

Dating and Preparation for Marriage

(This document includes questions that were asked by students and is not yet completed)

I. LAYING FOUNDATIONS FOR A GODLY MARRIAGE

- A. This seminar has three purposes: First, to encourage a fruitful discussion around the **biblical view** of dating and marriage. Second, to expose naïve thinking in some, who think that they do not need **clearly defined boundaries** for dating, because they assume that they can manage their desires well without boundaries. Third, to **expose idealism or false expectations** for marriage, so that people do not marry with false expectations and then grow disillusioned with their marriage.
- B. Four common issues that cause great pressure on a marriage are *wrong communication patterns*, *financial problems*, *idealism* (having the wrong expectations about marriage), and *pornography*.
- C. A strong foundation for godly marriage involves being equally yoked. Each one sets their heart to seek first Jesus and His kingdom, to verbally encourage each other to press into their relationship with Jesus wholeheartedly, and to obey God's will in their life and relationships.
- ³³***But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness... (Mt 6:33)***
- D. Do you have the same vision and values spiritually? Does he or she search the Scripture to find out how to be more committed to Jesus *or* to find ways to validate being less committed? Living consecrated to the Lord is a significant part of preparing for your future spouse.
- E. The importance of sexual purity in God's grace: Paul called believers to abstain from all sexual impurity by learning how to possess their vessel or body in sanctification (purity) and honor.
- ³***This is the will of God, your sanctification [purity] that you abstain from sexual immorality ⁴that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel [body] in sanctification and honor, ⁵not in passion of lust... ⁷God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. ⁸Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit. (1 Thes. 4:3-8)***
1. There is much deception even in the body of Christ today related to immorality. The Bible calls believers *to resist all sexual involvement outside of the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman*. Fornication is sex outside of the covenant of marriage.
- ⁹***Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites... ¹⁰will inherit the kingdom of God... (1 Cor. 6:9-10)***
2. Paul called young people to flee from lust and promised that in doing so they will be equipped and prepared for the ministry assignment that God ordained for them.
- ²¹***...if anyone cleanses himself...he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. ²²Flee also youthful lusts... (2 Tim. 2:20-22)***
- F. The best preparation for dating and marriage is to work on *yourself*. Work through your own brokenness with the help of wise counsel, e.g., our Pastoral Support program. Grow in your true identity and gain tools to help you continue to live authentically by owning your sin, asking for and extending forgiveness, bringing your thought life captive, etc.

- G. How can a woman live with a submissive attitude to her husband without being taken advantage of? I have never met a godly wife who is against submitting to her husband if he is submitted to God. If he is not submitted to God with his time, money and sexuality, then it will be difficult.

II. DATING, ENGAGEMENT, AND MARRIAGE: DIFFERENT PURPOSES

- A. We will briefly address three stages of the relationship that leads to marriage—*dating*, *engagement*, and *marriage*. Each has a different purpose and, therefore, different activities.
- B. *Deep love is built on respect*. Dating is a time to search out the answers to some questions to discover if the first “seeds” of romance will ultimately blossom into respect in the years to come.
- C. In this seminar, we are seeking to define what dating is and what it is not from a biblical perspective and to identify how it differs from a secular perspective. What are the kingdom boundaries and values?
- D. **Dating**: The purpose of dating is to discover if the other person is someone you would want to marry. I define dating as a relationship that is committed, exclusive, and public.
1. The purpose is to get acquainted with one another’s life vision, values, goals, personality, gifts, and weaknesses to determine if you want the relationship to progress to engagement.
 2. Dating is more than having fun with someone attractive, then moving on to another.
 3. *I recommend not kissing during the dating stage*, but waiting at least until you are engaged. The biblical standard is to get to know each other without touching (cuddling, etc.). It is easy to confuse the *pleasure of physical touch* with *real love*. Immorality brings confusion and distortion to the process of discovering more about your potential spouse.
¹It is good for a man not to touch a woman. (1 Cor. 7:1)
 4. **To put it simply**, do not kiss before getting a ring, and do not take your clothing off until after the wedding. I know more than ten couples whose first kiss was at their wedding.
 5. It is common for a brother who engages in pre-marital sexual activity with a sister to assume that he will marry her. But often it does not turn out that way. This means that the sister he touched sexually was someone else’s future wife.
²...exhort...older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity. (1 Tim. 5:2)
 6. You can only date one person at a time
 7. I refer to “pre-dating socializing”—going out for coffee, etc.—which has no commitment (absolutely no touching or intimate conversation). One purpose is to determine if you want to officially start dating someone. It is okay to meet a few times with someone without knowing if you want a long-term relationship that will result in marriage.
- E. **Engagement**: One purpose of engagement is to establish the relational and lifestyle patterns that will be foundational to one’s marriage relationship.
1. These involves how you will communicate, spend time and money, solve conflicts, and how you view sexuality, children, raising children, planning the future, seeking God, doing ministry, and relating to the local church, etc.
 2. It is best to involve one’s parents since the marriage involves long-term commitments.

- F. **Marriage:** One purpose of marriage is to develop a strong partnership in doing God’s will together as a couple and family. This involves enjoying His blessings, enduring hardships, and obeying Him in small things and routines of every-day life.
- G. The foundation of godly relationships is each individual genuinely setting their heart to seek Jesus first. Great problems arise when people are not authentic in a dating relationship
- H. I encourage all who are interested in dating to clearly define and write out their commitments for their **standards of behavior, boundaries of relating, and use of time** (how they will spend their time together). Some see a false distinction between prayer as their “*God time*” and dating as their “*personal time.*” Thus, they want to invest all their “personal time” in ways that do not enhance their spiritual lives together. They end up creating a false dichotomy in their life.

III. COMMITMENTS FOR DATING AND ENGAGEMENT

- A. When two people officially start dating (in an exclusive way), I suggest that *they compare and agree on their dating commitments*. I urge them to write it out and sign it, then share it with a trusted leader to whom they give permission to ask them if they are keeping their commitments.
- B. I recommend that a written dating commitment include *activities to pursue* and *activities to avoid* in order to have a godly relationship.
 - 1. *Commitments to activities to pursue*—to encourage one another’s spiritual vision instead of seeking to talk them out of it (e.g., not allowing for introductory sexual contact), to be actively involved in ministry and a local church, to go to prayer meetings together, and to read or study the Word together, etc.
 - 2. *Commitments to activities to avoid*— not to kiss (before publically engaged), not to be in compromising situations, not to drink alcohol together, not to watch movies that stir up desires that cannot be righteously fulfilled, not to be alone together in a home, etc.
 - 3. I urge ladies to ask the guy whom they are considering committing to date if they have looked at porn at all in the last three months. If so, ask them how much/how often. Ask him regularly if he has looked at it since you have been dating
 - 4. Talk in safe places. Spend time talking privately on the phone or in public places, such as the park or in the kitchen while others are in the living room.
 - 5. People cannot make these simple commitments if they are involved sexually.
- C. Couples who walk out their dating commitments for a long period are far more likely to marry someone truly committed to mutual values. Sooner or later, those not truly committed to godly standards will insist on some sexual involvement and will not want to spend some of their free time seeking first Jesus and His kingdom, nor will they regularly verbalize encouragement to the one they are dating to press into their relationship with Jesus in a wholehearted way.
³³*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness... (Mt 6:33)*
- D. Great problems are caused by people not being authentic in a dating relationship by presenting a face that is different than who they really are. The person they are dating falls in love with someone who is not really that person in their secret life.

- E. We urge our ladies to *stand courageously and boldly for boundaries* and not to assume that all the guys here are godly in their relationships. If a young man pushes against godly boundaries, it is a good clue that he is not a man you will be able to respect spiritually in the long-term. We want a safe environment for younger girls by encouraging them to be discerning and giving them permission to be courageous in keeping healthy boundaries even when guys want to cross them.

IV. WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A SPOUSE

- A. Some guys wrongly have a checklist of a “perfect” girl with a focus on her physical features. Being attracted to physical appearance has its place, but it is not best to make this the primary issue in determining whom to marry.
- B. The most important issue is to be in unity in commitment to Jesus, life vision, and values including ideas about family, finance, sexuality, child rearing, etc. If there is unity in these important subjects, then most of the other obstacles can be worked out over time.
- C. In what ways must people be equally yoked? What about dating an unbeliever to win them?
¹⁴Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. (2 Cor. 6:14)
- D. The most important question is not, “Will I be attracted to this man or woman for the rest of my life?” Attractions can change very quickly. The question is, “Will I respect him or her for the rest of my life?” Are they interesting in ways that go beyond physical attraction? Is his or her heart set on the right things, and do they consistently follow through on their convictions over time?
- E. Do they truly see marriage is a covenant before God that lasts for life—for better or worse?
- F. Watch how they act when under pressure, when mistreated, put down, disappointed, or when they fail. Do they respond to Jesus in a right way, or are they focused on payback with bitterness, self-pity, and complaining, or seek to escape with alcohol, drugs, food, or excessive entertainment?
- G. Are they good listeners? Do they rush or interrupt you? Do they multitask when you talk to them? What kind of entertainment do they want, and how much?
- H. Are they lazy, or are they self-starters? Are they complainers, or are they mostly grateful? Do they have a sense of entitlement to be treated better, or are they preoccupied with helping others?
- I. Do they have a plan for their spiritual growth, or are they casual about this, thinking that it will just take care of itself?
- J. Ladies, watch how he treats his mother, other ladies (especially in authority over him), and people in public service (i.e., the servers in a restaurant who do not serve him in the way that he wants). Does he treat them with kindness, dignity, and respect? This will give you some insight into how he views people and how he will treat you in the future.
- K. Many guys grow up with absent fathers. If that is true about the young man whom you are dating, will he eagerly agree to pursuing getting training on how to be a good husband and father? The same with a young woman in terms of being a good wife and mother.
- L. Is he or she sincerely pursuing the Lord in the way that you are? For example, does the guy want to pray with you? Does he initiate it? If not, then you will have to initiate it after you are married.
- M. Does he or she care for your heart or are they focused on correcting you and trying to fix you?

- N. How does he or she define success in life?
- O. How do they dress? Clothing reveals the heart (1 Timothy 2 speaks about modesty). Vain clothing reveals a vain heart. Someone's appearance reveals some things about their character.
- P. Who are their friends? Are they pursuing God with diligence? One's friends will reveal a lot about what kind of spiritual life they value.
- Q. How do they spend money? Do they save or give?
- R. Do they serve others or mostly only serve if it opens doors for them?
- S. Are they defensive, or do they easily acknowledge their errors or failures?

V. COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT DATING AND/OR WHO TO MARRY

Note: Some of these have answers or recommendations. Others are answers that you need to figure out for yourself.

- A. Some believe that the Lord has one person picked for them and that He will lead them to that person, while others believe that God allows a godly person to choose their mate. See the article: *How to Marry the Right Person for the Right Reasons* by David Sliker (davidsliker.com).
- B. Is there is only one person that you can love? Does God require you to find that person?
- C. How do you know this is the one to marry? Answer this: Do you have the same vision, values and ideas about domestic issues (family, finances, children, etc.) and do you talk to each other about these topics well?
- D. Will God give a prophetic dream to you or to others to confirm whom or when you are to marry? There can be confusion created by prophecies about whom to marry or when to have children. It is common for people to share their opinions or frustrations under the guise of a prophetic word.
- E. Do not say, "God told me to marry you." They may hear that you would not seek to marry them without being "forced" into it by God or that they may hear you say that they have no real choice in marrying you because you are suggesting that to resist marrying you is to disobey God.
- F. Do not use "God told me" to start a relationship or to break up—own what you want to do.
- G. Some guys hide behind "the prophetic" because they are afraid to fail, be rejected or be hurt in pursuing a relationship with a lady.
- H. It is common for one person to have a "sense of knowing" before the other in a relationship that results in marriage. It is common for the couple to operate at two different speeds. The fast one must wait on the slower one (without pressuring them). This is a pre-marriage "test run" of how to make decisions together because after marriage the same two personalities will be making the decisions together.
- I. Do couples need to have the same ministry calling?
- J. Do we need parental permission before dating? Should a guy ask her father before dating? The age and circumstance of the couple, their family history, and spiritual commitment affect this. There is an added blessing for honoring parents and receiving their blessing in life decisions.

- K. I urge young adults to involve their parents and seek to receive their blessing on engagement. The Lord releases an added blessing on those who honor their parents and receive their blessing.
- L. What questions do couples over 30 commonly ask?
 1. Is this relationship worth giving up my independence?
 2. I've been independent so long. Will I be able to adjust well to whatever changes this other person will request of me?
 3. I really don't want to be single all my life. Do I really love and respect this person, or am I just wanting to get married out of fear that I will never find anyone else?
- M. How do I know if it's real love and won't go away? If you continue to grow in respect for one another, then you will grow in your love for the rest of your life.
- N. What makes people fear dating or marriage? There are many reasons, including the fear of rejection, fear of divorce, fear of "maybe" finding someone better later on, fear of boredom in the marriage, fear of being hurt if the relationship ends, and of being criticized for breaking up.
- O. How are emotions different ten or twenty years into a marriage? Talk to couples who have been married successfully for ten years or more. Ask them to answer this question. Ask them how they maintain their relationship.
- P. How long are you willing to date someone if that person remains uncertain about engagement and marriage in your relationship?
- Q. What is the role of single woman in making a relationship happen? Can they pursue a guy or should they always wait for him to pursue her? The traditional view is that a man pursues a lady and then she responds to him (this is a cultural view, not a biblical one). A guy should not be invalidated as a pursuer because he did not initiate the relationship. However, there can be much subtle pursuing in the name of responding. Remember—who ever asks for the date pays :).
 1. Does she only send signals, or should she be straightforward telling him she likes him?
 2. Or do they just trust the Lord to "tell the guy" to make it happen? When is it too much?
- R. How does someone breakup well?
- S. What if two people have radically different plans, should they date hoping to work it out? You should not pursue a relationship with the hope of changing someone's values, goals, or behavior.
- T. What if the guy is not as "spiritual" as the lady? Again, you should not pursue a relationship with the hope of changing someone's values, goals, or behavior. You need to seek the Lord as well as see how the young man responds to your encouragement and spiritual level. If he despises where you are at, will you be able to grow in respect for him?
- U. What level of involvement should parents have in your dating relationships? Remember that parents care the most and know you the best, so I would listen carefully to them. What if my parents are more interested in gaining family prestige from my future spouse? The question remains, will you grow in respect for this person throughout your life or not?
- V. Is online dating okay? It can turn out good if done slowly, wisely, and openly (i.e. with a few trusted friends aware that you are doing it).

- W. Do long distance relationships work? What advice do you have for this?
- X. When is someone too old or too young for you?
- Y. How do you find healing & restoration after going too far sexually in a dating relationship?
Can two people establish a godly relationship when one is broken and the other is more whole?
- Z. Can two people date for long time and then decide not to get married?
- AA. When do I tell them I'm not a virgin? Meaning in what stage of the relationship is that a good idea/needed?

VI. WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO DESIRE TO BE SINGLE FOR THE LORD?

- A. What about being single? The Bible honors the commitment to be single in order to serve God's purpose with greater focus as seen in the life of Jesus, John the Baptist, John, Paul, Elijah, etc.
¹⁰"...it is better not to marry."¹¹ But He [Jesus] said to them, "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given.¹² There are eunuchs...who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it." (Mt. 19:10-12)
⁷I wish that all men were even as I myself [single]...⁸I say to the unmarried...it is good for them if they remain even as I am...²⁵I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord...has made trustworthy...²⁸But even if you do marry, you have not sinned...Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you...³²He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord.³³He who is married cares about the things of the world—how he may please his wife. (1 Cor. 7:7-33)

VII. COMMON SENSE ADVICE

- A. How long should a couple date before they get married? Only move forward after you have had sufficient time to see if you are truly equally yoked and if the one you are dating follows through in keeping their commitments to the Lord, to you and to other people and if they are teachable or defensive.
- B. Do not marry anyone hoping to change them. Only marry if you embrace their values now.
- C. The best preparation for dating and marriage is to work on yourself: working through your brokenness with the help of wise counsel; growing in your true identity and gaining tools that help you to continue to live authentically by owning your sin, asking for and extending forgiveness, and bringing your thought life captive, etc. You obviously want to bring wholeness as much as possible into the relationship.
- D. Does a couple need to be out of debt to get married? While a marriage begins on a much better financial footing when there is no debt (or small debt), the most important issue is for both of you to be committed to the same financial management values and for both of you to be fully aware of each other's prior financial commitments and debts.
- E. Take much time to seek to understand each other's family story, experience and culture, etc.

- F. How many times should you ask someone for a date? Some suggest three—first time they turn you down is because maybe they want you intrigued by their refusal. The second time might be because they want to see if you are determined. The third request is the final one; after that you should assume that you are annoying them if you keep asking them out.
- G. Do be overly sensitive by reading too much into a relationship thinking they are more than friends when they are not and vice versa.

VIII. FALSE EXPECTATIONS AND IDEALISM

- A. Some have too high an ideal for marriage that is unattainable, setting a relationship up for failure. Some have a false ideal of marriage as being purely romance and pleasurable without embracing God’s design for marriage which includes knowing Him in a deeper way, walking in godliness, being partners in life, making sacrifices and changes in one’s self, and raising godly children, etc.
- B. Some make a list of expectations of what they want in their mate that are unrealistic. Usually it is formed by media, where people are inundated by images of happiness captured in short sound bytes.
 - 1. Many believe that they are missing out on something better, due to social media. They think they’re going to be left out as they see what everyone is always doing and posting.
 - 2. Many of those seemingly “happy” people feel rejected and depressed later that very day, but they do not show it on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.
- C. *Expectations about romance*: The decision of someone marries is the most important decision they can make after salvation. It plays the largest role in their daily life. Many lose sight of this in the whirlwind of romance. One of the greatest dangers in dating is in being shortsighted.
 - 1. The message that fills our culture from the media calls us to live in the moment and to be “swept off of our feet” with romance by experiencing love at first sight on the day we meet our true soul mate. There is a great problem in trivializing the idea of love itself.
 - 2. We take our eyes off of Jesus as the source and definition of love. The challenge is to enjoy the journey of growing in love while keeping the big picture before us.
 - 3. The danger of seeking ideals as seen in the media in the area of romance is the temptation to cast aside restraint to simply “live for the moment.” It can be very costly and painful to make life decisions driven by our emotions. How two people make each other feel in a short period can set a relationship on the wrong path.
 - 4. The challenge of romance is to enjoy it as a gift from the Lord without elevating it above the Lord. We want Jesus to govern our values and emotions and to help us to maintain a godly perspective. People were created first for God and second for other people. Thus only God can fully satisfy our heart, while other people can bless and enrich our lives. Since we are flawed and weak, our satisfaction in this age is incomplete. No person can *fully satisfy* another person’s heart.
 - 5. We possess joy yet with a groan. Our joy can be full in the sense of reaching the fullness of what God ordained for this life, yet our heart can have this joy with pockets of emptiness that makes us groan. This makes it impossible to be satisfied outside of God and so drives us to God. It is idealism to seek to find total fulfillment in marriage.

6. This idealism causes much disillusionment that is harmful. A biblical perspective sees blessing in marriage, yet recognizes the groan in us for only that which God satisfies in part in this age and in fullness in the age to come.

D. *Expectations about being fulfilled:* Many are searching desperately for happiness.

1. Instead of seeing their spouse as an opportunity to be grow in holiness and wholeness, they are look to them as a source of their emotional fulfillment.

2. When they discover their spouse cannot completely fulfill them, then they look for someone else who might make them happier.

3. It is false expectation for ladies to believe that marriage will solve all their challenges related to loneliness and for guys to think it will solve all their challenges related to their sex drive.

E. *Expectations about money:* Do not get married without some financial stability.

1. Establish a plan for financial soundness. Without this, many often end up with great pressures in their marriage. If you can't make ends meet financially, then do not get married yet. Take an extra year to get your finances in order.

2. Money problems do not take care of themselves by merely trusting God.

3. It is important to define lifestyle expectations—with what will each of you be content? It is important to be in agreement about what kind of lifestyle you are expecting in terms of the way you spend time and money and pursuing nice things.

4. What about budget, tithing, giving, investing, and saving?

5. What if the wife makes more money than her husband?

F. *Expectations about ministry together:* How important is it to have the same ministry calling?

1. How should similarities and differences in one's ministry calling effect their relationship?

2. Many do not have the same ministry calling, but if they are unified in their life vision, values and ideas about family issues, then it can work.

G. *Expectations about time together:* Some are unprepared for the shift from a focus on romance in dating to serving in marriage.

H. *Expectations about his spiritual leadership:* His spiritual leadership as it is in the dating relationship will give insight into how he will probably lead in the future. It usually does not change much through the early years of marriage. Do you have some respect for his spiritual leadership now?

IX. PORNOGRAPHY AND OTHER ADDICTIONS

A. Should you date someone who has not been free from pornography for at least one year? How much pain and heart ache are you willing to bear after the novelty of the relationship is over? A guy regularly looking at porn cannot give spiritual leadership to a relationship. Porn is a significant obstacle to having a godly relationship.

- B. Addictions will always increase if they are not addressed and healed. (To “not act out” is referred to as *being sober* and to “act out” is referred to as *being drunk*). A dating relationship often gives incentive for those struggling to act sober. Often this incentive stops after marriage and in many cases the addiction starts to grow again.
 - 1. Counselors commonly consider one year of being sober (with zero acting out) as the benchmark for addicts to claim that they have found lasting freedom. Some wrongly think that if they only “act out” once a month that they are no longer addicts.
 - 2. Many who are working out addictive behavior patterns get married anyway hoping that marriage will cause the addiction to leave. They regret it because the behavior gets worse.
- C. *Common male addictions include:* internet porn, masturbation, gambling, gaming (video games), alcohol, drugs (legal and illegal), social media (constant use) and tattooing (not able to stop), sports or body building, etc.
- D. *Common female addictions include:* internet porn, masturbation, bingeing and purging (over eating and throwing up), anorexia (not eating), cutting (slices on bodies), alcohol, drugs (legal and illegal), and social media (constant use), Netflix (bingeing on movies for 10 hours a day), and living in a romantic fantasy that their knight in shining armor is coming to rescue them, etc.
- E. Some believe that that they can successfully compartmentalize part of their life in sin and another part of their life for God, thus they never admit and deal with their addictions.

X. LEARNING COMMUNICATION SKILLS-- PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELING AND MORE

- A. One of the main tensions in marriage is in growing in our communication skills individually and together as a couple. The main predictor of success in a marriage is in effective communication especially in disagreement or disappointment. Communication is a skill that can be taught (or learned). Most people grew up in a home without good communication being modeled consistently.
- B. Someone who is kind, fun, and sincerely seeks the Lord with diligence, does not automatically have relationship skills that are wise, unhealthy, and holy.
- C. ***I recommend pre-marriage counseling*** because it identifies communication principles and helps the couple to think about future situations and answer questions not obvious to them during their engagement. Take initiative to get pre-marriage counseling and to read books on relationships and how to communicate more effectively. Take this seriously
- D. Also get proper, ongoing counseling after marriage. Do not view counseling as a negative thing, thinking that if you needed counseling, you have “issues.” We all need help!

XI. BOOKS ON DATING AND MARRIAGE

- A. ***Sacred Marriage*** by Gary Thomas
- B. ***Catching Foxes*** by John Henderson- Christ-centered marriage. Gospel-rich. Covers almost every conceivable topic related.
- C. ***Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship*** by Joshua Harris
- D. ***The Meaning of Marriage*** by Timothy Keller (best book about marriage I have read)
- E. ***Ten Great Dates before I say “I do”*** by David and Claudia Arp

- F. *Love And Respect* by Dr. Emerson & Sarah Eggerichs
- G. *Love And War* by John & Stasi Eldredge
- H. *God & Marriage* by Geoffrey Bromily (Lutheran, but doctrinal dynamite)
- I. *The Mystery of Marriage* by Mike Mason
- J. *The Christ-Centered Marriage* by Neil T. Anderson, a workbook for pre-marital preparation
- K. *Back-porch Wisdom*— about how to do the little things in marriage with excellence.
Letters to Philip and *Letters to Karen* books by Charlie Shedd
- L. *Dating Delilah* by Judah Smith (a free book at
<http://www.lighthousegb.com/resources/datingdelilah.pdf>)
- M. *Date or Soul Mate* by Neil Clark Warren at <http://www.growthtrac.com/dr-neil-clark-warren-interview>
- N. *I, Isaac, Take Thee Rebekah* by Ravi Zacharias