

GOD'S RENEWAL FOR HOUSEHOLDS
"Part VII: Renewing Household Marital Courtships: Renewed Courting For Men"

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

(1) If a young adult man wants to date, let alone find a right partner for marriage, he has some basic **health** hurdles to overcome:

(a) According to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services' 1991 annual report, p. 13, 63% of all sexually transmitted disease cases occur among persons under age 25. Now that there are over 1 million cases nationwide of infection with the AIDS virus according to the same authority, **how can a man begin dating and marry a woman who is free of a sexual disease that could kill?!**

(b) It is well-documented that half of all weddings performed in America this year will end in divorce. According to a January 2nd, 1996 editorial in the Waterbury Republican-American, "Almost without fail, children are worse off after their parents divorce. They lose contact with one parent, they have to move to different communities or schools, their academic performance and social skills decline, their standard of living plummets, and they're burdened with all sorts of psychological problems that breed crime, depression, teenage pregnancy and suicide."

Half of all **Evangelical** young unwed churchgoers have had premarital sexual relations, a status the Bible calls the *sin* of **fornication!**

(2) But besides **health** and **spiritual** challenges, young men must face often confusing **cultural** hurdles where the roles of men and women in our feminist-sensitive era are up for redefinition: Brian Pappas, head of Together, a match-making enterprise in Farmington, mailed out an ad to singles last year with these two questions for **men** to ponder: "(1) When you see a woman you are **attracted** to, do you get tired of that little voice in your head saying, ' . . . How should I act? Should I lay back and be cool or come on and **be aggressive?** . . . ' (2) Are you uncomfortable about what to say to a woman when you meet, hoping she doesn't think it's a pick-up line?"

Well, how can a young man begin dating the right woman so that he will be able to avoid all sorts of health, spiritual and cultural crises before, during and after his wedding?!

(We turn to the sermon's "Need" section . . .)

Need: "With our immoral era of AIDS and shipwrecked marriages, with fornication among Evangelical youth running high and with the confusion of the roles of men and women in a feminist-sensitive society, how can a young man meet, love and win the heart of the right woman to find lasting marital bliss?!"

- I. **When God made marriage, it was a fulfilling relationship for men.**
 - A. When God made marriage, it was a very **fulfilling** union, Gn. 1:27:31.
 - B. That union was **heterosexual** and **monogamous**: God made one woman for one man and introduced her to him, Gen. 2:19-24.
 - C. As they had not yet sinned, Adam and Eve were designed from the beginning to live **endlessly** in that fulfilling union, Gen. 2:16-17.
 - D. That union was **comprehensive**: a holy God made and brought a naked woman to a naked man for mutual edification, Gen. 2:21-25.
- II. **Sin ruined a man's fulfillment in marriage: sin produced a *failure* in marital intimacy, Gen. 3:7, male *emotional withdrawal* from the spouse (where Adam blamed Eve, coldly calling her a "woman," Gen. 3:11-12) and male *relational distancing* from his spouse (bigamy, where men exploited women for selfish reasons), Gn. 4:19.**
- III. **In view of SIN'S destructive affects, King Solomon, who had ALL a GODLESS man might assume FULFILLS a man in marriage gave some insightful words for men particularly interested in DATING:**
 - A. Solomon had **700 wives AND 300 mistresses** (1 Kings 11:3) and had the means to support this living arrangement, 1 Kings 2:14-29.
 - B. However, after **attempting** this arrangement, Solomon concluded that it was unfulfilling, a mere "chasing after the wind" (NIV), Ecc. 2:1-11.
 - C. In fact, he offered advice to men regarding their relating to women:
 1. **Solomon** felt a man should live happily with **one wife**, Eccl. 9:9.
 2. He claimed a man should live **fulfilled** with the **SAME** woman he **first** married **throughout** their wedded lives on earth, Pr. 5:18-19.
 - D. Accordingly, Solomon suggested the following for unmarried virgin men as it would apply to our contemporary custom of **dating**:
 1. **Fact One** - If a man **starts** relating to women by **first** respecting God, he will build a right foundation for dating and marriage to "the wife of his youth" with whom he should happily live for life, Pr. 1:7. Updating this insight with the New Testament, one should accept Christ as Savior (Jn. 3:16) and fellowship with Him to begin his trek of finding bliss with a wife, 1 Jn. 1:9; Gal. 5:16ff; 1 Jn. 2:3-6.
 2. **Fact Two** - All voluntary premarital sexual arousal hinders later marital fulfillment, S/S 1:6; 4:12,15; 8:6 with 8:9; also, immorality brings on God's discipline, Pr. 5:20-23. Thus, abstain from **all** such activity **until marriage** via the Holy Spirit's power, Gal. 5:16-23.
 3. **Fact Three** - A man is created by God to be vulnerable to the attraction of a woman, Prov. 7:21 and 1 Cor. 7:4. Thus, as **dating** by its very nature leaves a man vulnerable to fall in love and marry a woman he "only" dates, **wisdom** dictates that a man **date ONLY** a woman who is **ALSO Biblically qualified** to become his **WIFE!**

4. **Fact Four** - Since a man should date *only* a woman who qualifies as his *potential* wife, these qualities should exist in a woman he **dates**:
 - a. He should seek the advice of *both* parents on the **kind** of young woman even to *date*, let alone **marry**, Prov. 6:20-24.
 - b. He should date a woman who, as a *potential wife*, among the *other* things mentioned in Prov. 31:10-30 text, manages herself well in a house and with money, who helps him instead of nagging, who considers the needs of others, who develops her potential to its limit and who fears God. With 2 Cor. 6:14, her *fear* of God means she **MUST also** be a **godly Christian!**
5. **Fact Five** - Lest a young man feel there is no such **qualified and attractive** young woman *left* in this wicked world for him even to *date*, let alone **marry**, he should consider the following realities:
 - a. If a virgin man does not have the gift of celibacy, God suggests he marry, 1 Cor. 7:2, 8-11. This rule applies at **least** until the Church is **raptured**, 2 Tim. 3:16-4:2.
 - b. Thus, **God** must provide a qualified, fulfilling **and** willing partner for **EVEN** a **contemporary** unmarried virgin Christian man, and God must do so in **leading** the man to the **right** woman!
 - c. Gen. 24:1-67 demonstrates how this divine program works!

Application: *As a virgin man seeking Biblical fulfillment in marriage, (1) begin with faith in Christ and fellowship with God (Jn. 3:16; Gal. 5:16-23; 1 Jn. 2:3-6). Follow up by (2) trusting God's promises to provide a qualified partner so as to (3) date and thus leave one's self vulnerable to fall in love **ONLY** with that partner Scripture indicates could be the lifelong future spouse!*

Lesson: *An unmarried virgin man TODAY will find marital fulfillment in spite of this wicked world's influence IF he properly (1) relates to God, (2) follows His leading and (3) implements God's directives for (a) holy premarital conduct and (b) date selection en route to (c) spouse selection!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the sermon's lesson . . .)

We can itemize the way God led Isaac and Rebekah together amidst all sorts of cultural, spiritual and health hurdles as follows:

(1) The hurdles to Isaac getting a proper wife for marital happiness were very great:

(a) His father had been directed by God to stay in a land of very wicked people full of morally and spiritually deficient Canaanite marital candidates, Gen. 24:1-3 with Unger, Arch. and the O.T., p. 237.

(b) Accordingly, Abraham had no choice but to ask his head servant to return to his kin and select a woman for Isaac from those who would most likely be godly, a rather trim "pickings" for Isaac! (Gen. 24:4)

met, making it possible that Isaac and Rebekah might not **like** each other, let alone want to **marry**, Gen. 24:5.

(2) However, Abraham trust that the Lord who had called him to be in the land of Canaan, and who had **supplied** Isaac by miraculous birth (cf. Gen. 17:15-22; 21:1-3) would also keep that promise by giving Isaac a wife with whom the Abrahamic Covenant could be propagated with additional descendants, Gen. 24:7.

(3) As it turned out, God supplied all the couple needed:

(a) God led Abraham's servant so that Rebekah was the woman God signaled was to be Isaac's wife, Gen. 24:10-15.

(b) God had made Rebekah to be a very attractive woman in making the marriage desirable for Isaac, Gen. 24:16a.

(c) God had led Rebekah to be chaste, a qualified partner for Isaac, Gen. 24:16b. God had led Isaac himself to be a godly, chaste man, Gen. 24:63a.

Support Rebekah, 24:34-38.

(e) God led Rebekah to be willing to marry Isaac whom she had never met as an act of faith, Gen. 24:58.

(f) God led Isaac and Rebekah to fall in love when they met and to become happily married, Gen. 24:63-67.

If God could provide for the union of Isaac and Rebekah in the midst of the hurdles they had to face re: meeting and marriage, he can and will help young men today!