

(Spiritual Guidelines for Courtship) Questions and Answers on Courtship

by Rick Leibee

The sermon provides biblical principles and practical advice for navigating courtship and understanding God's will in choosing a partner.

Duration: 49:46

Scripture: Genesis 24:51, Genesis 24:57, Psalm 32:5, Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:1, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Christian Courtship", "Marriage Guidance"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Isaac and Rebecca from the book of Genesis. He highlights the common occurrence of multiple suitors approaching a godly young woman once she reaches marriageable age. The speaker emphasizes that not all of these suitors can be the right choice, even if they are all spiritual and godly. He then addresses the question of whether courtship should be publicly announced or kept private within the church, providing insights and perspectives on this matter.

Transcript

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

This message is not copyrighted and is not to be bought or sold. You are welcome to make copies for your friends and neighbors. If you would like additional messages, please go to our website for a complete listing at www.charityministries.org. If you would like a catalog of other sermons, please call 1-800-227-7902 or write to Charity Ministries, 400 West Main Street, Suite 1, EFRA PA 17522.

These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Amen.

Good to hear testimonies, isn't it? Adds another little help in our understanding. Okay, well we have a little bit of time and I do have some questions, like I said earlier, here that some of you wrote down, maybe 10 or 12 of them here. And as I mentioned earlier, I think in the early part of the message, there was one question that came up, I think at least three times, maybe four times, depends on how you interpret it and how people ask it.

But I do think I need to spend a few minutes on it. It was asked in different ways. How do you know a guy or girl is the right one for you? How do you know you are meant to be together? Different ways it was asked, in different ways.

And I'd like to try to answer that a little bit here this morning. It's obviously, on the one hand, a very simple answer. On the other hand, maybe not so simple.

But it is an important thing to kind of think through. And again, I think if we can, first of all, remember what we've already shared this morning, that we can take the pressure off that there is no the one, the perfect one, then that kind of takes a little pressure off. Because again, then there's not that fear that if I start courting the wrong one, that I've totally missed God and I'm therefore unspiritual.

So we need to remember some of those things. So remembering some of those things as a backdrop, let's just kind of walk through some of the thought process here just a little bit. We can be thankful that God has revealed in His Word and in the principles that He gives us in His Word, things that, if I can say it this way, narrow it down till it's actually pretty simple in a way to see God's will in this area.

It's actually not a complicated thing. So let's just kind of walk through this a little bit. First of all, as Christians, I've got too many notes up here, sorry.

Let's look at 2 Corinthians. Is everybody with me? You know what we're answering here. We're looking at the question, how do you know it's the right one? Or how do you know if I should marry this one? Or how do you know if this is the right girl? Or how do I know, basically what they're really asking, is it God's will? Is it okay for me to marry this one? Again, you can ask this question a lot of different ways.

And it's a right concern that young people have because obviously we don't want to make a mistake. But let's just look at 2 Corinthians 6, verse 14. 2 Corinthians 6, verse 14.

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? Well, the simple thing is this. First of all, we look at this principle of light and darkness.

Now, there's what, I don't know how many people in the world today. Is there somebody? Six or seven billion? What is there? Six billion. Okay, well if we use this principle, we've just eliminated probably 95% of the people in the world.

Maybe more. I don't know. I could put a percentage on Christians.

But I'm afraid it's a pretty, according to the Bible, few there be that find it. Whatever the percentage is, it's a small percentage of people. Then, okay, if you use that guideline, that narrows it down quite a bit.

Well then, of course, if you're a boy, it gets narrowed down because you're only looking at the girls. So whatever that percentage is, you can cut it in half. Okay? Whatever that number is.

But then, okay, God's will is actually this simple sometimes. But then we look at the principle of compatibility. Or the principle of, you know, similar backgrounds.

In other words, let's just look at it from our perspective. Though we may believe that there might be a person, a young lady, for some of you young men, who could exist maybe somewhere. I'll use my background as an example.

I know of a church I used to go to in Florida. They're Calvinists. I know of some young ladies there that are very nice young ladies.

But they're flaming Calvinists. And they would cut their hair and believe in going to the army and different things like that. I would say to you, though that lady may be born again, and I know some there that I do believe with all my heart are born again, I would say to you, because of compatibility and beliefs and doctrines, you should eliminate those kind of people.

Because there's just too much to work through to be able to make a sweet, loving union without lots of theological debates and all sorts of other issues going on. So again, if we narrow it down to those that are at least, can we use the phrase, basically like-minded? Again, does that mean they have to go to Ephrata Church? No. But again, when you look at those that are basically like-minded, that actually narrows the field down quite a bit, doesn't it? I don't know what that number is.

I tried to think about that this morning, Brother Moes. I don't even know how many young people are in our circles. 1,000? I don't even know.

I don't even know how to count those numbers anymore. But 3,000 or 4,000? Okay, but again, you cut that in half with half for boys, half for girls. Usually there's more girls.

But anyway, cut it in half. It's actually not a lot to pick from, if I can say it that way. And so a lot of people worry as if there's a million choices.

But may I say to you, there aren't a million choices. I'm not trying to scare you that there's only a couple of thousand choices. But what I'm trying to say is, once you start looking at this guideline of light versus darkness, guideline of compatibility, we're actually down to a reasonable choice or possibility.

And even if it's 3,000 or 4,000, like you said, even if Moes is wrong and it's 10,000, and half of those are girls and half of those are boys, because you could go outside of our immediate circles into maybe some beachy churches or whatever where there could be a lot of compatibility and beliefs, you're still down to a pretty small group, could we say. But then you get into this. Here's another guideline.

The authority of your parents, just like Jeremy was sharing on in Divina, if your parents do not give their blessing and their willing participation in it, then, by definition, the general will of God and even the specific will of God is revealed through loving, godly authorities. And that can narrow it down quite a bit, can't it? And then on top of that, you have your church ministry or the other one's church ministry elders. They would need to be involved because they're obviously going to be putting on the wedding as Brother Moses will be sharing on, and you'll probably be in one of their churches or a similar like-minded church.

And so, by the time you go through the ministry and the things that they know, that kind of, by definition, those guidelines kind of starts revealing, is this person you're considering part of the will of God? But now let's take some of those. You see what I'm doing here? I'm kind of using these biblical principles because what the question is, is who is the one I should marry or is it okay to marry this one? By using these principles and guidelines, you're suddenly narrowing it down until you get a pretty good idea. But let's look at a couple of other verses here.

Well, let's look at Genesis 24. Let's look at the story of Isaac and Rebekah just for a moment here. And we can learn a couple of things that I think will help us further understand the will of God.

Again, remember our example earlier where there are times, and I've seen it often happen with young ladies that once they become of marriageable age and they are a godly girl and everything's just right in their life, it's all of a sudden, there's usually two, three, or four guys will come within six months. You all might be shocked. Being in the ministry, I'm often still shocked how often that happens.

It doesn't happen like once in a while. I'm often shocked that once a girl reaches a certain age, it's often kind of like, wow. The boys start coming out of the woodwork, if I can say it that way.

It's kind of like they figure out she's ready for marriage. And you're kind of wondering, wow, what do you do with all that? And again, as we said earlier, they all can't be right if they believe that they're the one for her. And yet, they're all spiritual, godly young men.

So, let's look at Genesis 24 here and get a couple of ideas here. We won't read the whole thing, but it's a long story. It's a beautiful story.

But in 24, Abraham is older. He sends his servant, who we assume is Eleazar, to go find a bride. And Eleazar says in verse 5, and the servant said, peradventure the woman, watch this, will not be willing to follow me unto this land.

Now, what is happening there? What is Eleazar afraid of? He's saying, okay, I know, first of all, Abraham is following the other guidelines. He's getting someone of like beliefs. Remember? Watch what's happening here in this story.

He's involved. The authorities are involved. It's a spiritual thing.

He realizes God wants to continue a godly seed. And he wants it to be of someone of a godly background that's had some similar teachings that there's only one true God, right? He doesn't want to marry one of these heathen girls. And Eleazar doesn't disagree with any of those guidelines to find the will of God who Isaac is to marry.

But he is worried about somebody's will. Did you notice that? He says, peradventure, she is not willing to come. Abraham doesn't rebuke him in the story and say, the girl has no choice.

This is betrothal we believe in in the Old Testament. Notice that, by the way. But anyway, that's another subject.

What does he do? He lets Eleazar off the hook, if you know the story, and says, okay, if she's not willing, we'll figure something out. It's almost as if he's saying, if she's not willing, then maybe it's not the will of God. We'll look somewhere else.

We'll do something else. But the story goes on. And let's go further in the story here.

And let's go down to verse 50. Chapter 24. Then Laban and Bethuel, okay, this is the uncle and the father.

So you have godly authority involved in the girl's life. Okay? Answered and said, the thing proceedeth from the Lord. So they've heard the story, heard the testimony, and they feel like, you know, this is a spiritual thing.

And we need to be involved in this. We cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee.

Take her and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife as the Lord hath spoken. Now, it seems like the whole thing's over with. But it's not.

That when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth. And the servant brought forth jewels and on and on and on and on. Now the story goes on.

But now watch what happens. They're speaking, but they're actually not done. Verse 57, And they said, We will call the damson and inquire at her mouth.

Now notice that. What they're saying is they're not ordering her to go, even though it looks like they are. They're saying, We're for it.

We think God is in it. It looks spiritual. It looks right.

It looks compatible. We have similar beliefs. We all worship the one true God.

All these other guidelines are being followed. And they called her back and said to her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. And so I don't know how to say all this right, and I don't have the final answer.

I'm not saying this is as easy as it seems, and yet maybe it is. If all of the things that God has given us and all these principles of authority and only marrying those of compatible similar beliefs like mindedness and being born again. If all those things are there and everyone agrees.

See what's happening here is everyone agrees. God's will is being revealed in everyone's heart saying, Yes, this is of God. In other words, there was an answer.

Abraham had an answer in his heart. I want this kind of wife. Eliezer was not disagreeing with his master, even though he was involved in the process.

Remember, if you'll read this whole story, you'll find out that when he saw the girl, he actually fell down and worshiped what? God. Because he thought, Yeah, this is looking like God is in this thing. But all the way to the end, everybody had to be in agreement.

And the will of God, if we can say it this way, wasn't fully revealed until everybody had a chance to say no or yes. And so then Laban said yes. Then Bethuel, the father, said yes.

And then Rebekah had the opportunity, at least the way it's given in the Word of God, to say no. It appears, anyway, I don't think they would be in here if God was just stringing us along. She had the right to say no.

I will not go with this man. And so we must reserve the right for the girl to be able to say no. And that final yes, and then all the other yeses, and then all the other guidelines, I think, if I can present it this way this morning, is a package answer to the question, how do I know the will of God? How do I know finding the right one? The answer is, when everything lines up.

Because we're all dealing with hearts here. We're not dealing with lists. It's not a scientific study that we get a list.

I've seen young men... One young man came to me. He had a list of 100 things that a girl had to be before he married her. I took the list and I tore it up and said, I pity the girl that you get.

She'll never live up to this. First, let's get rid of the list. And I say that laughing, but it's... I mean, poor girl! You know, we're talking about people here.

We're not grocery shopping. And so, the individual people are involved with their hearts. And so when everything lines up, everything lines up.

Now, you may think this is just Old Testament. Turn into the New Testament. 1 Corinthians 7. And again, I'm not trying to say all the power is in the girl.

I'm saying all of these things had to line up. There was power in the Father to say no. God could have turned it away.

God could have not led Eliezer to this girl. You see all this? Everyone was involved here. God was leading.

That's why Eliezer worshipped God. Everybody was leading. And everything started lining up.

Abraham was involved. Isaac was involved. Read the last part of the story.

It says he saw her and he loved her. So his heart was involved. He agreed with the choice.

You know, all these things are part of what's going on. Now, turn to 1 Corinthians 7. Verse 39. Okay, yeah.

1 Corinthians 7.39 The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth. But if her husband be dead... Okay, now this is a woman whose husband is dead. She's now a free woman.

She is at liberty. Liberty means she can marry. But now who does she marry? Marry to whom she will.

Only in the Lord. Then we have that qualifications again. Okay? So again, the qualifications.

So part of the revelation of the will of God is all of these things lining up. You know, she doesn't have to marry somebody just because the preacher says, you know, this is a really good choice. He's like-minded.

He's all these things. But if in her heart, she's going, I can't. She doesn't have to.

Even if everybody else feels she does have to. Now, again, I don't have time this morning to qualify all those things or say all those things the right way. But all I'm saying is there is a bit of a fear I think sometimes people worry and they're going to get the wrong one.

May I say, if all of these things line up? The Father. God is leading. You know, other people are involved.

The ministers. They're born again. The boy agrees with the girl.

It just flows. You know, it's kind of like even Jeremy and Davina's testimony. When she first heard his name, she didn't jump up and down and hoop.

I mean, it wasn't against him or for him. She just thought. She even kind of looked at me.

I remember going, Jeremy? I said, yeah. Jeremy Martin? Yeah. He's interested in me? I said, yeah.

She's like, I think she even said, I've never thought of that. Or however she said it, I don't remember. But she was like, you know, not that it always has to be a surprise.

I'm not saying I always. I believe in that. Sometimes it's not a surprise.

In this case, it was. But once she, as her testimony gave, once she prayed about it and there was no pressure put upon her, I didn't push her one way or the other. I gave her time.

She prayed. Like she said, it was a month or whatever it was. But then once she was clear, well, then it was clear that it was God's will and they came together.

And of course, look at him now. Isn't it wonderful? So, you know, I'm just trying to say, can we not trust the whole package here? The whole, all of these things lining up to show us God's will. Let's don't resort to a list and then strong arm the girl and make her feel guilty because after all, everybody else agrees.

Everything needs to line up. Everything needs to be there. And when it is, then I believe God is working in this situation and God's will is being done and it's a beautiful thing.

So I hope that answer helps you a little bit. I'm not saying it would answer every situation, but I do think there's something in there that does apply in most every situation. Okay.

All right, what I want to do is take a little bit of time here for questions and answers. I have some here that were already written out, but I think I'll also, before I look at any of these here this afternoon, would just like to open it up. Maybe if we have some microphones, maybe because of some of the things we shared this morning, maybe because of some of the testimonies or maybe some of the things I shared from the message this afternoon, you have a question in particular about some of those things that have already been shared.

If there is a question that you have that's pertinent or on your heart, I can easily read one of these out loud and try to answer it or give a little discussion on that. But I just thought it might be good to pause and open it up. If someone does have something on their heart, a question or whatever, you raise your hand and we'll be glad to try to look at that question.

Anyone? Okay. A question came to me as you were speaking today. I think you mentioned it a couple of times, Rick, about you don't want to be, you didn't use the word matchmaker, but something like that.

Is it ever appropriate for others who are excited about getting a couple together to interfere in putting a courtship together if they're not an authority in that person's life? The way you framed the question, no. But sometimes, yes, we do have friends that know us well, people that are close to us that might also know our situation. And I have seen situations where someone can speak into someone's life and just say, Have you considered so and so? And I think given as a, whatever, friendly, loving suggestion, sometimes that's okay because sometimes I have seen, if I can say it this way, young people who are asleep enough that they're not awake enough to be doing what they ought to be doing and that is, remember our definition of find it was obtained by seeking.

They're not really seeing what they need to see. I have actually seen that. I remember a young man once that I went up to and said to him, I think it's time for you to wake up.

And he kind of smiled at me and he said, you're the second minister that said that in three days. And I said, well, what do you think God's saying? He said, I think it's time to wake up. And then he did and now he's married.

But, you know, sometimes people do need a little suggestion. But we have to be careful. We don't want to be, even among ourselves, matchmakers because that can also become a little, I think, embarrassing or a little, I don't know, even intimidating because then if you don't pursue it, then is the person going to think you didn't think their suggestion was good.

I mean, there's all those dynamics that happen but I think as long as people understand that it should primarily be those that know us best and love us and care about us and know our character and know our walk with Christ that might even have the right to make a suggestion. We need to be very careful with those because I don't think as a church we want a lot of just names being thrown and bantered all about. I know if I were, you know, a young man or a young lady I wouldn't want to hear that my name has been tossed out to ten people in the last six months as a possibility.

I mean, I think I would feel, I mean, I'm not a playing card that you just toss around here. I'm a person. So, I think there has to be a little carefulness.

I think it's possible but I would think there would need to be a little carefulness respecting people's, you know, situation. Yes, Byron down here. Most young men fear getting a no to the point that they are very much interested in getting some kind of idea that there's at least a probable yes before they want to ask.

And so, sometimes there's this little stuff that goes on kind of behind the scenes a little bit before there's authority given or before anything is cleared. And, I'm just wondering, you know, how far that's okay? Is none of it okay? Is some okay? How far does it go before that's not doing what we're saying here? I mean, do you understand my question? I mean, there's, it seems like most people sort of want a little bit of security that there's going to be a probability before they pursue all these nine yards of stuff. Right.

Yeah, and I, again, I think somewhat framed in the way you asked the question, probably no, we don't want to do that. And yet, are there things we can do before we're courting to understand some things? I think yes. Again, I think even a wise parent will help make some connections happen, whether it's family to family, or even writing letters or things like that.

I think we have the freedom, you know, as a church and Christ and with parents and under the parental protection. But if the, trying to find out the answer is outside of the parents, outside of other things, and it's mainly between the boy and the girl, then I have to say no. I don't think that's right.

I think you're creating a problem. You're circumventing, you know, God's protections that are built in for our, again, for our good. And yes, of course, no one wants to know, but I think, again, the protections that are in there that might give us a no even ahead of time would also spare us if we're willing to walk through them.

And if the authorities hopefully are doing it for our good and they're loving, they'll allow us to not, you know, quote, be embarrassed, but allow us to maybe, you know, go through some steps and some ways of connecting to find out, you know, is there some compatibility there so that an appropriate yes or an appropriate no, because, again, no is not a bad answer. Just like in our prayers. Sometimes when we pray to God, we want a yes, but the answer is no.

That doesn't mean we're unspiritual, and it doesn't mean we're sinning by praying the prayer. It doesn't mean we've even done wrong. In fact, getting a no and receiving it can be a very spiritual experience.

I think there's this feeling, sometimes, this wrong idea of young men, may I just deal with that too, that no is a bad answer. It might be the best answer. It probably is, according to if we believe the word of God, whom she will, because if she's not willing, you don't want her, you know, and so you should actually, there should be a, okay, and yes, I mean, we're humans, and we had our hearts a little bit set that way, but, again, if we're thinking this whole thing through as spiritual as we can, we have to come to the point where we realize no is not a bad answer.

It wasn't what I was after, or I wouldn't have asked, but it doesn't mean there's something wrong with me, or there's something wrong with the girl either, you know, so I think we have to deal with all of those things in our own hearts as well. Okay, yeah, those are very real things, aren't they? It's where we find ourselves. Any other questions? Anyone else? I've got a couple here that I can do.

I think my goal was to be done by 3.30, so we've got a few minutes. I want to be able to get you home tonight to get rested up and be ready for church tomorrow, but, okay, if there's not any more, or if you want to raise your hand, that's okay. There's three questions which are all very similar, which I think I want to deal with those that seem to be repetitive or that more than one person had on their heart.

At least I want to cover those as much as I can. This one, one of them reads this way. In our church, should courtship be publicly announced at the beginning or remain undercover? Another question is, why do some couples not announce their courtship? Basically, the same question.

Or, as a church body, what should our words be to the courting couple, especially if it's not publicly announced? Okay, so those are three different questions I got. I think there was even another one somewhat similar, but those are three that are basically similar. And I don't know, again, I think we've even tried to talk about this maybe as a brotherhood.

Haven't we, Brother David, or not? Or did we? Or did we talk about it as a ministry, maybe? Okay, maybe it was just as a... Did we? Okay, I thought we did once. I know we have as a ministry a couple of times. And again, I don't think we ever came up with an answer that it always has to be one way or the other way.

Some of the things that are, some of the issues that are involved here is, number one, people obviously do want to hear. I mean, we all like to hear about courtships, right? And so there's that feeling, well, it should be announced. I think, on the other hand, there has been some courtships announced which then didn't work out, and the people were then somewhat embarrassed.

Also, there's some from different backgrounds who never announced their courtships publicly and just felt a little uncomfortable. When we first moved up here to Charity, the first year, they actually didn't announce courtships, as I remember, because I remember the first couple of ones we were here, I remember, we weren't here very long and there was a couple standing in the back who wasn't a couple. And I went to somebody and said, what's going on? They said, oh, that means they're courting.

And I said, what means they're courting? That they're standing together by the door in the back. And I said, okay, that's, say that again? They said, well, that's how we know they're courting. This was at Charity like 11 years ago.

Oh, okay. So, you know, and I'm not saying that's right or wrong, I'm just saying, you know, from different backgrounds, different things are done. But if you'll understand, some people have been, again, a little maybe hurt by a big public announcement and then the courtship didn't work out and they sort of felt like, you know, it embarrassed them, I think, or it made them feel a little funny or whatever.

I guess my feeling would be, I do think it's important to make some type of announcement. I'm not saying they have to come up front and make a big announcement themselves. I think it would be good even at a brother's meeting or even at the end of just a regular service oh, so-and-so is courting because then when we do see a couple together, everybody's not going, why are they together or are they just standing really close, you know? Because then that leads to speculation among the young people and misunderstanding and questions and then it also leads to next week another young man and young lady happen to be talking in the back innocently and they're not courting and then everybody's going, do you think they're courting? You know, because if it becomes the rule that just because you're talking together you're courting, that's not a good rule.

So, you know, my feeling would be yes, it should be announced at some level but whether it needs to be a big production and all these sort of things, no, I can understand all of that but I think for clarity among the brethren and being open, some type of announcement would be good. Again, I realize it doesn't need to be a big deal, we don't want to overly do those things and so I would think that that's probably just a little bit better. Again, the question is the church body, what should our words be to the courting couple especially if it's not publicly announced? Well, again, when couples are first courting, especially, I think we have to have a little sensitivity the very first time they're together or, and I don't have a rule about this either, I don't think there can be one, the first couple times together we don't want to walk up and say, so, when's the wedding? I've heard people here do that or, you're going to have a long courtship or do you already have the date planned? And they've had two dates.

Let's don't do that. You know, again, courtship is in mind with getting married but, let's don't marry them until they're married. Okay? Let's have a little grace and a little sensitivity.

Rather, there can be words of encouragement. Oh, God bless you. We're praying for you as you're courting and, you know, there's a lot of things we can say without skipping to the wedding date.

You know, so, I think, again, a little sensitivity, a little understanding especially in the, obviously, you know, as the courtship goes on three or four months and they're engaged as we use the term sometimes around here and the wedding date is set, well, of course. But, you know, that first month, can we just be a little, you know, encouraging without, you know, having them at the wedding date so to speak. I don't think that's wrong.

I think words of encouragement are very good but I don't think your words of encouragement has to be to get them married the very next month or so. All right. Okay.

How do you know when you're ready for a courtship? I think we've already answered that one. Okay. I think there's just one more here that I'll answer then we'll close.

I think it's a fairly easy one. It says, I have a question about text messaging via cell phones. It seems that it is a built, that it is growing in our church and it is building unhealthy casual relationships between young people of the opposite gender because it seems more acceptable to text message someone that you wouldn't necessarily just give a call to.

How do you feel about it? And again, we haven't really spoken about purity and yet we've spoken about emotional purity several times today how we want to have one romantic, one romance of a lifetime and I think some of these things of technology are wonderful tools, email, all these kind of things but we have to realize with these advancements comes the potential to back up too. You know, technological advancements can often cause us to back up spiritually and we need to measure those things and this thing of text messaging or emails or whatever but particularly the question of text messages I think is a very, very, very unwise and very poor decision for a young man and a young woman to think, well I'm just text messaging and then you just do it more and more and more and you're building a relationship with someone of the opposite gender and again, that's wrong. Are we free to talk to each other? Yes, we've already covered that but to develop a best friend mentality, somebody I just text back and forth with knowing that if I just called them and chatted for 30 minutes that might be frowned upon but after all I just text messaged them.

You know, again, I think we have to have a little wisdom and some of us parents need a bit of parental protection that if we see that going on you know, in our home I think we do need some, how would you say it, discipline with cell phones, discipline with technology, whether it's email, cell phones, whatever, those things are great for communication but just because they're great for communication doesn't mean it's always wise to who you're communicating to or what you're communicating about. So again, we want emotional purity, one romance for a lifetime and again, I know these are high ideals but as we had our picture of the heart with all those little fragments on it you may think you're getting away with it and you may be okay, you may be text messaging with this person and you actually might be in your heart clear but you don't know where their heart is. You know, you may be part of causing them to have that fragmented heart that we had up here earlier and so I don't think we have the right to do that and I don't think we want to do that to one another.

Amen. Amen. Alright.

Well, is there any other questions here? If not, we'll close. Any other questions before we close? Okay. Amen.

Well, God bless you all for coming today. I know it was a beautiful day. It was a good day to be here.

A good day to be probably doing things outside as well but I trust God will bless you for coming and bless us for endeavoring to walk our way through this subject of courtship. Tomorrow morning we will have I'll give you a little idea of the order of the service. We will have testimonies in the morning for our opening that will be on courtship then there will be family verses which will be courtship, family verses if I can say it that way.

Then the message, then an opportunity probably maybe for some question and answers and I'm not sure. We'll just see how that is and then a fellowship meal, Brother Moses' message and then the baptism I guess immediately following Brother Moses' message back here in the creek for Amos and Rachel. Okay, why don't we rise to our feet.

We'll be closed here with a word of prayer. Yes, Amen. Thank you Father for meeting with us.

Thank you for giving us your wisdom and your heart on these things. We pray that all these things that I've shared, Lord, you would just filter them through your Holy Spirit and plant the seeds where they need to be planted and pull out the weeds that need to be pulled out. I don't know how to do all those things, Father.

I give it to you. I trust you. I pray that you would help us all as a church to grow in godliness and to grow in this area of courtship because we know what your great love is for husbands and wives and godly families and we just want to be a part of that, Father.

We don't want to make up a bunch of rules. We don't want to go the wrong way. We want marriages that honor Jesus Christ.

Help us, Father. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Alright, thank you all. You're dismissed. Okay, maybe some of you have some questions here this morning.

We'll get a microphone to you. Maybe even some of you, some of you fathers have some comments or testimony or something. I think we can allow for that as well down front here.

Just wondering whether the common handshake should be considered touching in a courtship. I have felt negative about that. I feel that we shake hands with everyone else.

All the other sisters. It doesn't seem right that we don't shake hands with our girlfriend when we do with the other girls. So it seems to me my suggestion that the common handshake should not be considered touching in the area of dating couples.

That's the way I've interpreted it as well. And yet, on the other hand, if a couple feels for whatever reason in their particular situation obviously there's grace for them to say, you know, I think we'll refrain even from that. Yeah, amen.

God bless them. But I think you're right. We would feel free.

You know, if I would meet a sister in the church, you know, I would feel free to shake her hand. Good morning sister. God bless you.

I would not consider that touching per se, meaning in a romantic way or anything like that, but rather just a form of greeting that person in a common handshake. So I would agree. I think that's been pretty much our general understanding.

So thank you for bringing that up. Anyone else have a question or a comment? And you can write it down. I actually can't find my questions here.

I guess I left them at the house. Did I bring my... I couldn't find them in my briefcase. Maybe I left them on my desk.

Were there any out in the mailbox there? Maybe somebody should check this one here. Okay. Okay.

Someone is asking this question. I think we answered it yesterday, but we can certainly bring it up again. And some of you may have some other questions.

I'd appreciate you writing any down or raising your hand, either one. It says, why is the young man supposed to ask the minister when the Bible teaches that the father is the head of the home? And clearly that's true and we thoroughly covered that the father is the head of the home. I think what we brought up yesterday very clearly in reading those verses in 1 Thessalonians 5, Hebrews 13, 17, Acts 20, 28.

If you want to re-read those verses, the point that we were trying to make is that when we're part of the body of Christ and we're brothers and sisters in the church and we recognize that this courtship thing is a spiritual act and a spiritual activity, then we also would want our spiritual authorities involved in any spiritual activity and to exclude ministers or elders from getting their counsel, their input, their prayers would seem to be very, very unwise. And so, that in no way takes away from the father being the head of the home, but rather compliments that and supports that and the two join together in giving spiritual love, guidance, and oversight into the young person's life. And if you want a more detailed answer on that, I think we covered that fairly well yesterday.

You can listen to that tape. That's just a quick review of that point that we did cover, I think, in the second message yesterday. Alright, any other questions? I apologize.

I think I left them on my desk at home this morning when I was studying. So, I may need your help this morning if you have any other questions. I was reading them early this morning.

Any other questions? Yes, from the back there. Suppose the father of the bride-to-be or whatever, fiance, would say yes, but other people would say no. How would that play out here? How does that work? You mean like if there were other godly authorities that were involved like ministers or whoever? Well, I wasn't able to attend yesterday there, but the ministry versus the father.

Like let's say a man comes and he asks about a girl and the father of that girl says yes, and the girl says yes, but some other people, I don't know, ministry or other brothers would say no, then how does that work out? It's new to me this whole thing about the church being involved in it to the extent that we are. I'm not sure how that works out. Amen.

I don't think we have a black and white answer to that of how it worked out, but hopefully there would be an opportunity there to say why is there a difference? Hopefully there wouldn't be that situation, but if it did occur, there would be a good opportunity for the ministry or whoever it was that said no to sit down and share with that brother their reasons and it may persuade him to be reconsidered or he may persuade the other one. And it's an opportunity for communication, an opportunity to share more deeply in the heart because again, if somebody feels confident enough to say yes, there must be some pretty good reasons, but likewise, if somebody feels strong enough to say no, there must be some good reasons and it's in blending those things and coming to an understanding and I have often seen being a minister where ministers are privy to information many times, not always, but many times the father doesn't have because it's things that are in confidence that he wasn't at liberty to divulge to the public including the father, but now that a specific thing comes up, it may be time to divulge to that father, well, I know you don't know this and the reason I said no is that and that may not persuade the father, but it may make the father then go, I didn't know that and so those kind of, it just opens the door for those kind of, that kind of communication again, as long as we're looking at it as we're in this together jointly, it's not whose authority you know, is on top, it's not a contest, but rather, it's for the young people and to be a blessing to give them the best, you know, protection and guidance that we can, you know, work together. Amen.

Yes, okay. Yeah, testimony here, I just really appreciated the testimonies this morning Amen. and my, it reminded me of a very important subject or a very important principle in the godly life and they did bring it out, some but they, they you know, I think that principle will help us in all walks of the Christian life and that is that we purpose ahead of time that we will not go that way.

We purpose ahead of time that this is an area where I'm not going to go. This is a boundary that I will not cross and I think many a temptation could be avoided if we would purpose in our hearts ahead of time and think about these things and I just you know, thought that was so beautiful how Brother Marvin brought that out this morning. Praise God.

Yes, down front. Yeah, I feel like with the testimonies we got more than one sermon this morning, didn't we? Or teaching, maybe we should say. Brother David.

Maybe Rick, would you talk a little bit about the parents who didn't have a pure courtship and maybe are still carrying some of that or they're undealt with hurts and fears and I know that in my own marriage there was a time in our marriage that those things came to a place where my wife and I had to deal with those things. We had to be transparent. We had to look at those things.

Those were sins in our life and it made a big difference in how we viewed the future of our children and maybe that would be profitable just to say a few words to parents that are in that situation. Yeah, and I'm sure that encompasses some in this room who cannot say they had a pure courtship or a maybe even an especially godly courtship although they may have been in a church setting and one of the keys of course is transparency. I think we heard that as far as his past background a little bit in what Gary was sharing being just willing to be open about those things and even as you mentioned it they're just willing to lay those things on the table realizing praise God God is long suffering the Bible says in the book of Micah He delighteth in mercy you know and I'm so thankful that God delights in mercy and though we have regrets from our past we can have our sins as we know cast as far as the east is from the west and into the depths of the ocean and so yes we have regrets yes we have determination we will not go we do not want our children to go the way we went and yet I think in just clearing the air you could say with our spouses and being honest and just even apologizing to each other even though at the time you in a way didn't know better and yet probably deep inside you did know better some things where we crossed some lines I think those are very healthy things and can only as we heard with brother Gary you know build further honesty and further communication in our marriages which makes us better parents and able to better direct therefore you know our young people in their courtships so you know if you're in that situation please don't come to meetings like this and be despairing repenting amen that's good despairing no that's condemnation which is of the devil do not feel condemnation there's a world of difference between conviction and condemnation and may God by His Holy Spirit grant you conviction if need be and conviction is may I say a gift of God it is a gift for the Christian to be convicted in an area and just take that thing to your Father and have that mercy wash over you once again and have the release and the joy of knowing ah I'm clear you know God has has forgiven me for those things so yes that would be our desire that none walk away from this feeling condemned because you you know have regrets or didn't do things right from the past but rather take it to God amen alright any other questions or maybe comments or observations things you want to share from the weekend here alright don't see anything I think I'll just turn the time over to you to close as you see fit then Brother Dave thank you all so much

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/15/SID15511.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/rick-leibee/spiritual-guidelines-for-courtship-questions-and-answers-on-courtship/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net