

(Godly Courtship) 05 Godly Courtship - Question & Answer

by Denny Kenaston

Denny Kenaston emphasizes the importance of establishing a godly foundation for courtship to prevent future marital issues.

Duration: 1:12:17

Scripture: Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 3:5-6, Proverbs 4:23, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 15:33, Ephesians 5:15-17, James 1:5

Topics: "Courtship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses George Mueller's four-point outline for discerning God's will. The first point is to listen to the Spirit of God in our own hearts. The second point is to consider the circumstances and what they are saying. The third point is to seek guidance from our authorities. And finally, the fourth point is to consult the Word of God. The speaker emphasizes the importance of evaluating character and encourages young people to spend time in fellowship to better understand each other's character.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. The effect that it can have on your marriage, right courtship, wrong courtship, right emotions, wrong emotions, and as I was meditating upon it, I had to think, this is the answer to the divorce problem in America.

We don't need a standard that divorce is wrong. That is not what is wrong in America. The thing that is wrong in America is that all the marriages are starting out wrong.

And when you start them out wrong, they don't go right. And then out of a position of unhappy marriages, even God's people are wiggling their way around those Scriptures to find a good way that they can get out of their unhappy marriage and get another one. But the answer is to lay a right foundation before you even enter into marriage.

And then with happy marriages, you won't need a law that says no divorce. No happy married couple ever even thought about the word divorce. I believe that this is the answer.

May God give you girls the wisdom to lay the right foundation. At this time, we're going to open it up for questions, and I'll field the questions, and by God's grace, try to answer them. Okay, the question that was asked is this.

What do you do when you're just looking around the room and you find a young man's eyes looking your way? Here's the answer. The Bible teaches that young ladies and women should not be shame-faced. That word shame-faced means blushing-faced.

It means that there's not a boldness in you to look in the eyes of a man. Shame-facedness, I'm not sure how to say it, but the head and the eyes look down. A young lady that's shame-faced, you can be looking at her and look into her eyes, and she will look at your eyes, and it's right when you're talking to men to look at their eyes, but the shame-facedness, the eyes look down, and then they may look up again, but then they'll look down, and they don't spend a long time gazing.

That's what shame-facedness is, and that's God's will for every woman, married, single or not, that she doesn't feel bold around men to look them in the eyes and talk to them and focus along time on their eyes, but a shame-faced girl puts her head down and her eyes down. It may seem a little odd to you at first, but once you learn the spirit of shame-facedness, it will come very naturally. Okay, the next question was, if you find a young man looking at you, what do you do with your emotions? The answer to that is, you keep your emotions.

The word keep means to watch guard over them. You do not let them go, and that is a choice that you must make, and that you can make. In fact, you can get to the place where you're dead to all of those looks, and it doesn't stir you and make your heart flutter, and if your heart flutters when you find a young man looking your way, you need to crucify that heart that is fluttering.

Okay, the question is, what do you do if you have affection in your heart, and you're in a church fellowship meeting or a public meeting somewhere, and you meet the young man that you have affections for, and you can feel your heart rising up as you shake his hand. The answer to the question is, I think I would, number one, I would deal with my heart about it, especially if it's unlawful emotions, if it's emotions that are out of order. Before courtship, I would deal with my heart about it and put the whole issue on the shelf, just like David said in his testimony.

He had to put it on the shelf several times. But the second thing that you can do, if you find your heart moving in that direction, and then you're in the process of dealing with it, I'd probably shake some other hand and not that hand until I got it squared away in my own heart. Next question, further answer to the question about the young man that you find looking across the room.

Jackie had a good word there, that's right. If that young man is looking across the room like that, and he's wanting to stir your emotions, he is not moving in proper authority. You should look away, and really if you

find him doing that a couple of times, you need to go talk to your papa, and ask your papa to take care of it.

And girls, I truly believe that if we will do this, if you will practice some of this, it'll eliminate the whole nonsense game that goes on between young men and young ladies. The young men will learn, hey, you don't get away with that around here. Fathers will come and talk to you if you get out of line, and that's the way it should be.

And as soon as that happens a little bit, it'll all get in its place, and then things will be free, and you can all be free. Okay, the question is, a young lady is maybe in ministering situations, or maybe another example of it would be that let's say we put away these foolish things, and now we have a spiritual fellowship in our youth group, and we're busy doing the work of God together, and maybe a young lady has a spiritual attraction. And that is right.

There's nothing wrong with the fellowship of a brother and a sister where there's a drawing together there. But then if the young man, he misinterprets that in another direction, and he thinks what was a spiritual fellowship to him, he thinks it's an emotional fellowship. If that happens, again, you need your father to protect you in that.

I believe that's the answer to that question. Okay, the question is, what does a young lady do? How does she relate to a young man if she's having a struggle with her emotions toward him? She knows it's not right, but she still has to relate to him. What does a young lady do in a situation like that? And the answer to the question is this.

I would not spend a lot of time around him. I would make my relating with him as little as possible. That's the first thing.

And number two, I'd get real serious with God, and I would take that to my mom and dad and ask them to pray with me about it so that you could overcome it. Because it's a very uncomfortable situation. You're going to seem almost cold at times toward him because of the struggle that you're going through, and you want to overcome that struggle so you can be free again.

Okay, the question is this. The young lady asks, how does a young man go about working through the process of courtship when a young lady doesn't have a father? That's a good question. If she has no father, and the young man can't clearly see that there's some other older wise man that's kind of watching over her life, then the next authority would be her preacher.

And that's where he would go. And then the preacher may, the pastor may find different things. He may say, okay, we're ready to enter into a courtship here, and the pastor may call on an older brother, family in the church, and just give them the responsibility of overseeing your courtship.

We've done that a couple of times, and it works out beautifully as long as the young lady can come under the authority of that one that's watching over their courtship. The question was asked, what do you do if you're in such a group setting that if you shake someone's hand, it's totally misunderstood? Do you just avoid them altogether? I guess my counsel would be, yes, pretty much I would stay away from that whole situation because of the youth group setting that you're in. That will keep you free from all the pressures of that which can really distort your own working through the matter in your heart.

It can really distort it. And I would just stay away from the situation as much as possible. And I want to say this too.

This kind of answers a few different questions. There's nothing wrong with a young lady having a little bit of a coldness toward a young man if you sense that somebody is not interpreting you rightly. There's nothing wrong with him receiving a little bit of coldness.

And even if he struggles with it a little bit, it's his own fault that he struggles with it. He's supposed to be in his place, and he's out of his place. So I feel that it's right for you to just be a little aloof and cold toward them if they are moving in directions that they shouldn't.

Next question. Okay, the question is, what do you do if you're a young lady and you have a father who does not understand courtship and you're ready to enter into a courtship relationship, what do you do? My suggestion is that you find somebody else who will watch over your courtship. That would be my suggestion.

Usually if a father is like that, he's not in a church. They're usually unchurched if they don't understand anything at all about courtship. And you can just find someone in the church who will then come in again, like the other question that we answered, and oversee your courtship.

I like that term. Oversee your courtship. Just see you through that process.

And there are many couples that would be delighted to do that and would come in there and take the place of father and mother and carry you through it and keep you accountable and their hearts will be thrilled as they see you come up to the marriage altar. Next question is, what do you do if you don't have a father and you find yourself in an uncomfortable situation with a young man? Maybe he's looking your way. Maybe you can sense that his emotions are being drawn your way.

You don't have a father? You find a papa. You find a man who will do that for you. And if you can't find one, you go to your preacher and the preacher will be delighted to take care of it.

Either one. You either find another papa who can do it for you or you go to your spiritual authority in the church and they will be glad to do it for you. Okay, that's two questions.

So let's go back to the first one and give it again just briefly. Okay, the question is, what is appropriate and how long should you talk to a young man? And how do you know what you should talk about and not talk about? Now, that's a little difficult to answer just here in a short question and answer. But basically, you have to go by all the teachings that have been put into your heart and your life through the years.

And also, you must go by discernment. You know in your own heart how long as you're visiting with a young man, when things start feeling uncomfortable, that God's Spirit is very jealous over you and He will also begin to prompt your heart that this is going on too long. And then the second question that came after it was, how long do you sit and talk to a young man? Is it appropriate to sit and talk to a young man for 15 minutes, 30 minutes? Personally, I feel like that's getting a little long, you know, to be sitting down for a long session just privately, you and a young man.

I think that longer conversations are better in a group. Maybe your family and another family gets together and you're sitting around and you're visiting. There, your conversation could go for a much longer time.

But for just two to sit down and spend a half an hour visiting, I feel like that might not work out too well. I wouldn't think it would be the best. The question is, what do you do if a young man, how shall we say, innocently asks for your picture, wants to talk to you, and you're feeling uncomfortable about him coming your way, but he, but still you can tell that he's somewhat innocent in it.

If it's out of order, you still should ask an authority to help you with that and let it be a time of instruction for him. I don't believe it'll stir up thoughts in his mind, but rather it will instruct him and help him to realize that wasn't quite right. And let's face it, we all have some learning to do in that.

The girls do and the boys do also in what is appropriate and what is not. And some of that can be learned whether someone is drawing away emotionally or not. I'm sorry, George, but my father doesn't allow me to give pictures away.

And that's a good answer. And it's true. And maybe we should bring it out here.

You girls, if you have a father or you have a spiritual leader over you, you have such a place of protection, you can blame it all on Dad. See, just give it to Dad. And the dads are very willing to carry that.

You defer it over to your father. It's like running underneath this umbrella to hide. And any thoughts that he might have, oh, well, okay, Dad doesn't want it.

Well, amen. As soon as you mention Dad, that takes care of it. And it should.

And that's your protection. Use it. Okay, the question is this, and it's a very good question.

When David was sharing his experience in courtship and marriage, he said that for a long time he had a special feeling, sensing in his heart that Melinda was the young lady that he felt God wanted to marry. He wasn't positive. It wasn't that he had no question at all, but there was just that little sensing there that this may be my wife.

Is that okay? The answer to that question is this, as long as you know how to put it on the shelf. When I go to Africa, I put my wife on the shelf. That's a term that I use, but it's for real.

I put her on the shelf. If I didn't put her on the shelf, I'd be miserable the whole time I'm there, longing for her, wishing I could see her, and all of those things. But I just put her on the shelf.

And any of those kind of sensing that you may have, you can just put it on the shelf and leave it there. And it may fall off the shelf every now and then. But by the grace of God, you just put her back up on the shelf.

That's what David did. I mean, it came off the shelf a few times, and he just put it back on the shelf and forgot about it. That's what I do with my wife.

I couldn't make it in Africa if I didn't. And then about two days before I'm ready to come back home, I take her back off the shelf and everybody knows it. Those of you that went to Africa, you know what I'm talking about.

I let my emotions go then. I'm going home. I'm going to see my wife.

And that's exactly what you need to do. The same thing. Okay, here's the question, and it's a very good question.

What do you do if others are saying that there's a relationship beginning here, but you know that there isn't, and the young man, he's not even thinking about it. It's just a matter of some visiting and fellowship. Be free.

That's what we're talking about. A spiritual fellowship among young people that you don't have to live under these binding pressures of your peers. And it may take a little bit of time till everybody gets the idea that none of us are going to play this game anymore.

And once you all can lay that game down, then you won't have to worry about that. But until you do, I feel that it's alright for some conversation back and forth. I wouldn't worry about it.

You have a spiritual fellowship, let it be a spiritual fellowship. Let them do what they want with it. That would be my counsel.

Okay, I'm not sure if I can make a question out of this, but the counsel is very good. If you have a little sensing in your heart about a young man, it's very foolish for you to go sharing it with your best girlfriend who promised she would never tell, because they tell. And besides that, you shouldn't do it anyway.

That's not leaving the issue on the shelf. So many girls have been hurt and mixed up and wounded and confused because they shared those intimate thoughts with their best girlfriend and before they knew it, it was moving around the rest of the group. And that's an unloving and an unkind thing to do.

It does happen. But the best thing is to take a mature position on the whole thing and leave it on the shelf in your own heart. Leave it before the Lord and go on and serve the Lord and in God's good time, everything will work out.

I want to just say a little bit about that concerning Melinda. I knew that's what you were going to say, Jackie. Concerning Melinda.

Melinda had this sensing and in the meantime, God sent her here to be a school teacher. And I don't know, it must have been two or three times, other young ladies came up to her and shared with her how much they appreciated David and how they felt like David was going to be their husband. And she endured all of that and she swallowed all of that and tell me she didn't have a hard time putting it on the shelf, but she had to take that thing and put it back on the shelf and rest in God and say, God, if this is your will, it's all going to work out and all of these things will fall to naught.

And in God's good time, when David woke up, he rung her door right away. But it's a test of faith and trust in God to leave the thing up to God and just leave it there. But let's consider now what the girls did to her.

They should have never been sharing that with her. It hurt her. She cried herself to sleep as she pondered that thing.

It should have never been shared. It should have been on the shelf in their heart also. Share it with mom and dad.

On this subject, Viola says, talking about it never helps the emotions to go down. And that is well said. You may think you're going to get rid of it by talking about it, but all you're doing is blowing on the fire.

You know how you get a fire going by blowing on it? You're just blowing on the fire. And some girls will sit up until 3 o'clock in the morning with their girlfriend blowing on the fire all the while saying, I'm trying to put

the fire out, I'm trying to put the fire out. And you're blowing on the fire and it's flaming up.

Unless it's the mom and dad. You won't be fanning the fire if you're talking to mom and dad because mom and dad will be sitting there and dad will have his furrowed eyebrows and he'll be saying, I see. Well, we'll be praying about this and mom will be cautiously watching on and you won't be fanning any fire with your mom and dad.

So that's the best place to take it, to mom and dad. Very good counsel. Alright, the next question is, what do you do if another girl comes up to you and starts telling you about her boyfriend or whatever? I have two answers to that question.

Number one, if you're in a fellowship where these principles are clearly believed and taught, you should just quietly admonish her. I don't think we ought to be talking about this. But if you're not in this kind of a fellowship, you better just listen to her and be kind to her and hope and trust that maybe you can get an open door and admonish her that that's not a good thing for her to talk about.

But you can't just say, oh, I don't talk about things like that. She's living up to the life she has and she feels free to talk about it. You have to love her and allow her a little bit of room there.

But I would say this, if she's spending the night and she's settling down for a one hour conversation about it, then you just have to humbly tell her, you know, that my father really doesn't like me to talk about things like this. And just run right underneath that covering again and stay there under the protection of your father and let her go away thinking, boy, her father sure is a hard fellow to live with. Instead of thinking, you don't care and you're insensitive, let it fall on your dad.

He's got big shoulders. The question is, what if you sense maybe God's direction for a certain young man and he moves away and goes to another place and you pretty well just forget about it. Out of sight is out of mind.

And then you see him again and you begin to have those impressions. Do like Mary. Just hide those little things in your heart and put them back up on the shelf.

And then when it's time and maybe he calls and he says, I've talked to your father and mother and they've given me the freedom to ask you if we can enter into a relationship. Then when you begin praying about it, you can go back there on the shelf, pull all that down and look at it and say, now, Lord, is this God's will for me? I remember the impressions back there a few years ago. I remember them then two years later when I saw him.

And that will just be used to help you to discern God's will for your life. That's the best way to handle that. Next question.

Okay, the question is, and it's a good one. What if you are totally asleep in Jesus and you're not even thinking about marriage and you're just lost in the love of God and the service of God and all of a sudden a young man comes into your life. He's come to your father and mother and now it's come to the point where father and mother have brought it to you and he's asking if he can begin to court you, what do you do? What is your response? Well, because you're a young lady, it's time for you to go before the Lord and say, Lord, what are you doing? Unless you have an overwhelming witness that you don't have anything to do with that, then you just simply say no.

But if you have an open heart about those things, then it's time to pray about it and talk to your father and mother about it and begin to say, well, Lord, are you waking me up? Because see, with a young lady, that's how you'll all get woke up, if you know what I'm saying. With a young man, sometimes somebody else has to give him a little nudge here and there. Dad has to say, son, come on now.

I think you need to be praying about marriage, but with you girls, that is how you'll get woke up, every one of you. And I trust that by God's grace, you can be asleep until somebody wakes you up. The question is, we've come up to the point in the process of courtship where the question is now laid on you.

It's been through your authorities and now it comes to you. Is there any way that you can be sure in discerning what God's will is? Well, I would just give George Mueller's little four-point outline on discerning the will of God. Number one, what is the Spirit of God saying in my own heart? Number two, what are the circumstances saying? Number three, what are my authorities saying? And number four, what is the Word of God saying? Those are the four things that George Mueller used in all the decisions that he had to make.

And he had to make some big ones. Here's a big building over here for sale. It's \$100,000.

Lord, do you want us to buy this building? We don't have any money. And he discerned it by those four points right there. And if you'll follow those four points, you'll be able to come to a place in your heart where you're clear about it.

And if you get to a place where you're clear and then you find yourself struggling a little bit, prayer and fasting will make God's will real clear to you again. And I would encourage you girls to learn to pray and fast concerning these things, the struggles with your emotions. Pray and fast about it.

God will give you victory over it. When you come to the place where it's time to discern, along with the others that are helping you to discern, pray and fast about it. When you pray and fast, God brings you into spiritual awareness.

Your heart gets alert. You fine-tune your heart to hear the voice of God and you'll be able to discern God's voice very clearly and know this is the way walking in it. Next question.

The question is, how does a young man or a young lady evaluate the character of each other if they can't spend a lot of time talking together? Well, for some of you that may be difficult because you're not in a fellowship. But where you're in a fellowship, it just happens very naturally. You know, the young people, they get together and they go soul-winning.

They're on a bus going to New York City. And I'm just giving a few of the examples of the interactions that are here among us. It doesn't take long, you know.

You grow up in a youth fellowship. You know, you may be in there three, four years. You know the character of every young man in there.

You can tell. Just this weekend, different things going on, you know. You notice who was always standing there talking to the teachers after the sessions were over.

And you notice which boys were outside running around and fooling and all of those things. You had your eyes open to all those things. That is the way that you evaluate the character and it takes some time to do

that.

But if you have some questions about the character of an individual and he's already come and he's come to your father and mother and come and asking, I don't think it's wrong to call his father up and have a couple of conversations with him. Private, you know. If you're that far along in this whole matter, there's nothing wrong with calling a father up and saying, there's a few questions that I have about your son.

Could you answer them for me? I'm trying to discern God's will concerning marriage. And I trust that the father will give you an honest answer and then you can evaluate from there. But for the most part, you'll be able to evaluate character because of the interactions at church, at a youth meeting, church-wide evangelistic meeting, big meetings like this.

There are many opportunities. Families get together and there's fellowship there among families. All of those give you beautiful opportunities to evaluate character and I would say to all of you, open your eyes.

Learn to have a discerning eye and evaluate character. If you see that this boy is always the one that's punching around and he's always the joker and all of that, you know, you take note of those things, that his character is not doing very well. Yes, Ellen.

Okay, the question is, young people are together, sitting around a table, maybe they're somewhat of a debate, they're discussing a certain subject, a matter of Scripture. I think that's very good to have some conversation like that. That's what spiritual fellowship is.

That's what us older ones do when we get together. We'll sit together, two or three couples, and back and forth and discuss this Scripture and that one and what do you think it means? And we're sharing our hearts back and forth. That's the kind of spiritual fellowship that we're wanting you to have and that's good.

And again, those are beautiful opportunities to evaluate character. I want to say this, the hands are going up, we have five minutes and our 45 minutes are up. So, we're, let's see, did you have one? Okay.

Okay, the question is this, is it proper for a young lady to start a conversation? And that's a good question. And the reason why it's asked is because young men never do it. And here's the answer to that.

Really, it's twofold. I don't think it's wrong for a young lady to walk up to one of her brothers in the church and shake his hand and say, Good morning, Brother John. How are you doing today? I don't see that as being a problem to do that.

You should feel free. However, on the boy's side, I think if we can lay this whole nonsense stuff down, they might feel a little freer. Boys are very self-conscious about this whole thing.

And if everybody's watching on and somebody's going to think that so-and-so likes so-and-so, they'll just stay on the other side of the auditorium. They don't want to deal with it. I tell you, they've been scared away by all this nonsense that goes on.

So, I just encourage all of you girls to put it away so we can have a spiritual fellowship. Okay, we'll take one more question. The question is this, and it's a good one.

I'm glad you asked it because I wanted to minister to it a little bit. The question is, what do you do when you have already let your emotions go and you've suffered the hurts from it? And I'm sure a few of you girls despaired a little while you were listening to the principles being taught because you realize that all of

that has already happened somewhat in your life. What do you do? Well, remember that God is a God who heals hurts and wounds and He takes our failures and He can wash them away.

And I just want to encourage you to look to God and allow God to continue to deal with it and take the discipline of your failure and make sure that you don't go that way again because it will be easier for you to go that way again because you've already went that way one time. Take the discipline of the failure, the disappointment of the failure, the hurt of it, and let that put an awareness in your heart to stay away from it for the next time. Now what was the next question? This is the last question and that is, how do you know that you've sufficiently dealt with the hurt that came from an improper emotional relationship? The only way you can know that is if you see that individual and there's still hurt in your heart, you can be sure that the wound is not healed yet and you need to go before the Lord again and pray about it and let God go deeper and deal with that until you can be free and not feel any hurt feelings toward that individual.

Okay, I appreciate all your questions and I think we could probably do this another hour, but because of time, I think that we'll dismiss the meeting. Thank you so much for your input and may God take this session and all the other ones and just pour wisdom into each one of your hearts. My prayer for each one of you is that you will have a happy marriage because of the decisions that you've been making this week.

You're dismissed. Father in heaven, Lord, we thank you, God, for the opportunity that we have to sit here together as men and discuss these very important subjects of godly courtship. Lord, I pray for each one of these young men, Father, I pray that your grace would be poured out upon them.

Lord, I pray that you give them freedom to open up their hearts and ask questions. Oh, God, I know that many times we are afraid to ask a question. We think that it's a dumb one and many times it's the one that everybody else would have wished that they would have asked also.

So I pray, God, that you, by your Spirit, would give liberty to each one of us here. I pray, Father, that you'll give us a profitable time. Lord, help me by your grace to answer the questions of these young men, Lord.

May they prosper in these things. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Okay, the first question that was given, and it's a good one for this young man's session here of questions and answers. The question was asked, what do you do about finances? How do you know when you're financially ready to seek a wife? And that's a good question. In fact, that's one of the ways that you can discern before the Lord, is it time? Am I ready to get married? If you have a lot of financial burdens and you've gotten yourself in debt and you're working at five dollars an hour, it's not time for you to get married.

God is not opening a door for you to get married. So you need to have some financial stability if you want to enter into marriage. However, I'm not saying that you have to have your own business and it's well established and you ought to have twenty thousand dollars in the bank before you get married.

I'm not saying that you have to do that, but for most of the young men in this room, it's not, that's not an unprobable figure for most of you young men. But I don't say you should have twenty thousand dollars in the bank, but I think you ought to have a few thousand dollars in the bank and have some of your basic things taken care of. A car that is paid for and one that's serviceable and maybe you've got your tools and things like that and some of the basic things that you need in life.

And I feel if you have a few thousand dollars in the bank and you've got a decent job that makes a good wage, I feel you're financially stable enough to get married. Next question is given. What did I mean by

releasing your emotions? It may be some of you younger ones, you don't even understand that term yet.

And praise God if you don't. But what I mean by releasing your emotions is allowing your heart to begin to have affections and fall in love with a young lady. That's what I mean by releasing your emotions.

You, as you get a little bit older, you'll have, you'll find that your heart begins to go out and your affections may begin to be directed in a young lady's direction. That's when you need to get a hold of those emotions. And then, of course, they should be held in line until you've gotten to that place where you feel God wants you to marry, you've cleared it with all authorities, you've cleared it with a young lady, you're entering into a courtship relationship, and now it's okay to release your emotions or begin to fall in love, which is God's plan for a young man and a young lady.

Next, okay, the question is this. How do you discern when God is knocking on your heart and telling you it's time to get married? And this particular situation, we've allowed our emotions to go already in the direction of a young lady. Now we realize it's not right to do that.

We've pulled our emotions back. Now, do I take that as a leading from the Lord or not? I want to encourage you in that one. You pull your emotions back.

You get them in their proper place. Dear brother, you don't want to make a decision until those emotions are on the shelf, because it'll be very hard for you to discern the will of God before God if your emotions are in the way. And that is the reason why we don't let our emotions go.

Love is blind, fellas. You won't be able to discern anything. You won't be able to examine godly character.

If you let your emotions go, it's too late. Many times when this happens early, a young man or a young lady, and their emotions are gone, and then all of a sudden their father finds out about it. And father says, I don't think this is God's will for you to marry this young lady.

She doesn't have the same convictions you do, or this or that, and many things can come in there. And the father says, I don't feel good about it. Well, you're already gone, and you can't discern.

And your dad may say, look at this point of weakness of character, and this one, and this one, and you can't even hear it, because your emotions have already been kicked into gear. So you need to learn to put those emotions on the shelf. That's what I was telling the girls.

They were asking the question, what do you do when you have some affection, or it rises up, or an impression toward a young man? You put it on the shelf, and you leave it there. That's exactly what I do when I go to Africa with my wife. I put her on the shelf when I get there.

If I didn't put her on the shelf, I'd be missing her terrible the whole time I'm there. So emotionally, I put her on the shelf, and she stays there. And I serve the Lord, and preach, and pray, and all those things.

And then about two days before I'm ready to come home, I take her back off of the shelf emotionally, and everybody else knows it. I'm singing around there. I'm rejoicing.

I'm talking about going home. Well, what I do, that's exactly what you need to do. Put those emotions on the shelf, and leave them there until God gives clear direction that it's time for you to pursue a relationship.

And after you've gotten a clearing from all authorities, and you know that it's the will of God, and it's the right one, then you can take those emotions down off the shelf just like I do when I'm ready to come back from Africa. Another question. The question is this.

How do you take an interest in a girl if you're not supposed to let your emotions go? You're not supposed to take an interest in a girl. That is the answer to the question. You're not supposed to take an interest in a girl.

You're supposed to leave all of that behind until you sense that God is saying to you through the witness of God's Spirit and through authorities moving in your life that it's time for you to seek a life. That's when you start looking and take an interest in a girl. Next question.

The young man is asking this question. I thought you're supposed to get married when you fall in love with somebody. That is totally backwards, but that is the way the world does it.

The world, they marry the one they love. We as Christians, we love the one we married. And there's a big difference between the two of those.

The world falls in love. I mean, look, if a young man or young lady get together, you'll fall in love if there's some half-decent interest between the two of you. And many times it's a wrong match because there was no discernment.

I think I'll answer your question. You listen. That is the whole purpose for holding our emotions back.

You shouldn't take an interest in a young lady before you have checked the thing out and you know she's a godly young lady. She walks with God. She has godly character.

She seems to be compatible. She has the same basic convictions that I have. I have an interest there.

I've checked it out with father and mother. And when all those things are done, you'll fall in love. But you should hold it back until all of those things are clear.

And here's the purpose for that, young brother. Here's the purpose of it. That ensures that you fall in love with a young lady that meets all the requirements of a godly wife.

And see, the honeymoons do get over and you get back down to normal life, you know, and babies are crying in the middle of the night and all of those things happen. You want a godly young lady who's going to be there in the thick and the thin and who will love you for better or for worse, even if you get sick, even if you get cancer and you have to have your leg cut off. She'll still be beside you because you found one who had a commitment to Jesus Christ and a commitment to godly character.

So you don't want to fall in love with one that isn't like that. So you hold those emotions back. Guard over them like a soldier guards over a gate.

Okay, another question back here. Okay, the question is, how do you know if your emotions are going out and how do you hold them back? I think that most of this room know the emotion of love. But it may be for some of you that are younger, you don't know what I'm talking about.

And praise God if you don't. As you get older, you will. And when you get older and your emotions begin to rise in your heart toward young ladies, you'll know what it is.

And now how do you hold it back? You crucify them by the grace of God. You do not allow them just like I don't allow mine. There's many, many young ladies around here and there's many married women in this church.

I'm not allowed an emotional relationship with those women. I'm only allowed a spiritual relationship and I have spiritual fellowship with many of the sisters in this church here, but I'm only allowed an emotional relationship with one and that's my wife. You do the same thing that I do.

I crucify those feelings if they ever rise up. I crucify them by the grace of God and go on and walk in purity toward the sisters that are in the church. The question is, and it's a very good one, the girls asked it also, what do you do if you don't have a father? We got the fathers pretty actively involved in this whole matter.

What do you do if you don't have a father? You find a father in the fellowship where you're at. Either you go to your spiritual authorities in your fellowship and ask one of them preachers to watch over and oversee your courtship and it may be that they will then find another spiritually mature brother in the congregation, brother and wife, and then they could just come in and watch over your courtship. And that works very well.

We've seen that done and I've even done it and it works very well. It doesn't have to be a father, but it should be if you have a father, but if it can't be your father, another spiritual authority can do the same thing and fulfill that role and just give you a blessing through the whole thing. Next question is, do you share your innermost feelings about a young lady with another brother? Is that correct? My counsel to you is the same as I gave the young lady.

Don't do it. Share it with your father and your mother. Here's what happens.

You sit down with your buddy and you start sharing your thoughts. You're fanning the flames of emotion all the while while you're sharing. And sometimes young fellows will do it for a couple of hours, you know.

Just sit and talk about this girl and this and that and how I'm feeling and all that. And all you're doing is fanning those emotions. It's not good.

Most of the time, you'll share it with your best friend and tell him, now don't you tell! And he'll tell somebody else. It just happens. And then what that does, it makes this whole dating nonsense, this whole boyfriend-girlfriend nonsense that we have in the church fellowship, it shouldn't be there.

If you take your thoughts and your impressions and you just hide them in your heart like Mary does, and if you need to talk them over with somebody, talk them over with Mom and Dad. Get some counsel from them. If you're having a struggle, you have a young lady and you're having some emotions toward them and you're having a struggle, go to your Dad.

Say, Dad, I'm having a problem here. I'm struggling with my thoughts and my emotions toward a young lady. Bring it before your Dad and your Dad will help you.

He can help you to put them in their proper place and leave them where they belong until it's God's time for you to do otherwise. And He can give you some godly counsel also on whether you should even be having those thoughts toward that young lady. It may be that he wouldn't feel good at all about the young lady that you're having your emotional thoughts and feelings toward.

Next question. Okay, the question is, what do I mean when I say let the motivation of the desire for a life's partner motivate you to change your life and your character? I don't believe it's wrong to look ahead in life and realize I'm not prepared for what is coming and I'm going to prepare since I do feel like down the road God will probably want me to get married. It's not a wrong motivation to change your life for that.

Any more than it would be wrong if I sent a call to the ministry on my heart ten years before it became a reality in my life. Those ten years are years of preparation and God is even putting the call there ten years early so I'll get ready and change my priorities and begin to dig in the Word. So I don't feel it's a wrong motivation or a wrong motive to look ahead and say I believe I will be getting married.

I'm going to prepare my life for that day which is to come. Okay, the question is, how do you discern how long you should talk to a young lady? In some settings if you just say a few words everybody will think something wrong of you. In other settings it's considered rude if you sit for a long time, if you don't sit for a long time and visit with a girl.

I believe that what we need to do is live by right principles. To spend a long time with a young lady is not wise. So if others think you're rude, they'll just have to think you're rude.

You're living by the principles of God's Word that comes above and they'll just have to think that and you may have to bear the cross a little bit in that area. On the other side if you're among some who would think other thoughts of you, I think you ought to go ahead and be a spiritual brother and relate to young ladies just like you relate to young men and let them do what they want with it. It's the only way to bring the thing back down where it's supposed to be where we can be free from all this boyfriend-girlfriend stuff and have spiritual fellowship.

So I think that moderation on both sides of that question is what we need. Another question. The question is, what are the best steps to take when you feel like you're being chased by a girl? There's nothing wrong with getting a little coldness about you.

If there's a young lady that you sense is moving in, she's flashing her eyes your way and she's always there where you are and she's saying nice things about you and all that, you just back away from her and let her sense a little bit of a coldness from you. That's the first thing you should do. And then from there, you need to go to your spiritual authorities.

I told the young ladies, they were so glad to receive the protection of their fathers in this area, well you have some protection too from your parents. You don't have to wrestle your way through all of that on your own. If you feel like you're being chased by a young lady, you go to your father and your mother and you share it with them.

And maybe your mother can just have a little chat with the young lady and that'll take care of it. It's the only way to get this thing back down where it's supposed to be. We all have to work together on it and if we will, it won't last very long.

The girls will quit chasing the boys and the boys will quit staring at the girls. And that's usually the way it works. You know, the boys aren't very bold in these areas.

They don't move in on and talk to girls and stuff like that. They just stand back and stare. You young men, don't do that to the girls.

Don't do that to the girls. It makes them so uncomfortable and you'll probably get a visit from their father after you, if you knew all the things I just told them when we were in this room. Okay, the question is, I said that we're to treat the young ladies in our fellowship like we would our sisters, with all purity.

What do you do with the one you like? Should you not talk to her? The answer is, you don't like her. You put that on the shelf. It's unlawful for you to let your heart start heading in her direction because you're too young.

Until you discern that you're a man and that your authorities are clear, that it's time for you to move ahead in marriage, then you can start liking her when everything is clear. Until then, you need to crucify those feelings. Don't let them rise up.

Just put them aside and God will give you the grace to do that. You'll be able to leave it aside. I assure you, if you'll let God enlighten your heart in this area, you will be able to do something with your emotions.

You have to be able to do something with your emotions. All of us married men do it all the time. So you can too.

God is not asking you to do something that you cannot do. Another question. The question is, I said that we should relate to the sisters in the church, to the young ladies in the church, just like we do our sisters.

And the question is, what do you do if you don't have a sister? You have a mom. How do you relate to your mom? With all purity. With rightness of heart.

I believe that you can learn most of those interactions with your mom just like you could with a sister. It would be basically the same. Okay, the question is, is it wrong to have a friend that is a girl? And we have to interpret a little bit what we mean by friend there.

Well, no. She should be your sister. You should be her brother in the Lord.

There's nothing wrong with that. There's nothing wrong with visiting with the sisters in the church. There's nothing wrong if your two families get together in an evening to sit and play a game.

There's nothing wrong with all those things. Those things are good and right. They're under the watch care of your parents, and there's nothing wrong with that.

But, the question and the carefulness that you need to have here is, if you spend too much time with your, quote, friend that is a girl, you'll begin an emotional relationship there that you don't want. But on a spiritual level, having spiritual fellowship, yes, there's nothing wrong with that. However, I do have a caution about how much time you would spend with a girl, with any girl.

You know, like, say you meet a girl at church and you sit down for 30 minutes, the two of you are sitting there on the pew visiting together. That doesn't seem very wise to me. I don't do that with other ladies.

As a married man, I don't do that. Now, if a lady needs some counsel, I'll give her some counsel, but I don't walk up to any of the sisters in the church and just sit down with them and just have a fellowship with them. No, they belong to somebody else.

My fellowship is not a close one in that sense. It's a little more distant because she's a sister, she's another man's wife, and I'm married also. The next question.

Okay, the question was, what do you do if you've failed already in this area of your emotions? And it's very possible that there's some young men in this room that have failed with that. How do you heal that? Well, don't despair. God will heal it.

Now, it will never be like it could have been because you already know what it is to let your heart go in the direction of a young lady. It will never be like it could have been if you kept the thing on the shelf and saved your heart and your emotions for that one girl that God has for you. It can never be like that, but it can still be very good, and if you'll face your failure, God can deal with your failure and help you to see that your emotions were wrong, and I believe you can learn to put your emotions on the shelf and God usually puts some distance between that relationship that you had and the one that you may have for your life partner, and I believe God does that sometimes.

He puts a distance in there just so that the other one can be far enough in the past to give you a fresh start with the one that is your life partner. And many times, young men and young ladies, they struggle with that, that God puts a distance between maybe an emotional failure they had and maybe they're 23 and 24 and they wait that long before God sends them a partner, but God knows what He's doing. He's putting a gap there so that that other relationship is far enough in the distance that it won't hinder their marriage like it would if it happened six or eight months ago.

That would really hinder a marriage. Okay, the question is, what do you do if you have entered into a relationship, now you see that it's wrong, how do you make the break and how big of a break needs to be made? You do need to make a break there, and probably for a time, you need to back away a little bit further there than what you would from others, and I think that the young lady should also expect that and be doing the same thing. You know, if you've been writing notes and your hearts have been drawn out toward each other, you have to make a break and it needs to be a clear break.

And in some situations where emotions have really gone too far, it might be good for you to do a little V.S. service somewhere else, that you can separate yourself totally from that relationship for a time, and then come back after you've gotten your bearings straight and be back in the fellowship there in your church. Okay, the question is, if you have developed an emotional relationship and it's a pretty close relationship and would be getting close to marriage, and of course we want to recognize all of that is not right, because it's not under authority and it hasn't been cleared, and now all of a sudden we realize it's wrong, now what do you do? My best counsel to the young man and to the young lady working through their parents and with their parents, I think they ought to break off the relationship, put it on the shelf, put a good long space of time between you, so much so that you can get free, both of you, from your emotions, that then you can pray about it and discern it and clear it with mom and dad and all of that, and then move back into it. And if it is God's will, yes, those emotions will take up right where you left off.

But you desperately need to get that thing broken up so that then it can be cleared with the proper authorities and you can get your head back on straight and discern this thing by godly principles rather than emotions. Because emotions is a terrible way to choose a mate. Oh, there's so many shipwrecked marriages in America because, like the young man said a little earlier, meet a girl and you fall in love and you marry her.

Yeah, well, let's take a look at that. We got a 50% divorce rate in America because that's the way they do it. That isn't the way to do it.

God has a better way than that. Yes. Okay, the question is, and it's a good one, counsel was given that you have to be careful how much intimate spiritual fellowship you have with the young lady.

That is true. You do need to. You need to have an open heart before the Lord.

God's Spirit will help you and prompt you when things are not right. But just as a general rule, it's not good to spend a lot of time visiting with a young lady. It just doesn't come out right.

But if you do find yourself several times, oh, maybe you're in some work of God and this happens sometimes, you might be a school principal, there might be a school teacher, and there's quite a bit of interaction there, you'll know in your heart, God's Spirit will prompt you, and especially once your heart is enlightened to what we've been teaching you, you'll know in your heart this thing is getting out of order, something isn't right here, and then it's time for you to back off. Yes. The question is, if in your youth group, what kind of activities do you have that you can help the youth group so that they don't fall into these boyfriend-girlfriend things and all of that? The answer to that is that if you're going to have a youth group, and some don't even believe in them, but if you're going to have a youth group, it needs to be a spiritual youth group, and you give direction in the direction of spiritual activities, little soul winning together, Bible studies, prayer meetings, sharing times, go sing in rest homes, there are many spiritual ministries that a group of young people can do, and they're beautiful opportunities to get together, and it also gives young men and young ladies free opportunities to evaluate the character of those that they're among, their peers.

You know, when you're working together, you're preaching, you're working out on the street corners, you're passing out tracts, you're in the rest home, ministering to needy people and all of that, they're beautiful opportunities to evaluate character, and you should have your eyes open to evaluate the godly character of a young lady or the young ladies, so that when you do decide, it's time for me to discern God's life partner for my life, you have something to discern from. You'll know, this one is pretty foolish, she kind of flirts with the other boys, I'm not really interested in a young lady that's been flirting with all the rest of the boys, I'd like to have one that's going to be mine, and those are the kind of ways that you discern God's will. Okay, we have about five more minutes.

Okay, the question is, how do you answer when someone comes up to you, maybe you just met them, and they ask you, do you have a girl? Which is a, it happens pretty much, doesn't happen much in our circles, but it happens in a lot of other circles. Do you have a girl? What do you tell them? Here's what I would tell them, I've given my life to the Lord Jesus, and I've committed my heart not to enter into any emotional relationships with any young ladies until I know of a surety that it's time for me to get married. That's what I would tell them.

That's a mouthful, and they'll probably go, oh. Last question. Okay, the question is, the young man says that his mother has instructed him, and she wisely has done that, that there are some clothes that young men shouldn't wear because they become a temptation to the young ladies.

And he wants to know, would I address that just a little bit here, and we'll do that as the last question. Yes, there are. I believe that, I'll just tell you, since I'm married to a wife, and I'll just share some of the things that she has shared with me that become a temptation to ladies.

Tight-fitting pants become a temptation to the young ladies. It's not right. Even though you're slim and muscular and all of those things, my personal conviction is that only your wife should know how muscular

you are.

I don't think that you men, any more than the young ladies, should be going around showing your figures, how strong you are. So, tight-fitting pants, tight-fitting shirts, T-shirts out in public, these muscle shirts. Some of them even go to the things that just come down over here, and all the shoulders and everything is showing.

I just feel like that is so immodest, that is stirring up desires in young ladies. You're defrauding the young ladies, and it's not the will of God to do that. As I said a little bit earlier, I'm not saying everybody has to button their button all the time, but if you're not going to button your button, if you're going to leave your button unbuttoned, don't leave two of them unbuttoned.

And if you're going to leave your button unbuttoned, wear a T-shirt underneath it so that your hair doesn't hang out, because that hair is a temptation to a young lady. That's something that stirs her, just like there are certain things that young ladies do that stir your emotions and stir your passions. There are things that stir young ladies, and your hair hanging up out of your shirt does that.

And if you're one who has a lot of hair, and even when you have a T-shirt on, still all the hair is tucking up over there, you may need to consider just to button your shirt, except when you're out in the field working or out on the job. Those are things that I believe that young men ought to consider. In light of this whole subject of defrauding.

Many times we put the load on the girls, and it's true that we are stirred by eyes, and they are stirred by touch, and by things that are said. But even though that is true, women also are stirred by the things that they see, not to the point that men are. So it's good for you to consider, to stand in front of a mirror, to go to your mother, and ask her for a little counsel, about what you wear, the kind of clothes you put on, because they do become a temptation to the young ladies.

With that answer, I think we'll be done. I appreciate all of your questions, and you did well for a minute there. I thought we were just going to have three or four questions and be done, but it seems that some of you young fellows were a little bit timid, and I just appreciate you overcoming those feelings, of the insecurity that you had, and you're afraid to ask the question, and just open up and be a man, and put the questions out there.

This has been a very good session, and the questions that you have asked, and the answers that have been given, will be a help to others, as they listen to them on the tape, and think about their own lives. Class dismissed.

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