If someone is leading you into fleshly sin, it is probably an indication that this person is not ready for marriage.”¹

- d. Prov 5:15-20 – loving the wife of your youth and not being given over to other women.
- e. Heb 13:4 – “Marriage *is to be held* in honor among all, and the *marriage bed is to be undefiled*, for the sexually immoral and adulterers God **will judge**.”
- f. “Fornication (sex between two unmarried people) is sin and comes under God’s judgment (Heb. 13:4). Sexual sin is not limited merely to intercourse. God designed every aspect of physical intimacy between a man and a woman to be enjoyed only within marriage. Using someone’s body for sexual pleasure intrudes on what God intended only for a spouse. First Corinthians 7: 3– 4 says that your body belongs to your spouse and that your spouse’s body belongs to you. If you are not yet married, you belong to the spouse whom God will give you one day. When I was single, a wise friend told me, “When you get married, you will wish that you had never kissed anyone other than your wife.” He continued, “Treat the girl you take out on a date as if one day she will be married to your best friend. Or treat her the way you hope the guy who is out with your future wife is treating her.”²
- g. Gen 2:24 – “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”
- h. “Another potential danger of dating relationships is that strong emotional attachments are formed prematurely— that is, before a couple is ready to make a commitment to marriage.”³

6. What Issues Should be Resolved During the Dating Process?⁴

¹ Newheiser, Jim. Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: Critical Questions and Answers (Kindle Locations 1006-1008). P&R Publishing. Kindle Edition

² Ibid. 998-1004

³ Ibid. 1008-1009

⁴ adapted from Ibid.

- a. If someone makes a profession of faith, but is not bearing fruit, then they should not be encouraged to get married to another believer.
- b. Just because someone professes Christ does not make them a Christian.
- c. Do you both have a love for the Gospel?
- d. Do you both have a love for the church? Are you both members of a local church?
 - a. Does this even matter?
- e. What theological differences do you have? How will those affect you in marriage?
- f. Sexual past. Have you discussed any sexual sin from your past? It cannot remain hidden and then be revealed later on in the marriage.
- g. What do your friends say? Do you get along with each other's friends?
- h. Do you have a history of resolving conflict biblically?
- i. Do you currently and quickly confess sin, seek and grant forgiveness?
- j. Are you willing to accept the person for who they are now realizing that neither you nor marriage will change them?
- k. What are your expectations of a spouse and of marriage?
- l. How well do you actually know each other?