

Introduction.

The Bachelor. Most romantic show ever? One successful, good looking, single, dude with a good personality. Dude is the epitome of “Man Crush Monday.” 16 beautiful “Woman Crush Wednesday”, single, desperate women who are cat-fighting all for the same guy. So the dude starts to get to know them one by one, picking them off one by one and rejecting them on national television by not giving them the awaited rose. The crazy part is that they put all the women in the same house together. Perfect strangers, all fighting for the same man. Talk about DRAMA! I’m shocked there’s no bloodshed. This is a reality TV social experiment that you girls can’t help but watch because its so emotionally charged with love, hate, attraction, chemistry, drama, competition, jealousy, deception, mystery, intrigue, rejection, and hope. Then when the dude whittles his way down the last few, he goes to see their families. How are these dads feeling as this point? This total tool bag has already slept with most of these girls. He’s telling the dad how much he likes his daughter all while getting ready for another family date the next day? Then the final show where he proposes to the chick after only knowing her a few weeks? Did you know that not one of those final episode couples are still married today after 17 seasons? This is not love or romance. This is craziness!

Need.

Teenagers, we need to let God define what love is, not movies, music, magazines, or TV shows. We need to let Him write our love story. God has something so much greater for us than a huge competition. God has something far better than a man or a woman who has to make a quick decision on whether or not they want to spend the rest of their life with us. God’s plan for us is a lifelong marriage. A loving family. A faithful marriage. A husband and wife who love Jesus and who are on the same page with life. A dad and mom who raise their kids to love and serve God together as a family. Those two who become grandparents one day who watch their children raise their grandchildren in a godly, loving, biblical home. The world can’t offer that!

Let me show you how God means for it to be!

I realize we have 6th graders who think the opposite-sex is still gross.

We have middle schoolers in relationships and some not.

We have high schoolers in relationships and some not.

We have some students in here whose parents don’t allow them to date, and some whose parents could care less. This is a tough task. But God has something for all!

Truth.

I Love My Church: Because We Love Marriage.

God’s will is your life’s mate, not your next date.

Bible.

1 Peter 3:1 - Gospel-centered marriages have godly roles.

Here at CBSM, we are unapologetic about the Bible. Some people think its outdated or too traditional, but we know its the Word of God and what God says goes! God here says that wives should be subject (or submissive) to their husbands. That means God sets up the family with the man as the leader and the woman as the submitter. But why? Is that fair? It is fair, because that's the way God operates. God wouldn't ask us to do anything He doesn't expect of Himself because He wants us to be like Him! Within the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit), we see leadership and submission. All throughout Jesus' life, Jesus said things like "Father, not My will but Yours be done." "It is My food to do My Father's will." "I and My Father are one." We also see 1 Corinthians 11:3 that says God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man, and man is the head of woman. So as Jesus and God the Father are one, within their divine relationship, there is authority and submission. God leads Jesus and Jesus follows God. God is sharing Himself with men and women when He calls husbands to be leaders and wives to be followers. We also see in chapters like Ephesians 5 that just like Jesus leads the church and the church follows Jesus, husbands are to lead their wives and wives are to follow their husbands. Marriages are gospel-centered because they mirror God's Trinity and Jesus' gospel-relationship with His bride, the church.

You may be thinking to yourself, what does this have to do with me? I'm 12? Or I'm 18? I'm not getting married anytime soon. Well, I want to answer four big questions tonight. **#1. *What am I supposed to be doing if I'm not dating anyone?*** First of all, many of you have asked me how old you even need to be before you start dating. Dating isn't in the Bible..especially dating without the purpose of marriage. Biblically, relationships are supposed to be about marriage, and not about dating. But the Bible doesn't say that dating relationships are sin either. So I'm not going to come down on you either way honestly. But here's what I do know, dating brings a lot of opportunity for sin, hurt, pain, drama, attachment, detachment, and negative emotions. Pray before you get into a relationship. Get to know the person first! Today its get into a relationship and then get to know them. Then its break-up city all your life and by the time you're married...you're already in divorce mode. What are you supposed to do now? Grow in your relationship with God! The closer you get to God, the more wisdom He'll give you on who and when to do date. The closer your relationship with God, the better your relationships will go. The closer you get to God, the better your marriage relationship will be later because He's protected you till then.

1 Peter 3:1b. Gospel-centered marriages are between believers.

Peter here is talking to women who are married to unbelieving men. Non-Christian men. The woman may have gotten saved after marrying. They may have not been taught who to marry and not marry. But they're married to an unbeliever. What are they supposed to do? God doesn't say divorce him! God says to submit yourself to this man who is an unbeliever, and let them lead you, so that they might get saved. Let me be honest with you...that's got to suck! To follow a man who isn't following Jesus? No godly

woman would honestly enjoy doing that. Do not put yourself in this situation, ladies. You do not want to answer to a man who doesn't love Jesus. Which brings us to...

#2. Who and how are you supposed to date? Always pray before you go on a date with or enter into a dating relationship with someone. I would encourage you not to enter into a committed dating relationship until you're at an age where you are considering marriage. Dating is the time where its perfectly appropriate to Jesus-juke someone. A Jesus-juke is when you turn a conversation out of nowhere straight to Jesus. Such as "How are you? Well great because Jesus is coming back one day, so are you ready?!" That's not a real strategic way to witness, but as your youth pastor, I'm telling you its perfectly okay to Jesus-juke someone when they ask you out. "Would you like to go out with me? Tell me about your relationship with Jesus. What is the gospel? What did your pastor preach on this last Sunday?" Make sure they are a follower of Jesus and a believer in the gospel before you go out with them. ***Make sure your attraction is mostly spiritual! (1 Peter 3:3-6).***

Then get to know them. Phone calls, text messages, group hangouts, family hangouts, etc before entering into a dating relationship with them. Pray! When you get into a dating relationship, you want to watch from going too far emotionally and physically. Going too far emotionally is when your life would fall apart if yall broke up. That's when you turn the girl or guy into your God. Save the "I Love You's" for the one you're going to marry. Going too far physically. That's a tough one! The question really isn't how far can we go, but its how pure can we stay? Here's the absolute RED LIGHT for getting physical...don't ever touch in any way or see anything on their body that you don't have. That's the absolute red line right there that we all can agree on! Don't find loop holes. Don't make excuses.

1 Peter 3:7. Gospel-centered marriages have loving leaders.

To have a gospel-centered marriage one day, you have to learn to live with understanding with women. That means listen. Ask questions. Be interested. Don't just sit there mindless and mute on a date. You want to be a husband who knows his wife, knows his kids, and loves them deeply.

You need to be a man who shows honor to women as the weaker vessel. This means try treat them with gentleness and handle them with care. This doesn't mean they are weaker in any way, but this means that we treat them like a very valuable and fragile. We do this because they are ultimately our Christian sisters and not our property. We do this because we want a close relationship with Jesus.

PWR Gospel.

A gospel-centered relationship is one where both the guy and the girl prayerfully believe that God has called them into a relationship to see if they are the ones to marry. Just like Jesus pursued His bride, the church, by coming to earth to sacrificially live and die for us...men are to be the ones to go to the girl, ask them out, and then sacrificially lead them in a relationship closer to Jesus.

App.

Live now how you want to be living later.

I can't wait to watch your Facebook status' change to engaged, then to married, then see pictures of your families as you grow older. Your future is real. Live it now!