

The Principles of Romance 2009

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Introduction:

Gail Ann Dorsey wrote -No Time

No time for talking, no time for walking, not time for loving you, Baby, I've got a lot on my mind. So much to do and too little time I got a lot on my mind, and I wish I knew where to draw the line.

Ain't got time for romance on a starry night or waking up beside you in the morning light. I've got business to attend and money to spend. Time is my enemy. There's too little hour in a given day. Too many people getting in my way. I'm so caught up in my crazy world!

No time for talking no time for walking no time for loving you, baby. I've got a lot on my mind. I'm too tired to listen, too tired to fight, too tired to get up and turn off the lights. I worry about the things to come. I'm looking out for #1.

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Learning from the Master



This is so true for many of God's people; we just don't take the time **for** important things. Romance takes time, and in order to make a marriage **or a relationship** work it's going to take time **and effort**.

When we look at our calendar it may seem like there is no room for **anyone** but you. **The bible teaches us that two is better than one**

Pray that God teach you and deliver you from selfishness

Making time is what real lovers do, they find the time for romance. God's people must lead in showing the world how to romance. This book will help us learning from the Master, our **Lord and Savior**. I **have** learned that people take time for what is important to them. Many times people will make time for the things **they care about**; sadly many people don't feel the same way toward their mates. Today we see many of **our** men put their **mates** on the back burner. Men, your woman needs to be top priority in your life and **not just** when its bed time. Night time or bed time seems to be the only time men make an attempt to romance **their wives**. She is not going to be in the mood if you are just now telling her she looks good and feel good, she will wonder why she wasn't told this earlier. Women on average do twice the work of men. **They too** have jobs and still expected to cook and clean and be a freak in the bedroom. Yes I went there; **many** men will want the royal treatment almost every night. Remember **YOU ARE HER HUSBAND** not her pimp.

Let's look at the problem why **many** people **do not** take time to romance. The number one problem **is** romance can become predictable .Couples that **do not** refresh ideals, make the same old moves saying the same old things and expect the same response. Suppose your pastor preached the same sermons Sunday after Sunday I don't think anyone would put up with that. We would call the pastor and ask if he/she were ok.

Let's look at some fresh ideals

Romantic Games

- * Play "Taste the Rainbow". Blindfold your partner and feed them fruity candies. See if they can guess each flavor. Next, put the candy in your mouth and then give them a kiss. See if they can guess that.
- * Go buy at least two light romantic games and play them at least twice this week.
- * Tell her how you feel in a game of Hangman.
- * Play Twister together and get all tangled up. If you're in the mood for fun, this game is a classic. Clear some space on the floor, put on some up beat music and see where the night takes you.
- * Have a board game night. Buy a bunch of chips, dip and other finger foods to snack on and get ready for a competitive night of games! For a fun romantic twist... whoever wins the most games gets one free wish!
- * Play the Basketball game of "H-O-R-S-E". Every time your love gains a letter, they also owe you a kiss of your choice!
- * Have fun and unwind - visit a local arcade or take in a game of pool.

*** Play the alphabet game! One person starts with the letter "A" and has to kiss a body part on the other person beginning with that letter. The other person starts with "B" and so on and so on. If you can't think of a body part for a letter make up one**

Love Letter-When they aren't looking put a love letter in their pocket.

- * Spray your love letters with perfume.
- * Surprise your mate with twenty-six gifts from A to Z that begin with each of the letters of the alphabet.
- * Write love letters at least monthly.
- * Write a long love letter, then seal it with a kiss and mail it.
- * Write your love a love letter using kiddie stickers that say things like "terrific" or "top notch". It's a colorful way to spice up an ordinary love letter and will be sure to make their day that you put in the extra time.
- * Write a surprise love letter to your significant other on a bed sheet (the one you use to cover up with).
- * Write a love letter and put it in a glass bottle. Place the bottle somewhere that you know your love will find it.
- * Find out his favorite colors and make him a blanket, preferably fleece, and on one side using felt letters write something like "Cover you in kisses" or "I Love you" or "Wrapping you in my love" or something like that.
- * Give your love a letter opener on a Wednesday and on Friday (or Saturday) give her 4 envelopes (not all at once) the first one is where you are going for dinner, the second has a tape with love songs, the third has movie tickets to the movie she has been dying to see, and the fourth has a letter that says "I Love You".

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- * Buy a dozen or so love cards and a box of stationary. Keep a few cards and/or sheets in your car, purse, briefcase, etc. Whenever you are stuck waiting somewhere, take a few moments and write a love letter.
- * Send a loving e-mail, poem or letter to your loved one.
- * Write down the 26 letters of the alphabet (placed in vertical order on the paper) and write down a description of your boyfriend/husband that starts with that letter. Example: A -- Ambitious; B -- Breathtaking; C -- Cuddly; D -- Delicious; E -- Exciting; F -- Friendly; G -- Good kisser; H -- Handsome; I -- Ingenious; J -- Jock; K -- Kind; L -- Lover; M -- Masculine; N -- Neat; O -- Outstanding; -- And so on. It helps if you have a thesaurus at hand to look up words that describe your man.
- * On a special occasion put a little confetti or tiny heart cutouts (not a whole lot though) on top of the visor in his car. When he brings down the visor to block the sun the confetti will sprinkle down on him. You could also put a love letter or love-note there.
- * Hand write love letters and leave them under his pillow. Be sure to use romantic stationery, avoid cliches, and tell him how you really feel.
- * When you feel like your getting comfortable with each other... dig out the old love letters that they sent to you... and send the letters (on a new sheet of paper or card or whatever) to your love... they will love the fact that you kept the letters, and love it even more that you sent them the same letter that they used to win your heart.
- * Write them a letter using the letters of their name to start each line.
- * Write them a letter that has I LOVE YOU as the first letter of each line.
- * Write them a letter that has I MISS YOU as the first letter of each line.
- * Send your love anonymous love letters on little pieces of scented paper, and tell him/her to meet you somewhere romantic...like the first place

you went maybe. Blindfold them and gently kiss them all over their face...SOFTLY like an Angel.

- * Get a deck of cards and give them one every week of the year with a love letter on it.
- * Send your love a letter with confetti hearts inside of the letter so they pour out everywhere when your sweetheart opens it.
- * Just write them a letter that says "I LOVE YOU" all through it, and it sure will lift their spirits.
- * Write little notes to say "I miss you".Read old cards and letters from each other to each other.

Romantic Phone Calls

Our lives are busy. Often the phone calls between you and your partner are rushed, businesslike and unfriendly. Why not take the time to place a few fun, loving and romantic phone calls. Don't be surprised if the first call doesn't go well, that is a sign that your phone calls in the past haven't been fun and friendly enough. After a couple of loving calls, your partner's harsh exterior will melt away.

God is highly romantic. He is very interested in your love life!!

God wants us to be strongly romantic with our mates. Notice I did not say strongly sexual

Romance requires us to share our time and substance; two things are free, Time and Touch.

So many couples no longer touch their mates or have a meaning conversation. We should be touchy feely with our mate, It says I still think you still have it, that I am still wanting to flirt with my mate. We should make a habit of flirting without wanting sex every time.

We should call it a *just because moment* .***God does not let a day go by with out touching our lives in one way or another.*** 99.9 percent of women love to be touched. So men lets do a better job of touching.

Now take a look at the bible and the body, The bible says we are made in the image of God That is mental, moral and physical , take a note of the body how every inch has nerves. Ready to be touched cuddled and held. *Nerves alerts us with pain but they also cause us to appreciate one another's touch.*

A Non romantic God would have made us boring to look at .A romantic God gave us hips lips and long finger tips curves every where black brown and blue eyes. So when you look at the body of man you see a body built to be romanced. Our hands are made to hold and to hug, unlike a robot we can be very gentle as we caress and hold the one we love. Men seem to only touch when we want to be sexual or worse when touched we think she means that she wants sex. Many women would trade sex for flower or a date. We must be careful not to let the body be our focal point of our relationship. Many people are looking for a man or a woman that has a certain look. Peoples mind change and so do looks, thin turn to thick in a few years. Most of us loose hair height and sight just to name a few problems that age brings. **The most foolish mistake a person can make is falling for looks. *Many of your***

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best looking men are in jail, most of the women you see in porn are very beautiful. **Prov 31:30** says Beauty is vain.....God's man or woman for you may not be miss America but they will teach you one main lesson that looks don't pay the bills. You have some people that think they are too cute to work and will almost cost you your salvation Just remember beauty is only skin deep!!

Let's Be Real



Let's be Real, When you think about the time you spent together preparing for marriage, **are you spending enough time together now in order to stay married?** Good question! Many of us are not.

As husbands and wives we need to be willing to sit down together and honestly and openly discuss how we can work toward a fulfilling marriage. we need to ask ourselves, "What can we change that will help our marriage?"

. We Need to realize, like many empty nesters have found out the hard way, that when the children grow up, when it comes right down to it, it is just you and me baby in this thing together.

A good suggestion is once a week gets a baby sitter or lean on friends and get out together as a couple. **Don't feel guilty about hiring a baby sitter.** It is better to hire a baby sitter than to hire a marriage counselor. Consider a weekend away.

Dr. Willard Harley has identified for most people the **basic marital needs of men and women.**

A. For men,

1) **Sexual fulfillment.** A man can't do without this! Many men love sex more than sleep So wife handle your business. Yes some men seem to be robots but remember wives they will slow down sooner than you will. many men slow down sometime in their thirties when women seem to get stronger.

2) **Recreational Companionship.** The couple that plays together stays together. You need to get out and spend fun time together whether its at a football game or concert movie or car race be together, even if you don't care for the sport ,ladies spend time with your man.

3) **Attractive Spouse.** When she looks good, he feels good. Men love their women to look good; Men are so proud of their fine wives; she represent him in every way.

4) **Domestic support.** He needs some peace and quiet. The wife should let the kids play outside in the yard. Some men just like to spend a few hour alone.

5) **Admiration.** He needs her to respect him and be proud of him. Husbands love it when their wives are on their side and cheering them on.

b. For women, listen men:

1) **Affection.** Touching and holding. Brothers your wives

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crave for it. They desire to be under your arms. Kisses of affection behind the neck from time to time they will love it.

2) **Conversation.** 15 hours a week on average. Wives love to talk, so men listen, even if it hurts a little. A woman has the need to get it out, talking is healing for her.

4) **Financial support.** Enough money to live comfortable. Anything over \$50,000 has no bearing on happiness or well being.

5) **Family commitment.** She needs him to be a good father. Not just when the children grow up. A good father loves at all times

6. Am I willing to follow Christ's example in my marriage? Dr. Harley tells this truth: Most wives cannot comprehend their husband's need for sex any more than most husbands can comprehend their wives need for affection.

7. (Luke 6:31 NIV) Do to others as you would have them do to you. Here is the marital golden rule: Meet your spouse's needs as you would want them to meet yours .

Romances of the Bible



Lot's Wife

Let's take a look at some of the romances of the bible. We will focus on the good the bad and the ugly. Let'S take a look at lot's wife the bible doesn't say much about her, but we know there had to be issues in their marriage. How do we know that? First if your comfortable living in an all gay community that says a lot about you and what you stand for.Maybe she just loved the ways of this world more than God. John writes:

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. (I John 2:15-17)

There may be more to it, however, than we have thought. Most people assume that Lot had only two daughters, but this is not the case. He says to the Sodomites, "See now, I have two daughters *who have not known a man*" (Genesis 19:8). He had two unmarried daughters. Later, in verse 14, he "spoke to his sons-in-law, *who had married his daughters*," meaning he had other married daughters who were not virgins. Finally, the angels tell him, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters *who are here*" (verse 15), implying he had daughters elsewhere.

Since Lot and his wife had more than two daughters, they left more than just material possessions in the city. When God rained down fire and brimstone upon Sodom, their married daughters and sons-in-law—and possibly

grandchildren—perished with the rest of the city's populace. What a poignant and tragic test of their faith!

Thus, when Lot's wife fled for little Zoar, her wealth, her house and her social circle were not the only things on her mind. Those concerns were insignificant beside the certain death of her flesh and blood. Perhaps she did not believe that God would follow through on His threat. As a loving mother, her emotions for her doomed family in the city clouded her ability to make proper decisions.

Jesus makes a pertinent comment in this regard in Matthew 10:37-39:

He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.

Jobs wife

The next woman of God has no name given her, but we will call her Jobeda .Well known For telling her husband to curse God and die, but let's be real how many times we have spoken a work out of our pain, Sure she was in pain seeing her husband suffer from day to day, she had to clean his sores double wash his clothes and comfort him any way she could. Day after day night after night. Yet we see no evidence that she ran out on him or left him to manage on his own. When his so called friends made false accusations she was there loving him caring for him, Note he was not the rich and well loved man of the town that he once was He had money friends and fame this man had it going on

and so did she because she was still his wife. Now let's look at the end of the book of Job Job 42:12-17 After God deals with Jobs friend he turn to Job and bless him double for his trouble. Ten children in the entire bible talked about how beautiful the girls were probably just like their mother. Look at this love she was strong enough to suffer with him and also willing to remain his lover. This is a love story that had tested the better or for worse of marriage.

Abraham and Sarah Lesson on waiting and patients

Sarah: When God Seems Silent
Genesis 16

I've told you before the story of John Claypool who in his book *The Light Within You* tells of his young daughter who was diagnosed with Leukemia and was in a tremendous amount of pain. One night in the hospital she asked him, "Daddy, when will my pain go away." And John said, "Honey, we're doing everything we can to get rid of it." And his daughter asked, "Daddy have you asked God when my leukemia will go away. Have you asked him daddy? What did God say?"

And Claypool writes that he didn't know what to say to her. "What do you say to a little girl when God seems as if he is not listening. What do you say," he writes, "when the heavens seem silent."

Some of the hardest things to handle are the times in our lives when God seems like he is a million miles away and is not answering our prayers. God promised in his word to always be there but it seems as if he giving us the silent treatment. Where are you God when I hurt? Job wrote in the Old Testament, 'I go east, but he is not there. I go west but I cannot find him. I do not see him in the north for he is hidden. I turn to the south, but I cannot find him.'" (Job 23:8).

Maybe right now you have a situation in your life and you are wondering where God is. Maybe it's a disease you deal with and you are wondering if God notices. Maybe it's a rebellious child and you've asked God to help; but your child just dives deeper into rebellion. Maybe you've been abused and the pain is deep and it just won't go away and you wonder if God even cares. Maybe you have a decision that you need to make but there is no clear picture as to what you should do. And God is not helping you see what you should do. He's silent.

Sarah was a woman in the Bible who became frustrated with God's silence when she could not get pregnant. She wanted desperately to have a child but it just wasn't happening. Open your Bibles up to Genesis 16 and let's look at Sarah's story and the draw some lessons for our lives about how we should react when it appears that God is silent.

I. SARAH'S STORY

Genesis 16:1, "Now Sarai, Abram's wife had borne him no children." Sarai or Sarah was barren. She could not give birth to a child which in those days was considered a curse. Sarah was about 75 years old and so the chances of her having a baby were pretty slim.

Years ago, Isaiah Moore, a professor at the College of

Scriptures in Louisville, Kentucky decided that he would remarry when he was widowed for the fifth time at age 89. Wayne Smith, the renowned preacher from Lexington, Kentucky asked Isaiah why he was marrying again at his age. Isaiah quipped, "Well, Wayne, I've always wanted to have a son." And Wayne said, "Brother Moore, you ought to be the president of the Optimist Club."

At 75 years of age there was little optimism in Sarah's mind that she was going to have a child. I think the even more frustrating thing for Sarah was that 10 years before this God had come to her husband Abraham and promised him that they would have son. The Bible says that God took Abraham outside and had him look at the heavens and told him that his offspring would be as numerous as the stars in the sky. (Genesis 15:5).

The problem was that God had made this promise some 10 years earlier and Sarah was yet to conceive a child. She was growing older and it was looking like an impossibility she would get pregnant. God had been silent for 10 years and you can imagine how impatient Sarah and Abraham must have been. God we want a child so bad! Where are you? When is your promise going to come to fruition God?

One of the toughest things to do in life is to wait on God like Sarah had too. Someone once said that God is never in a hurry, but yet he is never late. Dealing with God's timing takes certain knowledge of who God is. God's view of time is quite different than ours. The Bible says that for God a thousands years is like a day. In other words, for an eternal God a thousand years is really not that long of time. Where as 10 years must have seem like an eternity to Sarah, it was just a few seconds to God.

A 4-year-old boy was traveling with his mother & constantly asking the same question over & over again? "When are we going to get there? When are we going to get there?" Finally,

the mother got so irritated that she said, "We still have 90 more miles to go. So don't ask me again when we're going to get there." Well, the boy was silent for a long time. Then he timidly asked, "Mom, will I still be four when we get there?"

To a small child, a 4 hour car ride seems like an eternity. But to an adult a four hour car ride is not so long because an adult has experienced time. To God a few years on earth seems like a few seconds because he has experienced eternity. And we sometimes appear to him like the child constantly nagging from the back seat, God when is this going to happen. When God? When?

Well, because of Sarah's impatience with God's silence she convinces her husband Abraham to go along with a crazy and downright sinful plan.

II. SARAH'S SOLUTION

Second half of verse 1 says, "She (Sarah) had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar; so she said to Abraham, 'The Lord has kept me from having children. Go sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her.'"

"Abraham agreed to what Sarah said. So after Abraham had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarah his wife took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar and she conceived."
(Genesis 16:1-4).

Sarah could not wait on God so she tried to help matters along. She was so impatient that she comes up with a terrible solution. You know desperation often makes us do stupid things. Sarah gives her husband permission to sleep with her maidservant. Abraham agrees and Hagar the servant becomes pregnant. Customs in those days allowed a woman to do exactly what Sarah did. A barren wife often

offered her servant as a substitute and as a result, any child born of the union became a legal heir.

Sarah did what most of us would do. She took action when God appeared silent. Because hey the Bible says, "God helps those who help themselves." No it doesn't. Instead the Bible says, "Wait patiently for the Lord." Sarah was tired of God's silence, "he's kept me from having children," she said, "so I am going to do something about it." She could no longer stand the stigma of being barren and so she devises a plan to make the disgrace disappear. Sarah decides to forgo God's ways and she will make her own way.

But she soon finds out the folly of her way. Little does she know that her efforts will only fuel bitter relationships and heartache? Sarah begins to resent her maidservant and her husband. Verse 5, "Then Sarah said to Abraham, 'You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my servant in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant she despises me.'"

Abraham is referred to in the Bible as a man of great faith, but he must have been a few cheeseburgers shy of a happy meal during all this. Guys let me give you some advice. If your wife comes to you like Sarah did in a moment of lapse judgment and says it's okay to sleep with another woman, don't believe her. Ladies do you understand why Sarah was upset with Abraham? I think she wanted Abraham to say, "No honey, if you and I can't have a child together, we won't have one."

Abraham failed to take charge and he let Sarah carry out this miserable and foolish plan. Abraham ends up telling Sarah to do whatever she wants with Hagar. And Verse 6 says that Sarah, "Mistreated Hagar so she fled from her." Isn't that often how it happens, we blow it and others feel our frustrations.

Hagar refused to put up with Sarah's mistreatment and flees to the desert. She would eventually return and give birth to a son named Ishmael. Ishmael was the father of the Arab race. And the Jews and Arabs are still fighting today. Sarah's plan ended in disaster. The world is still reaping the consequences of her decision as we speak. But God was silent, Sarah took action, and it all fell apart.

III. LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM SARAH – WHEN GOD IS SILENT

There are a few things we can learn from Sarah about what to do when God seems silent.

First WHEN GOD SEEMS SILENT: DO EXPECT IT TO BE DIFFICULT. Those ten years that Sarah had to wait on a child probably seemed like an eternity to her. It was so hard for her to wait on God. She knew he had said she would give birth but it was driving her nuts to wait. It's difficult to wait on God.

I don't want to mislead you. Dealing with God can sometimes be a pain in the rear end. It is not easy to follow God. Corrie Ten Boom was imprisoned and tortured in a Nazi Death Camp for years and she wrote, "God, if this is the way you treat your friends, its no wonder you don't have very many."

Do you know why God is sometimes silent when we go through difficulties? It is because he is testing our faith. God often uses trials and difficulties to mature our faith.

Harold Wilke was born with no arms and one time when he was a preschooler he was struggling to get his shirt over his head and shoulders. He said, "I was grunting and sweating and my mother just stood there and watched." A relative turned to his mother and said, "Ida, why don't you help the

child?" His mother responded through gritted teeth, "I am helping him."

Sometimes God stands by in silence and does nothing because it actually helps us mature. **James 1:2 says, "Count it such joy when you experience trials because those trials come so that you may develop patience with God.** If you are in the midst of a trial allow yourself to ask God for help and he gives freely help to those who ask."

God's silence may have been a test to see if Sarah and Abraham were going to be faithful and trust God's promises. How else do we really know that we trust God unless that trust is tested from time to time?

Lesson Two is this: WHEN GOD SEEMS SILENT DON'T GET AHEAD OF HIM. When we go against God's timing and get ahead of him as Sarah did we can almost bet that the result will be disastrous. Teenagers do not want to wait until marriage to have sex and the result is unwanted pregnancy and disease. A young married couple doesn't want to wait to save to have the nice house so they go into deep debt to buy a house that's too big, too soon for their budget and they end up filing bankruptcy. Getting ahead of God can be disastrous.

Sarah did it her way and in her time and she ended up creating a conflict that still exists to this day between the Arab and Jews. She had a surrogate plan to replace God's plan and it all fell apart. Someone once said that the worst thing we can say to God is, "God what do you think of this idea?" Judi Hefner pointed out to me a church sign that read, "If you want to make God laugh, just show him your plans."

Ron Hutchcraft calls what Sarah did "backwards planning." That's when we make plans and arrangements before we check with God.

God said to the Israelites in Isaiah 30:1 "Woe to those who carry out plans that are not mine, forming an alliance, but not by My Spirit, heaping sin upon sin." God says, "You're making plans without consulting me. You're figuring out ways to get it done that are not my ways of getting it done. And, as a result, you're just guaranteeing disaster for yourself."

Someone once said that spiritual ends are never achieved through carnal means. Sometimes the best way to determine God's will for our lives is to do nothing but simply wait and allow things to play out. That is often hard to do; but it is the wisest thing we can do. Consider these verses in the book of Psalms about waiting.

Psalm 27:14 "Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD." Psalm 38:15 "I wait for you, O LORD; you will answer, O Lord my God." Psalm 130:5, "I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope."

Do you know what we should do while we wait on God? Pray. A key discipline in the Christian life for making sure we don't get ahead of God is prayer. Prayer is a way of communicating with God and acknowledging that we are trying to follow him. Prayer is the key to not getting ahead of God. Prayer helps us make sure we are not backwards planning. Anne Benefield says, "Only time spent with God can bring us into God's rhythm."

That is why Proverbs 3:6 says, "In all your ways acknowledge God, and He will direct your paths." That says, to pray and God will direct you. Too many of us direct our paths and then ask God to walk along with us. Here God I'm going this way. That's not how it works. You know its funny but we do not read in the Bible that Sarah prayed about her barrenness perhaps that is why she got ahead of God. She

was not in rhythm with God's timing.

Thirdly, WHEN GOD IS SILENT. DON'T TRY TO UNDERSTAND HIM. Sarah's main mistake is that she assumed that she understood God. She even said, "The Lord has prevented me from having children." She mistook God's silence as meaning she wasn't having a child. She was wrong in her understanding.

We should never try to understand or interpret what God is doing because we will never fully understand his ways. Last weekend I spoke at a conference and talked about this church and was asked to describe what God was doing here and I said, "I really don't know." It's hard to explain what God is doing.

Someone once said that God's heavenly plan sometimes makes no earthly sense. In Isaiah 55:8 God says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my way, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways." In other words, don't try to understand my ways they are beyond your comprehension.

And you know we may never truly understand God's plan for us completely. It may be that we don't understand God's plan until we are dead and in heaven. God never promises us that we will understand fully what he is doing. He just asks us to trust. The apostle Paul was imprisoned and tortured; hated and rejected. But somehow he was able to write in Romans 8:28, "In all things God works for the good of those who love him." Paul just trusted that God was working things out for good.

In her book, *The Hiding Place*, Corrie Ten Boom wrote about an incident in World War II that taught her to trust that God knows what he is doing. She and her sister, Betsy, had been

sent to the Ravensbruck concentration camp by the Nazis. The barracks they were assigned were not only overcrowded, but flea-infested. As Corrie lay in the dry straw she had made for a bed, not only was she suffocated by human bodies, but fleas bit away at her skin and she got so frustrated and complained to God. "God why these fleas? Haven't I gone through enough God! I can take anything but fleas. You've got to be joking God."

It was there in Ravensbruck that Corrie and her sister Betsy started a Bible Study in their barracks for Jewish women. It was illegal to study the Bible in those prison camps and if the guards came into the barracks and found them, death was certain. But to Corrie's surprise the Bible Studies grew and grew and no guard ever interrupted, nor came into the barracks. After weeks and weeks of the Bible Studies, Corrie and her sister finally found out why the guards never came into their barracks. One of them overheard a guard say, "We don't go in there because of the fleas." She could not understand the reason for the fleas at first but it all made sense to her now. God had worked it all out for good.

Folks, you never know how God is orchestrating his plans and his will in your life. He is behind the scenes making it all work out for good and we just have to trust he knows what he is doing even when he is silent.

These words were found on a wall in Cologne, Germany where Jews had been hiding from the Nazi's. "I believe in the sun even when it is not shining. I believe in love even when I don't feel it. And I believe in God even when he is silent."

You know what happened to Sarah? God worked it out for her good. She eventually gave birth to a son. A wonderful son named Isaac whom she and her husband Abraham would love. Isaac would be a main character in the Bible and a man of God. You see Sarah, God did have a plan for you.

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He was watching over you all the time. His promises are true. If you would only waited until the right time.

God has a plan for each of us. He loves us, the question is do we love him and are we going to trust?

Should Christian's Flirt



Flirting is an expression of **sexuality** and a common form of **social interaction** whereby one person obliquely indicates a **romantic** or **sexual** interest towards another. It can consist of **conversation**, **body language**, or brief physical contact. It may be one-sided or reciprocated (encouraged) with intentions of getting to know that person on a higher level.

Flirting may involve speaking and acting in a way that suggests greater **intimacy** than is generally considered appropriate to the **relationship** (or to

the amount of time the two people have known each other), without actually saying or doing anything that breaches any serious **social norms**. This may be accomplished by communicating a sense of playfulness or irony. **Double entendres**, with one meaning more formally appropriate and another more suggestive, may be used.

While some of the subconscious signs are universal across cultures, flirting etiquette varies significantly across cultures which can lead to misunderstandings. There are differences in how closely people should stand (**proxemics**), how long to hold eye contact, and so forth.^[1]

But outside the hairdresser's chair, things are not so simple. Flirt the wrong way with the wrong person, and you run the risk of everything from a slap to a sexual-harassment lawsuit. And of course, the American virtue of plain spookiness is not an asset in an activity that is ambiguous by design. Wayne State's Abbey, whose research has focused on the dark side of flirting--when it transmogrifies into harassment, stalking or acquaintance rape--warns that flirting can be treacherous. "Most of the time flirtation desists when one partner doesn't respond positively," she says. "But some people just don't get the message that is being sent, and some ignore it because it isn't what they want to hear."

One of the most fascinating flirting laboratories is the digital world.

Here's a venue that is all words and no body language; whether online or in text messages, nuance is almost impossible. And since text and e-mail flirting can be done without having to look people in the eye, and is often done with speed, it is bolder, racier and unimpeded by moments of reflection on whether the message could be misconstrued or is wise to send at all.

Worldly View of Flirting

"Flirt texting is a topic everyone finds fascinating, although not much research is out there yet," says Abbey. But one thing is clear: "People

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are often more willing to disclose intimate details via the Internet, so the process may escalate more quickly."

That's certainly the case on sites like Yahoo!'s Married and Flirting e-mail group, as well as on Marriedbutplaying.com and Married-but-flirting.com "Flirting" in this sense appears to be a euphemism for talking dirty. A University of Florida study of 86 participants in a chat room published in Psychology Today in 2003 found that while nearly all those surveyed felt they were initially simply flirting with a computer, not a real person, almost a third of them eventually had a face-to-face meeting with someone they chatted with. And all but two of the couples who met went on to have an affair. Whether the people who eventually cheated went to the site with the intention of doing so or got drawn in by the fantasy of it all is unclear. Whichever, the sites sure seem like a profitable place for people like the guy behind me on the pre-Christmas flight to hang out.

Most people who flirt--off-line at least--are not looking for an affair. But one of the things that sets married flirting apart from single flirting is that it has a much greater degree of danger and fantasy to it. The stakes are higher and the risk is greater, even if the likelihood of anything happening is slim. But the cocktail is in some cases much headier. It is most commonly the case with affairs, therapists says, that people who cheat are not so much dissatisfied with their spouse as with themselves and the way their lives have turned out. There is little that feels more affirming and revitalizing than having someone fall in love with you. (It follows, then, that there's little that feels less affirming than being cheated on.) Flirting is a decaf affair, a way of

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feeling more alive, more vital, and more desirable without actually endangering the happiness of anyone you love--or the balance of your bank account. So go ahead and flirt, if you can do it responsibly. You might even try it with your spouse all of the above came from a worldly site and is in no wise a Godly perspective. Sad the church is following many of the same guide lines

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It Raining Standards

People find it safe for them to flirt on line because they think nobody is looking. The it may be safe is it sin? .Most of the time saints are flirting with non Christians. because the women in the church are finding there are so few men in the house of God.,

It is raining standards

Standard are falling fast in the house of God. Many women are DROPPING their standard due to the lack of brothers in the house of God. The bible talks about in the **last days there would be only one man for every seven women.** Truly we are in the last days and despite the recession people are spending millions of dollars seeking the soul mate. Woman seeking men can be found in the bible Songs of solomon chap. 3 She search till she found the man she was looking for, not one time did she settle for anything lest, She was beating once but would not let that stop her from seeking he whom her soul loved.

Settling

Settling seems to only work short term when you do get what you want and settle for less than you are shooting yourself in the foot. My belief is Marry what you want and Want what you marry. Most men want a S. S. S. S. Woman Smart, Saved, Sexy and Spontaneous.

Saved: Most men want saved women when they are not, they want a woman they can trust when many can not be trusted. When you talk to men in the streets they all say give me a church lady. If you ask the street men who do

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you think is smart many will say the street woman mainly because she knows the streets. But to be fair not all men feel this way. Unequally yoke couples mainly have problems related to church. Most of the times the men do not want to attend church but control when the woman goes to church. Men love the fact that if there is person in the house that can pray for him. Many feel like a saved woman will rather follow then lead.

SMART: Men like smart women because you don't have to tell them how to do every little thing, Smart women don't need a man to make them feel good about themselves, So if a man needs a little help hanging drywall, painting, typing a paper she know how to be a help to her Husband. Smart women today own more homes and have better jobs then men, While many of our black men are marching to jail many of our black women are going back to school and excelling in life. The smart woman don't wait for a man to lead them they understand that God said he would never leave them and they try to follow his lead till the brother wake up and learn his place in God,. Men can only be the true head of the home when he let God be the head of his life and home. I do think that many couple don;t make it because their IQ levels are so far apart that you wake up saying wow, I didn't know you were so dumb. Couples marriages that last for years really feel good about their mate intelligentsia. Suggestion: Never stop studying together, Keep a vision have a ministry of your own, Have a ministry together.

Sexy: *First what is sexy? Arousing or tending to arouse sexual desire or interest.* Sexy is not all about what you have on, a walk or how you talk they spend millions trying to get that look. But its not a look, sexy can be a fat person with little or no shape at all. Sexy is like beauty in a way. In the eyes

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of the beholder Sexy is more about how you feel about you. Too many people are trying to look sexy instead of being themselves, you can't buy sexy. its not for sell Many attempts have had women looking like prostitutes or worse Men love to look at a sexy woman, save or not men want their wives to be sexy, Men want their woman to be like eye candy cute and fine.

1. **Spontaneous:** Happening or arising without apparent external cause; self-generated.
2. Arising from a natural inclination or impulse and not from external incitement or constraint.
3. Unconstrained and unstudied in manner or behavior.
4. Growing without cultivation or human labor

Men love a woman who can make up her mind, when they are spontaneous that's a bonus Spontaneity gets things done with out a long conversation that may lead to an argument .Life after fifty can be one of the best times of marriage, Kids are gone, you are free to be spontaneous, go do something together without worrying about the kids. warning don't become full time babysitters of your grandkids, you will be stuck with them and rob your kids from their responsibility for raising their own kids.

RESTORING THE ROMANCE

Well, why don't you treat me like you used to do? How come you treat me like a worn out shoe?

My hair's still curly and my eyes are still blue.

Why don't you love me like you used to do?

Why don't you spark me like you used to do?

And say sweet nothings like you used to do?

I'm the same old trouble that you've always been through,
so, why don't you love me like you used to do?

Well, why don't you be like you used to be?

How come you find so many faults with me?

Somebody's changed so let me give you a clue.

Why don't you love me like you used to do?

(Hank Williams, Why Don't You Love Me Like You Used to Do)

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Some of you recognize that old Hank Williams song. Some of you, who don't recognize the song, can recognize the sentiment. If you are like most couples, when you came together, you saw stars.

You remember how things started out? You thought you'd be in love forever. Your palms would start sweating at the thought of holding her hand. Your breath would catch in your throat when you heard his car pull into the driveway. Do you remember how she would look at you, and you'd wonder how in the world you were ever lucky enough to get such a girl? Do you remember when just a look from her would make you feel like you could whip the world, and if she was watching you'd be willing to die trying? Now, instead of taking on the world for her, she can't even get you to fix that drawer that keeps sticking.

Do you remember the time you would put in, fixing the food he liked, trying to make it just right? Now, if it can't be micro waved he's not getting it. What happened? Where's the romance? Where is that feeling that used to make you break out into goose bumps?

Sadly, in many of our homes, your husband or your wife has become not much more than a roommate. The romance has died.

Some of you believe that romance, the goose bumps and all of that stuff is just for children and for the movies. It was fun while it lasted, but this is the real world. That stuff is for children and romance novels. It's not like that in real life. Horse feathers! Love doesn't have to die. Passion isn't supposed to die. In Proverbs 5:18-19 we read let thy fountain are blessed: rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always by her love. The word translated there as "ravished" in the KJV means to be intoxicated. In other words, God wants you and me to forever, in old age as in young, to be overwhelmed by the love of our spouses. Our love is never to grow cold. Over the years, however, busyness, unforgiveness, parenting, distractions, temptation and exhaustion can cool the flames of passion; they can quench our love. How then can that excitement, that passion, that loving feeling be restored and maintained? Turn in your Bibles with me this morning to Revelation 2:1 as this morning we see together how to Rekindle the Romance.

- Read Revelation 2:1-5

I believe that the relationships we have and enjoy here on earth are designed

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by God to give us a picture of heavenly relationships. For instance, God gave us dads, strong, confident, protecting providers to give us an earthly picture of our heavenly Father. He has given us brothers and sisters so we can more easily understand the relationships we are to have with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Just like our earthly brothers and sisters, we don't get to pick our Christian brothers & sisters and though we may not always agree, we are to love and care for them.

The same is true of our marriage relationships. In the Bible, Jesus Christ is called the Bridegroom of His Bride, the church. Husbands are commanded to love their wives as Christ loved the church, and gave His life for her. So the relationships we have with our spouses are supposed to reflect the relationship Christ has with the church. At the same time, our relationships, our marriages sometimes suffer from the same problems our heavenly relationships do.

In these verses, we find the Bride of Christ, a local church in Ephesus, has fallen out of love with Jesus. Though they are still married, though they still have a relationship, the love and excitement has left the relationship. Just like a grieving husband, Jesus asks, "Why don't you love me like you used to do?"

In the first couple of verses Jesus praises His bride. He says, "I know you're faithful. I know you haven't wandered. I know how you've worked. You're still holding up your end of the deal, but you're just going through the motions. The spark is gone from your eye and the excitement has left your voice. I miss the old days."

Let me ask you, "Is your relationship still as exciting as it was when you were dating? Do you still love your spouse as much as you did then? Is she still the apple of your eye? Do you still look forward to going home at the end of the day because she is there, or because he will soon be home? If not, then notice the instructions Jesus gives for reigniting that fire.

I. REMEMBER - v5

Remember what it used to be like. Remember how sweet it used to be. ...

II. REPENT - V5

Repent means to change your mind. It means to change your direction. In other words, you need to realign the priorities in your life. You need to change your mind about what's really important.

What good is property and possessions if you have no one to share them with? What good are accomplishments and accolades if your cheerleader

isn't there?

You need to change your mind about what's important.

III. REPEAT -V5

Go back to doing the things you did at first. Not just a peck on the cheek as you're going out the door, but a kiss and a squeeze that takes her breath away and makes her look forward to you coming home at the end of the day. Not just fixing yourself up, before you go to the store later in the day where you might run into a friend, but showing him he's important enough to you that you fix him breakfast that you fix yourself up for him before he leaves. Make him look forward to coming home at the end of the day and he won't make nearly as many stops on the way.

(From sermon by Marc Axelrod, Sermon Central.com)

Gentlemen, do the things you used to do. Wash her car. Clean up the yard. Send her a card, or flowers. Take her out to eat. Take her for a walk on the beach. Turn off the TV and spend some time with her. Put actions to your words.

The young woman was married and had 2 beautiful children, but one day as she was standing over the sink, washing dishes, she thought, 'There must be more to life than this.' When her husband came home, he found a note she'd written and began to weep. She would call him once every week to check on the children, and he would always tell her of his great love for her and beg her to come home. She would always say no and hang up.

Finally she hired a private investigator to find her and he went to the apartment where she was staying, nervously holding flowers in his hand as he stood at the door. He had rehearsed over and over again what he would say and he finally got up the nerve to knock on the door. She opened the door and he started to speak, but she suddenly began to cry and fell into his arms. Through her tears she said, 'Let's go home.'

Months after, when things were starting to heal, he finally asked her something that had been bothering him: 'All those times I talked to you on the phone; I asked you to come back and you refused. Why did you come back now?' 'Before,' she said, 'you were just telling me that you loved me. When you came, you showed me.'

Gentlemen, ladies, show your spouse you love him, you love her

When Sex gets Boring *The Big Boom*

I know some of you think that I must have bumped my head to take on this subject. But let's be real many people will tell you that the one reason why they will have premarital sex is they don't want a boring sex partner. So many risks their souls in an attempt to get a good marital partner good in bed. Premarital sex or living together research shows the couples that do so marriage don't fair any better.

In fact statistics shows that people who wait to have sex and take their time, marriages have a much better chance of a lasting relationship.

But why are so many Christians not happy in the bedroom or have become bored, The biggest problem is that we as the couples God don't study together about sex and the problem that can take place in the bedroom, More than 1/2 of our home are watching pornography

And we tend to have an unreal expectation of our mates in bed, our wife/husbands may not keep going and going like the Energizer bunny. They also may not like to do all the acts that you may see in a movie. When you see these women in porn you don't see them cooking for a family or getting off an eight hour job to perform on a daily basis.

The internet has made it easier for couples to bring porn in their homes. From the pulpit to the door porn has affected the church. Lay members are not the only one looking at porn, even Pastors and elders are falling fast to the temptations of porn at an alarming rate. God did not intend for man to get his/her gratification from a book, movies or magazine.

Let's face facts everybody saved or not will not pass the bar of sex. Like some women can not cook, some men can't change a tire or hammer a nail. QUESTION will you divorce your wife/husband because they are bad in bed? Most people would not because they understand there is more important factors of marriage than the big boom of sex. The Big Boom of Sex does not happen every time you lay down.

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Most people who have sex regularly may have the big boom once a weeks .quality time is what it take for sex to be good. In fact many couple has sex between jobs,' "IT IS CALLED QUICKIE" between cooking and cleaning couple are trying to make or find the time to have sex

So sex becomes a rushed job and some body usually will end up not happy. The Big Boom takes place when we take time as we said in the beginning of the book. Romance takes time! Rushing in to sex also can be a sign of someone who may want to just get it over with.

It is commonly viewed that sexual problems are the results of relationship problems

There are many couples that are still in love but the sex is dead, When you ask them about their marriage they will tell you all is well and they love their mate, but the fact is their love life is dead,

The premise is if we fix our marriage the sex will get better and that is far from the truth .Emotional fulfillment does not always mean great sex, we do not want to think that our love making skills are bad.

We need to know your mate, for instance some people says if it aint broke don't fix it, others says give me adventure and excitement.

It wasn't long ago that we the church felt like oral sex was sin and you were going to hell. Needless to say just about everybody seems to be doing it with out conviction. We should be free from the bondage of ignorance. Next let's be honest that all some men want and that not good. For some it is needed to help him reach an erection.

Age is a big problem for many men,

Experts say men score higher in libido, while women's sex drive is more "fluid."

By [Richard Sine](#)

WebMD Feature

Reviewed by [Louise Chang, MD](#)

Birds do it, bees do it, and men do it any old time. But women will only do it if the candles are scented just right --

and their partner has done the dishes first. A stereotype, sure, but is it true? Do men really have stronger sex drives than women?

Well, yes, they do. Study after study illustrates that men's sex drives are not only stronger than women's, but much more straightforward. The sources of women's libidos, by contrast, are much more difficult to pin down.

It's common wisdom that women place more value on emotional connection as a spark of sexual desire. But women also appear to be heavily influenced by social and cultural factors as well.

"Sexual desire in women is extremely sensitive to environment and context," says Edward O. Laumann, PhD, a professor of sociology at the University of Chicago and lead author of a major survey of sexual practices, *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*.

Here are patterns of men's and women's sex drives that researchers have found. Bear in mind that individuals may vary from these norms.

1. Men think more about sex.

The majority of adult men under 60 think about sex at least once a day, reports Laumann. Only about one-quarter of women report this level of frequency. As men and women age, each fantasize less, but men still fantasize about twice as often.

In a comprehensive survey of studies comparing male and female sex drives, Roy Baumeister, a social psychologist at Florida State University, found that men reported more spontaneous sexual arousal and had more frequent and varied fantasies.

2. Men seek sex more avidly.

"Men want sex more often than women at the start of a relationship, in the middle of it, and after many years of it,"

Baumeister concludes after reviewing several surveys of men and women. This isn't just true of heterosexuals, he reports: gay men also have higher frequency of sex than lesbians at all stages of the relationship. Men also say they want more sex partners in their lifetime, and are more interested in casual sex.

Men are more likely to seek sex even when it is frowned upon or even outlawed: About two-thirds say they masturbate, even though about half also say they feel guilty about it, Laumann says. By contrast, about 40% of women say they masturbate, and the frequency of masturbation is smaller among women. Prostitution is still mostly a phenomenon of men seeking sex with women, rather than the other way around. Nuns do a better job of fulfilling their vows of chastity than priests. Baumeister cites a survey of several hundred clergy by Sheila Murphy in which 62% of priests admitted to sexual activity, compared to 49% of nuns. The men reported more partners on average than the women

3. Women's sex drives are more influenced by social and cultural factors.

In his review, Baumeister found studies showing many ways in which women's sexual attitudes, practices and desires were more influenced by their environment than men. **Women's** attitudes towards (and willingness to perform) various sexual practices are more likely than men's to change over time. **Women** who regularly attend church are less likely to have permissive attitudes about sex. Men do not show this connection between church attendance and sex attitudes. **Women** are more influenced by the attitudes of their peer group in their decisions about sex. **Women** with higher education levels were more likely to have performed a wider variety of sexual practices (such as oral sex); education made less of a difference with men.

women were more likely than men to show inconsistency between their expressed values about sexual activities such as premarital sex and their actual behavior.

Why are women's sex drives seemingly weaker and more vulnerable to influence? Some have theorized it is related to the greater power of men in society, or differing sexual expectations of men when compared to women. Laumann prefers an explanation more closely tied to the world of sociobiology.

Men have every incentive to have sex to pass along their genetic material, Laumann says. By contrast, women may be hard-wired to choose their partners carefully, because they are the ones who can get pregnant and wind up taking care of the baby. They are likely to be more attuned to relationship quality because they want a partner who will stay around to take care of the child. They're also more likely to choose a man with resources because of his greater ability to support a child.

Sex Mistakes Women Make

WebMD Feature

Reviewed by Louise Chang, MD

Ladies, be honest: when your sex life becomes a little humdrum, out comes the mental catalogue of all the ways your partner isn't quite measuring up. Guys tend to get a bad rap when it comes to understanding women's bodies and what turns us on, making them easy targets in the blame game when sexual satisfaction starts to wane. And sure, they make their fair share of bedroom errors. But as the saying goes, it takes two to tango. As it turns out, top sex and relationship experts say that women make plenty of sex mistakes of their own. Here's what they have to say about the six most common mistakes women make in the bedroom and what you can do to get the satisfaction you so rightly deserve.

Sex Mistake #1: Not Initiating Sex With Your Partner

It's 2009 and still, many of us worry about ladylike behavior. We don't want to appear pushy or come on too strong for fear of being labeled aggressive. According to Les Parrot, professor of psychology at Seattle Pacific University and author of a new book called *Crazy Good Sex*, failing to initiate sex is one of the biggest mistakes women make.

"Most guys feel like they are always the initiator and that sets up disequilibrium on the passion scale in the relationship," he says. Generally, men want to be pursued by their partners just as much as women do.

Holding onto outdated ideas about sex roles also inhibits satisfaction with our [sexual relationships](#), says "Dr. Ruth," aka Ruth Westheimer, PhD, a psychosexual therapist, professor at New York University, and lecturer at Yale and Princeton universities. "They used to think that women are less interested in sexual activity and I don't want to say that

anymore. I think there are women who are as interested in sex [as men].”

Show your interest by taking the first step from time to time. Your partner will likely appreciate it, and you may find a new level of satisfaction in taking responsibility for your sexual experience, something Westheimer feels strongly women must do.

Sex Mistake #2: Worrying About What You Look Like

Thinking about how you look during sex stops you from enjoying yourself and ruins your chances of achieving an orgasm.

“Don’t think about the fat on your belly or the makeup on your face,” advises Westheimer. “Concentrate on the pleasure of the act. You must give yourself permission to have an orgasm.”

“Men want their wives to abandon themselves in sex play, and that’s not likely if she is anxious about her physical concerns,” Parrott says.

Helen Fisher, PhD, a cultural anthropologist at Rutgers University and author of a new book called *Why Him, Why Her*, says men don’t notice half the things women obsess about anyway.

It’s amazing what men don’t notice if you’re enthusiastic, energetic, interested in them, and flexible minded.”

According to Fisher, there is an evolutionary explanation for the selective blindness men show to our physical flaws. For Darwinian reasons, says Fisher, men are (unconsciously, of course) looking for women who are able to bear healthy babies. Starting millions of years ago, men who attracted fertile women and had a lot of children lived on. Those who couldn’t died out. Although maybe not as necessary today, Fisher says that primal survival mechanism lives on.

“Men are much more attracted to women who show signs of health and youth and [fertility](#). Rather than worry about the shape of your waist and hips, worry about your energy level and enthusiasm and interest in him,” Fisher advises

Sex Mistake #3: Believing He’s Always Up for Sex

Sure, most teenage boys are ready and willing just about any time you ask, but not true for men. The pressures of everyday life -- family, work, bills -- can zap a man’s libido. This comes as a big surprise to many women, and often his lack of interest in sex is something we take personally.

“It comes as such a shock [to women] that they just don’t believe it,” Fisher says about the reaction many women have when their partner says they aren’t in the mood for sex.

“They know themselves that they are not always interested in sex but they still love the man. But when they discover he doesn’t want to have sex, they think, ‘he doesn’t love me.’ Not true. He just doesn’t want to have sex.”

Dating



But when two individuals, a boy and a girl, decide to date each other exclusively and limit their social contact largely to themselves, they begin to look for more than companionship and friendship. In the relationship, romance becomes a part of the expectations and part of the activities. Expressions of love, real or imagined, appear. Emotions and feelings begin to rule. Things change.

They are fundamentally different. The problem is that these emotions and feelings are not a good place to build a relationship. Ask any married couple. If they haven't felt unloved or like leaving the relationship at one time or another, see a permanent relationship is built on something other than emotion or feeling. On something other than sex or attractiveness.

Dating doesn't train young people for marriage

Not the way it is done now anyway. It prepares them for divorce. You see dating typically involves a series of short-term relationships. Some intensely emotional and involved. Those who end up with a solid marriage out of this process often have to deal with a lot of painful emotional baggage from previous dating relationships, baggage from the breakups, from the betrayal of trust, from the fickleness of youth, from boredom and wanting to be free. Young people are learning to break off relationships that don't work out or are stale or when someone new, better comes along. The practice of falling emotionally in love and then falling out of love with each other can cause a great deal of pain and scarring and establish bad relationship habits.

Jim Ryun said, "A lot is said these days of abstaining from sex before marriage, but there is a great need for emotional

abstinence as well."

Scholars from the Institute for American Values conducted a survey,

"Hooking Up, Hanging Out, and Looking for Mr Right"

- It asked 1000 college women about courtship, Dating a male with the hopes of finding a lifelong mate has been replaced by hooking up. hooking up with a male partner usually is fueled by alcohol and entails engaging in sexual activity. 40% of the women surveyed- admitted to hooking up with men

And 1 in 10 disclosed they had done so at least 6 times

Elizabeth Marquardt, co-author of the report, says the women wish they could really get to know a guy

Without necessarily having a sexual relationship

This survey was conducted after the National Marriage Project at Rutgers University

Released a report in 1999 That concluded

That Americans were marrying far less and those who do marry are less happy

So what are people to do?

What is the Biblical viewpoint?

The fact is the Bible doesn't have a section That directly addresses dating It does address marriage- And it does address sexual immorality- What we must understand Is that our lives as Christians are to be lived on the principles God has laid out in the Bible He does not allow for a division Between our spiritual lives and our social lives

The reason dating is not directly addressed Is that dating or mate finding Is to be done in a godly way Now that is not the way the world does it.

Let's look at some Scripture and see if we can apply it to dating

Col 3:1-4

if then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

- Paul states the context in vs. 1-4 for what will follow
- He reminds us we have been raised from the dead with Christ
- We are new creations
- Who are to fix our sights on the things above
- We are to pursue the things of God
- Not the things of the world
- We are to live our lives in Him
- Not for ourselves
- Notice we were raised with Christ, who is seated at the right hand of God

We are to live like those who sit next to God Himself
Having laid the foundation he gives us some clear instructions how to live that life in Christ.

Look at vs. 5-6

Col. 3:5-6 (ESV)

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming.

There are some other principles we should consider

Paul tells us in 2 Cor 6:14-16

2 Cor. 6:14-16

Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? 16What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

If dating is designed for us to find a significant relationship One that could result in marriage Then don't date non-Christians

Why? You are not to allow yourself to be yoked with a non-Christian You have nothing in common beyond the physical

No basis to build a permanent relationship

We are to avoid that kind of bondage

We have been called to live in the light

And we can't do that When we are related, tied to someone

Who only knows the darkness

- The result will always be misery or failure or at least struggle

- Don't do it

Turn 2 Tim 2:22

2 Tim. 2:22 (ESV)

So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

GAY MARRIAGE

Clarence Peters

1 Corinthians 6:9-6:11

Text: topical

Function: The listeners will examine their response to gays on the grid of truth and love.

Fifty years ago, if I said, "I'm gay", you would have thought, "Oh, he's happy." If I said that today, most of you would think I'm either lying or homosexual. That shift also shows the major changes we've gone through. Some changes good, some not so good.

Homosexual behavior used to be a crime. Now, our government, with Bill C-38 is looking to redefine marriage as this: "the lawful union of two persons to the exclusion of all others". Our Saskatchewan government recently sent me instructions on how to change our current marriage registration forms. In a same-sex wedding, I should just cross out "bride" and "groom" and write in "applicant one" and "applicant two".

So is this progress? You probably have an opinion on this, and a reaction to it. But what is it based on? Is it your gut instinct, or something deeper?

If you were a landlord, and a gay couple wanted to rent your house, what would you do? If you're grown up child wanted to bring home a gay partner, would you let them stay at your house? Would you even let them in? What if they invited you to their wedding? What if someone at school announced, "I'm gay", how would you treat them? For some of you, these issues are rather close to home.

As Christians, we have a right and responsibility to respond as Christians. I want to lay out first,

WHAT GAYS CAN EXPECT FROM US

by "us" I mean Christians who follow the whole Bible, not just parts of it. Some who follow just parts of it say, "I hate homos", and they believe they're being true to God. Other churches who like other parts say, "Gays and lesbians are oppressed and need our support. Let them marry. Let them become our pastors and teachers."

One side wants to hold up the truth. The other tries to love. Both fail. The Bible does better. It calls us to speak the truth in love. That's the goal.

If we follow the entire Bible, gays and lesbians can expect Respect from us. Why is that? Every human deserves respect. 1 Peter 2:17 says rather simply, "Show respect for everyone." When we talk about homosexuality, we're not primarily talking about some thing, but about someone.

What comes to your mind when I say "Gay"? Real faces and people come across my brain, some whom I have cared deeply for and been close to. They deserve human rights. Sometimes they need court protection from hate mongers.

As a church we're a member of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. They know some people go berserk. They issued this statement, "We deplore the name calling and rhetoric that has been used in this debate. As an association, we believe that every person is made in the Image of God and should be treated with dignity and respect." EFC

So here's a question. Ever called someone "gay"? Or, said; "That's so gay." If so, you've crossed a line. Even in joking, and even though you might not have meant it, you've said, "Gay people are bad, weird and to be made fun of." And someone who struggles with it may have heard you. In them, you've created more self-hatred, more fear, and more dismay. That's not Christian, not even close. We tend to make fun of people we fear or don't understand.

The homosexual person can also expect us to be Understanding. Understanding is different from approval. Understanding says, "I think I can relate a little."

Sometimes we put homosexuality into a category above, beyond and separate to all other categories. It's not. Look at 1 Cor. 6:9-11: Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the

greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed... 1 Cor. 6:9-11

Do you see anything of yourself in there? How many of us have no sexual flaws -- in thought or action? How about greed? Have you ever wanted way more money or things than you needed? Ever taken anything that's not yours? Ever slandered someone, or cheated? We're all human. Your struggle may be different or similar. But because we all struggle somewhere, it calls for some understanding.

Expect to give respect, understanding and Love and Acceptance. Jesus said it as simply as it gets, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Mark 12:31. He said love your friends and your enemies. It's as close to loving God as you can get.

When I talk about acceptance, I'm talking about acceptance of the person. We have friends whose grown daughter came out. We knew her and the parents. She did not have an absent father or a dysfunctional home. We met her. My being a pastor, she must have wondered, "Will they love me less now that they know about my sexuality?" I made sure to give her a big hug and a smile. I tried to act no differently towards her. Parents don't stop loving their children who are openly gay, nor, should we.

One Christian man has struggled with the feelings for years, but has demonstrated a twenty-five year faithful relationship to his wife. He writes, "Why haven't I told my story to my church friends? Why is my identity anonymous? Because, despite all the claims by my heterosexual friends to "love the sinner but hate the sin," I do not trust them. I do not believe that they could know this about me and still want me to be their congregational president, their youth-group leader, their sons' coach. Perhaps I'm hypersensitive in not trusting, but I've overheard too many jokes and seen too

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many expressions of hate directed at homosexuals to believe that these same people could be my friends if they knew."

I think that's a shame. I'm sad when I think that it might not be different here. Why should a sincere and faithful Christian carry this burden alone? I would see it as a success, if someone at church can say to some friends, "I struggle with gay thoughts. Will you help me?"

Christians who cannot bring themselves to deal with homosexuality calmly and compassionately should just keep their mouths shut.

Here's a test. If a gay couple moved in next door, would you invite them over for coffee? Would you be as friendly to them as you are to the neighbors on the other side? Would you, could you invite them to church?

Many gays and lesbians have come out of the lifestyle through the love and support of others. One of my good friends has done it and lives happily with his wife and children, though he still is tempted. I think we need to put our best work into changing lives more than changing laws.

Gays need love as much as you do. They are not to be feared, not to be hated. Here's the basic Principle: We can't sacrifice love for truth. The truth about anyone should never diminish our love for them. Even if they call me a homophobe when I am not one, I should still love them. Even if they want to change marriage, I should not despise them. From me, as a follower of Jesus, they can expect to be treated with dignity.

But there is another side:

WHAT GAYS CAN'T EXPECT FROM US.

Some expectations are realistic, some aren't. As a grown man, you can expect that I would not play with my toes in public. But you can't expect me to have a baby. That's a natural contradiction.

As a Christian, I believe that God exists, and that God has something to say about healthy living and unhealthy living in his Word. With that in place, no homosexual should expect me to agree with the lifestyle.

No one knows what causes homosexuality. Some research points to some biological elements, but no direct genetic links have been found. Other research, points to common features of the home environment or development in the teen years. No one's sure.

What is true for all of us is that ways of thinking become personality. And that usually leads to acting out. It's the acting out that the Bible speaks against, as we already read. We all have temptations to control.

Romans 1 speak of the downhill slide. When we people reject God's truth, we descend into wicked and harmful behavior. My Bible says that's evil, and to be avoided. So I can't agree both the Bible and with every part of the homosexual agenda.

It may seem old fashioned, but I still hold to a world where there's right and wrong, where some ways of living are plain harmful, and where better ways are to be sought after.

Just as they should not expect me to agree with their lifestyle, neither do I expect them to agree with my lifestyle choices and beliefs. I just believe God warns us for good reason.

Another thing they should not expect from the Christian

community is this: Church Membership. Openly gay people would be welcome to attend here, every Sunday. I would hope that they would experience the love and joy of relationships here. But they could not become members until they gave their lives to Jesus. They would need to agree to change their ways.

That's no different than the alcoholic, a couple living together, a gambling addict, or a thief. In Christ, the old has gone and the new has come.

If they asked to be married, would I marry them? Absolutely, but only a man to a woman, both committed to Christ. That brings us to the next issue. Gay and Lesbians cannot expect from us

Same-Sex Weddings. I have to admit, there are some good things about it. In an age when most others are backing out of formal marriage, it's interesting to see some jumping in. And, if marriage to one partner cuts down some on the sleeping around, that's good.

But that is where it ends. People say Jesus never spoke against homosexuality. That's only partly true. He spoke directly about marriage, "In the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one." Matthew 19:4-6

Why not two men? Why not two women? Homosexual behavior was probably more accepted in Rome then, than even now. Why not just shrug your shoulders and say, "Who's going to be hurt?"

God says "no" for good reason. He doesn't always lay out that reason, because we should be able to figure it out. Why

doesn't God approve?

First, the created natural order sets the pattern. God could have made humans reproduce like amoebas with only one sex, but he chose male and female. Masculine and feminine complement one another and fit. Children are naturally born only to male and female.

Second, children deserve a daddy and a mommy. In general, bring up a boy without a dad and he will be desperate for a leader. Bring up a girl without a dad, and she will often go looking for love in the wrong places. A boy without a mom grows up hard. A girl with two daddies has so far to learn what it means to be a mom. You learn how to be a parent from both parents. I know that heterosexual relationships and marriages fail, but the ideal still holds.

Schools may force children to read a book about "My Two Mommies". But you can be sure that the child with two Mommies wishes she could be hugged by a daddy. The adults cry for their rights, but what about the rights of the child?

Third, a crack in the definition of marriage means anything can go. In Missouri, one man wanted to marry his 22 year old mare named Pixel. He said, "She's gorgeous. She's sweet. She's a loving person. I'm very proud of her ... Deep down, way down; I'd love to have children with her." The courts said no, for now.

But a more real possibility is polygamy. Why should marriage now just be two people? On what basis do you argue that? Unless we develop some firm definition of what a marriage is, the options are endless. If these options sound absurd, remember that all it takes is a few activist judges to use their power to open the door.

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Fourth, up until now, every culture on earth has understood marriage happens between male and female. The government is tampering with deep ancient universal principle. Gays can have a committed partnership without changing our country's definition of marriage. The Supreme Court has said as much.

Fifth, Bill C-38 does not protect the rights of clergy who don't want to comply. That's provincial jurisdiction. In other words, down the road, I could be prosecuted for refusing to perform a gay marriage. Our charitable status may well be up for discussion.

I am not so much angry with individual gay people as I am with the agenda of our government to erase all moral lines, and to mess with areas that belong to the church.

I am also peeved that the interpretations of provincial judges started this whole thing, and that the people of this nation will have no say in the change of something so foundational to society. I hardly ever make political statements, but this area has crossed the lines of sanity. It's no longer separation of church and state. Our government does some wonderful things, but this is not one of them. As a citizen, I am disappointed. There's still a chance to stop the legislation, but I think the chances are now rather slim.

We're drifting further and further from all biblical memory, closer and closer to rocky shores.

But the drift of the culture doesn't mean that we follow as a church. You already know how to fill in the blanks on this principle: We can't sacrifice truth for love.

So where are you on this one? Response, most people don't have trouble holding a strong opinion. But maybe you need to Study the Bible. Pick up a pamphlet. Is truth a moving

target for you on this, or do you know what is right and wrong? Can you stand up for it? Or maybe you need to pray for a softer heart towards homosexual people. Are you really committed to love them as much as any straight person? Bigots can't represent Christ. You may need to come to hate gay bashing, whether it's a little jab or comment or a big effort. Always stand up for those who are wrongly treated. Or maybe God's calling you yet again to Pray urgently for our nation or write to parliament.

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ--to the glory and praise of God. -Phil 1:9-11

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Please feel free to contact me, for your opinion is important. I pray you will pass this book on to others in the faith.

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