

(Godly Courtship) 01 Godly Courtship (Part 1)

by Denny Kenaston

God's heart for marriage is a beautiful order that He planned, where a man and woman become one flesh and are companions to each other.

Duration: 1:11:14

Scripture: Genesis 2:15-17, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 19:5, John 14:6

Topics: "Courtship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the mysterious missing element in a young man that leads him to leave his parents and cleave to his wife. The speaker refers to Ephesians chapter five, where Paul speaks of a great mystery concerning Christ and the church. The speaker encourages young people to strive for excellence in courtship and marriage, highlighting the importance of holding emotions back and not playing around with them. The speaker also discusses the story of Adam and how he trusted God to provide a help meet for him, emphasizing the importance of trusting in God's timing and plan.

Transcript

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Thank God. I thank God for your enthusiastic singing. What a joy it is to sing that way and to be in the midst of people who believe in singing that way and to be in the midst of people whose hearts are set free that they can sing that way.

Well, I come with some fear and trembling to the subject here this morning. I must admit, while I was preparing for these lessons, studying, gazing into God's heart, what His best is, how beautiful it is in this matter of godly courtship, how well it works, I just had to cry because I missed it. I missed it all.

I missed it ignorantly. I knew nothing of it at all because of the way that I was raised and the path that I chose to take. I missed it all.

My heart aches over that and I can't change that. But what I can do instead is I can take that burden and make it translated into a tremendous motivation to encourage all of you young people. Squeeze it for everything that's in it.

Because God has His best in this matter of courtship and marriage. He has His best. And like God in everything else, it is really the best.

It's beautiful. I just encourage you to strive for that which is excellent in this area. I'd like us to open our Bibles to Genesis chapter 2 this morning.

We have three sessions here. I will be speaking about more than just the subject of godly courtship. As I pondered the subject of godly courtship, I realized that there are many issues that precede and there are many issues that follow this matter of godly courtship.

So I felt it wouldn't be wise, nor would you get the depth of what God wants you to grasp concerning this subject if I just dropped in in the middle and started talking about godly courtship. So I want to lay some groundwork and probably we won't get into the actual subject of courtship until tomorrow. Maybe a little bit here this morning.

But I assure you that everything that I'm saying today you need so that I believe that God will use it to stir your heart and your interest and your desire for what you're going to receive tomorrow. So we want to begin by reading in Genesis chapter 2. Brother John mentioned, I believe in his opening session on the Sermon on the Mount, that the kingdom of God is bringing things back into the godly order that God planned for it. So I think as we look at this matter of godly courtship, it's good for us to look here in Genesis chapter 2 at the beautiful order that God planned concerning marriage.

We're reading in chapter 2 from verse 15. And the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make and help meat for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them.

And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle and to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found any help meat for him.

And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept. And he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman and brought her unto the man.

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife.

And they shall be one flesh. What a beautiful portion of Scripture that we find here. You may not feel that way, but I spent a lot of hours in those verses that I just read, not just for these sessions today, but I find myself meditating upon them just about every time we have a wedding.

And I have a message to preach to a young couple concerning marriage. I always find myself going back to these texts because this is God's heart. We see it so beautifully laid out in here.

We want to just look at a few points here in these Scriptures. We want to begin in verse 18. And notice that we have the opportunity here to drop in on the counsels of God.

I don't believe God was just thinking to Himself. I believe He was conferring in the counsels of God. Oh, shall we say, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? In the same way that we find it earlier there, I believe it's in chapter 1 where He says, Let us make man in our image.

So we drop in on the eternal counsels of God. There's a discussion going on. And God says, It is not good for the man to be alone.

I'd like us to recognize that, that God is the one who recognized it. It was God who noticed that. It was God who looked at His creation.

It was God who looked down the road. It was God in all of His wisdom who looked at the man and said, It is not good for the man to be alone. And we'll make a helpmeet for him.

A helpmeet? Well, I think that phrase has been watered down pretty good. As I ponder that and as I've studied that matter of a helpmeet, it's been watered down so much that in the minds of many a man, you may as well say, servant or slave, it's not good for the man to be alone. I'm going to make a woman so that she can help him.

And that's not what God meant when He said that, young men. That's not at all what God meant. He wasn't looking down on Adam and saying, Adam's going to need a lot of help to keep this garden.

I'm going to make a woman that can help him do all the work that's in this garden. That's not what God is saying there. Yes, He is saying, I'm going to make him a helper.

But He's saying, I'm going to make him a helper that is neat for him, that is suitable to him, that is adapted to him, that is compatible to him, that is compared to him, that is a companion to him. That's what God was saying. He wasn't saying, I'm going to make a woman so that Adam has somebody to help him.

That's a pretty shallow vision, isn't it? But I'm afraid that many times, that is how many a young man looks at it, and many a young lady feels like it too in about the first year of marriage, that they understand that's how their husband looks at it. But that isn't how God was looking at it. And that's not on the negative side either, young men.

That's on the positive side. God made woman for so much more than just to help you wash your dishes and cook your food. So much more.

So much more beautiful. So much more meaning. So much more depth than that.

Alright, the next verse that I'd like to look at is, I'd like us to notice in verse 19 and 20 that God prepared Adam. He prepared him. I don't believe that it's an accident that these verses are in there, where the first

couple of times you read them you think, now why did God put that in there? What does that have to do with marriage? You know, here all of a sudden we're talking about the creation again, and the cows and the lions and all that.

What does that have to do with it all? But I believe that it's in here because we can see so clearly that God was preparing Adam. He already looked and saw that Adam needed a helpmeet. But now He wants to help Adam to understand that also.

So He brings all the creatures before Adam and here they come. The lion and the lioness. The cow and the bull.

The hen and the rooster. And they all come before Adam. And Adam starts naming them.

And I'm sure somewhere in there it dawned on him. Male. Female.

Male. Female. Two.

Two. Two by two by two. I don't need to say anything else, do I? And I'm only one.

God prepared him. God put something inside of his heart there. Alright, the next thing I'd like us to notice here.

Isn't that good? Praise God. That's beautiful. But the next thing I'd like us to notice is that Adam slept.

Now God's going to make sure that Adam has a helpmeet. But Adam slept. It wasn't his worry.

There wasn't anything he could do about it. Absolutely nothing. That was God's responsibility.

Adam, he just slept. And he trusted it all to God. He knew something was missing.

He saw all those animals go through there. He knew that he was only one and they were all two. But he just trusted God.

And he went to sleep. And God caused the sleep to fall over him. Alright, the next thing we'd like to notice is in verse 22.

Well, no, we need to look at verse 21. I'm sorry. The Lord God caused the deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept.

And he, God, took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof. So we can see here that God took a rib out of man. Now, that wasn't just a nice way to do it, young men and young ladies.

That wasn't just God's way that God decided, well, now let's see. Now, all the others, you know, all the other creatures, even Adam, I just reached down and I took the dust of the earth and I formed them and then I breathed into them the breath of life and life came into them and man became a living soul and all the animals became living creatures. But God didn't do it that way this time, did He? He did it different and that wasn't an accident.

That wasn't just a flippant choice. He had a very important reason for doing that. He took out of Adam.

He took something out of Adam. And may I interject some thoughts to you here and cause your mind to meditate a little bit. I believe that when Adam woke up, I don't know how soon he saw Eve, his wife, but I believe when Adam woke up, he knew something was missing.

He knew something was missing. Now, a nice little proverb over in Africa, I love it. Brother Francis, the pastor over there at the church in Africa, they had the opportunity, I did, to marry a couple of the couples over there and Brother Francis says of Brother Eakins, Brother Eakins found his rib.

And it's kind of a joke over there, but I tell you what, it's no joke. This is a great mystery, brothers and sisters. But Brother Eakins did find his rib.

Adam woke up and Adam knew that something was missing. Something that was inside of him was now not there anymore. Something was not there and it was missing.

So God took the rib. And with a rib, instead of the dust of the earth, God made woman. After his kind, after Adam, like Adam, out of Adam, God made the woman.

And when Adam woke up, I believe that he knew that something was missing. And verse 22, And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman and brought her unto the man. Can you just imagine with me a little bit that meeting? Ponder it.

See, this is what meditation is. We don't just read over the verse, but we stop and we picture it. Picture this.

This happened. Adam went asleep. Adam woke up.

Something was missing. And God took the woman and gave the woman unto Adam. Can you imagine that meeting? Adam's loneliness was fulfilled with a companion.

Adam's love had something to release itself upon. Until then, he didn't have anything. He had the love.

He had the capacity to love. Because God made him after his image. But he had nothing to release that love upon.

Think about it with me. Adam had never loved a woman. Eve had never loved a man.

She had never released her emotions of love to a man. And Adam had never released the emotions of love to a woman. Can you imagine what that meeting must have been like? She was perfect.

She was absolutely perfect. And he was perfect. And he was everything that God wanted him to be.

And she was everything that God wanted her to be. Can you imagine what that meeting must have been like? Bless the Lord. Now notice Adam's response here in verse 23.

He is pretty excited about it. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man.

He gave her a name right away. He knew right away. That which is missing is not missing anymore.

I'm going to call her woman. My name is man. I'm going to call her woman.

Taken out of man. And he knew it. This is bone of my bone.

This is flesh of my flesh. She was taken out of me. She is just like me.

Adam was excited about it. That day there in that meeting, Adam became unreservedly a one woman man. And that day in that garden, Eve became unreservedly a one man woman.

What a beautiful beginning, amen? Talk about the kingdom of God. Talk about God's beautiful order. Talk about God's lovely kingdom.

We've just gotten a beautiful glimpse into the kingdom of God. What kind of relationship do you think they had with a meeting like this? How do you think he felt about her? Do you think he looked at her and said, Thank you, Lord. Come on, Eve.

There's a lot of work to do in the garden. Let's go. Do you think he looked at her that way? And I know we chuckle about that.

But let's get some depth out of it too. He didn't look at her that way. My... He looked at her.

My treasure. My wife. My queen.

A gift from God. This gift that God gave me. A woman.

A wife. What kind of a relationship do you think they had? How do you think Eve looked at him as she was standing there? And she realized, I came out of him. There's this wound over here in his side.

I came out of him. Why? I wasn't. But now I am.

And I was made for him. What kind of a relationship do you think they had? Oh, it was beautiful. It was beautiful.

Alright, on to verse 24 here. Verse 24 says, Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh. Now I'd like to, for some of you, you may get tired of hearing this, but I'd like for us to look at and see why the therefore is there.

Because there is one in this verse. Therefore is there. We know that therefore is there as a summation.

Therefore is referring to the things that happened before. The statements that were made. The picture that we saw.

The reality of what we've just looked at. And at the end of all of that, that was just described, that we read, we find this word therefore. And I believe that there's a great key in that word right there.

That God had something to say to us. There's something mysterious. There's something mysteriously missing in a young man that causes him to leave his father and his mother and cleave unto a wife.

There's something mysteriously missing. You'll think about it. Ponder it.

Ephesians chapter 5 where we find these very words read again in the Scriptures. And then Paul said, this is a great mystery, but I speak of you concerning Christ and the church. And I'm not sure what all that means.

But I'm going to be digging into that one. You can be sure of it. But consider with me, there's something missing.

There's something that's not complete. And therefore, a young man shall leave his father and his mother. And many a father and a mother feel hurt when a young man wants to leave father and mother.

But there's something missing. And the two shall be one flesh. That which is apart, that which is separated, that which is missing, that which is incomplete, shall become one, shall become together, shall be completed.

And before I get too far into this, I want to assure you I do believe in 1 Corinthians chapter 7 also that in this New Testament age that we live in, it is God's will for some not to marry. But nevertheless, this mysterious thing that happens works in the hearts of young men. Well, this is a beautiful story, as I've said already.

To me, it just thrills my heart to look at it from God's perspective and all the beauty that God planned for it. It thrills my heart and I wish that the next chapter wasn't where it is. I really do.

But nevertheless, chapter 3 of Genesis is in the Bible and we're not going to read it here this morning, but it's the account of the fall. And because chapter 3 is in the Bible, that's the reason why all the rest of the things that I need to say, the rest of this session, and the one tomorrow, and the one on Friday need to be said because chapter 3 is in the Bible. And man fell.

And all that beautiful order that God set into motion has been muddled up. It's been confused. It's been tainted by sin.

It's been infected by a lower nature. And because of that, that's why we're going to have the rest of the session today and tomorrow and on Friday because there is a Genesis chapter 3. God wants to restore this beautiful, meaningful part of His order and His kingdom. That is God's heart.

I'm sure that every one of you agree with that. That God, it's in the heart of God to do everything that He can in order to bring back into reality these beautiful pictures that we've seen here in Genesis 2. That is God's heart. He wants that to be.

How do I know when it is time to pursue this awesome relationship called marriage? How do I know that? That's a question that many, many young people ask themselves. Many times they ask it. Sometimes they ask it to others.

I believe they're very wise when they start asking those kind of questions to their fathers and their mothers and spiritual leaders. That's a wise question to ask. Rather than to just think on your own and independently, I will figure it out on my own when I'm ready for this.

But how will I know when it's time to pursue this relationship called marriage? There's three things I'd like to bring out. First of all, God will help you to know. He's very concerned about it.

He's very concerned that it be right. He's very concerned that it come forth in the beauty by which we've just looked at it here. I assure you that God will help you to know when it's time for you to pursue this relationship of marriage.

By the continual promptings of His Spirit in the quiet of your heart, in the quietness of your own prayer closet, in the sweetness of your own meditations, at times when you are meditating upon the Scripture and you are sitting there in the presence of God, God will tell you. He will help you to know that now that it's time, may I encourage each one of you, do not move forward in any of these things until you can sense those promptings coming from God. And if you don't know the presence of God, please don't try to make those kind of decisions.

Find out who God is first. But God will help you to know when it's time for you to enter into these relationships. Number two, your parents will be able to help you to discern this.

They know you. They know you like nobody else knows you except God. They know you.

They know where you're at. They know the level of your maturity. They know your strengths.

They know your weaknesses. They know your walk with God. They know you.

Let your parents help you to discern when it's time for you to pursue this relationship called marriage. And thirdly, godly leaders will also be able to give you some insight concerning this subject. If you have godly leaders in your life, some of you I know you don't, but some of you do.

Don't just pass them by. They can also help you in this area. They also know you.

They watch for your soul. They've been watching over you. In some situations, they've watched you grow up.

They know you for five years. They know you for ten years. Let them help you to discern when it's time for you to enter into this relationship.

Some principles for you to consider in your own heart. When is it time? When am I ready to enter into such an awesome relationship as marriage? Some principles to consider. First of all, the principle of maturity.

You need to ask yourself, am I mature? Am I a mature Christian? And you may say here this morning, oh, come on, I'm not forty years old. I didn't say that you needed to be a forty-year-old mature Christian. But the question you need to ask yourself, am I a mature Christian? Which means, have I learned to walk with God? Have I allowed God to work in my life and build character in my life? Have I allowed God to stabilize my life? Can I say that I'm one who is established in the faith? I believe that you can be that long before you're forty years old, young men.

You can be established in the faith long before that. But that's a question that we need to ask ourselves, young men, young ladies. Am I mature? Am I steady? Am I established in the faith? Do I have a relationship with God? Don't move ahead if you don't have that.

Don't do it. You'll mess up the beautiful kingdom. Number two, some principles to consider.

Have I mastered the authority issue in my life? By the grace of God, have I mastered the authority issue in my life? What do I mean by that? Am I under authority? Am I sweetly under authority? Do I love authority? Do I pursue it? Do I long for my authority's protection over my life? Do I long to hear what they think about my life? When you get to that place, you have mastered this area of authority. And it's not as hard as some of you might think. It's not that hard.

I assure you, when you master it, you'll know it. Because it's one of the richest, sweetest experiences in your Christian life. When you have mastered it, you will know it.

You will know it because of the absence of conflict with those that are in authority over you. You will know it because of the sweet closeness that you have with those that are in authority over you. You will know it because of the sweet thoughts of love and respect that you have for those that are in authority over you.

You will know it because of the thoughts of gratitude that you have on your heart unto God as you realize that you have authorities over you. You will know that you have mastered this matter of authority. Number three.

And these are big ones, and we could break them down. We don't have time. Number three, am I married to Christ? Am I married to Christ? I feel this is a very important one.

Is Jesus my all in all? Is He the sweet, beloved lover of my soul? Is He the sweetest relationship of my life? Is Jesus the lover of my soul? Am I married to Christ? And this morning as I say these things and I look out over your faces, and I can read your faces by the way. Everybody that stands up here can. Most of the time.

And some of you are saying, Man, that is a high standard. That is a high standard. No it isn't.

That's the Christian life. That's not a high standard. That's the Christian life.

You're supposed to be in love with Jesus. He's supposed to be the altogether lovely one in your heart and in your experience. You should be content in Jesus just to love and serve Him.

Are you there? What a beautiful place for God to lead you from. Here you are. You're just lost in the love of your Savior.

You love Him. You're serving Him. And the thrill of serving Him is a reality in your heart and your life.

And in the midst of all of that, you're just wrapped up in Him. In the midst of all of that, the Lord starts knocking on your heart and says, My son, my daughter, did you ever consider getting married? What Lord? What was that? And you know I like it if you're so wrapped up in the other one that He has to knock a few times, you know. And maybe He sends a father by and says, Son, have you considered getting married, you know? Mom and I have been praying about this.

What Dad? What? I like that. That's good. That's healthy.

And the older men say, Amen! And all the younger men are quiet. But I tell you what, you enter into it that way, yes, God, He will get your attention because He's the sweet lover of your soul and He will get your attention and you will finally realize, yes, the Lord is talking to me. And you start down that road of seeking God about a life partner and courtship and marriage and all of that, and you walk into the middle of that out of that relationship of love for Jesus like that, dear brother, dear sister, I can almost guarantee you one of the sweetest relationships this side of heaven.

So those are just a few principles that I wanted to share with you that are good for you to consider. When am I ready for this? You may say, Brother Denny, I'm 20 now. That will take me five more years.

Well, it might not take as long as you think if you'll raise it up there as a standard for your life. But the problem is so many times it's not raised up there as a standard and we think, well, we'll get by with it on a lesser standard and we're just real glad and happy that Mom and Dad have a lower standard too. And we can pull it by Mom and Dad, you know.

And we'll get Mom and Dad's consent to go ahead when in reality these things are not a reality in our life. I tell you, young man, young lady, you're better to wait until you're 25 and have these things there in your life and God to be a reality to you than to slip one by Mom and Dad because you'd like to get a wife or a husband. There are higher goals than that.

Much higher goals than that. You know, as I was pondering this message, I was looking for different Scriptures that I should pull out and it was suggested to me by someone, maybe at 1 Corinthians 7, maybe we could talk about that, where it says that to avoid fornication let every man have a wife and let every woman have a husband. You know, I thought about that and I thought, dear Lord, that was written to the Corinthian church.

They were having a lot of moral problems. We're not the Corinthian church I trust. What a weak and a second-rate motive to want a husband or to want a wife.

I've got to get me a wife. I want to avoid fornication. Man, that's a pretty weak reason.

It is a biblical reason. And God will bless you if that's all you can do. But oh, God has a much higher goal than that.

Much higher than that. What kind of partner do I need? Notice I said what kind of partner do I need. Not what kind of partner do I want.

But I trust that the need and the want are the same thing. And may I say when you get down into this area, it's time to open your eyes. There will be a time for you to shut your eyes after you're married.

But right now, it's time to open your eyes. And I would encourage you to do that. Not here this morning.

This morning what you should do is open your heart and allow God to put into your heart some clear biblical convictions about what kind of a partner do I need that I, by the grace of God, can live out this beautiful kingdom of God and bring back the order and bring back the beauty and the harmony that God planned for. What kind of a wife or partner do I need? And I have five points here on this one. Number one, one with a vision.

One with a vision. One that sees just beyond. One that sees beyond just having a husband or a wife.

You want one with a vision higher than that. You want one that sees eternal things as they look down the road and as they look at marriage and they consider life in the future and what God's will is for them. You find one that sees something.

That sees godliness. That sees order. That sees a godly family.

That sees a testimony. That sees a life message. That sees the work of God.

That sees the building of the kingdom. You find one like that. I've often said, and I do believe this, don't even consider the ones that don't have any vision.

Well, I want to get married. What for? I need a wife. I need a husband.

What for? I'd like to have some children. Don't go that way. The goals are so much higher than that.

So much higher. Number two. You need one that is virtuous.

A virtuous woman? A virtuous man? A virtuous one? What do you mean one that is virtuous? Well, we can look at Proverbs chapter 31. On the lady's side, there we have the most beautiful commentary of a virtuous woman that you'll ever find in the Bible. It's all put together there.

All packed together in all those verses. And I tell you, you won't find this kind out in the world, and you won't find it in a worldly church usually. Because the goals of the women in many churches today are far from those in Proverbs chapter 31.

But I'd like you to consider Proverbs chapter 31. When you're looking for a virtuous woman, you find one who is virtuous like it is in Proverbs chapter 31. And those are down-home virtues.

The kind that make for an orderly home. The kind that make for a godly home and blessed children. You look for one like that.

One that knows how to sow. One that knows how to cook. One that knows how to keep a house.

One that would be concerned about children. You look for one like you find there in Proverbs 31. That, I assure you, that's the kind that you need.

Forget about the natural beauty. I'm not against that. But if you put that up there on the top of your list, you may be surprised, young men.

And you may be surprised, young ladies. The most beautiful one, the most handsome one, is often not the most virtuous one. I'm not saying it's always that way.

But don't put that at the top of the list. You take a young lady, a young man. You get their heart clear and clean and pure.

You fill that heart with the grace of God. You let them be filled with the joy of God. You get a radiance on that face.

It will be beautiful. It will be handsome. Even though it may not have everything just perfect on it.

A virtuous woman, but also a virtuous man. There is no chapter in the Bible describing a virtuous man. I believe the reason for that is because the whole Bible is there to challenge us men.

It's all there. But you look for a man who is filled with virtues. Godly character is point number three.

One who has been developing the qualities of godliness in their life. Notice I said developing. I'm not saying that they're all there.

Everything is perfect. I'm not telling you that. I don't want to send you away from here with some ideal that you'll never be able to find.

I'm not saying that. But one who is developing the qualities of godly character. And you know they're changing.

They're allowing God to work on them in this area. God is purified over here. You look for one like that.

Who has their focus on godly character. And they're in the midst of God transforming their life into the beautiful character of Christ. Point number four, and this one has already been said, but I want to say it again.

In another perspective. What kind of partner do I need? Consider this matter of authority. Young men, you don't need a wife who has not found this beautiful place of being under the authority of her father and her mother.

You do not need a wife like that. You do not need it. But you say, but she's pretty.

And you say, but I like her. But I don't think it'll be a problem. Hear me, hear me.

You don't need a wife that has not learned the beautiful place of being under the authority of her father and her mother. You don't need one like that. I'm not saying God can't work in spite of all that, but now we're down here choosing.

If I can use Brother Phillip's illustration. You know, now don't just walk in there and stick your hand in that wood lathe. You don't need one like that.

And young ladies, you don't need a young man who has not learned to be under authority. I tell you from experience of watching many, many a home. If he doesn't know how to be under authority, he will absolutely fail at being in authority.

If he doesn't know how to be under authority, he won't be a leader. He might stomp on you. He might push you around.

But he will not be a leader. If he doesn't know how to be under authority, he won't be a leader in a good way, in a positive way. He won't be one of those that leads out and says, let's go in this direction.

It doesn't happen. Secret, secret. Young man, young lady, this is a big secret.

But really it's not. This is one that you don't want to just pass over in your mind. You need a husband.

You need a wife that has mastered this area of authority. And lastly, and I said this already, but I'll say it again. You need one who is in love with Jesus.

It's not enough to say, well, she says she's a Christian. He goes to a good church. He's in a good youth group.

It's not enough to do that. It's not enough. Those things can be put on.

There's plenty of hypocrites around. It's not enough to say, I'm a Christian. It's not enough to say, I love Jesus.

It's not enough to go to a good church. It's not even enough to be from a good family. That's not enough.

You need to love Jesus. And you need to be able to know that by the testimony of their life. And everybody knows somebody who loves Jesus.

There's no question about it. You know it. You know it this week.

You spot them. You spot the ones that you know without a doubt. That young lady loves Jesus.

That young man, he loves Jesus. No question about it. You want one that loves Jesus.

Alright, I'd like to say a couple of things about waiting. And some of this is in preparation for tomorrow. And I think I'll have enough time to drop this on your hearts.

To ponder through the day and to bring with you tomorrow. What about the waiting? I just put a waiting period before you, didn't I? I didn't give you any years. And I don't believe it's right to necessarily set a year and say, by this year you can do such and such.

But rather we go by the scriptural principles that are in the Word of God. And when we rise up to a level of maturity, then it's time to move into this area of marriage. But I put a waiting period before you.

What do you do while you're waiting? What should you do? Young man, what should you do? Should you build a big business? Should you make a bunch of money while you're waiting? No, you won't mature if you do that. You'll be waiting a long time. Don't do that.

Use these years of waiting to deepen your relationship with God and your relationship with others. Use these years of waiting as a motivation to holiness and purity. Use these years for that.

Use your desire to get married, to have a wife. Use that motivation to change your whole life. It's interesting, the motivation that we see in the Scriptures, the motivation to have a wife.

What a powerful thing it is. I think of David in the Scriptures, where David was supposed to have Michael as his wife. Michael, the daughter of Saul.

And Saul meant it for evil, but it didn't matter to David. He wanted Michael to be his wife. And Saul evilly said, well, I want the foreskins of a hundred Philistines as a dowry.

You give that, you can have my daughter Michael to wife. Well, that didn't bother David at all. The motivation to have a young lady as a life companion was so strong in him, he went out and slew 200 Philistines.

He got double the dowry. That's because there's a tremendous motivation there. Use it to purify your life, to build your relationship with Jesus Christ, to build the relationships of those that are around you.

I think about Jacob. He wanted Rachel. Oh, he wanted Rachel for a wife.

And he went to Rachel's father and asked, can I have Rachel to wife? And we know the story, how that Laban deceived him, and he worked for seven years. And the Bible says, it seemed like a short time to him, but he worked for seven years. How could he do that? There was something motivating him.

You take this time of waiting and use that as a time, use that motivation there as a time of purifying your life. I'd like to say something else about waiting. I'd like to encourage you to wait emotionally.

Wait emotionally. If we could just refer back to Genesis chapter 2. Adam released the emotions of romantic love that were deep inside of him when God brought Eve to him. And Eve released the emotions of romantic love which were inside of her.

She released them onto Adam. Save yourself emotionally for your husband, for your wife. I believe that God's best, God's perfect will, God's sweetest order, as much as possible is that you be a virgin physically and emotionally when you enter into this matter of marriage.

I believe that's God's perfect will that you be a virgin, not just physically, but emotionally. And I praise God that around here we have the standard of physical purity and virginity. Praise God for that.

I just rejoice over it. I've been around a lot. It's a beautiful thing.

And we're blessed that we have that standard. But I tell you, I believe we need to raise the standard a little higher than that. Because just like everything else in the Christian life, just like we heard from Brother Philip today, it's not the act.

It's the heart. Save yourself emotionally for your husband. Young men, save yourself emotionally for your wife.

How beautiful! How beautiful that a young man can hold his emotions back and watch guard over them and not allow them to run away and not give them to this young lady and then give them to this young lady. And she may not even know that you did it. But you did it.

But just hold those emotions in check. Why? Why? I'm saving them for the most precious woman in my life. I don't know who she is yet, but I'm saving them for her.

Sorry, all you other young ladies, this is a prized possession and I'm saving these emotions for the precious young lady of my life's partner. Young ladies, you do the same. You put a rein on your emotions.

Put a rein on them. Don't let them go. If I could just encourage you sisters, throw away all those romance books.

I mean that. I don't even think you need to try to figure out what's wrong with them. I think you ought to do it just because I told you to throw them away.

Because they're ruining you. They're doing things inside of you that's early. It's premature.

You're not even supposed to know what all those feelings are about. And some of you have been running all over the country in your mind and you love this one and you love this one and it's all in a book and I tell you it's poison and it's from the pit and they need to go in a burn barrel and be burned. And I know you young men, you don't do those things.

You don't read books like that or maybe some of you do, but you don't need the book, you know. You've got your own movie theater. God would take us deeper than just holding the standard of physical virginity.

God would have us to hold our emotions that yea, truly so, that when God does finally knock on our heart's door and wake us up and try to get our attention which is all wrapped up in Jesus, we come to that place where we begin to release our emotions. I tell you what, young men and young ladies, it's beautiful. It's thrilling.

Don't play around with it early. You'll just mess it up. You'll dull it.

You'll confuse it. And it won't be the same. It won't be the same.

Hold those emotions back. You say, how can we do that? Brother Denny, that's impossible. You're asking us to do something that's impossible.

Am I? Let me ask you a question. I'm married 21 years tomorrow. Praise God.

21 years tomorrow. Is it right for me to release my emotions of love toward another woman? What do you all think? Everybody disagrees with that. Well, that's wrong! Brother Denny, that's wrong! That's unlawful! Well, what shall I do? What shall I do if all of a sudden a temptation comes my way to release my emotions to another woman? What shall I do? You tell me.

You give me some counsel. We all know the answer, don't we? We all know what Brother Denny should do. He should rise up by the grace of God and crucify those feelings.

That's what Brother Denny should do. Well, may I suggest to you today that if Brother Denny must do that and Brother Denny can do that, then you must do it too and you can do it too. Turn with me to Colossians 3. I'm just about done here.

I know I'm over. In Colossians 3, we want to look at a couple of words here in these verses we're going to read, but I'll give them to you ahead of time so that you can see the flow of context that surrounds these words. But we want to look at the words inordinate affection.

Inordinate affection. It's found in verse 5. Now let's read the context here. Verse 1, If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Amen. Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth. And you notice that word affection.

Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth. Why? For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.

Mortify therefore. There's another therefore. Mortify or put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry, for which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.

Now we see the context of these verses, and we want to look a little bit at the words inordinate affection. That's a very interesting little group of words there. We know what affection means.

We've been talking about affection. That's exactly what we're talking about. Do not allow your affections to be released in the direction of a young lady or young ladies.

Do not allow your affections to be released in the direction of a young man before your time. That's what we've been talking about. So, we've got the word affection, and we all understand that.

But the word I'd like to look at is the word inordinate. Inordinate means out of limits. Inordinate means out of order.

Inordinate means unrestrained. So now let's look at it again. These out-of-limits affections, these out-of-order affections, these unrestrained affections, put them to death is what Paul is saying here in

Colossians chapter 3. Why? For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Why? Because you're to set your affections on things above. Why? Because they are out of order. Now I believe that this Scripture here is not necessarily talking about the relationships that we're discussing here.

It's talking about mine that I described to you. For me to release my affections toward another woman is an inordinate affection. It is out of order.

And it's right in the middle of uncleanness and lasciviousness and evil concupiscence and all of those other things. To release my affections in the direction of another woman is inordinate affection. Or they are affections that are out of limits and they are out of order.

And I'm just presenting to you this morning that I believe you can get some mileage out of this word in this whole area of saving your emotions for one man and for one young lady. Now I'm not saying this morning that if you have some thought about a boy or a girl or there's a little affection that rises in your heart that this is evil and it's time for you to hit the mourner's bench and this is a gross sin. I'm not saying that.

But I'm saying when you begin to release your love, the romantic love of your heart at the age of 15 and 16 to this one and then to this one and many times nobody even knows that it's happening. It's all in the secret chamber of your heart that this is taking place. I'm saying that you are bordering on these very words of having affections that are out of order.

And it's not going to come out right for you. And it's not saving yourself for your husband. Or it's not saving yourself for your wife.

I believe we need to lift the standard up a little higher. That when God brings a young lady and a young man together, they can sit down together and they can say one to another. My heart is overflowing with love for you and I want you to know that it's never overflowed before.

I've been tempted for it to overflow, but I stopped it. By the grace of God, I didn't allow it to stay. That's a beautiful way to start.

And that's the right place to end.

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