

# Feast of TABERNACLES '04

## Pensacola Beach, FL

*Tell me more about Infuse @ Pensacola Beach, FL!*

### **WHAT EXACTLY IS INFUSE?**

Infuse is a new program created for you. Sermons will be on topics that are relevant to you. Plus, uplifting music, group discussions and activities.

### **WHO IS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?**

The sermons and discussions will be directed at young adults. However, everyone is welcome.

### **IF I ATTEND INFUSE, WILL I MISS THE MAIN SERVICES?**

No, the Infuse service will end in time for you to worship in the main services. Infuse services will be held at the Best Western, which is walking distance from the main services at the Clarion Suites Resort.

### **WILL INFUSE BE AT OTHER FEAST SITES?**

No, Infuse will only be at Pensacola Beach, FL in 2004. It is a pilot program. Look for Infuse at other Feast sites in the future.

### **HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED NOW?**

### **GREAT, I'M THERE! WHERE DO I STAY?**

Group rates have been arranged at the Best Western and Clarion Suites Resort. To receive the group rate state you are with The Church of God, International when making your reservation.

#### **Best Western**

**Phone:** (800) 934-3301 / (850) 934-3300

**Address:** 16 Via de Luna

**Website:** [www.BestWestern.com](http://www.BestWestern.com)

**Rates:** Ocean Front . . . \$89.00  
Non Ocean Front . . . \$69.00

#### **Clarion Suites Resort**

**Phone:** (800) 874-5303 / (850) 932-4300

**Address:** 20 Via de Luna

**Website:** [www.ClarionSuitesResort.com](http://www.ClarionSuitesResort.com)

**Rates:** Ocean Front . . . \$129.00  
Boardwalk . . . \$119.00  
Benchwalk . . . \$89.00

All other lodging is not arranged for group rates. Emerald Isle is next door to Clarion Suites. Contact JME Management at (800) 24-BEACH and RMI Vacations at (800) 874-9245 for more information.

SUMMER 2004

# infuse

## Love

*“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” Matthew 6:13*

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*Have you made sure you have the qualities of being the right person?*

**06** **DATING: A TOOL IN PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE**  
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## Sex

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## ➔ From the Editor



**G**rowing up, I always looked forward to the Summer time and while there are many summers that are special, there is one in my early teens that stands out. It was the elements of the unexpected that make that experience unique.

I had never been on a plane before, nor had I ever gone so far from home without my parents. But, at the age of 14 I was on my way to Orr, Minnesota to attend the church youth camp. I had a great time, made a lot of friends and enjoyed many good adventures. Reflecting on that occasion reminded me of some great gifts I was given the summer of 1969.

The counselors, staff and ministry did not appear to see us, the campers, as a mass of young people they had to entertain for four weeks. Instead, each camper was treated with respect, trust and equality. We were not seen as troublemakers but rather as young individuals who had hopes, dreams, fears and who may make a mistake now and then and need some loving correction and guidance.

The physical and spiritual activities offered were well structured and presented opportunities to be a team player, assertive, accepted, encouraged, challenged and recognized. That summer, I learned something new about my religion. I was not too young to understand the Word of God. God's truth is not restricted to only those who reach a certain age of maturity. I left camp believing I was needed by God and that His church could not be complete without the participation of young people. Sadly, over the years, I believe young people have gotten lost in the upheaval of churches divided.

# INFUSE

## @ Pensacola, FL

One reason Infuse was born is due to the concerns of losing so many young people. There are many who share my conviction that teens/young adults have something to contribute to God's church and that there is a useful role for young people to play within God's church.

At this year's Feast of Tabernacles we are trying something new in Pensacola, Florida, which is called the Infuse Service. The Infuse Service is a pilot program and as in any new program, we need the energy, help and suggestions from all of you. We need you to put your gifts, talents, knowledge and skills to work. It is our goal to cultivate opportunities for young adults to teach and lead.

I am pleased to announce Mike James will be the coordinator of the Infuse Service and Activities for the teens and young adults for this year's Feast of Tabernacles in Pensacola,

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Florida. For those of you who do not know Mike, he is a man that is passionate about sharing the gospel. He is skilled, intelligent, hard working and his heart cares about young people.

I went to camp seeking a fun time and ultimately found out Christianity is not for spectators, but rather a religion that encourages participation. "Make them ready for your service through your truth; your teaching is truth" John 17:17. God tells all of us, young and old that His Word is truth and He instructs us to study His Word to show ourselves approved (II Timothy 2:15). There isn't an age or gender listed in God's instruction. I encourage each of you to become a participant and I welcome your suggestions and ideas for this year's Feast of Tabernacles, this magazine and the website.

God bless you,

**Noni McVey**  
**Editor in Chief**

*See page 1  
for details* ↗



# \* Choosing the \* Right Adam or Eve

By Loren M. Chamberlain

And Adam said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh”

(Genesis 2:23—24).

**T**wo of the most important decisions of a man or woman’s life occur during adolescence, whether or not to follow Christ, and secondly, whom to marry.

For those who do not choose to follow Christ, the importance of a proper marriage doesn’t matter because there is no reason for them to accept the fact that God ordained marriage for a male and female, and it is a divine institution. Society is attempting to turn marriage upside down and turn it into a contract between two people regardless of sexual orientation.

The question of choosing the right one becomes particularly strong to those who choose to follow Christ and do not believe in divorce, and want to marry once for life. Even for those who are not considering marriage, when a particular someone comes along for the first time the question will certainly cross the mind: Could this be the right one?

Out of all the hundreds of people of the opposite sex whom a young adult may meet, how can he/she know the right one? Shivers up and down the spine perhaps, or some sixth sense maybe, or as some have experienced, “you will just know.”

Looking around at the divorces and unhappy marriages that exist it is easy for a person to wonder whether he can really expect any better. Mismatched couples are everywhere. No one wants to make the same wrong choices. If you

feel this way, your thoughts and concern about marriage are certainly viable. Research tells us that while 90 percent of church teens believe God intended marriage to last a lifetime, less than half (48 percent) say they would desire a marriage like that of their parents. Another 43 percent believe it is very difficult to have a successful marriage in today’s society.

How do you choose the right Adam or Eve and not end up being just another divorce statistic? How do you overcome your fear of making a mistake and ultimately find true, lasting love in marriage?

## **NOT BEING THE RIGHT PERSON**

If you are looking for the “right Adam or Eve,” chances are others are doing the same. Therefore, it becomes very important for you to become a right Adam or Eve. There is no sense in praying for the right person to come along and not give attention to being a right person yourself. The young person who is not surrendered to God, who is not obeying the parts of God’s will that have been revealed to them is not preparing to be the kind of person who could lovingly and selflessly care for the right Adam or Eve.

The proper attitude young people should have for marriage is not to be looking primarily to have their own needs met, but rather to meet the needs of their spouse. These needs may center on self-esteem, sex, emotions, finances,

or other needs. It is best to think in terms of what you can give in a marriage instead of what you can get.

## **LOOKING FOR THE WRONG PERSON**

Often the wrong picture of the “right one” will be painted in a person’s mind. The list might start with stunning physical beauty, handsomeness, self-confident charm, and impeccable manners, and may also include spiritual and social characteristics. It is often forgotten that it usually takes a lifetime for an individual to develop all those virtues!

Be careful not to create an image of Mr. Adam and Miss Eve that is so idealized or romantic that it can blind them to the possibilities all around them. This is not to say that you should not look for certain qualities in a potential mate, but just be sure such qualifications reflect realistic and godly goals.

## **THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Success in marriage does not consist so much in marrying the right person to make you happy, as it is in avoiding those who could make you miserable.

It is certainly within the realm of possibility God has a mate selected for everyone. Psalm 139 tells us in verse 16 that he knew us when we were but embryos. Job said, “I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted” (Job 42:2).

# → Love

Obviously then, it is very important to prepare for marriage, and at the same time to pray to God to send the right mate. It might just be the mate God sends is for the purpose of helping to develop all those wonderful qualities we are so quick to look for in others, but fail to develop for ourselves.

While God can do all things it is equally true God gives us the freedom to make wise choices within prescribed moral limits. We must not ignore God's sovereignty or our responsibility.

If we believe God can provide a mate for us, we can show our faith by being obedient to His word. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

Once you have sincerely sought God's guidance regarding the choice of a mate, how do you know if the right decision has been made? Usually God does not solve our problems the way we want them solved. How can you know for sure who the right mate for you is? You know for sure on the day you stand before an Elder of God's church, and say "**I do.**" Until that day you probably won't know for sure. After that day the issue is settled. Suddenly, your choice has become God's choice!

## **SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS**

These questions are but a few of the Biblical requirements for a Christian hoping to embark on a godly route toward marriage.

1. Do you help each other grow closer to God?
2. Can you talk?
3. Can you play together?
4. Can you work together?
5. Do you have mutual friends?
6. Are you pleased with each other?
7. Are you intellectually on the same level?
8. Do you have common interests?
9. Do you share the same values?
10. Do you feel comfortable about how you make decisions together?
11. Do you help each other emotionally?
12. Do you have absolute trust in each other?
13. Are you more creative and energetic because of each other?
14. Can you accept and appreciate each other's family?
15. Do you have unresolved relationships in your past?
16. Is sex under control?
17. Have you spent time together? *This does not mean being alone together making out. It means quality time spent together getting to know one another better intellectually.*
18. Have you fought and forgiven?
19. Have you talked about each area of your future life?
20. Have you had counseling?

Marriage requires the wholeheartedness of each spouse. Anything less will bring failure to any union. Love for one another is primary. The Biblical perspective of "Love" is this: True love is evident when the happiness, health, and spiritual growth of another person are as important to you as your own. Now, go out there and find your own Adam or Eve! **i**



# Dating: A Tool In Preparation For Marriage

By Kitty Bumgardner

After selecting a dating partner who fits the description in the spring issue of Infuse, under Things to Look For in a Godly Guy or Girl, spend some time in prayer before going out. Ask God for His help in being what He wants you to be. Only then consider yourself ready to enjoy an evening out.

Dating should be used as a tool to grow and become a better, more stable person as well as to find the one person you would like to spend the rest of your life with.

Your actions on any date will not only create good character but could destroy character. Determination to do the right thing and obey God's commands to flee fornication should be upper most in your mind when you go out with the opposite sex.

Developing a relationship that is physically too close should be avoided. Physical closeness leads to greater and greater temptation, finally leading to the result of giving in to the temptation to the fullest. This act should be saved for your future mate. In order to avoid this tremendous temptation avoid the closeness that should be reserved for marriage.

Light hugs and kisses are one thing, passionate kissing and fondling are another. In order to avoid fornication (premarital sex) we must avoid the passion that leads to this act. By saving ourselves for our future mate we are in the process of insuring a marriage that will be successful. A marriage takes work and it begins with dating.

As young people dating one another, you are preparing yourself and are becoming a good wife or husband in advance.

By avoiding a relationship that is too close and saving oneself for marriage, you are building the character that develops when you avoid sin. You will also be learning to be faithful to the one you will eventually marry.

On the opposite side of this coin, if you allow yourself to get involved in an intimate and passionate situation and give in to your passions, you are destroying character and learning how to be unfaithful to the one you will eventually marry.

If we cannot be faithful to God it will not come natural to be faithful to a future mate. By avoiding or fleeing fornication (as we are instructed in 1 Corinthians 6:18), we develop the character to be faithful to God and thereby the character to be faithful to our future husband or wife.

So start now being what God wants you to be. By being the most wholesome date you can be you are preparing to be the best wife or husband that you can be, when you find the one God has for you. i



## Things to Know About the Person You Are Dating

Dating is the time spent with someone to see if you would want to marry and spend the rest of your life with him or her. It might feel like an interview at times, but it is important to ask many questions, whether you think you know the answer or not. Talk, talk, talk, that is how you will get to know each other. Once you know this person's personality and who he/she is, you will be able to make a better decision if you want the relationship to move forward to marriage or not. Below are some ideas and topics of things to know about the person you are dating.

### BASIC INFORMATION

- First and last name
- Where he/she works or goes to school?
- Where he or she lives?
- Hobbies
- Age
- Parents- married or divorced
- Brothers and sisters
- Relationship with family
- Does he/she do kind and loving things for others?
- Does he/she brag about getting away with things?
- Has he/she been married before?
- Does he/she have children?

### BASICS ABOUT LIFE-STYLE

- What are his/her friends like?
- Does he/she like your friends?
- Courteous and dependable
- Well-liked, well-respected and responsible
- Makes good decisions
- Is he/she in debt?
- Can he/she support himself?
- How much time and energy is put into interests, hobbies, politics, socializing, etc?
- Do you admire and respect this person?

### PERSONALITY

- Any mysterious behaviors
- What does he/she do in his free time?
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Make others feel comfortable
- Taste in music and clothing
- Jealous
- Nosey, snoopy or can't keep a secret
- Temper
- Irritable, stubborn or unforgiving
- Make excesses for behavior
- Emotionally strong
- Poor manners

### DIGGING DEEPER

- Is there anything about him/her you would not want your parents or friends to know?
- Demands you change
- Treated with respect?
- Health/medical problems
- Keeps promises
- Remembers important dates
- Criminal record
- Does he/she care about your wants and desires?
- What do your parents and friends think of him/her?
- Physically attraction
- Odd opinions

# Save Yourself



**L**ove, marriage and sex; it's supposed to go in that order. Unfortunately, I did it backwards...sex, love, and hopefully marriage. I have living proof of my mistakes. I'm 17 and I have a 1 year and 3 months old little boy.

Now I was raised in the church. I knew what was right and what was wrong, but when I was about 13 I basically quit going. I guess I felt like I had better things to do. I started doing things I knew were wrong. I wouldn't go to school. I snuck out all of the time. I stole cigarettes and money from my mom. I stole her car. I didn't care what anyone thought about me, not even God. I basically turned away from God. And although I knew what I should've been doing I kept doing wrong. No matter how many times my mom told me that I wouldn't be able to get away with it forever and something would eventually happen to wake me up... I didn't care.

Well, guess what? Momma was right. I became pregnant two months before I turned 16. The day that pregnancy test read positive is the day I grew up. I couldn't be a kid anymore, especially a bad one. I had to switch to home schooling so I could stay home and breastfeed. No more partying. No more staying out all night.

God woke me up all right. I guess he thought that if all I wanted to do was lay up with my boyfriend every weekend and not be responsible then he'd make me be responsible. So he gave me a little boy. Now, instead of causing trouble I have someone to take care of all day, every day...forever. I have to cook for him, clean up after him, give him a bath, pick out his clothes, comfort him, etc. I have to do twice as much every day.

I wish I had saved myself for marriage. Then I would've been financially stable. I could have been able to provide for my little boy things that I never had. I provide for him the best I can though. Eighty percent of my money is his. I can't spend it on me. Don't get me wrong, I love him with all of my heart and I wouldn't trade him for the world. But, I still wish I'd waited.

I guess what I am trying to say is...please save yourself. If you think your chores are hard now then just think about doing twice as much or three times as much (twins). It's not hard to say no. God is on your side. Even if saying no means people talk about you and call you a "goody-goody". Still say no! You don't need them. If they don't like you for whom you are then forget them. God loves you for who you are and will always be there for you. This article isn't written for only girls to read. Guys, how would you like to bust your butt for \$6.12/hr. and work overtime just to make \$450 every two weeks and then turn around and have to give half of it away because you have a girlfriend and a child to take care of. Ya'll can't party anymore either because you've got to be home incase something happens to your child. So, ya'll need to save yourself too.

Stick to your beliefs. Don't let anyone change them. Do what you know is right. Don't let anyone bring you down. Remember that wherever two or more people are present, God is there. Make Him proud.

God bless,

*Courtney N. Ryals*

# “Everybody Else Is Doing It!”

By Brian Christensen, Rory Ries & Bob Swimm

**H**ave you ever heard that line before? It’s normally used by someone who is trying to talk you into doing something you probably don’t really want to do. Take for instance, having sex before marriage.

Despite the fact that unwanted pregnancies, abortions, STDs, HIV, AIDs, etc., have all come home to collect their IOU’s people continue to look down on God’s instructions about marriage and the sex act, giving young people the impression that everyone is doing it. However, the statement above is not necessarily true.

There are quite a few who are involved in sexual immorality, but not everyone is doing it. A number of teens follow Jesus Christ and practice what he has taught. There is a great reason and reward for waiting until you are married to have sex. Let’s take a look at why.

## WHAT IS SEX?

First of all we need to discuss what sex is. That may sound funny or strange, but over the years we have had people come up with their own definitions of what sex is and what sex is not, including a past President. The only definition we are concerned with is God’s definition because He is the Creator of all things.

God created sex and gave it to man as a beautiful gift. When sex is respected and done in a way that is following God’s law, man and woman are blessed. Anything outside of God’s law concerning sex brings painful and destructive consequences.

Sex is simply uncovering the nakedness of another person and having genital contact with that person. We are instructed to be moral and sexually pure (Ps. 119:9, Prov. 15:26, Matt. 5:8). Even how we look at someone else can be sin (Matt. 5:28).

## DOES SEX=LOVE?

Let’s discuss a common misconception, “Sex equals love” or “If this person has sex with me, they must love me.” The more of life you experience; you will realize the opposite is more true.

If someone you are dating, does not wish to have sex or is willing to wait until marriage before sex, then there is definitely more to this relationship than just hormones. A recent study revealed that most relationships break up within three weeks of having sex. Love is a special emotional bond between two people that forms over time. When that bond becomes so strong that a couple wants to publicly commit their lives to it, then sex becomes a physical extension of that emotional love and bond. So wonderful and beautiful that a life can be created by it.

In all the television programs and movies, we are told that the missing ingredient in sex is LOVE. They call it “making love,” but there is no such thing. As I am writing to a godly audience, I assume we know, “God is LOVE.” When Paul was addressing the church at Ephesus he told the husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church. That is a ton of love. Within marriage this includes the pleasure of physical intercourse and outside of marriage it is filthy sin.

## SEXUAL IMMORALITY

Sexual immorality describes a wide variety of sexual activities before marriage and is not limited to the consummated sexual act. Any intimate sexual activity or play outside marriage is sin and immoral. It will only lead to trouble in one’s life.

All one has to do is look up some recent statistics and see the problems that stem from sexual activity before

*“The number of teens who remained virgins rose 16 percent in the past decade. In 2001, virgins outnumbered those who say they have had intercourse 54 percent to 46 percent. In 1991, the ratio was just the opposite. The number of students who have had at least four sex partners dropped 24 percent, according to studies just released by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In 2001, only 1 in 7 teens—or 14 percent—had had at least four sex partners, down from 19 percent in 1991.” (Teen-aid.org)*

marriage. More teens are sexually involved than ever before. The sexual revolution has even affected those who are still in elementary school. It’s not uncommon to talk to 12 year olds who have already experienced some form of sexual activity.

Marketing has intensified society’s desire for sex by causing us to constantly compare ourselves to others with everything from physical appearances to sexual deviation and performance. Society has taken something that was designed by God as a beautiful connection between two people, in love

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Everybody continued from **page 08**

and committed to each other, and turned it into something “fun” that everyone should do and experiment with. The number of lives that have been lost or murdered and all the pain experienced by countless people, as a direct result of promiscuous sexual activity is staggering. It is similar to a wolf dressed in sheep’s clothing. Sound like anyone we know?

**THE CONSEQUENCES**

When we go against God’s plan and try to have the physical before the emotional, that is when trouble begins. The deeper love is harder to form and becomes almost “forced.” We also begin to develop more and more sexual partners. This can dilute or hinder a relationship with your “true love,” when it arrives.

Pre-marital sex can have a negative affect on someone emotionally. We know, teenaged girls who are sexually involved with one or more partners are at a higher risk of being depressed and are at risk of committing suicide more so than those who are not sexually involved with anyone. It could possibly be from the guilt one experiences when they do something that is immoral or it may be from the feelings of hopelessness that can come from being sexually active before marriage.

Pre-marital sex also creates a risk of pregnancy, life long viruses, or fatal diseases. I Corinthians 6:18-20 tells us that we should respect our bodies as belonging to God. Did you know there is a 1 in 4 chance of contracting a sexually transmitted disease? Back in the fifties, there were approximately three major diseases someone could contact through having sexual intimacy. Today, there are over thirty different sexually transmitted diseases, and some will cause death.

How would you like to tell your future mate you have an incurable disease? Would you like to marry someone who has a disease they could possibly pass on to you or even your children? Plus, you may even become sterile by contacting one of these sexually transmitted diseases. Kiss off the idea of having a family.

There are two types of sexually transmitted diseases. One is biological and the other is viral. The biological can be cured, while the viral is incurable. That means if you have sexual contact with someone who has a viral disease you will get that disease and you will have it for life or until you die. Death can be a serious consequence for breaking God’s law.



**BOND BETWEEN HUSBAND & WIFE**

All of the physical pleasure in the marital bed is holy, good and pleasing to God. He blessed it and ordained it. Read it with your own eyes in Hebrews 13:4, “Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whormongers and adulterers God will judge.”

It is our Father’s and elder brother Jesus’ greatest desire to share everything they have with us. Jesus is going to marry us—His church. We have to be virgins, which means to be pure. “Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready. And to her

was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, write, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb...” (Revelation 19:7-9).

Within marriage sexual intercourse is the bond that makes man and wife one flesh “So a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two will become one body” (Genesis 2:24). It is the glue that binds a marriage. Sex outside marriage defiles the marriage supper of the lamb. It throws filth on that love of Christ toward the church.

Sex isn’t funny, dirty or embarrassing. It is a beautiful gift from Almighty God reserved for your wedding night: the most precious gift you’ll receive. Don’t go snooping in the cupboard and open it early. You’ll deeply regret it, you truly will. Do not make the dreadful mistake of assuming that everyone is doing it. They’re not—can’t be if you’re not.

**SO NOW WHAT?**

It is important to remember we, along with God, control our destiny. Second Thessalonians 4:1-8 instructs us to live our lives to please God. We should control ourselves and continually learn and do more towards this goal. The input of other people is sometimes important information, however, we should try to understand all aspects and results of our decisions before we make a choice.

Our friends won’t help us raise a child, cure a disease, fix a broken heart or restore our innocence. God will. His love is so strong that he has done all he can to help us make the right choices. He will also be there for us if we make the wrong decision. Seek him and pray often.

Keep the communication open with your parents. Ok, I just lost everyone. Seriously, your parents have been in this situation before and can give you valuable insight as to how wonderful sex can be between two people committed to each

other and God. It is just as uncomfortable for them to talk about as it is for you. It is the most uncomfortable and important topic to discuss. You must understand and accept their emotions as a result of their love and protection of you. Don't be so quick to wish that away. For all the years you have taken and expected their love and support, you can give a little on this one. Despite their initial reactions, they do love you and will help you the best way they can. The ministry is also available to counsel with if you feel that would be helpful or needed.

**BUT I'M NOT A VIRGIN**

Are you married? If you answered no, then you cannot be sexually involved with anyone. It's simple. It may not be simple abstaining from sex, but it can be done. There are quite a few people who are choosing to be a virgin until they are married. It may not be simple to quit having sex, but it can be done. It's not too late to stop and turn from being sexually immoral.

Get a check up with your doctor. Most teens, and even adults, don't realize they may be a carrier for a viral disease or even a bacterial disease. The symptoms are not always obvious.

You're probably thinking, my partner is a good person and they wouldn't have any physical problems. They may not even know and do you trust them with your life and honestly believe they wouldn't sleep with anyone else?

On the other hand, you're partner may not have any of these diseases but then ask yourself, if they care so much about me, then, why are they leading me down a trail to death? God is very serious when He says the sexually immoral will not inherit the kingdom (Gal. 5:19-21). You can still avoid death, if you stop and choose to obey God.

No one is looking down at those who may have experienced some act of sexual intimacy. You too can experience God's love for you and reap the bountiful blessings He has in store for you. If you don't believe me prove me to be wrong.

Stop having sex and give it to God and see for yourself how God will abundantly bless you.

To those who are walking the life of a virgin, God bless you. Please continue in your walk with Christ and you will be blessed beyond anything you can imagine. Jesus Christ will provide you with everything you need and you will be rewarded the night you do come together with your mate.

*Condoms are not the answer. The pill is not the answer either. Many women have developed cancer due to the pill or other inventions man has made to allow women to have sex without the worry of getting pregnant. Anything man does that is opposite of what God teaches will only lead to disaster and even death.*

**CONCLUSION**

God is the Creator of sex. He has created a beautiful gift and has given it to all of mankind. There is nothing more beautiful than a man and woman coming together, sexually, for the very first time after being married before the eyes of God. This is what true sexual intimacy is and it cannot be shared with anyone else. It is something special between a husband and wife.

Marriage is an awesome institution God has given man. The feeling that comes from your mate, knowing he/she is devoted to you and only you, is beyond compare. Two people coming together as one, sexually, are phenomena only God could instill in His great creation. Choose to partake of what God has waiting for you by obeying His laws and joyfully reap the many blessings that lie ahead. i

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- ## 9 Ways To Stay Out of Trouble
- 1 Go on group dates.
  - 2 Do a lot of talking to find out about each other's families, goals, interests, dreams and friends.
  - 3 Don't put yourself in a situation where you will be alone.
  - 4 Be cautious, some might say they want to get married only to get affection.
  - 5 Talk about your morals and why you are waiting for marriage.
  - 6 Make a list of qualities you want in a partner and stick to them.
  - 7 Don't do a lot of kissing. You need to keep your head clear so you can see any warning signs telling you to end the relationship.
  - 8 Make sure you are ready to get married. Have you finished your education? Are you stable as a single person?
  - 9 Don't be in places where "making out" is encouraged.
- ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

***"Pray that you will not fall into temptation." Luke 22:40***

# DATE RAPE

By Mike James

**R**ape can be defined as someone performing a sexual act against you without your consent. Date rape is defined as a person who you are dating performing an unwanted sexual act against you without your consent. Some would also broaden the definition of date rape to include forced or coerced sex between friends, friends of friends and acquaintances.

One major problem with date rape is the fact that it is the most underreported method of rape. It is also the most common form of rape according to some. In 1992, 78% of rapes were reported to be date rapes. Allowing a rape to go unreported may lead to someone else becoming a victim of that same rapist. The lack of reporting the crime may be due to the victims being concerned about retribution from the friends or family of the rapist. The victims might also feel a sense of blame and humiliation because they were involved with the rapist by their own choice.

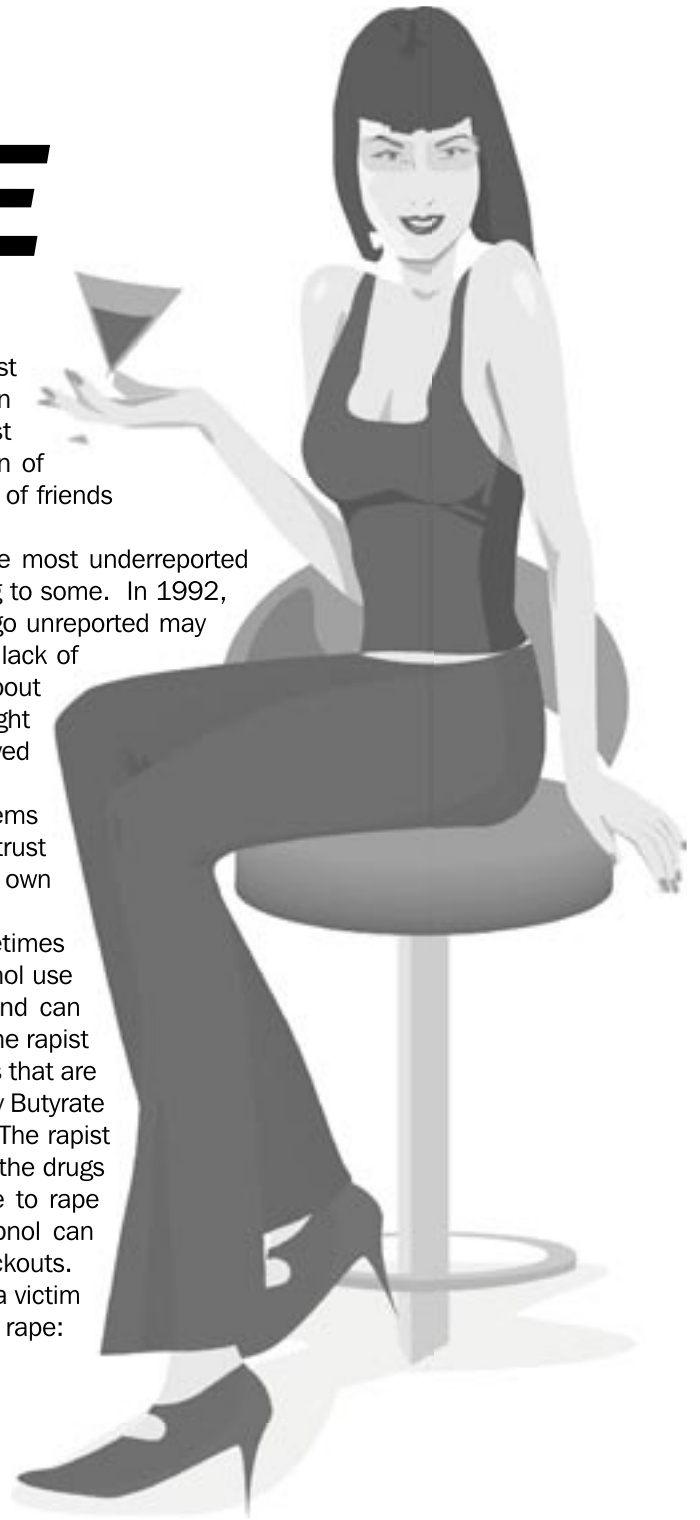
Date rape is also a problem because it leads to further problems for the victim long after the rape. The victim might find it hard to trust people after the rape. Some victims's begin to question their own judgment due to the trauma of rape.

Drugs and alcohol can play a big part in date rape. Sometimes the victims are too drunk to know what is happening to them. Alcohol use is often involved in date rapes because it limits your inhibitions and can cloud your judgment. In other cases victims have been drugged by the rapist and didn't even know what was happening to them. Two of the drugs that are often used in date rape are Rohypnol ("Roofies") and Gamma Hydroxy Butyrate (GHB). These drugs are sedatives that are colorless and odorless. The rapist usually places the drug into something the victim is drinking. When the drugs are placed in liquid they dissolve. The drugs make you vulnerable to rape because you become sleepy and sometimes unconscious. Rohypnol can also cause problems with your motor skills, speaking and cause blackouts.

Date rape is a major problem. Some say 1 out of 4 girls will be a victim of rape before they reach age 25. Here are some tips to avoid date rape:

1. Go out on group dates rather than one on one.
2. If you drink anything make sure you opened the drink and you always have control of the drink.
3. Don't drink alcohol on a date.
4. Make sure that before you even start dating someone they know you are not interested in having sex.
5. Stay in public places during your date.
6. If your date makes you feel uncomfortable, have the means to get home on your own.
7. Take a self-defense course. Practicing techniques to protect yourself might give you just enough time to escape a bad situation.
8. Carry a loud noisemaker like a whistle whenever you go out.

One final point I'd like to make is despite all the precaution's you might take, date rape might still occur. Please don't keep it to yourself. It's a mistake not to report the rape because the person who did it to you might do it again to someone else. Keeping a traumatic event like rape to yourself can also lead to psychological issues. If you are a victim of rape please talk to your parents about it and get professional counseling. If you can't talk to those close to you please call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE(4673). The hotline operates 24 hours a day 7 days a week. **i**



# “I Was Raped... and Now I’m Pregnant”

By Mike James

One of the tougher issues that arise out of the pro-choice and anti-abortion debate is the question about what a woman should do if she is raped and becomes pregnant.

Those on the pro-choice side of the argument reason that a woman’s body is her own and she should not have to carry a baby that was forced upon her by a violent act. The woman in this case was not prepared for all the ramifications that come with carrying a baby for 9 months. Some also argue that once the child is born the woman may resent the child and not treat it in a loving way. Even among many who don’t agree with abortion, they would allow abortion in cases of rape and incest.

The anti-abortionists argue that a woman is not better off by getting rid of the baby. Psychological issues can surface because of rape, but these issues are compounded if a pregnancy is aborted. Many women suffer from feelings of guilt and self-loathing long after they abort their baby. Another thing to remember about the child is it is not just the rapist’s genes in that child, but the victim’s genes also. Does it make sense to kill someone that is so much a part of you?

Arguments can be made on both sides of this debate, but as Christian’s we need to go to God’s word when we need to make difficult decisions. Let us look at some scriptures that can help us determine God’s will in this matter.

The first scripture is Job 31:15, “Did not He who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same one form us both within our mothers?” This scripture tells us God makes us in the womb. This gives me the impression God has high regard for the unborn child.

Isaiah 44:2 says, “This is what the Lord says, who made you, who formed you in your mother’s body, who will help you: ‘People of Jacob, my servants, don’t be afraid. Israel, I chose you.’” It appears the writer seems to be saying the same thing we read in Job. Here again we read God made us and formed us in the womb. Each of us was very much a human being while in the womb of our mother’s.

Now notice Isaiah 49:1, “... Before I was born, the Lord called me to serve Him, The Lord named me while I was still in my mother’s body.” This scripture tells us that before someone was born, the Lord called him or her. God appears to be intimately involved with the unborn child. This scripture

stands in direct opposition to those in the pro-choice movement who believe the unborn child is less than human.

Finally, notice what Jeremiah 1:5 says, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

God’s word teaches us that God is very concerned with the unborn baby. One could easily argue from these scriptures that life does begin at conception. We also know as Christians God has a great potential awaiting all humans who accept the gospel message. Rather than focus on the negative aspect of a terrible crime like rape we should focus on the great potential every human life has. Every individual has the potential to become a member of God’s very family.

Rape is a terrible crime of violence and control, but destroying an unborn child only increases the violence and pain of the sin of rape and is sin itself (Thou shalt not kill.)

Mothers should keep their babies or allow them to be adopted. God is the ultimate creator of life. We are only a part of that process. **■**

# The 3 Essential Keys to Success in Marriage

By Loren M. Chamberlain

*How beautiful is the marriage of two Christians, two who are one in hope, one in desire, one in the way of life they follow, one in the religion they practice . . . Nothing divides them, either in flesh or spirit. They pray together, they worship together, they fast together; instructing one another, encouraging one another, strengthening one another. Side by side they visit God's Church and*

*from one another; they never shun each other's company; they never bring sorrow to each other's hearts. They visit the sick and assist the needy. Psalms and hymns they sing to one another, striving to see which of them will chant more beautifully the praises of their Lord. Hearing and seeing this, Christ rejoices. To such as these He gives His peace.*

*So wrote Tertullian, the second-century church father.*

**H**ow fortunate and blessed you are if you share and enjoy such a healthy relationship in your marriage. Certainly, it is far beyond the price of a treasure chest full of rubies. Alas, it is sad to say very few experience this level of existence in marriage in today's world.

Satan's attack on marriage and the family is unprecedented in history. Strong marriages produce strong families, and the family unit is the backbone of the Church, and essentially of the whole nation and world. Destroy the institution of marriage that was created in the beginning by God and you morally bankrupt the world.

We already see more young people leaving home sooner and not entering into traditional marriages, but into contemporary alternatives. The illegitimacy of options such as multiple marriages, contract marriages, open marriages, trial marriages, and cohabitation establishes the urgent need for strengthening the good marriages we do have in the Church today. We can best do this by emphasizing the roles of husbands and wives in the marriage relationship given by Jesus Christ.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE?

God's Church believes and strongly teaches that marriage is of divine origin and is a sacred institution in itself. Marriage and the family picture the family relationship of God. God reveals Himself as a family composed of two persons, Father and Son, known as the Godhead, which is now in the process of reproducing itself through mankind by the addition of sons and daughters. In like manner, mankind physically demonstrates this God-plane relationship through marriage. Man can, like God, build a family and add to it while experiencing the joys and happiness that family life involves. Paul refers to this analogy between marriage and the family and God's purpose and plan of reproducing Himself through Christ and the Church as "a great mystery" (Ephesians 5:32) because it reveals the very purpose for which God created mankind.

True happiness and personal fulfillment for both sexes can result from a proper understanding and application of God's instructions concerning the roles of men and women. All people, regardless of race, nationality, social status or sex, have the same ultimate goal and are spiritually equal before God.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). God's purpose of reproducing Himself in mankind clearly applies to both male and female because all will be "sons and daughters" of God. "And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Corinthians. 6:18).

For the purpose of this writing we will assume that a total commitment to "that way" (Acts 24:14,22) of Jesus Christ has been made. Without a complete commitment to Jesus Christ, attempting to apply His value system to marriages not founded upon the scriptures would be an exercise in futility. While there are some fine marriages outside the church, they are missing much without a total commitment to Christ.

For those who know Christ and are known of Him, particularly those within the family structure, there is a way to experience the unity and harmony God so much wants for the family. Within the diversity of individuals in the family, it is possible for each member to contribute to and enjoy the unity of the whole. The major responsibility for the welfare of the family falls upon first the husband and then the wife. While most marriages in the church should be quite sound, a further understanding of the essential keys to the "way of Christ" as applied in marriage, will further enhance the harmony of the Godly Family.

## KEY 1: CORRECT ROLE RELATIONSHIPS

The first essential key is that of *correct role relationships*. The marriages in today's world are in constant turmoil because of the constantly changing roles of husband and wife. If anything, this should teach us that to have stable families we must have a correct understanding and modeling of Biblical roles.

God in the beginning ordained specific roles for marriage partners that, if performed with love and concern, will upbuild and strengthen marriage. Therefore, we must get back to the absolute truth found only in God's word, the Bible, if we are to know and understand God's way for the marriage institution.

Let's return to the beginning and examine some of the basic scriptures describing family roles and functions.



We first learn from Genesis 2:18-25 that the husband is to be the head of the family and the wife is to be his helper. This is not to say that the male is superior to the female, but is simply explaining the role and function of each in the family unit. In Genesis 1:26-28 both the male and female were made in the image of God. This is proof that both the man and woman are equal as persons before the Lord. One is not superior to the other.

However, in Genesis 2:18-25 we are told that the man was created before the woman, and because of this fact, and the fact that he names her, designating her as the “woman” (2:23) he has positional authority in the creation order.

God specifically refers to the woman’s role position in marriage as “a helper suitable for him.” The Hebrew term for helper is used of God Himself in Psalm 54:4. Therefore, it cannot be understood in any way as being of lesser value. In Genesis 2, the word suitable has the meaning of “one corresponding to another.” The woman was God’s gift to the man for the fulfillment of marriage. If the husband abuses or misuses this marvelous gift from God, he will ultimately have to answer to God for his actions, not to the gift.

It was by God’s design that husband and wife have different responsibilities and roles within marriage. The difference between responsibilities and roles must be understood.

Headship, is the role or “Job title” of the husband. Ephesians 5:23 states, “For the husband is the head of the wife.” This is the husband’s position, not his function. It tells what his role is, but not his daily responsibilities.

In Ephesians 5:25, the responsibilities of the headship are delineated. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her.” Therefore, the function of headship is sacrificial giving, and providing for the needs of his wife and family. It also involves the loving leadership of his family.

Concerning the wife, Ephesians 5:21-33 makes it clear that she is to be a woman set apart from all others so far as her husband is concerned.



She is to have a unique place in his life. Genesis 1-2 defines the Biblical role of the wife as that of “helper.” This too is a job title, not a role function. The role function of the wife is found in Ephesians 5:22, which states “Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.” The word “submit” means to respond, to uphold your husband and to honor him. It is another way of saying to love him. It means showing concern for him, responding to his needs and encouraging him to face life’s challenges and be a success.

You as a wife should want to do these things because your husband loves you, strengthens you, complements you, and gives you all he has to offer—his time, energy, thoughts, spiritual help and encouragement—his life. It is quite apparent that for the benefit and success of the marriage and the family, husband and wife must surrender themselves one hundred percent to one another and be totally committed to “the way” of Jesus Christ.

## KEY 2: LOVING ONE ANOTHER

The second essential key to success in marriage is *loving one another*. God is love (1 John 4:8) and it is Christ who gave Himself for the Church His bride to be. The Apostle Paul said, “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

We are in the engagement period with Christ, therefore if we want to be His bride we must learn to love as God loves. God loves selflessly, and so must husbands and wives love one another selflessly. God demonstrated His great love for us by giving His son for us. Therefore husbands and wives should copy God’s example and love one another selflessly, giving their lives to one another, which is their time and undivided attention.

“I know my wife loves me. She is always sacrificing her own time and needs to supply my needs before her own. She has set her mind to making me happy. I hope my love for her is just as obvious,” said one husband. A similar comment was made by his wife. “He demonstrates his love for me in so many ways it makes me want to put him first at all times. I know I am the most important thing in his life.”

When someone demonstrates love for you, it is easy to love them back. No one has more love for us than Jesus Christ. “We love Him because He first



# ➔ Marriage

loved us” (1 John 4:19).

The ability to love another human being with a lasting love comes from God’s Spirit. “And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us” (Romans 5:5). When we walk in fellowship with our Father, the great God, He gives us a love with which we can love even our enemies. How much more, then should we love our friends, and most important, our own wives or husbands and our children?

Our marriage with Christ will only be successful if we love him as He loves us. Husbands and wives must love one another paying careful attention to each other’s needs and doing their best to fulfill them. Love is not a mechanical act performed several times a week. Love is constant, outgoing concern, affection, sharing and empathy. Marriage partners must become one flesh and cleave to one another mentally, physically, emotionally, and psychologically. If marriage partners do this faithfully, they will experience a true and lasting real love.

Besides learning to love one another faithfully, husbands and wives will want to help each other prepare to be the bride of Christ. Revelation 19:8 describes Christ’s Bride as being clothed in righteousness. Christ gives us His righteousness through His Holy Spirit as we submit to Him and learn to live life as revealed in the Bible. Righteousness is simply doing what is right. It is keeping God’s commandments (Psalm 119:172).

A bride on her wedding day usually spends several hours preparing before the ceremony and a few final touches are made just before she is escorted down the aisle. Likewise, the Bride of Christ must be preparing herself to be beautiful spiritually, through righteousness. A husband and wife can perform an invaluable service for one another by lovingly helping each other prepare for their saviour Jesus Christ. If children are a part of the family this sets a marvelous example for them, and nothing assures the success of the whole family more than a Christ filled home.

Christ wants a bride “not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that [she] should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:27).

## KEY 3: BEST FRIENDS

The third essential key to a successful marriage is *friendship*. Ideally and Biblically husband and wife should be best friends. Many men and women with happy marriages count their mates as their best friends. Most believe that it was this best friends’ status that contributed to the success of their marriage.

Best friends usually find many common interests. It is these common interests that draw people together which is most important for a marriage. Best friends do everything together, sharing thoughts and activities.

Genesis 2:24 indicates a man and wife become “one flesh.” This refers to much more than physical unity alone. We must remember this also involves being one spiritually

and emotionally. Ephesians 5:21-33 commands husbands to love (agape) their wives. Agape is the Greek word for self-sacrificing love, and inclusive in this term is the idea of *devoted unconditional friendship*.

Husbands and wives, are you Best friends? When the going gets tough, do you go to your spouse, your best friend to look for understanding and encouragement. Are you comfortable with the love and companionship you find with your mate?

Are you continually working at building the “friendship” level within your marriage? Do you work, play and pray together? Do you guard each other’s character and reputation jealously when you are with others?

Jesus Christ has given us the opportunity to be His friend. “Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth. But I have called you *friends*, for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you” (John 15:15). If a married couple makes the effort, they can as Abraham did, enjoy the awesome privilege of becoming the friends of God. “And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. And he was called the Friend of God” (James 2:23).

Couples use the engagement period to get to know each other and to prepare for being married. Even though Christ has been working with us through the power of His Holy Spirit since the Father called, there are still things He wants to know about us.

Communication is vital. Listening is an important part of communication also. Christ will always listen. We can pray at anytime, and know our prayers are heard. We should talk often with God, with husband or wife, children, and friends, listening to what they have to say.

Christ needs to know certain things about His Bride to be. Will we be committed and faithful to Him? Will we respect Him, communicate with Him, and be merciful and forgiving? And will we under the new covenant share and express God’s own love with Him for eternity?

The power of God is on our side. That power will help husbands and wives grow in love and friendship. Preparing to be the Bride of Christ is a serious matter.

We should always remember that since Adam and Eve there have been no perfect marriages. Every marriage runs into difficulties from time to time. All marriages have problems, tensions, and conflicts. We see this frequently in the Scriptures as well as in our own lives. There always comes that time in a marriage when one or the other partner asks to be forgiven for some reason or other.

Surely the most forgiving being in existence is God. Jesus Christ gave his life for the sins of the world. We are instructed to follow Christ’s example of forgiveness. “Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against any other. Even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do” (Colossians 3:13).

God has given us many essential ingredients for a successful marriage. We have discussed only three. If we use these three diligently, with a converted heart, we will be able to build a successful marriage that will last throughout life. **i**

## If A Marriage is No Longer Fulfilling, Shouldn't We Be Free To End It?

By Margie Marang

**W**hy should you want to end your marriage if it is no longer fulfilling? Paul, the author of Corinthians says, "Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife. But to the rest I, not the Lord say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her let her not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace. For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?" (I Corinthians 7:10-16).

Think back to when you were dating each other. It might have been love at first sight. It could have taken several dates to realize this was the person you wanted to spend your life with. What attracted you to each other?

Think of the fun things you used to do. What did you talk about? Think of the special dinners you used to fix. The special places you use to visit. The fun times you had with your children. When did all of this stop?

You may have to be the one to start a conversation. Get back to communicating. Talk about the good times you had before and after the children came. The special times and trips you made. Get out old pictures. They will help bring back special memories.

One of you will have to be the one to start a dialog. Don't wait for your spouse to be the first to speak. Be patient, positive and cheerful. Make your spouse feel important. Give him or her a

compliment, but be sure to be sincere.

If your marriage isn't fulfilling, maybe it's your fault. You need to slow down and notice what your spouse needs. Share your problems with your mate. In your marriage vows didn't you say; "till death do us part?" Don't break up a marriage before you consider all these things. Give your marriage a chance. It takes awhile to get to really know your partner. You might say it takes a lifetime of "give and take"

"Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: it is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, because of sexual immortality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control" (I Corinthians 7:1-5).

King Solomon said, "Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vain life for that is your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 9:9).

If your spouse is abusive, violent and head strong, hasten to professional Christian counseling. You might have to end it. On the other hand it might bloom into something more beautiful.

In the dictionary the word "compromise" means to "promise together, make a mutual pledge, come in from the extremes and meet on common ground." I know it's hard to compromise because we all really want to have our own way. "Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called Sons [or children] of God" (Matthew 5:9). **i**

## Divorce in the United States

One out of every two marriages will end in divorce. Make sure you are marrying the right person and you are ready to get married. Many do not take marriage and the commitment seriously. In the long run it is easier and less hurtful to end the relationship before investing time and possibly children into it. Read on for more divorce statistics from [www. divorcePeers.com](http://www.divorcePeers.com).

- In 1998 2.2 million couples married and 1.1 million couples divorced.
- In 2000 58 million couples were married, yet separated.
- In 2000 there were over 21 million people who had been divorced.
- People between the ages of 25 to 39 make up 60% of all divorces.
- Over one million children are affected by divorce each year.
- Approximately 1/3 of divorced parents remain bitter and hostile several years after the divorce.
- In 1990 the average female age for re-marriage after divorce was 30.6 years; for males, 33.7 years of age.
- In 1990 the average female age for a second divorce was 37.3 years; for males, 40.4 years of age.
- More people are part of second marriages today than first marriages.

# Confessions of a Teenage Nerd

by Ruth Kerr

A high school reunion is exactly like you see in the movies. Cheesy Grade 12 music blasts over the sound system. People fiddle with nametags bearing their (please!) graduation photos. Women embrace each other and exclaim, "You look EXACTLY THE SAME!" Men are more restrained, shaking hands and poking each other's potbellies.

Welcome to your 20-year high school reunion, where former beauty queens are a little faded and folks who were once wallflowers hand out expensive business cards.

The high school reunion is not for the faint of heart, especially if you were a nerd as a teenager. You survey the room full of middle-aged people and recall, with a twinge of sadness, how things were way back when.

## THE BEST YEARS?

When I was young, my well-meaning father often reminded me that teenagers were free from the worst things in life – a mortgage, utility bills, children with crooked teeth. "These are the best years of your life," he warned.

To a girl in thick brown glasses and K-Mart pants, this was a grim prospect. Who wants to spend the best years of her life camouflaging homemade haircuts and watching *Fantasy Island* on Saturday nights?

In my high school, there were four groups of people: the "jocks" (sports-minded individuals); the "brains" (academic-minded individuals); the "heads" (narcotics-minded individuals); and the nerds (me). The pressure to belong to one of these cliques was enormous. The students in my school were not renowned for their views on individuality. I was different and I paid the price. My teenage years were a social wasteland—much to the delight of young neighborhood parents who needed a last-minute babysitter.

*There has to be more to life than this*, I told myself. The scorn and ridicule from classmates were, at times, almost overwhelming. I promised myself that after graduation I was never going to speak to those people as long as I lived.

## ADVICE FOR NERDS ONLY

It's tough being a nerd in high school. It's easy to let your classmates become your entire world. Your peers scrutinize everything you do, say, or wear and they are not shy about voicing their disapproval. You might start to think people will always behave this way toward you. Will it ever get better? *Is there life after high school?*

In short, the answer is Yes. Here's some advice from an aging nerd: Develop long-term vision. What they say is true—high school doesn't last forever, and some day it *will* all seem like a bad dream. You really *will* graduate. After that, a year soon goes by, then two, then ten, and you suddenly realize your high school experiences are funny stories people request at parties.

More importantly, ask God for help. As a teenager, I often felt God had more important things to do than help some nerd cope with a day of high school. But that's the great thing about God. He does have a million important things to do, and one of them is helping you get through "the best years of your life."

## RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL NERD

I could not face my former classmates after graduation. I could not pretend I was glad to know them. But when the high school reunion rolled around, I relented. It was too tempting *not* to attend. Who can pass up the opportunity to see what your former tormentors look like now?

There were two great surprises. (1) All the people who thought they were so cutting-edge in high school now drive mini-vans. (2) Every person I met embraced me and said I looked EXACTLY THE SAME. (Thanks.) People actually waited in line to talk to me! You would have thought I was some rich old aunt handing out early inheritances.

Take it from someone who's been there. It may not seem like it now, but before you know it you'll be attending your own high school reunion. It's then you'll realize that high school cannot forecast real life. Sometimes, the best years of your life start *after* the "best years of your life." i



## Cover Artwork

by Madalisto Siyabu & Eliasi Kapito

Drawn with crayons, the inspiration for the cover came from Matthew 19:5, Genesis 2:24 and Song of Solomon 8:6-7. Madalisto and Eliasi are from Ntcheu, Malawi, Central Africa.

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# *Finding Time* A Key To Exercising

By George James

*“Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:52).*



It was the night of the International dinner and the International students, clothed in a colorful array of costumes, were serving a delicious assortment of foods. Seated at my table, while we anxiously anticipated tasting the smorgasbord of delicacies around us, were some really terrific people. However, one of these fine comrades was telling me he had a problem finding time to exercise.

How does one incorporate exercise in the midst of life's busy schedule? Of course this is not just a dilemma with my dinner companion but with many others as well.

“I just don't have the time,” is the often-quoted phrase of the masses. On the other hand, we do make time for things that are truly important to us, and exercise isn't one of those things for the majority of people.

But, allow me to share something with all those who truly would like to exercise and really believe they just don't have the time.

First, my dinner companion was uncertain on how to even begin a quality exercise regimen. We often do not know where to begin or which exercises will give us the best results in the shortest amount of time.

Therefore, many have the belief they should plug away with long laborious efforts that include five exercises per body part. This is most assuredly not the case. In fact, workouts that are very long often can cause over training, injury and many to quit.

“time” - we do not need a tremendous amount of it to have a successful exercise program, but we do need to exercise, and it should be challenging for any optimal results to be obtained.

Also, begin at your own pace and not the local bodybuilder's pace. It should be easy, at first, if one is unconditioned.

Now, my dinner companion was primarily focused on lifting weights, so I will focus on that.

How often do we need to lift weights? Six times a week, five or four? Try two for maintenance. That's right, just two lifting sessions a week will allow one to maintain overall strength.

If one is a beginner, the results will probably come at a faster pace. Of course, for elite athletes and weightlifters, this most likely will not be enough, but for those with the tightest of schedules who are just looking to find a way to integrate strength training into a busy life, this could work rather nicely.

To obtain the best results, with a program such as this, there are a few things to consider. For instance, the American College of Sports Medicine recommends utilizing at least eight different exercises that cover all muscle areas of the body. It is also important to focus on major muscles of the body.

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balance is maintained, while training areas such as the legs and back. Using a repetition range of 8-12 also works very well for nearly everyone. A program such as this could be performed on a Monday and a Thursday and last no longer than one hour for each session.

If one chooses to get a little more ambitious, three days does appear to yield better overall results than just two days, but be consistent regardless of choosing two or three weight training days.

The program described above is very suitable with machine-type apparatuses. Nautilus and Cybex are two popular names in this industry. These machines can be used in circuit fashion, with one exercise right after the other. Many YMCAs also use a training approach with a circuit system for their members. Once instructed correctly, using the machines is simple.

Jesus is our role model. His life exemplified balance and harmony in all the key areas of living, which are physical, mental, social and spiritual. “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:52). Time is often hard to find, but taking some time for exercise can be rewarding for our spiritual and physical health. **i**