

Dating, Love, and Marriage Bible Study
Topics for not-yet-married couples
How can I know whether this is the person to marry?
2023.01.13 – Week 3

Open Questions (ask more @ ljl.church/datingbiblestudy/askquestion):

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Group Ice breakers:

- How would you determine if the person is the right person to marry?

The man who finds a wife finds a treasure, and he receives favor from the Lord.
- Proverbs 18:22 (NLT)

Remember: God created marriage. It is good for a man and woman to become one.

Goals for couples:

Your decision to marry is not dependent on the world's suggestions such as: compatibility (how would they know?) and even seemingly-godly aspects, such as the probability that both of you complement each other with characteristics to do God's will (you certainly will do with what God gave you!). Though, they may be factors, that is not your primary reason.

Until Engagement: (Seeking a mate)

- **Both: Wait on the Lord. Men, act as the Lord directs. Women, respond. Both require patience, wrestling with God, and gives opportunity to reflect and seek counsel.**
- **Men: when you believe the person is the one whom God wants you to marry – go full out and win her heart**
 - o Pray asking God for help, guidance, and endurance.
 - o Disregard all your personal changes you want to make about her. Accept her as she is.
 - o The reason why you seek her marriage is because God says so. Your pursuit in life is to honor God, and if you have assurance, you ought to do all you can and trust God for the results.
- **Women: spend time in groups (in safety) to get to know men as brothers. Learn to love God more as you wait.**
 - o When an interest arises, pray and seek God. Pray for the man to fall in love with you. Remember, your husband must lead the family after you marry.
 - o *Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him." Genesis 2:18 (NLT)*
- Of course, it's often not that simple. **When unsure someone is from God:**
 - o Both: Certainly, seek God in prayer and reflect with God using Scriptures.
 - o Both: Fall back to a place of safety. Small groups. People who love God, who know you, love you, and want the best for you. (We ought to do the same when we are not sure about anything else in life!)
 - Welcome those who love God and you to endure with you (Love is patient, 1Corinthians 13:4) and carry your burdens (Galatians 6:2)
 - *Other Scriptures to not stand alone in important decisions: Proverbs 15:22, Psalms 37:30-31, Proverbs 20:18, Proverbs 12:26, Proverbs 27:17, 1John 4:12, 16, John 15:12, Acts 4:32*
 - o Both: Take actions as God directs you. Trust God for the results and timing. It may not be immediate. Maybe God needs to work on you alone before you head toward marriage.

Now, engaged: (Both agree God called you to each other and want to marry)

- Seek other Christian brothers and sisters who know you (family, friends, and small groups) to bless your coming marriage. Any doubts, rely on and openly discuss with them. When ready, with each other.
- Seek to get married as soon as logistically possible. Don't let Satan add doubts by unnecessary delays.
 - o Don't make "until I feel ready" as a constraint (You will never be really ready!). Only considerations should be logistics of others who would bless you.

Read **Genesis 24** together (ptents.com/s/gen24)

1Abraham was now a very old man, and the LORD had blessed him in every way. 2One day Abraham said to his oldest servant, the man in charge of his household, "Take an oath by putting your hand under my thigh. 3Swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not allow my son to marry one of these local Canaanite women. 4Go instead to my homeland, to my relatives, and find a wife there for my son Isaac." 5The servant asked, "But what if I can't find a young woman who is willing to travel so far from home? Should I then take Isaac there to live among your relatives in the land you came from?" 6"No!" Abraham responded. "Be careful never to take my son there. 7For the LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and my native land, solemnly promised to give this land to my descendants. He will send his angel ahead of you, and he will see to it that you find a wife there for my son. 8If she is unwilling to come back with you, then you are free from this oath of mine. But under no circumstances are you to take my son there." 9So the servant took an oath by putting his hand under the thigh of his master, Abraham. He swore to follow Abraham's instructions. 10Then he loaded ten of Abraham's camels with all kinds of expensive gifts from his master, and he traveled to distant Aram-naharaim. There he went to the town where Abraham's brother Nahor had settled. 11He made the camels kneel beside a well just outside the town. It was evening, and the women were coming out to draw water. 12"O LORD, God of my master, Abraham," he prayed. "Please give me success today, and show unfailing love to my master, Abraham. 13See, I am standing here beside this spring, and the young women of the town are coming out to draw water. 14This is my request. I will ask one of them, 'Please give me a drink from your jug.' If she says, 'Yes, have a drink, and I will water your camels, too!'—let her be the one you have selected as Isaac's wife. This is how I will know that you have shown unfailing love to my master." 15Before he had finished praying, he saw a young woman named Rebekah coming out with her water jug on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel, who was the son of Abraham's brother Nahor and his wife, Milcah. / Then at last, when the camels had finished drinking, he took out a gold ring for her nose and two large gold bracelets for her wrists. / 51Here is Rebekah; take her and go. Yes, let her be the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has directed." 52When Abraham's servant heard their answer, he bowed down to the ground and worshiped the LORD. 53Then he brought out silver and gold jewelry and clothing and presented them to Rebekah. He also gave expensive presents to her brother and mother. / 58So they called Rebekah. "Are you willing to go with this man?" they asked her. And she replied, "Yes, I will go." 59So they said good-bye to Rebekah and sent her away with Abraham's servant and his men. The woman who had been Rebekah's childhood nurse went along with her. 60They gave her this blessing as she parted: "Our sister, may you become the mother of many millions! May your descendants be strong and conquer the cities of their enemies." / 67And Isaac brought Rebekah into his mother Sarah's tent, and she became his wife. He loved her deeply, and she was a special comfort to him after the death of his mother. -Genesis 24:1-15, 22, 51-53, 58-60, 67 (NLT)

Consider:

- Who did Abraham believe determines the **best person** for his only son to marry? (v. 1-9)
- How did the servant navigate when he was **uncertain** on how to find the mate? (v. 10-14)
- What did the servant do when he felt she may be the one? (v. 17, 21-28)
- Who initiated the approval and blessings from the woman's parents and family? (v. 33-53)
- What actions did Rebekah take throughout this story? (v. 15-20, 24-25, 28, 58-61)

Questions for discussion:

- Today, should women lead in the engagement process? Women proposing ok? If so, what should men's role be?
- Does today's cultural *sex-before-marriage* and *living together before marriage* impact lack of men's leadership?
- What are the necessary key conversations before marriage? (What can "make or break" the decision to marry?)
- What should we do when parents do not bless the marriage?
- Consider a married couple. Should the woman lead the family under certain circumstances?
- What is your view on feminism? Does feminism hurt, support, or is neutral to building strong & healthy families?
- For the Married: How do you maintain your first love that you enjoyed before marriage? Does it matter today?

Actions to Take:

- Let your decisions be based on your trust in God for the one person you will love/respect for the rest of your life.
 - o Men, be ready to lead by getting on your knees and seeking direction. Take actions as God directs you.
 - o Women, respond. Direct to a dialogue. Seek God and clarify.
 - o Fall back to small groups to walk with you through your decision-making
- After engagement, coordinate with others who will bless you, then get married as soon as logistically possible.