

Oxford Baptist Church – April 17, 2016 Pastor Robin W. Pifer

Series: Relationships: Improving Our Connections

Message: Finding the Right Life Partner

Scripture: Genesis 24; 2Cor 6:14-16

When it comes to Finding the Right Life Partner.....

Be all you can be in Christ and Choose Wisely!

Why do people get married? Genesis 2:18; Malachi 2:13-16

- Companionship, Covenant, Commitment, Children
- What is Christian or Biblical marriage?

Traditional marriage is a permanent and sexually exclusive relationship of extraordinary care between one man and one woman. "Willard F. Harley Jr. www.marriagebuilders.com

Marriage is two people (a man and a woman) who have committed themselves to take individual responsibility to work together for the fulfillment of each other through a mutually submissive partnering relationship of oneness with Jesus Christ.

What are some of the Myths of Marriage?

- My partner will complete me.
- "I will live happily ever after."
- We both have the same expectations about marriage.
- Everything Good in our relationship will get better.
- All of our current problems will go away or get better when we get married.
- Love is a feeling.
- Leaving home will solve all my family relationship problems.
- My partner will meet all my needs.
- My parents think it is a good idea.
- I can change my partner.
- Our marriage will be perfect.
- If we live together first we will have a better relationship.* See appendix on Cohabitation.

- Resource: "[The Ring Makes all the Difference](#)" – The Hidden Consequences of Cohabitation and the Strong Benefits of Marriage, Glenn T. Stanton, Moody Press, 2011.

Looking for a spiritual life partner.... Genesis 24 – Isaac and Rebekah

1. **The Lord is at the Center of the Their Story.**
Genesis 24:7 - Abraham; v. 12-14 – His Servant; Isaac – v. 63
 - Biblically this makes sense. James 4:2
2. **The Lord helps find the right people in the right places.** Gen 24:3; 1Cor 15:33 - Friendship, Family and Friends
Why is Spiritual Oneness so important? You have a Common Treasure... Common Values... Common Blueprint... Common Goals... Common Strength. Bill and Lynn Hybel's book "Fit to Be Tied." 2Cor 6:14-16
 - Not an arrangement but a relationship.
3. **The Lord exposes the right qualities and character of a potential spouse.**
Genesis 24:16; 1Cor 7:32-35; Eph 5:21, 28
4. **The Lord can also say "no or not now".** Genesis 24:5, 8, 9.

Life Group Questions

- How does today's message build on the message from last week on single living?
- What are Biblical reasons for marriage? What are the world's reasons for marriage?
- Discuss the myths people have about marriage? Which one stands out to you the most?
- What is one thing you need to be more Christ-centered in your approach to healthy relationships?
- Take time to read and review the message points from Genesis 24. What stands out to you about God's plan for finding the right life partner?
- What is one personal take away from the message/talk that has helped you to understand a better approach to healthier relationships?

Appendix on Cohabitation. Notes created from the research and resource: “The Ring Makes all the Difference” – The Hidden Consequences of Cohabitation and the Strong Benefits of Marriage, Glenn T. Stanton, Moody Press, 2011.

Why Cohabitation or Living Together has Big Issues for Relationships...

1) Living Together results in significant difficulties in relationships.

--- Living together means you will break up 5-7 X more than married relationships.

Jan Stets found cohabitating couples have lower relationship quality, lower stability, and higher levels of disagreements. More fights, more violence as lower levels of fairness in their relationships and happiness with them.

2) Living Together results in higher levels of domestic violence.

The Journal of Family Violence reported the most frequent relationship reporting domestic battery.... Cohabitation 48% of couples living together. The lowest rate was 19% was found among married couples.... Those divorced or separated held the middle rate of 27.3 percent. (p. 46) Men with rings on their fingers appear to be very different kinds of men... safer men.... protecting the marriage and parental relationship.

3) Living Together means higher rates of cheating. (p.47)

- In a given year live in boyfriends are nearly four times more likely than husbands to cheat in the past year.
- Co-habiting women are eight times more likely than wives to cheat. (National Sex survey)
- If you want a faithful partner then cohabitation is not your thing.... STD's

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4) Living Together means much less financial stability.

- Marriage is a wealth building institution/relationship.
- Purdue University.... cohabiting couples ... more closely resembles the earnings and savings rates of singles. National Marriage Project... reports ... poverty rates for children in married households is 6% it jumps to 31% for children with a cohabiting Mother and Father.
- Why? Less sharing and pooling of resources because they have an arrangement not a relationship. What is mine is not yours... and what is yours is not mine...

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5) Living Together means men will do less around the house.

Studies have shown against the stereotypes. married men because they have the ring.... will spend up to 8 more hours a week doing household chores, helping with kids etc... than his shacking up peer. Living together means participating in more High Risk Destructive Behaviour.

- Talk to your insurance agent about this.... “During their twenties, young men and women who lived together showed very high and increasing rates of health-destroying and dangerous behaviours.”
- Married men and women are consistently less careless and accident prone than their single and cohabiting peers. Men who are married are not as likely to be out late at bars, driving their cars and motorcycles too fast, or taking chances at dangerous pursuits.... p.51

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6) Living Together before Marriage means anywhere between a 50 to 80% higher divorce rate. Average for Cohabitation before marriage 65%. Average no cohabitation is well below 40% U.S. lower in Canada 30%....

- Cohabitation Effect.
 - Lack of Commitment.
 - Cohabitation Teaches Unhealthy relationship skills...
 - I am not sure about you.
 - Manipulation.
 - Partner becomes a consumer product.
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7) Living Together provides uncertainty and problems for children

- Rates of Sexual, physical abuse sky rocket.
- Poverty.
- One study done found this....
 - Three Things for marriage success
 - Finish High School
 - Marry before having children
 - Marry after the age of twenty....

Only 8% of families were at the poverty level..... If people failed to do this..... 79% of people were at or below the poverty level.

Marriage breaks the cycle of poverty.... also helps children to have academic, relational success and security.

8) Living together produces greater health risks.

Waite - The Case for Marriage.... "The evidence from four decades of research is surprisingly clear: a good (Healthy) marriage is both men's and women's best bet for living a long and healthy life."

Dr. Robert Coombs (UCLA) found this....

"Virtually every study of mortality and marital status shows the unmarried of both sexes have higher death rates, whether by accident, disease, or self-inflicted wounds, and this is found in every country that maintains accurate health statistics." P. 96

Marriage is healthy... protection from STD's - partners in marriage are just more faithful...

9) Living together produces greater health risks.

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Marriage is healthy... protection.... STD's - partners are faithful...

10) Living Together Destroys God's design for Marriage and Family.

- God's heart for you is that if you are married or single that you follow his path....
- Malachi 3:15-16
- Christians are called to God's standard. He is the designer of both holy singleness and holy marriage.
- Genesis 2:24; Eph 5:31; Leave, Cleave, Unite, Pursue Oneness.