

COURTSHIP: THE BRIDGE FROM SINGLENESS TO MARRIAGE

WHAT BIBLICAL COURTSHIP MEANS

Session 1: Definition summarized; Biblical courtship means one is not yet married and message: FORBIDDEN FRUIT CREATE A LOT OF JAM (Appendix A)

Session 2: Biblical courtship means it's a purposeful relationship

Session 3: Biblical courtship means it's with a believer

Session 4: Biblical courtship means it's with an opposite gender

Session 5: Biblical courtship means purposeful relationship

Session 6: Biblical courtship means exercising Godly wisdom and prayer for the relationship

Session 7: Biblical courtship means growing in Christ

SPECIAL PROBLEMS APPENDIX

Session 8 (Appendix B): Dating Nonbelievers and 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

Session 9 (Appendix C): Breaking up Biblically

WHAT TO LOOK FOR/WHAT TO GROW INTO

Session 10: Doctrines that matters

PRE-COURTSHIP COUNSELING: SEVEN RELATIONSHIP QUESTIONS

Purpose: To be conscious of timeless biblical principles concerning character and beliefs for relationships (Questions # 1, 2 and 3) and also whether it's the case between couples in relationship (Questions # 5 and 6). Questions are also design to encourage Christian growth in relationship, in terms of identifying what one needs to work on in the area of sanctification (Question #7) and protection for purity (Question #4). Questions #1-4 are also good questions for singles not in a relationship to answer ahead of time as well.

- 1) What is the quality and characteristic of a godly husband?
- 2) What is the quality and characteristic of a godly wife?
- 3) What doctrinally (theologically) should I look for in a potential spouse?
- 4) What should be my physical boundaries during a relationship for the sake of purity?
- 5) Does he have these characters and quality? On this basis, is he ready for a relationship?
- 6) Does she have these characters and quality? On this basis, is she ready for a relationship?
- 7) What do I have to work on in terms of my character?

PART II: THE BRIDGE FROM SINGLENESS TO MARRIAGE

- I. Courtship defined: The period in an individual's life (a) where he or she is not yet married (b) but in a purposeful relationship that is intending to seek marriage in the near future (c) with a certain believer (d) of the opposite sex, (e) and during this season is exercising Godly wisdom, discernment and prayer in discovering to the best of their ability if the two are compatible with one another where the possibility of marriage then seems to be God's will, (f) **who both show indications of desire and character to live out a God-centered, Biblically-principled marriage.**
- II. Practicing Godly wisdom, discernment and precepts
 - a. Asks the question: What does God's Word has to say about this phase in my life?
 - b. Desire to seek to honor the LORD in everything they do.
They wish to get an "A" in these three Areas:
 - i. Alignment:
 1. Meaning they want to have God's standards, morals and wisdom be their own.
 2. It is an issue of renewing the mind (**Romans 12:1-2**)
 - ii. Action:
 1. Meaning they want to act according to God's will that has been internalized in their life.
 2. It is an issue of being not only a hearer, but a doer of God's Word (**James 1:22**).
 - iii. Attitude:
 1. Meaning they want to have the right motivation.
 2. It is an issue of being not only a hearer, but a doer of God's Word (**James 1:22**).
- III. Not yet married
 - a. Sex is to be only within the marriage bed (**Hebrews 13:4**)
 - b. During the season of courtship there will be temptation.
 - c. (SEE APPENDIX A: FORBIDDEN FRUIT CREATE A LOT OF JAM)
- IV. Purposeful relationship
 - a. Purpose of courtship: It should be purposeful to see if it would 'work out' for marriage.
 - b. Biblical Proof
 - i. Scriptural example
The following are examples of people in the Bible in "relationship" that headed towards marriage.
 1. Issac loved Rebekah and married her (**Genesis 24:63-67**)
 - a. Was outside meditating: "*Issac went out to meditate in the field toward evening*" (**v.63a**)
Implication: Issac was a spiritual man
 - b. Seeing a caravan of women heading towards him
 - i. First look at **v.61**: "*Then Rebekah arose with her maids, and they mounted the camels and followed the man. So the servants took Rebekah and departed.*"

1. Am I looking for a relationship for any other reason besides considering the possibility of the relationship heading towards marriage?
2. Can you see yourself marrying this individual and the God of the Bible would be happy about it?
3. Do the two of you have serious discussions about various facets of marriage?
 - a. Not just wedding plans
 - b. Compatibility questions
 - c. Each other's spiritual life
 - d. Family background
- ii. Resolve that if the relationship does not work out, have the courage to call it off:
 1. Because it is the right thing to do
 - a. If the purpose of Godly relationship is marriage, and the possibility of Godly marriage is nihil, then there is no purpose to the relationship and the right thing to do is call it off.
 - i. It would allow that person to be set free for God's plan in their life (singleness, marrying someone else, etc).
 - ii. It would allow yourself to be set free for God's plan in your life as well (singleness, marrying someone else, etc).
 2. And do so graciously, as Joseph was going to do with Mary (**Matthew 1:18-23**)
 - i. Joseph and Mary were engaged (**v.18**)
 - ii. When Joseph saw his engagement with Mary was not going to work out, he called the relationship off (**v.19**)
 - iii. He was "*being a righteous man*" by "*not wanting to shame her*" (**v.19**)
 - iv. Though he called off the relationship, the angel never rebuked him for it (**v.20-23**)
 - v. It is possible to call off a relationship and be righteous before the Lord!

V. With a believer

- a. Principle: For the Christian, the only person that should be considered for courtship must be Christians only.
- b. Reasoning
 - i. Bible commands us not to have "fellowship" with unbelievers, how much more so should one not be married to unbelievers.

"Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has

Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?" (2 Corinthians 6:14-15)

1. Four rhetorical questions here to establish the principle in the beginning of **verse 14**: *"Do not be bound together with unbelievers."*
 2. The most intimate way one can be *"bound together with unbelievers"* is through marriage, hence the verse does prohibit a Christian from marrying an unbeliever.
 3. If Christians must court for the purpose of seeking someone for marriage, and a Christians cannot be married to an unbeliever, then this rule out Christians courting an unbeliever.
 4. Notice how **verse 14** states *"for what partnership..."*; Christians cannot have an intimate partnership with someone who is lawless from God's law.
- ii. Note whom Paul allowed a widower to marry: *"A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband ^{is} dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord."* (**1 Corinthians 7:39**)
1. Note *"in the Lord"* refer to the sphere of those whom one wishes to be married to.
 2. This *"in the Lord"* phrase is seen earlier in the chapter in verse 22 and the context reveals it refers to someone who is saved and a Christian.
- iii. Such a relationship with a nonbeliever will affect your character and relationship with God.
1. One's company (especially one's boyfriend/girlfriend) will influence who you are.
"Do not be deceived: 'Bad company corrupts good morals.'" (1 Corinthians 15:33)
 - a. Realize that nonbelievers does not accept the Biblical standard, motive and reasoning of living out a godly life.
 - i. A non-Christian might do the "right thing" such as not steal or murder, but his reasoning and motive will never be a biblical one: to glorify God, and as an act of worship in light of responding to God's saving grace in their lives. His ethics is ultimately totally different than a Christian's (grace driven vs. works driven, act of worship vs. attempt to earn merit, God-based vs. utilitarian-based)
 - b. Remember that a lot of how we live and think is more "caught" than "taught".

- c. Therefore, in the long run a relationship with an unbeliever will make you become more like a nonbeliever rather than you becoming more sanctified.
 - d. Illustration: I can't believe how much being in a relationship and being married can change a person. Nancy use to hate pho and Vietnamese sandwich. Now she loves it. Being in love can even change people's taste bud.
- iv. The most important part of life is your relationship with God, how sad would it be that in the most important human relationship of husband and wife, God cannot be an active part of the relationship between the two of you.
1. Christ is more valuable than anything else in the world
"But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of ^(R)knowing ^(S)Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, ⁹and may be found in Him, not having ^(T)a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, ^(U)the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, ¹⁰that I may ^(V)know Him and ^(W)the power of His resurrection and ^(X)the fellowship of His sufferings, being ^(Y)conformed to His death; ¹¹in order that I may ^(Z)attain to the resurrection from the dead." (Philippians 3:7-11)
 - a. According to **verse 7**, everything else that might be gained is now considered loss for the sake of Christ.
 - b. Knowing Christ is more surpassing in value than anything else to the point everything else is like "dung" according to **verse 8**
 2. If He is more valuable than anything else than why:
 - a. Disobey His prohibition of intimate relationship with a unbeliever (see reasoning i)?
 - b. Break your relationship with God?

c. Practice

- i. Not in a relationship?
 1. Resolve ahead of time not to compromise but to be faithful to God.
 2. Practice obedience to God in other parts of your life (see **Luke 16:10-11**). If you are not obedient with God in the small things, what makes you think you will be faithful in the bigger things in life such as a relationship?
- ii. Interested in someone?
 1. Find out as soon as possible if the person is a believer.

- a. How?
 - i. Ask!
 - ii. Don't just ask, talk to he/she about God and the Bible!
 - iii. Observe the person's fruit (hence the recommendation that relationship should begin slowly for discernment).
- 2. If the person is not a believer, do not get in a relationship with that person and count Christ as surpassing the value of a relationship with the individual.
- iii. In a relationship already?
 - 1. If the person is a believer, praise God!
 - a. Keep on growing in Christ together through the Word, serving God and prayer!
 - 2. If the person is a nonbeliever, do the right thing in the sight of the LORD, and end it as an act of obedience to God.
- iv. Special application note for married people ministering to singles
 - 1. Share these truths with single Christians before they are in a relationship! Preventative steps are the best steps to take!
 - 2. Gently remind believers the importance of these truths who are considering someone to court.
 - 3. Exhort those who are in relationship with nonbelievers to obey God.
 - a. If they are ignorant, share them these truths.
 - b. If they are struggling, share them the grace of God to motivate them to do the right thing.
 - c. If they are disobedient, admonish them with a serious warning.

VI. With a member of the opposite sex

- a. If godly courtship is to head towards marriage, and marriage is only between a man and a woman, than biblical courtship must be only between a man and a woman.
 - i. Marriage was created as being between a man and a woman (**Genesis 2:20-25**)
 - 1. No suitable helper was found for the first man (**v.20**).
 - 2. God created for Adam a woman (**v.21-23**).
 - 3. This first pair of man and woman were created to be in a marriage (**v.24-25**).

Note the term "*wife*" used twice in this section.
 - ii. Therefore, relationship seeking marriage must then be sought between the setting of a man and a woman only.
- b. God's natural design for a man and a woman desire and function within marriage is heterosexuality (**Romans 1:26-27**).
 - i. Function

1. **Verse 26** mentioned that women exchange their natural function for that which is unnatural, but what is this natural function?
 2. **Verse 27** answers this question, as hinted by “*and in the same way also...*”
 3. **Verse 27** then goes on to describe the fact that some “*men abandoned the natural function of the woman...*”
 4. Therefore, the natural function of the man is for the woman and since **verse 27** hints “*in the same way also,*” it is true that the woman natural function is for a man. This was God created design.
- ii. Desire
1. **Verse 27** states “*and burned in their desire toward one another*”
 2. This desire for one’s own gender is described in **verse 27** as an “*error*”.
 3. Specifically, it’s an error that will receive “*it’s due penalty*” (**v.27**)
 4. What is not an error per se is heterosexual desire.
- iii. Also, the function and desire of heterosexual relationship is only within marriage. Out of marriage, sexual activity is prohibited whether it is between those
1. Unmarried (fornication)
 2. Married with someone outside their marriage (adultery)
 3. One’s own mind (lust)
- c. Homosexual desire and act itself is specifically prohibited by Scripture, and therefore a homosexual relationship of any kind can not be godly courtship.
- i. The Law of God is against it: “*But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching.*” (**1 Timothy 1:8-10**)
 1. Notice that among the list of whom the Law is for includes homosexuals.
 2. The list of whom the laws are for include certain types of sins that are not mentioned in the New but mentioned in the Old.
 - a. New Testament does not mention any law prohibiting killing parents specifically, but it does seem to be an allusion to the Old Testament reference in **Exodus 21:15** about striking one’s parent.

- b. *“And the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping.” (Proverbs 19:13b)*
Notice the comparison of a contentious wife to dripping water.
 - c. *“Like a bird that wanders from her nest, so is a man who wanders from his home.” (Proverbs 27:8)*
Many of these passages address men about marrying the wrong woman, here it addresses about a bad family man.
 - d. *“A constant dripping on a day of steady rain and a contentious woman are alike; He who would restrain her restrains the wind.” (Proverbs 27:15-16)*
 - i. Again, another comparison in Proverbs of a contentious woman to dripping water.
 - ii. Also a comparison of her being unable to be restrained by the wind.
2. “BETTER THAN...” comparison: It is better to be originally single than to be married in some instances.
- a. *“It is better to live in a corner of a roof than in a house shared with a contentious woman.” (Proverbs 21:9)*
 - b. *“It is better to live in a desert than with a contentious and vexing woman.” (Proverbs 21:19)*
 - c. *“It is better to live in a corner of the roof than in a house shared with a contentious woman.” (Proverbs 25:24)*
- iii. While finding the right person can prove to be quite a blessing
- 1. *“An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones.” (Proverbs 12:4)*
 - a. Note the first half of this verse.
 - b. She is like a crown.
 - 2. *“...But a prudent wife is from the LORD.” (Proverbs 19:14b)*
The trait of prudence in a wife is a gift from the LORD.
- iv. Therefore one needs to be very careful of whom they want to court and consider to their future spouse.
- b. How do you find the right person then?
Two principles: Seek wisdom from God and pray.
- i. Seek wisdom from God
The following are four practices.
 - 1. **Fear the LORD** first since fearing the LORD is the beginning of Wisdom (Proverbs 1:7)
“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.” (Proverbs 1:7)

- a. Fearing God entails acknowledging Him and His laws.
 - b. It involves submitting to Him and His laws in life.
 - c. APPLICATION: Search your heart and ask, Do you fear God before anything else such as not being in a relationship?
2. **Read the Word** of God which is where God's wisdom is stored (**Excerpts of Proverbs 2:6-19**)
- a. God has revealed His wisdom: "*For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.*" (**Proverbs 2:6**)
 - b. His revealed wisdom will give discernment concerning life's choices: "*Then you will discern righteousness and justice and equity and every good course.*" (**Proverbs 2:9**)
 - i. Note the consequence of God's revealed wisdom is that "*you will discern*"
 - ii. Wisdom revealed from God will lead one's "*every good course.*"
 - iii. Every good course include's one's decision of courtship and marriage.
 - c. The reason one can discern every good course is because one receives God's revealed wisdom into their heart: "*For wisdom will enter your heart...*" (**Proverbs 2:10a**)
 - d. One of the consequences of internalizing God's revealed wisdom is it protects a Christian from the wrong person to be in a relationship with:
 - i. The Unfaithful, who will leave you (**Proverbs 2:16-17**)
 - 1. "*Strange woman*"
 - 2. "*Adulteress who flatters with her words*"
 - 3. (One who) "*leaves the companion of her youth*"
 - 4. (One who) "*forgets the covenant of her God*"
 - ii. The Ungodly, who self-destruct with you (**Proverbs 2:18-19**)
 - 1. "*her house sinks down to death*"
 - 2. "*her tracks lead to the dead*"
 - 3. Her partners will not "*return again*"
 - 4. Her partners will not "*reach the path of life*"

- e. Application: Are you in God's Word daily to be wise in all aspects of life so as to discern the total life of a potential candidate?
- 3. **Ask** God for wisdom because He will give it (**James 1:5**)
- 4. **Obtain counsel** from God's people and their Godly wisdom
 - a. Receiving godly counsel is wise
 - i. Beware of being wise from only your perspective: "*The way of a fool is right in his own eyes*" (**Proverbs 12:15a**)
 - ii. Rather, receive other's counsel: "*But a wise man is he who listens to counsel.*" (**Proverbs 12:15b**)
 - b. Receiving godly counsel leads to success
 - i. Without counsel, it leads to frustration: "*Without consultation, plans are frustrated,*" (**Proverbs 15:22a**)
 - ii. With many counsel, it leads to success: "*But with many counselors they succeed.*" (**Proverbs 15:22b**)
 - c. Application: Do you ask regularly consult the wisdom of God's people concerning a decision of whether to pursue a particular person, and whether you two are ready to court?
- ii. Prayer
 - 1. **Ask** God directly in your prayers because Jesus teaches us to ask God (**Luke 11:9**) because He gives (**Luke 11:10**)
 - a. Paul also teaches that we can pray for everything (**Phillipians 4:6**)
 - b. This includes relationship!
 - 2. **Search and destroy** for wrong motives in what you ask from God, in light of **James 4:3**
 - a. People can have ulterior motives in asking for a relationship (distraction from family problems, idolatry of romance and sex, because being single will be viewed weird by peers, etc)
 - b. Don't just identify wrong motives, go to God for repentance.
 - 3. "**Be anxious for nothing**" because "*your requests be made known to God*" (**Phillipians 4:6**)
 - 4. **Thank** God for being single and also whatever the outcome is ahead of time, since our requests ought to be "*with thanksgiving*" (**Phillipians 4:6**)
 - 5. **Accept** whatever God's Will and answer is

- f. If you two are growing in Christ and becoming Christ-like, that means in some sense you are humble enough to be teachable and love God enough to change.
- g. For a strong Christian marriage to work, you want to be able to say years from now to each other, “You were a different person than the one I first met and married.” You want to also be able to add, “And boy am I glad you are different!”
- h. Illustration: Everyone has a minefield in their heart, filled with mines of sins. The Christian who is growing in sanctification is clearing more minefields and less explosions are avoided.

Special Problem Appendix A: “FORBIDDEN FRUIT CREATE A LOT OF BAD JAM”

INTRODUCTION: Whoever does not plan, has already planned to fail

Importance of having a plan in the area of purity in relationship

This is addressing both those in relationship and those not in a relationship yet

Purpose: You need to set boundaries before you are in a relationship, **within your relationship** and boundaries with those outside of your relationship so that you guard your heart, mind and body in purity before the Lord.

- 1.) Do I need boundaries in my relationship?
- 2.) How do I set/implement those boundaries?

ESTABLISH THE NEED: Why Boundaries? It is a wisdom Issue

Do you think you are too strong to need boundaries?

Samson was the strongest man in the Bible

-Killed a thousand men with a fresh jawbone (**Judges 15:15**)

-Destroyed a building housing 3,000 people (**Judges 16:27-30**)

Yet, he strayed away from the LORD when it comes to area of relationship

- **Judges 16:4-21**

Do you think you are too wise to need boundaries?

Solomon was wisest man

-“...behold, I have done according to your words Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you.” (**1 Kings 3:12** beginning at **1 Kings 3:5**)

- **1 Kings 10:23**

Yet, he strayed away from the LORD when it comes to area of relationship

- **1 Kings 11:1-6**

Do you think you are too spiritual to need boundaries?

David was a man after God’s own heart

*“But now your kingdom shall not endure The LORD has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.” (**1 Samuel 13:14**)*

*“After He had removed him, He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, ‘I HAVE FOUND DAVID the son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will.’” (**Acts 13:22**)*

Yet, he strayed away from the LORD when it comes to the area of relationship

-**2 Samuel 11:1-5, 12:9**

PRINCIPLE 1: How far away can I be away from the edge of sin?

Principle: So many times people have the mind that ask, "How close can I go before we sin?" instead of "how far away can I be away from sin?" We need to start thinking of being as far away from sin as possible.

Proof:

One of the most hair standing passage that Scripture addresses the issue so vividly and accurately the danger of flirting with the edge of temptation is **Proverbs 7:6-27**.

Coming to the edge **Proverbs 7:7-9**

"Passing through the street near her corner" (v.8a)

"Takes the way to her house" (v.8b)

At night (v.9)

Note: Four times of the same thing for emphasis:

"In the twilight"

"in the evening,"

"in the middle of the night"

"and in the darkness" (v.9)

The onslaught temptation **Proverbs 7:10-21**

The unavoidable disaster **Proverbs 7:22-23**

Listen! Listen! **Proverbs 7:24**

**"DO NOT LET YOUR HEART TURN ASIDE TO HER WAYS,
DO NOT STRAY INTO HER PATHS"**

Picture: (Driving off the edge in Iraq, four flip humvee!)

Practice: We don't need to be no cranberries. Have you notice

PRINCIPLE 2: Am I starting up anything before its proper time?

Principle: Go slow in the progress within the relationship. Don't unnaturally press for the relationship to go fast; remember, fast is slow and slow is fast.

Proof:

3 Times stated: "I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, By the gazelles or by the hinds of the field, that you will not arouse or awaken my love until she pleases."

Go slow with Physical relationship

Song of Solomon 2:7, after verse six which states

"Let his left hand be under my heart, and his right hand embrace me."

Song of Solomon 3:5

Song of Solomon 7:4

Picture: Nancy and I went so slow in our relationship, we did not hold hands until 2 and a half years into the relationship!

Practice: Set up boundaries!

PRINCIPLE 3: Am I in God's Word?

Principle: The Word is so important in our victory over sin and also rightful boundaries.

Proof: **Proverbs 7:1-5**

Specifically note verse 5: “That they may keep you from an adulteress,
From the foreigner who flatters with her words”

Picture: (The girl’s question and while I was reading the Bible)

Nancy’s telling me to lead us to study the Word

Practice: Get in God’s Word

PRINCIPLE 4: Am I doing the proper thing before the sight of the community?

Principle: Our relationship is never in a vacuum; we belong to a community

Proof:

Ruth 3 and 4:13

Practice: (Julie’s friend and marriage apart from the Body of Christ)

PRINCIPLE 5: Am I honoring Christ

Principle: 1 Corinthians 10:31, Colossians 3:23

Picture: Rifle range

Practice: Honor Christ?

Special Problem Appendix B: Dating nonbelievers and 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

Principle: Do not be bound together with unbelievers, avoid it ahead of time and break up if you are in one, because it comes down to your identity in Christ.

→ This is a clear prohibition from **2 Corinthians 6:14a**: “*Do not be bound together with unbelievers...*”

→ Being in a relationship (dating, engagement, sexual involvement, etc) is one of the closest ways one can be with an unbeliever and the extent of 2 Corinthians 6:14 would definitely be applicable against dating nonbelievers.

Mapping the five rhetorical questions of **2 Corinthians 6:14-16a**

<u>Issue:</u>	<u>Christians</u>	<u>Non-Christian</u>
Partnership	Righteousness	Lawlessness
Fellowship	Light	Darkness
Harmony	Christ	Belial
Common	Believer	Unbeliever
Agreement	Temple of God	Idols

- I. The rhetorical questions reveal the impossibility of a Christian being involved romantically with a non-Christian.
- a. Righteous cannot have partnership with lawlessness (**v.14a**).
 - b. Illustrated by the truth that it is physically impossible for light to have fellowship with darkness (**v.14b**).
 - i. If light were to have fellowship with darkness, darkness will disappear and it can not coexists.
 - ii. Similarly, it is the case with a believer dating a nonbeliever.
 - c. Christ cannot have harmony with Belial (**v.15a**).
 - i. The word “harmony” in Greek is the noun συμφωνησις which verbal cognate is συμφωνεω and used in the Greek Septuagint in three places that shows strong military/political alliances and agreements:
 1. **Genesis 14:13**, where the brothers of Mamre the Amorite were allies of Abram.
 2. **2 Kings 12:8**, where the priests made an agreement with King Jehoash in such a way where it can be seen as an alliance with the king.
 3. **Isaiah 7:2**, where Ephraim (that is, Israel) under it’s king Pekah, the son of Remaliah (**v.1**) allied with the Arameans against Jerusalem to the point of allowing the Arameans to camp out at Ephraim.
 - ii. Who is Belial?
 1. Belial appears once in the Bible and it is in this passage.
 2. However, the name Belial is not unknown to Jewish religion.

3. According to an important Dead Sea Scroll left by a group called the Essenes called The war of the sons of light against the sons of darkness, the Hebrew text records Belial to be the leader of a Satanic army that's against the "Sons of light" in the opening paragraph: "*The first attack of the Sons of Light shall be undertaken against the forces of the Sons of Darkness, the army of Belial*"
 - iii. Understanding the Greek root of the word translated as harmony and knowing about Belial reveals the impossibility of having an alliance with a nonbeliever.
 - d. Therefore: Believer cannot have what is common with an unbeliever (v.15b).
 - i. The Greek word for "common" here is μερίς, which can also be translated as "part, portion."
 - ii. Acts 8:21 uses this same noun illustrating Peter's own example of not having in common his ministry with an unbeliever when he did not compromise when Simon in his unrighteous heart wanted to purchase the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18)
 - e. Temple of God cannot be in agreement with idols (v.16a).
- II. Issue with a believer getting together with an unbeliever reveals a heart issue:
- a. A believer who will partner with one who is lawless rather one who is righteous (v.14a)
 - i. Lawlessness is sin (1 John 3:4)
 - b. A believer fellowship with one who is in darkness rather than the light (v.14b)
 - c. A believer now has serious issues of being in harmony with darkness and disharmonizing their relationship with Christ (v.15a)
 - d. A believer has a commonality with an unbeliever that is more important than with being with other believer (v.15b)!
 - i. My experience: Those who date nonbelievers will depart from fellowshiping with other believers.
- III. Being with a nonbeliever is an identity issue: It tells us who you are!
How would you answer these questions:
- a. Are you righteous or are you a lawless rebel?
 - b. Are you in the light or in darkness?
 - c. Are you allied to Christ or Belial?
 - d. Are you a believer of Jesus Christ, or are you an unbeliever?
 - e. Are you made a temple of God, or is your body for idolatry?
- IV. But if you are a believer, then your identity in Christ means you will be obedient to Christ
- a. Summary: If you are a believer in Christ, remember your new identity!
 - b. A believer is a temple of God and can confess the following: "*For we are the temple of the living God*" (2 Corinthians 6:16b)
 This truth is grounded in the Old Testament promises found in Lev. 26:12; Jer. 32:38; Ezek. 37:27: "*I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND*"

- (E) *WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE*” (2 Corinthians 6:16c)
- c. If one is a temple of God, there is a dilemma: “*what agreement has the temple of God with idols?*” (2 Corinthians 6:16a)
 - d. There is only possibility since you are a believer: “*Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,*’ says the Lord. ‘*AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you*” (2 Corinthians 6:17)
- V. Your identity in Christ spells several blessing which makes it possible to be motivate you to break off any dating with an unbeliever.
- a. Meditate on these truths of what God has done for believers:
 - i. God dwells in you: God says “*I will dwell in them...*” (2 Corinthians 6:16c)
 - ii. God walks in your midst: : “*...and walk among them*” (2 Corinthians 6:16c)
 - iii. The true living God is your God, for God has said: “*And I will be their God...*” (2 Corinthians 6:16c).
 - iv. You are considered part of God’s people, for God has said: “*And they shall be my people*” (2 Corinthians 6:16c).
 - v. You will be welcomed by God for your obedience: “*And I will welcome you*” (2 Corinthians 6:17c).
 - vi. You have God as a Father: “*And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me*” (2 Corinthians 6:18).
 - b. There is only one conclusion of these promises being meditated and motivating your Christian life: “*Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*” (2 Corinthians 7:1).
 - i. The “therefore” in Greek is *oun* which shows the consequences of previous truths.
 - ii. The bearing of these truths in your life leads to perfecting holiness.
 - iii. There is a sense of reverential fear of God.
 - iv. This should lead us to sanctification from sins.

GUID FOR COUNSELING USE:

- 1.) Have counselee read all the Scriptural references every time it is cited, even if it has been done before so that the Word of God will have it’s effect.
- 2.) Have counselee see if they can list section V of God’s promises.
- 3.) Keep on pointing to the chart and note the different spheres.

Special Problem Appendix C: Calling off the relationship biblically

Question: If you had to break up, what are some implications from the Bible that applies to the situation?

- I. With a non-Christian...
 - a. Ask for forgiveness for being a believer that has wronged them.
 - i. Relationship with a nonbeliever is a sin (see Appendix B).
 - ii. If you are repenting to God, you will break the relationship off and that will involve hurting the other person.
 - iii. Therefore, you should ask for their forgiveness.
 - b. Share the gospel
 - i. The nonbelievers in their sins are hated by God everyday: *“God is a righteous judge and a God who has indignation everyday”* (Psalm 7:11).
 - ii. The wrath of God is very real and one day if your former partner does not know Jesus, they will be thrown into the Lake of fire: *“And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire”* (Revelation 20:15)
 - iii. Therefore, knowing the sobering truth of the loss state of the unbelievers, you should be compelled to share the gospel of hope that would save them and pray for their salvation.
 - c. Break the ties for good if there is no repentance
 - i. To avoid the temptation of sinning again by reuniting.
 - ii. This is especially true of there was sexual past: *“Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body”* (1 Corinthians 6:18)
 1. Note the imperative “Flee”
 2. Run away from sin is wise!
 - iii. What it means practically is: End all opportunity of talking again.
- II. With a believer
 - a. Ask for forgiveness for any wrong doing.
 - i. As Christians we are bound to sin: *“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us”* (1 John 1:8).
 - ii. Therefore, you should ask for the individual’s forgiveness of any of your sins.
 - iii. God desires reconciliation between believers (Matthew 18)
 - b. Protect the person’s public testimony
 - i. Again, everyone has committed sins (1 John 1:8), but that does not mean every sin or bad side of the individual is now subject being revealed to everyone.
 - ii. Do not forget the example earlier of Joseph, the father of Jesus in this regards: *“And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly”* (Matthew 1:19)
 - iii. This means practicing not speak ill-will of them to others.

- c. Consider the person a brother and sister in Christ
 - i. This concerns how you think of the individual.
 - ii. Your thought life concerning the individual is most important: What you think of that person will drive how you behave towards that person.
 - iii. How you think of that individual is not subject to being the victim of your emotions—what you think of that individual is a choice!
 - 1. You are no longer a slave to your emotions!
 - 2. You are now a slave of Christ!
 - iv. That person is your brother or sister in Christ so treat them like one.
 - d. Unless you two are back in a relationship again, think of that person as someone else's future wife or husband and act in purity.
 - i. (Again this concerns how you think of the individual and what you think will determine your actual behavior towards the individual.)
 - ii. God is Sovereign and has a plan for every believer that is good (cf. **Romans 8:28**)
 - iii. If circumstances lead to the point where you two are not going to be husband and wife, that means that individual might be someone else's husband or wife.
 - iv. God has a plan that cannot be thwarted: "*For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate it? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?*" (**Isaiah 14:27**)
 - v. Therefore, do not sin against God's plan or cause yourself unnecessary heartache.
 - vi. Practical application:
 - 1. You cannot treat that person in an impure way (cf. **1 Timothy 5:1** about treating young female believers as sisters in purity)
 - 2. You do not "own" that person anymore, if someone else was in a relationship with them you have no jurisdiction or right to get upset, be jealous or require the other person to get your permission ahead of time, etc.
 - 3. You can not be stalking.
- III. Whether believer or nonbeliever...
- a. You pray to the Lord in your pain.
 - b. You draw closer to the Lord and find your satisfaction in Him when you feel lonely.
 - c. You practice Godly singleness (see SINGLENESSE SERIES).

Session 10: Doctrines that matters

- I. Establish the need: Do you find out what the person you are courting believes?
- II. Purpose: To encourage believers to find out what the other person believe and also to ensure you know and apply what you believe about God, the Bible, man, sin, Jesus, salvation and philosophy of relationship so that you will spiritually grow and practice discernment when it comes to courtship.
- III. Doctrine defined:
 - a. Andy Snider has defined doctrine as “Our Summation of a biblical theme that states a truth and calls for a response.”¹
 - b. Simply put it is “*teaching*” from the Bible.
- IV. For followers of the Bible doctrines matter
 - a. “*Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.*” (1 Timothy 4:16)
 - b. “*Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the ^[a]saints.*” (Jude 3)
- V. Goal of knowing doctrine isn’t just head knowledge but to love God and worship Him. This will also have implications for our practical lives.
- VI. Some doctrines that has implication for relationship

Note: The following are examples of how certain key doctrines are important to see oneself and the person you are courting to have, since it has dramatic implications for the relationship and marriage/family.

 - a. Total Depravity and humility
 - i. Total Depravity: Sin has affected every faculty of man (mind, will, body, emotions).
 - ii. Total depravity should incline us to believe what others say is wrong with us and constructive criticism necessary for a relationship to grow.
 - b. Christ’s work for our salvation and forgiveness
 - i. “*Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven ^[a]you.*” (Ephesians 5:32)
 - ii. Understanding of what Christ has done for us incline us to forgive others.
 - c. God’s Sovereignty and Suffering
 - i. The strongest theological model of God’s Sovereignty is Calvinism.
 - ii. Believing in God’s Sovereignty will be very important during suffering
 - d. Gender Roles
- VII. Are there other doctrines that you can think of as important for both to hold to in your courtship and are not negotiable?
 - a. Go back and work on your Pre-courtship counseling seven questions earlier in this series.

¹ Andrew Snider, *Theology 605: Theology I Class Notes* (Sun Valley: The Master’s Seminary Class Syllabus, Revised Fall 2009), 13.

- b. Don't arbitrarily pick doctrines; study the Bible, study systematic theology and believe and apply it so you know what is important!
 - c. Learn from others.
- VIII. Talking about doctrines
- a. Best way to talk about doctrines is go through the Bible together
 - b. Ask that person what they believe.
 - c. Pay attention to "circumstantial" evidences
 - i. Find out the person's favorite preacher, sermon, verses (and why), etc
 - ii. Find out church background, ministry involvement, etc.
 - d. Use "teachable moments" to uncover or discover God's truth together
 - e. Discern also whether one is teachable or firm in doctrines that are conviction you hold.