

# Ungodly Practice of Dating

by Tim Conway

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of biblical headship in the family, particularly in the area of dating and marriage, and encourages fathers to take an active role in guiding and protecting their daughters.*

**Duration:** 1:18:40

**Scripture:** Numbers 30:2-3, Deuteronomy 22:13-17, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Dating"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of relying on the strength of the Lord to conquer the challenges and obstacles in life. He specifically mentions children as one of the 'monsters' that God has given parents to conquer. The preacher highlights the short season parents have with their children and the responsibility they have to guide and care for them. He also addresses the topic of biblical courting and the need for parents to study the Scriptures and equip themselves to lead their children through this process. The sermon concludes with a reminder for parents to handle their children with care and to be mindful of the potential pitfalls in the area of dating.

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## Transcript

Grant me your attention as we get started this morning. I did tell the children, I was going to ask you parents, how many of you know who Ishbi B'Nab is? I told the children, I don't think one adult is going to know who that is. And they said, not even Brother Charles? I said, no, I don't think so.

Ishbi B'Nab. Okay children, let the adults know who that is. He's a giant and one of David's mighty men killed him.

In fact, I think it was Abishai was the one that killed him. And there were four different giants that we find in 1 Samuel that were put to death. One of them had six fingers on each hand.

Do you remember Og, the king of Bashan? He was also a giant. I talked to the children today about giant killers in the Scriptures. And we, as Christians, are yet called to be giant killers.

This isn't just something for the fairy tales. Dragon slayers and giant killers are very much a reality today. They're big things that God has called little people to conquer.

But when we go in the strength of the Lord, we can conquer them. If we go in our own strength, we can't do it. We can't do it.

You know, one of those monsters that God has given us to conquer are our children. And every parent here knows the weightiness of that truth. This week, well, I think it was last week actually, I was reading in my own personal Bible study time and going through the prophecy of Ezekiel.

The Lord, in Ezekiel 16, boy, in the middle of Ezekiel's prophecy, there are some of the most incredibly angry words that come forth from God. Wrathful words. It is the place in the history of Jerusalem where God is going to destroy them and there is no hope of repentance.

There is no hope that God's going to turn away. He tells them, I am going to do this and I am not going to turn away my wrath. And it doesn't matter if you even had righteous men among you like Noah, Daniel.

It doesn't even matter if you have men like this. I would not turn away my wrath. Repentance from men like that will not turn me away.

It's not going to happen. His anger is fierce. And as He is telling, chronicling all the devastation and destruction and despair and sorrow that He is going to bring on the people of Jerusalem, He begins to go through and tell them why He is going to do this.

And He lists their sins. And in the course of listing their sins, one of the terrible abominations that they committed was that they offered their children as sacrifices to foreign gods. I want you to hear exactly how the Lord Himself describes this atrocity.

He says in Ezekiel 16, 20, And you took your sons and your daughters, whom you had borne to Me, and these you sacrificed to them. By them, He means the gods, the idols, the images that they were worshipping, to be devoured. Were your whorings... Now, He's not talking about sexual whorings.

He's talking about idolatrous whorings. Were your whorings so small a matter that you slaughtered My children and delivered them up as an offering by fire to them? The Lord says here, your sons and your daughters. But He says that because they're their responsibility.

But He says, these sons and daughters that He calls yours, He says, they have borne to Him. And then the Lord points to each one of those children and He calls them My children. Your children belong to Him.

And I realize He's speaking to Jerusalem here, but the same principle is true for our children as much as it is for their children. We bear them to Him. And they're His.

Parents, do you ever just sit down, sit back and watch your children and realize, they're not mine. They're not mine. I've been entrusted with them.

And folks, you know what? You have been entrusted with them for a short season. You do not have long with these children. All you have to do is ask somebody whose children are already gone out of the house.

They will tell you, it happens like that. In a flash. It is, they are gone.

You only have them entrusted to your care for a short season. We just simply don't have long. And you know what? You guys only get one go around at this thing.

There is not a second chance. No second chances here. How many parents say, oh, where did I go wrong? But you know what? They're asking that after the fact.

When it's too late to correct anything that they did wrong. Folks, if we're going to ask about doing wrong, we need to ask ourselves right now while we have time to change what might be wrong. Not later.

Folks, we need to seek to perfect this thing. The Scripture says, whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might. Well, God has given your hand to be a parent.

And you need to give it all your effort. Give it a good effort. You need to seek to perfect this thing, looking to the Lord and trusting Him.

We need to seek to give this thing our best, folks. And you know, biblical parenting is one of the hardest things that God has given us as Christians to do in this life. Folks, He has entrusted living souls to your care.

Living souls entrusted to your care. Handle them with care. Handle them with care.

One of the areas that parents have the potential to go wrong is in the area and deals with the subject matter that I want to cover today. It is in the area of dating. Folks, parents have a responsibility to guide their children.

Wait, this thing has just had its better day. There's no question about it. Parents are failing in this area.

No question about it. Is it worthy of a sermon? Yeah, it is. It's worthy of lots of sermons.

And I believe that one of the problems in this country and one of the reasons that parents and Christian parents have gone astray in this matter is because you know something? There's been a failure in the pulpit. I mean, I would challenge any one of you guys to tell me when you have ever heard a message about biblical courting or dating in your entire lives. And yet, it is a huge matter.

It is a huge matter. It is a huge responsibility as far as our parenting goes. This is an area that we are not properly, biblically instructed in.

And I say that for myself. I know that I have not had messages about biblical courting pressed upon my conscience. And you know what? You hear some things about it.

You've got people out there like Joshua Harris, why kiss dating goodbye, and there's some things like that. But you know what? Even for the amount of biblical courting material that I've come across or I've heard about, rarely have I ever seen somebody really open up the Bible and show why is one way right and one way not right. Why is it right? I mean, give me some... You know what? I get frustrated with hearing people say, well, the Bible says do this.

And you know, in a lot of the courting stuff and a lot of the dating stuff, you hear people say, the Bible teaches this. The Bible teaches this. The Bible teaches this.

But you know what? They never go and show you where it teaches that. Because a lot of times when guys say that, when I read it in a sermon or hear it on a tape, I'm thinking, well, where does it say that? You don't say where it says it. Because right off, I can't think of where it says it.

And you know what? If you don't have Scripture bearing weight on your conscience, just because a man says the Bible says it, it doesn't hold a lot of weight with me and probably not with you either. So we need to dive into this. Now, parents, God has given you wisdom.

He's given you a measure of biblical understanding. He's given you knowledge. He's given you things that your children don't have, right? He has brought you to a place where every Christian adult in this room has knowledge about what would make a good spouse.

They have biblical knowledge. They have practical understanding about what a good spouse ought to be and what one ought not to be. And yet, isn't it amazing that for all that wisdom that's been imparted to Christian parents, the dating system bypasses that just about altogether.

You've got little girls bringing home boys and boys bringing home girls, and they're the ones selecting. And the parents are left out of this formula almost altogether. And yet, we're the ones who have been given to our children to guide them and lead them and train them and instruct them and warn them.

And how the present day system... I'm telling you folks, Satan wants parents out of the formula. Because he knows the danger that there is when we get involved in our children's lives. There just might be a godly result in the matter.

And he doesn't want that. But God does want that. Now, you guys might think I'm going to dive right into this and say, well, of course, dating's wrong.

You know, you throw a guy and a girl out in the back seat of a car. What do you expect? Well, of course, that is, and there's a place to discuss that. But you know, I really think as I've studied this issue up, I'll tell you what I did.

I started off by going to daughter and daughters and virgin and virgins and words like that. And I scoured the whole Bible. Because as I've looked at this and I've considered it, I feel like, I have a sense, and I think the biblical evidence will back me up on this, there is a failure, folks.

There is a failure at the point of sound biblical headship in the family. I think that is the starting point of the fracture in this area of the lives of our children and of our families today. Not just out there in the world, but in Christian circles.

I think it is a matter of headship failure. And now maybe you wonder, well, what do you mean by headship? I mean authority. Folks, when you go to the Bible, I realize feminists don't like this.

This might sound sexist to some of you. But listen, it's biblical. God has ordained.

In fact, you know what? When you go to the Bible, you find that Jesus Christ is the One who created everything. He created it. If it's out there, folks, He made it.

If it's light, if it's day and night, if it's the plants that come up, if it's the seas and the dry land, if it's the animals, the birds in the air, the fish in the sea, we find out in John 1.1 and following there that in the beginning was the Word. And you know what? There's not a thing out there, folks, that wasn't created by Him. He ordained it.

And you know what? Not only that, He ordained all the structures. He ordained society. He ordained the way the family would be.

He ordained the way the church would be. He ordained the way that government would operate. And you know what you find in the Scriptures? You find this principle of male headship.

It's biblical. God designed men to lead in government. He designed them to lead in the church.

And He designed them to lead in the family. And that just can't even be argued. Now, I know there are exceptions where women may need to take up the headship in a family or in the government.

But they're exceptions. They're not the rule. They're exceptions to the rule.

And I would remind you of this, guys. God did not give male leadership and male headship to oppress. He gave it to protect.

And so that needs to be where we start out with. And I want to deal first and foremost with that headship issue as it involves fathers and daughters. Now, no doubt about it, it includes fathers and sons or fathers and wives.

But when you go to the Word of God, you find far more emphasis on the father-daughter. Now, I know you go to Proverbs and you find lots of instruction being given to the son, but when it comes to the headship and the authority issue, you find the submission emphasized far more in the Word of God when it concerns daughters. And I want to show this to you because I believe, folks, that this is where the breakdown is.

I really believe that if this is corrected in our families, then there will be a natural outflowing that will tend to cause young men to have to conform as well. Because I'll tell you this, folks, if a man isn't going to let his daughter get touched by any young man until he is responsible, until he's hardworking, until he proves himself as a leader and shows himself to be brave and courageous, if all fathers took that position and a young man couldn't, I'll tell you, his sexual drive and his desire to have a wife and his desire to lay his hand on a woman would be pretty compelling to get him to conform to certain standards. But that's not the way it is today because young men basically have sex handed to them on a plate and there's no responsibility required.

And so you know what you've got? You've got a bunch of young men that aren't responsible. So, let's jump into the Word of God. Let's check this out.

First thing is, you guys know that there is definitely a principle and you're going to say, well, yeah, we're familiar with this. It's in our culture today. But there is a biblical principle about fathers giving their daughters in marriage.

You might say, yeah, but you've come across it a lot. So if you've read your Bible any fair amount of time, you've come across the verses that deal with this. You've heard this.

Let's just look at some. The first one I want to read to you... Don't look at all these because I'm going to shoot through them very fast, but open your ears right now. We'll all read together in the Scriptures in just a second.

This first one I want to read to you, pay very close attention. You'll probably never hear it read again in a sermon the rest of your life. 1 Chronicles 2.35 So, Shishan gave his daughter in marriage to Jarhah his slave.

Exodus 2.21 Moses was content to dwell with the man Jethro. And he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah. Genesis 41.45 Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphonath-Paneah.

And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potipharah, priest of An. Nehemiah 10.30 We will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land. Joshua 15.16 And following Caleb said, Whoever strikes Curiah-Sephar and captures it, to him will I give Aksa, my daughter as wife.

Anath-Neel, the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, captured it and he gave him Aksa, his daughter, as wife. In 1 Samuel 18.17, Saul said to David, Here is my elder daughter Merab. I will give her to you for a wife.

Now, ultimately, he didn't end up giving her to him, but the point was he was saying I will give her. In 1 Samuel 18.27, David arose and went along with his men, killed 200 of the Philistines. David brought their foreskins, which were given in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law.

And Saul gave him his daughter Michael. Not spelled like the guy's name, but it's a girl's name. Michael for a wife.

Jeremiah 29.6, Take wives and have sons and daughters. Take wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage. In Judges 21.1, the men of Israel had sworn at Mizpah, no one of us shall give his daughter in marriage to Benjamin.

Genesis 34.8, you know, one of Jacob's daughter Dinah was raped and Hamor, the father of the young man that raped her, spoke with Jacob and his family saying, the soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him to be his wife. Now, you guys might think, well, yeah, we still have that.

I mean, in our wedding ceremonies, what does the father do? Papa, what did you do? Did you take her hand and set it in mine? I don't remember exactly how we did that. But you know that happens in weddings. You have the father.

Typically, in a first wedding, a lot of times in later weddings, it doesn't happen this way, but in the first wedding, you have the father who will hand his daughter over to the groom. Well, folks, that's only a ceremony. You know what? It's symbolic of a greater truth.

We still have the symbolism in our society, but we've in great measure lost the truth that goes behind the symbolism. Because you know what you've got? You've got Daddy's little girl who brings home some guy and he doesn't like him. And he doesn't trust him.

And he's got a thousand things that he thinks are wrong with this guy, but you know what? He keeps his mouth shut and in the end, they end up there at the altar and he never did like the guy, but he just hands his daughter over to him and never says a word. And you know what? He hasn't given his daughter. He hasn't been in control of this thing.

He hasn't looked at a young man and found approval in him and then handed his daughter over. Folks, do you realize in the Scriptures that's exactly what was happening? When Caleb said, I will give my daughter to whoever takes this mountain, what he was saying is, I'm looking for a man to prove himself and take this mountain, and if he takes it, then that is the man who I am going to be pleased to give my daughter to. And I'm going to be the one to be pleased with it.

And I'm not saying, folks, that the daughter never has anything to say. But I'm telling you this, in God's Word, you don't hardly ever... I can only think of one time where the daughter's ever consulted. That doesn't mean she shouldn't be, but what I'm telling you is the Scripture gives emphasis to the father's

decision, not to the girl's.

And He does that because the girl's decision is not primary. It's secondary. The father's is the most important.

Not the daughter's. You see this, folks? A father in Scripture could refuse and did refuse to give his daughter. You know what? The fathers in Israel said, we will not give our daughters to Benjamin.

In Nehemiah, the fathers in Israel said, we will not give our daughters to the people in this land. You know what? If your little girl went out and all of a sudden she got all these affections for one of the Amorites that lives out in the land, guess what? Daddy's not giving her no matter how much she cries, no matter how much she goes on. And you know what? A good father in Israel would not have let his daughter go out and get moved by affection for one of these Amorites.

But you see, that's where this laid in the hands of the father. Now I know, this might rub some wrong. We have such feministic, equality type thinking that runs in our society.

Folks, let me tell you something. Men and women are equal spiritually. But men and women are not equal when it comes to roles.

God has designed distinct roles. They're not equal. They're not the same.

I'm not saying they're not equal in the sense that necessarily one role is superior to the other, but God designed them different. And in the differences, the men are to rule over the women. They are.

And again, I want to emphasize this to you. It is not to oppress them. It's so that they might be cared for.

It's so that there might be protection. God lovingly has provision in mind, protection and care when He designs these things this way. Loving, caring, nurturing headship.

You guys, the fact is that the Scriptures teach us that women are the weaker vessel. And fathers need to protect their daughters. They are weaker physically generally and they are weaker emotionally generally.

And I'm not saying this to knock, ladies. We know this is true. What we have to do is look at this thing.

It's biblical and it's practical. It's real. We see this.

God has given women a God-given role and a God-given place. And you know what? As women take that place, it's a glorious thing. And as women take that place, it's a safe place.

It's a protected place. It's a place, folks, that's not somehow degrading. You know what? When you will take on yourself the place God has created you for, there's no place of greater blessing.

You know what? When the feminists come along and they come with their equality type statements and they go after God's Word, you know what they do, ladies? They don't give you liberty. They put you in a place where you are vulnerable to be harmed. And what they do is they produce men who are weak and will not take up leadership.

And they produce women who come out from under the protective headship of their fathers and their husbands and they become far more vulnerable. Will you guys remember with me? Satan attacked mankind right at this point. He went after Eve when she was away from her head.

Because he knew she was most vulnerable right at that point. Don't you for a second think that the feminist movement is liberating. Folks, it's destructive.

Because it goes dead set against God's order in things. So, fathers, we need to give our daughters in marriage. We need to do it.

We need to have the courage to stand up when it's not right, when we see that our daughter is in danger. We need to speak. We need to act.

This whole thing about giving daughters away falls in your lap. This isn't something we sit back and let our daughters figure out. Let them go through all the ropes on this thing.

This is a thing, folks, we men need to be leading in. Now, you mothers who don't have a husband, or you have one, but they're unwilling to take up their responsibility, then you must, with God's help, take up the task. But I just want you to never forget that once that headship of the father and the husband breaks down, God has given you the headship of pastors within the context of the church.

And we are here to take up that, to come alongside, to counsel, to put our shoulders into those family situations where the father in the family is not there or failing to do what he's called to do. And we just ask you, if this is a weight, if you're confused, if you're not certain how to carry this through, come to Charles or come to myself. We're here to help you.

We want to help you. Okay, everybody turn in your Bibles to Numbers 30. Numbers 30.

Now, you might say, well, brother, this doesn't speak about marriage. This doesn't speak about courting. This doesn't speak about dating.

This speaks about vows. Oh, it does speak about vows. But, it sets forth a principle that I want you to see.

I want to note a number of things. I'm going to read to you an entire chapter, but don't worry, it's not all that long. Let's look at Numbers 30.

Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the people of Israel, saying, this is what the Lord has commanded. If a man vows a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break it. Now, folks, this is any man.

It doesn't tell us age. It doesn't tell us if he lives in his father's house or doesn't live in his father's house. It just says simply, if it's a man and he makes a vow, his word is his word.

And he's got to stick to it. He shall do it according to all that proceeds out of his mouth. But, verse 3, if a woman vows a vow to the Lord and binds herself by a pledge while within her father's house in her youth, now that's important.

She's at home. Note that. And her father hears of her vow and her pledge by which she has bound herself and says nothing to her, then all of her vows shall stand.

And I would note this, fathers. Silence is an affirmation. Did you get that? When you don't say anything, you are affirming what your daughter is doing.

If you don't say anything or you give approval, all her vows shall stand. And every pledge by which she has bound herself shall stand. But, if her father opposes her on the day that he hears of it, no vow of hers, no pledge by which she has bound herself shall stand.

You see, folks, the father takes preeminence over the daughter. He can overrule her. You don't find this about the son, but you find this about the daughter.

If a son gives a vow, if any man does, he's bound to it. Even if he's under his father's authority, he's bound to it. He's given his word, he's got to stand by it.

But the woman, the daughter who lives at home, she must concede to the authority of her father's headship. And the Lord will forgive her because her father opposed her. He'll forgive her of her vow.

He'll basically let it go. He will not hold her to it because the father has overruled in the matter. If she marries a husband under her vows... Now notice this, folks.

She's under her vows. It means she made vows when she was under her father's roof that her father agreed to or gave consent to, but now she's becoming married. She's carrying over vows from her single days.

"...or any thoughtless utterance of her lips by which she has bound herself, and her husband hears of it and says nothing to her on the day that he hears, then her vows shall stand and her pledges by which she has bound herself shall stand. But if on that day that her husband comes to hear of it, he opposes her, then he makes void her vow that was on her." Now, this is what I want some of you fathers to understand too. The moment you give your daughter away to a man in marriage, his authority supersedes yours.

You may have approved of her vow, but now the father's headship overrules yours and he has the right to negate the vow. I just warn you fathers, when you put your daughter's hand in marriage to the hand of that young man, you better trust him. You better be convinced that he is a man that you can trust your daughter with.

Because after you let her go, she's gone. Your authority... oh, they still need to honor you, but folks, they don't need to honor you by conceding to your authority in the matter. The father's was superseded by the husband's here.

If on that day that her husband comes to hear of it, he opposes her, then he makes void her vow that was on her and the thoughtless utterance of her lips by which she bound herself and the Lord will forgive her. But any vow of a widow or a divorced woman, anything by which she has bound herself, shall stand against her. Now, I want you to notice this.

The only single women that are ever talked about in any of this context are ones that have already been married. Never, never, never, never, never does God acknowledge a young lady who has not been married, who is not under her father's roof. Did you get that? This idea today of letting young women go out of the household who have not been married, sending them off into an apartment or into a dorm is not biblical.

You don't find examples of that. What you find is examples of young ladies under the protective headship of a father who directly and immediately go from there under that headship and the authority of a husband. Never is she left unprotected, without a head.

The only women you find here that are in a place of their own headship are those who have already been married. And either by a legal divorce or by the death of the husband, they are in a place to make the call on their own. But I'll tell you this, even the young ladies who find themselves in this capacity, Paul tells in 1 Timothy 5, they need to go get married again.

They need to find a husband again. Because it's not good that they be in that state. And if she vowed in her husband's house... Now, this is not so much a carryover vow from her father's house.

Now, Moses is talking about if she actually makes a vow in her father's house and bound herself by a pledge with an oath and her husband hears of it and said nothing to her and did not oppose her, then all her vows shall stand and every pledge by which she bound herself shall stand. But if her husband makes them null and void on the day that he hears of them, then whatever proceeds out of her lips concerning her vows or concerning her pledge of herself shall not stand. Her husband has made them void and the Lord will forgive her.

Any vow and any binding oath to afflict herself, her husband may establish or her husband may make void. Folks, he has the headship. He has the authority.

But if her husband says nothing to her from day to day, then he establishes all her vows and all her pledges that are upon her. He has established them because he said nothing to her on that day that he heard of them. But if he makes them null and void after he has heard of them, then he shall bear her iniquity.

These are the statutes that the Lord commanded Moses about a man and his wife and about a father and his daughter while she is in her youth within her father's house. So, again, I'll say, this doesn't speak about courtship. It doesn't speak about dating.

But you see some principles here. Male headship. Fatherly headship.

You find that young ladies that haven't been married yet are not running around out there on their own. There's no category for that. God doesn't even concede to such a category.

Again, I emphasize, the picture you have in the Scriptures is of a father protecting his daughter and that baton being handed to a husband who will then protect that young lady. Protection. Protection.

Protection. Deuteronomy 22. Jump over there please.

Deuteronomy 22. Now here in Deuteronomy 22, we have the virginity of a young woman who has been married called into question. Again, we get some good headship points here.

It's very instructive. Deuteronomy 22. I want to begin reading in verse 13.

Deuteronomy 22, fifth book in the Bible. Verse 13, If any man takes a wife and goes into her and then hates her and accuses her of misconduct and brings a bad name upon her, saying, I took this woman and when I came near her, I did not find in her evidence of virginity, then the father of the young woman and her mother shall take and bring out the evidence of her virginity to the elders of the city in the gate. And the father of the young woman shall say to the elders, I gave my daughter, there's that concept again, I gave my daughter to this man to marry and he hates her.

And behold, he has accused her of misconduct, saying, I did not find in your daughter evidence of virginity. And yet this is the evidence of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloak before the elders of the city.

Basically, it was a cloth that would have contained the blood of proof of her virginity. Then the elders of that city shall take the man and whip him. If he brought a false report against his wife and it was found that he was a liar, he was to be scourged.

And you know what else? They shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver. A little research on that will show you that's about \$60,000 in today's currency. Gentlemen, you did not want to falsely accuse your wives of not having been faithful.

Because if you did and you were found out, it was going to cost you \$60,000 and it was going to cost you a scourging. Either one of those by themselves would have been punishment to probably cause you to not want to do this. Both of them together was quite a wallop.

And, he was to take this silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name upon a virgin of Israel, and she shall be his wife. He may not divorce her all her days. But, if the thing is true that evidence of virginity was not found in the young woman, then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done an outrageous thing in Israel by whoring in her father's house.

So you shall purge the evil from your midst." Now, somebody might say, well, brother, you're reading all Old Testament passages. Well, one thing I would have you remember that whoever gave you reason to think that we need to disregard the Old Testament, all Scripture is inspiring. All Scripture is profitable.

And folks, the thing about the law of God is this. It reveals to us the character of God. When you come across the Old Testament, believe it, who God is is being revealed back there just as much as in the New Testament.

And what you find out is what God feels and how His concerns run when it comes to purity, when it comes to families, when it comes to fathers, when it comes to husbands, when it comes to daughters and wives. We get an idea of the mind of God in this that carries full well over into the New Testament. Well, what I want to show you, I want to mention three things here.

First, notice this. When the virginity of a young woman was questioned, who did they question? I mean, who was brought in? They didn't bring the young lady in for questioning. Who did they go to? Who was called in? Yeah, it wasn't the woman that was called in to vouch for her purity.

It's the parents and specifically the father. Why? Because he had had the headship of that young lady prior to this husband who has now married her. It's the parents, specifically the father, who has the responsibility to keep that daughter pure before her marriage.

It's his responsibility. And so, when there's some question about whether she's pure or not, that's who they go to. You know what? When that girl was on her wedding night and her wedding was being consummated and she was a virgin, they actually put a cloth or a cloak as described here on top of the bed in order to give proof.

And you know what? The young lady did not hold that. She didn't keep that as proof. Who was it given to? It was given to the parents and held by the father.

Why? Because it had to do, folks, with his headship. It had to do with his honor and his integrity. It had to do with how well he kept his daughter pure.

If it turns out that she indeed played the whore in Israel, it was his integrity that would be at stake. Guys, a young woman in Israel was expected to be a virgin until the time she was married. It was expected.

And if it wasn't true, she was considered a whore and it brought great reproach upon her. She would be killed and great reproach upon that family. The fact that the parents were responsible to keep the evidence of her virginity indicates that they have a biblical duty to ensure and to raise their children in a manner so as to preserve that purity and that virginity in their children.

That is a responsibility of parents. Fathers, you have a responsibility to keep those daughters pure. You do! You do.

Notice second, that when the fine of 100 shekels or \$60,000 comparable to our money today was paid by the lying husband, it wasn't paid to his wife. And it was his wife whom he lied about. But it wasn't paid to her.

It was paid to the father of the accused woman. Why is this money paid to the father and not to the slandered woman? I mean, after all, who was wronged in this whole thing? Although the charge was brought against the woman, it is her father's reputation as the one responsible for protecting and preserving his daughter's virginity that is at stake here. So what the man is doing is he's paying for the scandal and dishonor brought upon the wife's former head.

And that head was her father. Now, notice thirdly this. If the woman is guilty, check out what happens.

The woman isn't executed out front of her husband's house. And she's not executed out in front of the city gates. But where is she executed? She is put to death at the front door of her father's house.

Look, folks. A father has headship over his daughter, and if she is found to be impure, part of the blame and the shame is to be bore by the parents and specifically the father. You know what? If your child gets to marriage and they're not a virgin, if your child loses their virginity, we can look at this and we can say, well, it's the sin of my child.

And you know what that may be. But there is shame and there is reproach that is brought upon the family because you know what? That father did not protect his daughter well enough to preserve her virginity. He let her out of his sight.

He let her out of his protective headship. He let her out into this world in a way that she was exposed to such a thing. A good father in Israel would not allow his daughters under any circumstances to be in a situation where it might call into question his ability to be able to keep her pure.

He would not. And yet, fathers in our country and Christian fathers will let their daughters go. They will let them into circumstances where their virginity is not protected.

And it's the truth. Christian parents will let their children into unguarded, unprotected, unchaperoned situations. Very questionable situations.

And you find that that is not the case in the Scriptures. Even though this father here was likely unaware of his daughter's sexual immorality. Very likely, he knew nothing about it.

Very likely, he assumed that she was a virgin. And yet, her sexual activities while living at home, he must bear the shame for because he failed to properly protect and fence his daughter from such behavior. You know what? Parents, our greatest objective is no doubt to lead our children to Christ.

It is. But you find that biblically, we're not just to protect them spiritually, we're to protect them physically. We are to be their protectors.

God has given you fathers to be protective heads of your wives and your daughters. You need to protect them. And you're not protecting them when you let them go out into this world.

You're not protecting them when you hand them off into some young man's hand who has made no commitment whatsoever to them and they want to run off on some date together. You're no protector. You're allowing your daughter to go off and to be defiled.

Not protected. Which brings us to dating. Very popular exercise.

And you know, there are those who like to call it recreational dating and it's a good term because it is just that. It's recreational. It's done for pleasure.

And you guys know what I mean by that. I mean, the thing is, one thing I don't have here is a bunch of fifth generation Christians who are all naive about how all this works. Almost every single adult in this building right now, those of us who were lost as we grew up and we have children now, we did this thing.

We know what it's about. You know, you get to a certain age, you get attracted to a member of the opposite sex and the first thing you want to do is you want to try to get alone with them. You want to talk to them.

You want to have phone calls with them. You want to try to get off in a corner by yourself together. Then whenever you have transportation available, you want to try to get to the movies together or to a ball game together or to dinner together.

And you know the practice. And if you decide that you're not going to go out with anybody else, you call it going steady or whatever. I'm going with that person or however you guys phrased it here in Texas.

Probably a lot of the same, similar terminology. And you know, it's basically disposable relationships. And when you get tired of that or it doesn't work out, something didn't quite right about it, then you hand that off and you go to the next one.

And the average person, I don't know, I heard one preacher say, the average person in this country goes through five major relationships before they ever get to marriage. And basically, that's what it is. A bunch of disposable relationships.

Well, folks, I'm here to tell you and I think you will agree with me if you know your Bibles at all that God hates this practice. There's so much about it that it is abominable to His Word. It is not right.

It is not righteous. It is not pure. It does not engender good, solid marriages.

It doesn't do any of this stuff. What it is is simply young people's opportunity to go out and play together and enjoy sex to one degree or another. But folks, you know in our day, you know in the 70's, you know in the 80's, you know in the 60's, dating, kissing, necking, petting, and beyond, folks, are a part of dating.

It was expected. It was known. How much more 40 years, 30 years after the fact? Do you think somehow dating has become this pure thing? It hasn't.

It's just the same. All you've got to do is look around you. It hasn't changed.

It's only gotten worse. The first thing. Statistics.

66%. That is 2 out of 3 of 18 year old females in this country have had sex by the time they're 18 years old. 68%.

2% more of young men by the time they reach 18 years of age have had sex. 1 million young ladies under the age of 20 become pregnant in this country each year. 40% of all American females have become pregnant at least once before they turn 20.

Do you realize what this means? 66% of 18 year old females are in a position where if they had lived in the Old Testament times, they would have been stoned to death. Right in their father's doorway. On their wedding night, they would have been found out and they would have been carted out before the elders of the city and there would not have been proof of her virginity and they would have taken her right away to the father's front doorstep and they would have crushed her skull with stones.

And you know, God's attitude about premarital sex has not changed today. Fornicators and adulterers He will judge. The Scripture is plain.

Because of these things, folk, the wrath of God is coming. God has not lightened in these matters. You guys just ask yourself this question.

When have 66% of our young ladies and 68% of our young men found time to get together where they have lost their virginity? When is this happening? I tell you, dating, folks. It's dating. It's when they get together.

It's when you let them run off and go spend the night at a friend's house or go off out to the movies together or go off... Folks, automobiles are basically moving couches. I mean, don't be naive. How many times young man and young woman, well, I'm going to go spend the night at my friend's house and she goes to spend the night.

And you know what? You've got parents on the other end and nobody knows what's going on. And it's not difficult, folks. When you've got undiscerning parents, it is not difficult for young people to figure out how to get together.

It simply isn't. You know, folks, what does dating say about biblical headship and the responsibilities of fathers to protect the purity of their daughters? Fathers are miserably failing in this area. I mean, it is ludicrous for me to think... Men! Men! Men! Men! If you were that age, you knew who you were.

Think about this. A Christian man to send his daughter out with a young man who has hormones spilling out his ears and who is obviously attracted to his daughter or he wouldn't be asking her out, and to simply let her go off with him all by themselves. What can we possibly think is going to result from this? Biblical

headship in fathers is absolutely breaking down at this point.

Absolutely. Dating is a breakdown, folks, of family authority and headship. And then, you guys have to think about this.

You know, one thing that I became very aware of when I became married is the fact that as much as God calls upon me to honor my mother and my father, that as soon as I was married, basically Ruby's parents became my parents. And I was to honor them in the same degree. But where does all that honor go? I mean, think about it.

Even if that young man you send your daughter with ends up becoming your son-in-law, even if that happens, is he honoring his future son-in-law if he lays his hand upon that man's daughter prior to marriage? Total dishonoring of the parents in that respect. Next thing, you guys, the symbolism of the man-woman relationship. Anytime we talk about men and women, we talk about a conjugal relationship.

Anytime we talk about man and wife, anytime we talk about sexual intimacy, do you guys realize that Jesus Christ designed all of this as a picture of a spiritual reality in the church? Christ the Husband. God the Head. God the Husband of His people.

We are likened to the virgin daughter. You know how oftentimes Israel was called the virgin daughter of Israel? It wasn't because they had a bunch of virgins there. And it identified men just as well.

You guys remember how it was? Paul said, I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I have betrothed you to one husband to present you a pure virgin to Christ. You know, when we allow our children to run off with each other and fall into emotional and sexual intimacy before they're married, we just blow out of the water all the symbolism that goes behind the very reason God created sex and created marriage, created sexual intimacy. Responsibility is ignored.

I am so positive that this headship issue is right at the heart of the matter. You know something? A young man is not forced in our society to be responsible. Can you imagine if it was like it was in Israel? There was no man in this country going to let me lay my hand, lay a finger on his daughter, until I've shown that I can successfully put together a household.

I can have a house. I can have sufficient money to be able to take care of his daughter. Show myself as a spiritual leader.

To show myself that I'm able to accomplish things in this life until I've proven myself where that man is going to be willing and trustingly hand his daughter over to me. I can't trust a woman. And so you know what happens when you become 15, 16, 17 years old and you begin to desire to be with a woman pretty badly? If I can't be with one unless I'm responsible, guess what it's going to engender in me? Responsibility! You know what we have today? We have 12-year-old, 13-year-old, 14-year-old young men, boys, and they get these sexual urges.

And obviously, there's at least 66% of fathers out there who are willing to let their daughters out of their sight long enough to fall into the hands of these young men. And they're becoming pregnant. And then you know what? Nothing's required of them.

You know what it says in the Scriptures? If a young man laid with an unpatrolled virgin and it was found out, guess what happened? He had to pay an equivalent of \$30,000 of our money today to the father, and

he had to marry her. And he could never divorce her. And you know what you've got today? You've got young men that are going out and they're enjoying all this sex, but society and the families and the fathers are not requiring anything more of them.

And then they go home and they play Nintendo. And they're not figuring out how to be wise, honorable, upright, hard-working young men in our society. No.

It's all handed to them on a silver platter, folks. And you know what? No responsibility is being expected out of them until they're 30, 35 years old. And isn't it a wonder? You know what's happening? The average marital age in this country is moving up, up, up, up.

You know why? Because young people can enjoy everything now without having to have marriage. And so, you know what? I was there. I was in that culture.

My friends and I, we always talked that way. Why marry? Most of them had parents that had been divorced anyways. Why did we want that? Why take upon us that responsibility? You see, what we're engendering in our society today is irresponsibility.

Dating encourages irresponsibility. That young man comes over there, and you know, you send your daughter off with him, I guarantee, folks, within a date or two or five, there is going to be contact, and there is going to be intimacy. And here this young man, he's got free access to it.

And nobody's putting the clamps on it. As one man said, I listened to some messages, I like this, he said, you know, there's no place for SpongeBob and for Nintendo in a young man's life if he's serious about this thing. No place whatsoever.

And if the fathers in our families would rise up and be responsible and take upon themselves that God-given headship that they ought to have, we'd be encouraging that far more. Now, I'm not saying all this has to do with our daughters as a place. You parents need to be pouring yourself into your sons too, and you need to be training them.

Another thing, this whole dating thing, it certainly isn't love. It's lust. You know what? Love seeks the purity of the one it loves.

It doesn't seek to defile. When that young man lays his hand on a young lady, he's defiling her. Young ladies never be sucked into that mindset that some young man comes along and he says he loves you.

He doesn't love you if he's willing to defile you before marriage. He doesn't love you. He's selfish.

He's self-centered. He's doing it for his own pleasure. He's doing it for his own desires.

He's not doing it because he cares a whit about you. He cares about satisfying his sexual desires. And you know that's true.

You know it is. Flee youthful lust. Oh, guys, in the Scriptures, we're taught not to flee from the devil.

We're taught to resist him and he'll flee from us. We're taught to wrestle with principalities and powers. We are given pictures in the Scriptures of fighting the devil.

But you know when it comes to sexual immorality, when it comes to youthful lust, we're never taught to fight it. We're taught to run from it. We're taught to fear it.

We're taught to escape from it. We're taught to flee. Parents, you are not instructing your children rightly.

You are not encouraging them rightly. Fornication and adultery are not things that you ought to simply throw gasoline on top of. You guys realize, you can tell by your words to your sons and daughters one thing.

You can tell them, well, you better not. But then you let them go right out the door together. That's gasoline on the fire, folks.

And you know what? If this statistic is right, that the average person has five major relationships before they get married, you know what? When you let your daughter date another man and he lays his hand on her in any way, he lays his lips on her lips, you know it is very unlikely that those two will ever be married. That boy is laying his lips on a woman that is going to end up being another man's wife. Fathers, you have no business letting your own sons go out with another woman and set his lips or his hands or any body part at all upon a woman that is going to be another man's wife.

No responsibility to allow such a thing. None whatsoever. And you fathers with sons, you better remember, you are trying to encourage.

You are trying to encourage him to honor parents. You are trying to encourage him to respect authority because he himself is going to have to turn around and be that authority. And young men, listen to this.

If you're out with a young lady, you ought not to be out with them. I shouldn't even say that. But if you meet, if you know a young lady who is not willing to submit to her father's authority, she will not submit to your authority either.

Don't believe that because somehow she has this giddiness about her now and this willingness to try to become whatever you think that she needs to become, it won't be that way when you get married. If she doesn't respect the authority of male headship in her life while she's under her father's roof, she will not respect it when she is under your roof. The divorce rate.

Is it any wonder? You know, the divorce rate is close to 50%. And it moves around from year to year. But is it any wonder that the divorce rate is nearly 50% in our country? Listen, if that statistic is right, if the average young people getting married in our country today have had five relationships prior to marriage, guess what's true about those five relationships? Every one of them failed! Basically, you have people getting married today who have a string of failed relationships prior to their entering into marriage.

And is it any wonder then that marriages fail? Because you know what the whole dating scheme induces into our society? This mindset of disposable relationships. If I don't like anything about it, I can just toss it away. And young people get hardened through that.

Their emotions get hardened. Why? Because people get hurt. Folks, when you come together and you give yourself to a person of the opposite sex, whether married or not married, when that thing separates, it causes pain.

And there's separation. And you've lost a part of yourself to that person. You've given a part of yourself to him.

And when you come together now and you're married, so much of what ought to be there in that marriage relationship has been lost. The things that ought to be special between the two of you have been lost in other relationships. We're teaching our children disposable, trivial relationships as far as marriage goes.

Not the inseparable relationship. God hates divorce, folks. He hates it.

He absolutely hates it. Serious ramifications there ought to be. Folks, if a young man touches a young lady, there ought to be serious ramifications.

In the Bible, \$30,000 to the father he had to get married. Today, you know what? We allow so often out here in this culture, this dating and everything, and young people, they do what adults ought to do. And there ought to be serious ramifications in the matter.

There ought to be very serious ramifications. Young people ought not to be able to walk away from this thing without having to bear the penalties of it. In the Old Testament biblical times, they had to.

There were fees. There was money that had to be given to the father of the offended female. There was obligation to marry.

You know what? In the Old Testament, if a young man got together with a young woman out of wedlock, you know what their sexual act constituted? It constituted betrothal. As soon as they had that sexual relationship, whether a baby resulted or not, you know what? By law, they were man and wife. By law.

When a young man did that, there was a commitment involved. He was not... You know what? There's no commitment today. No commitment.

Our young people just walk away. No commitment. We as Christian parents, we'd better enforce commitment on our sons and daughters.

If they're going to do that, there must be a willingness to commit to something here. There must be a willingness to make sacrifices and a willingness to give. Okay, this brings me basically to courting.

You know, if all this doesn't work, and I'm going to be short here, and folks, there's a lot more reasons that could be said about why... Maybe some of you are thinking about other reasons about why dating is wrong. There are many others. We just simply don't have time for it.

I'm trying to cover all of this in one message. When it comes to biblical courting, there is much more that can be said about it. If you are interested in other sermons, in other material, there is good stuff on the Internet.

There are books that have been written. And there are places you can go to get very good information with regards to this if you want to study. If you have young people that are in their lower teens and just in a few years, this is all going to be realities with you guys, you need to know.

You need to study your Scriptures. You need to have a good idea. You need to be equipped to lead your children through a biblical courtship.

Because you know, listen, I know singleness in 1 Corinthians 7 is something that is set forth as a possibility. But you and I know that if we were to go ahead 30 or 40 years and look at where all of our children are, the majority of them will marry. That tends to be normative.

This lifetime of singleness, you know, just as Christ told His disciples, not all can receive this. Paul said it's better to marry than to burn. Not all have gifts.

It's actual gifts. And the truth is, God doesn't give it to most of our young people. Most of your children in this place, the ones that you have now or will have in the future, are going to get married.

So this is very practical. Fifteen, sixteen, seventeen year olds ought not to be concerned with boyfriends. They ought not to be concerned with girlfriends.

They ought not to be concerned with finding dates. You know what, folks? When they're that age, they ought to be concerned with becoming what they need to become to be the kind of mate that exactly the kind of mate they're looking for would desire. Did you get all that? Folks, if a young man is hoping to have a young lady who is quiet, neat-spirited, submissive, a worker at home, one who loves her husband, loves her children, is going to be devoutly faithful, pure and upright, a woman who fits the Proverbs 31 description, then you know what that young man needs to be becoming, what a woman like that would desire in a husband.

And just vice versa. If a young woman truly wants a man who is going to be a strong leader, a spiritual leader, a physical leader, a man who is going to be a good father and a good husband, a man who is going to be a hard worker, a man who is going to be honest and full of integrity, a man who is upright, a man who is going to be a man worth marrying, then she needs to be becoming the woman that she needs to become. And enough with the games.

Enough with the boyfriend-girlfriend giggling in the corner stuff. I know when God saved me, I went to a certain church and there were two young ladies who were marrying age. But you know what? It just seemed like all the time, all they did was stood over in the corner whenever I would see them, over in the corner they were just giggling and laughing all the time.

And I just thought, that is not the kind of wife that I want. It didn't interest me at all. You know what? If there would have been seriousness there, maybe.

But it didn't interest me. And it shouldn't interest if a man is looking for the right kind of wife. You know what? Scripture says that charm and beauty are vain.

You want a wife that's going to fit the description of Proverbs 31 woman or Titus 2 woman. Men. Bulging muscles and everything that TV and the movies make out to be these macho men today isn't it.

You know what, ladies? You find a man who gives his word and he doesn't go back on it. You find a man who's concerned for the poor and the needy in this world. You find a man who's willing to stand by his family no matter through thick and thin and he's not going to bail when things get hard.

A man who gets off his rear end most of the time and is working and hard working. A man who's willing to be responsible and to guide his family. That's what you need to be looking for.

Not the GQ guy. And we as parents know these things. That's the thing.

And so many parents today, they don't pour themselves into their children this way. And so the children grow up and you know what? They didn't have their parents there. Their parents might be thinking about what they think would be right and best for their children, but unless you're telling them, instructing them, guiding it, laying it down.

You know what? When I was growing up, I had a grandfather who instilled in me I was going to go to college. You know what? When I got into high school age and beyond, no matter how much of a partier I was, no matter how much I got involved in anything, no matter how much... I simply had this mindset that I was going to go to college and I was going to succeed. It was ingrained in me.

And you know what? You parents ought to be ingraining your children the same way. Your daughters ought to have it ingrained into their head. You are going to be a virgin when you get married.

You are going to be a virgin. You are going to be. And you are going to look for a man that fits this kind of man.

And you are going to be this kind of woman. And I realize, folks, there are things about this, there are aspects of the heart that we have to trust God to do. But I am telling you, lots of these principles carry out whether your children are lost or whether they are saved.

Whether your child turns out to be lost when they get married, you still need to pour the Scriptures into them. You still need to train them in biblical principles. You still need to guide them and train them and teach them and instruct them to find that kind of man.

Because you know, even in the lost world, there are men who far excel other men. And there are women who far excel other women. Far excel.

And the parents have a great deal to do with that. So, when they are ready to marry, under no circumstances whatsoever, fathers, do you ever let that young man alone, unchaperoned with your daughter? In fact, you know what? You resist allowing your daughter to get emotionally attached to that young man until you have discerned whether he even meets your standards. Until he has, you have no right allowing any emotional, let alone sexual intimacy to be involved there.

None whatsoever. There ought to be no romance. And I don't mean sexual immorality.

I mean just poetry, phone calls, love letters, you know, that kind of stuff. There ought to be no relationship evolving there until you as a father have come to grips with, you know what, prayerfully and everything I know about this guy and by all my observations, I think he is a worthwhile young man. And if your daughter's interested, then maybe you begin to pull the reins back a little bit.

A little bit! You might allow them to talk. You definitely want to allow them to talk. You want to allow them to get to know each other.

And it's not saying that they can't get to know each other before that. Consider the guy in the beginning. You know what? When that young man's interested in your daughter, he doesn't go to the girl.

He goes to you. And he seeks your permission. Because you're the head.

And you know what? If he's not willing to do that, he's a coward. And he's not going to take up any kind of leadership or headship. I'll tell you, even as mellow as Papa is, I was probably sweating bullets when I had

to go talk to him.

It was nerve-wracking for me. And there's a lot. Most fathers are far worse than him.

He's probably one of the easiest that you could have, yet I was scared about the thing. But you know what? You've got to do it. There's going to be a lot of things as men who lead their families.

There's a lot of areas that you might find are fearful, but that's where courage comes in. That's where courage comes in. Just instill, instill, instill, instill.

There will be no sexual intimacy at all until they are married. Instill that. The marriage bed is the only undefiled place on the face of this earth for any sexual intimacy.

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