

Relating, Dating, and Mating
stewarding the affections of your heart for a lifetime

FOUNDATION

Embrace wisdom of God's word and wise counsel over common culture and previous experience (Engage: Repent/confess your devotion to love what He loves and hate what He hates)

- The greatest commandment (we must value and steward our heart as a gift from God above a object of emotional ecstasy) valuing His word and wisdom above all.
- Neighbor as yourself: What does wisdom say? How do I jealously guard and steward the heart and affections God has given me? In what way will I most honor God, this person (His child), and myself in this decision?

Embrace your sex and relational drive (Engage: Repent/thank the Lord)

- A guarded heart and pure life is the trophy you present to your spouse at the marriage altar.
- Sex and covenant relationship drive is a gift from God. He will use it to train you in all the fruits of the Spirit and make your life a display of Christlikeness.

Embrace your singleness

- You are becoming who you will be. The Joseph principal.

Embrace freedom and forfeit pain (Engage: Repent/ write down new freedom boundaries)

John 4:34 "Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."

- **READ:** We are going to look at the purpose God created us for and that is covenant relationship. We were designed for covenant relationship and the pain of dating and breaking up and longing and compromising comes from the deceptive mindset that we can attain the fulfillment found in a marriage relationship that belongs in covenant without the actual commitment- which is the foundation of fulfillment.

1 Corinthians 6:12 "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any"

- (in 1 Corinthians 10:23 repeated except the end says, "...but not all things edify".**
- Stop asking how close you can get to the feeling of covenant relationship and start protecting the acts of covenant as though your life depends on it.
- You go to college to finish - how much greater is the importance of relationships
-Courting; purpose toward marriage but it is not engagement

SETTING YOUR BAR

Jealously guard convictions (Engage: write them down, and why you have them)

- You believe in group settings/they hang out alone (only ever raise the bar!)
- Unequally Yoked: (not an egg yolk)

2 Corinthians 6:14-15 "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?"

- Can you be unequally yoked with a believer? I submit to you there are believers that exercise unbelieving mindsets.
- **READ:** remember, the question is always, What does wisdom say? How do I jealously guard and steward the heart and affections God has given me? In what way will I most honor God, this person (His child), and myself in this decision? I am not trying to get as close to covenant without commitment, I am jealously guarding my heart and affections. They belong to the Lord, and to the spouse He gives to me.

Controversial Questions for the Steward

- Developing a plan in His presence: (reference **Proverbs 16:1-3, 9**)
- Build walls while your strong

How long should I wait to date somebody I'm attracted to?

- Waiting a year
- Waiting till your junior or senior year (reference the finish His work principal)
- Bible says you will know them by their fruit **Matthew 7:20**
 - Time will tell/ know them through the seasons
 - Is this the best timing for me/ them (interests - **Philippians 2:4**)? -accountability?, new Christian?, their past?, callings?

When can we kiss??? (what's the question?)

Song of Solomon 8: 3 -4 "His left hand is under my head, And his right hand embraces me. I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, Do not stir up nor awaken love Until it pleases."

- Kissing is foreplay ("two becoming one flesh" by the passing of membranes)
- "the net you catch them with is the net you keep them with" (lust or purity?)

1 Corinthians 10: 12 "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."

BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Strong men, Not yes-men

- (love your neighbor as you love yourself) - how do they value/treat their own life, purity, desires, they will value/treat yours the same.
- You know their accountability by their fruit **Matthew 7:20**
- Powerful Accountability: Be afraid, be very afraid!
- **READ:** Accountability implies a required sense of ownership and initiative to change. The nervousness you feel isn't based in a fear of the person, but in your flesh's understanding that dark things put in the light must not remain the same.

Proverbs 20:30 "Blows that hurt cleanse away evil, As do stripes the inner depths of the heart"

Engage:

- Action Plans- share your bar, share your values, develop action plan of liberty if you should ever happen to fail (the abnormal experience of the Christian)

- if you fail to plan you plan to fail
- don't be fooled into thinking you're the exception to the rule
- Live for eternal satisfaction and gain, not momentary.

Proverbs 16 1-3, 9 “The preparations of the heart *belong* to man, But the answer of the tongue *is* from the LORD. All the ways of a man *are* pure in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the spirits. Commit your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established.... A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.”

DEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP (DTR)

Purpose: establish healthy boundaries, direction, communication.

- Same questions: What does wisdom say? How do I jealously guard and steward the heart and affections God has given me? In what way will I most honor God, this person (His child), and myself in this decision?

2 Reasons to DTR

1. Two people in a healthy place (all of the above) with an evident attraction (3 months)
 - “Learning the guitar” (time together in group settings)
 - “The parking lot”
 - Talk details with the Dream Team
2. Sensing attraction but feelings aren't mutual. (honor)

Philippians 2:4 “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”

1 Corinthians 13: 4-5 “Love suffers long *and is kind*; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; *does not behave rudely*, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil”

- be clear and direct in you communication, don't lead on.
- **Matthew 18** “go to your brother, sister”
- don't be a “middleman” for someone else's relationship
- sharing intimate details of someone else's life is gossip
- Ultimately it is about health in the body

Engage: question and answers

Resources: www.stanxa.com

- four part series, downloadable “stewarding your heart” audio files
- xxxchurch.com, ihop.org, harvest.org
- scripture studies, TFM (action plan in “discipleship”)
- audio (responsibility of revelation, cultivating intimacy are just two I recommend)
- resource table books and “from myspace to ourspace”,