

Torrey 1997 Standards from God's Word

By Chris and Alisa Grace

Chris:

Before I go any further, I'll introduce my wife again, this is Alisa. We have been married ten years, four months and 16 days, and I just remembered that today and wrote it out and calculated it out. In those 10 years, we've learned quite a bit about each other. We've learned and continue to apply principles that we learned when we were dating. And it's some of those things that we're going to try and talk to you about today. We are convinced of a couple of key points. Probably the biggest point we're convinced on is that the quality of the dating relationships and the quality of the relationships that you have now with members of the opposite sex is directly related to the quality of your future marriage.

What you do today and the quality in which you hold or keep your dating relationships now is directly related to the quality of your marriage, of your future marriage. We know and we're excited, as we said, to talk about relationships. In fact, we're going to talk today. They ask this question to people, aside from God, what makes your life meaningful and what is necessary for your happiness? The most frequent answer given satisfying close relationships with friends, family and partner. It's the number one answer that you always get when people ask about or talk about what's necessary for happiness. Aside from God, it's other people. And we've been at this business for a long time, haven't we? Understanding relationships, being in relationships, talking about marriage and love. It's nothing new. What's different and what's new is that our culture

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today has changed. We have some messed up marriages out there and some messed up ideas about what dating should be like and about what marriage is should be like.

I there was a La Mirada newspaper. It's The La Mirada Tribune, and it comes out, I think, once a week maybe. And in this paper it was under we rarely read it. I mean, they just throw it up in our driveway and it's free. And so but one day I happened to pick it up and there was this story about the criminal element, the things that were happening in La Mirada for crying and talking about terrible marriages, or at least one that has the potential being kind of terrible in this crime. It was describing what happened. And a guy apparently was at the Albertson's right here on the corner of La Mirada and Imperial and or Valley View on Imperial. That's what it is, Valley View and Imperial. And he was in there shopping and three guys walk up to him and say, so you're the one that has to do the shopping in your family. And the what the victim, as he was called, says, yeah, I'm the one that shops. And they proceeded to tease him about the fact that he has to go shopping and that that must mean that his wife is the boss. And this apparently bothered him quite a bit. And so he was saying, well, no, she's not the boss, I'm the boss. And they were saying, well, why are you doing the shopping? Where's your wife while she's at home? You see there, she's the boss and apparently I bugged him, so much so. That they decided the three guys decided to bet him five hundred dollars, that he wasn't the boss, that his wife was the boss.

No, if I was in the store shopping, which I did quite a bit and came up to me and said, well, I bet you five hundred bucks that you're not the boss your wife is, I think I would just probably laugh and just think whatever. But for some reason, this individual took it as a personal affront. And so

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he had five hundred dollars on him. And why he did that, I don't know how anybody cares that much money.

But he he decided to go ahead. And the three men said, I'll tell you what, why don't you give five hundred dollars to this third guy here? He'll keep I'll give him five hundred dollars and then we'll go ask your wife, who's the boss. So the guy did this. This is a true story. He gave five hundred dollars to the other guy and they all went to the house because he was going to prove that he was the boss.

So he went in to find his wife. She wouldn't come out. By the time he comes back out, the men are gone and he loses five hundred dollars. That's that's a sad story, isn't it? It's a sad story. And a lot of ways when you think about it, that he was so concerned about who the boss was, he was concerned enough so that he would get five hundred dollars to go prove to these people who are strangers, because there's something strange that's happened in our society about marriage and about love and about relationships.

There's something weird that's happening. We all know strange marriages and strange kind of dating examples. We're going to talk some about those today. And people, by the way, when we talk about love, all kinds of people have. Talked about love, I mean, poets, theologians, philosophers, in fact, here's Robert Browning, as you all have probably read some of his stuff on Love. He says this This is a wonderful poem. He says, Breath and bloom, shade and shine. Wonder wealth and how far above them truth that's brighter than Jim. Trust that's pure than pure pearl brightness, truth, purest trust in the universe. All more for me in the kiss of one girl, we've

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had theologians. He kissed me with the kisses of his mouth. This is a song of Solomon. Your love is better than wine on my bed night after night I saw him. Oh, my soul loves your lips are like a scarlet thread and your mouth is lovely.

Well, you get the point. We'll go on. [audience laughs] But I mean, he just. You're kind of serious. He also here's another one. Every time I look at you, I go blind. That's Hootie and the Blowfish. Right. So we have all of these individuals, all of them talking about love, whether they're philosophers, theologians. And we have a lot of different perspectives. So what we say today is going to also come what we hope to from a biblical perspective. We're going to talk about love for God or the God that we are supposed to have for each other. Beloved, let us love one another. Full of love is from God and everyone who loves us borne of God and knows God. We'll talk about God's love for us. I have loved you with an everlasting love. Jeremiah 31:3. Therefore, I have drawn you with loving kindness.

And then finally, we're going to talk probably tomorrow on God's compassion for people who have struggled in the area of dating and who have messed up in the area of violating standards. The Lord's loving kindness indeed never cease. First, compassions, never fail. They are new every morning. Great as thy faithfulness. Proverbs 6. When we talk about relationships, we have some exciting things, but we hope to share with you. But I thought, what do we do first? Just share a little bit about our story. Ultimately, we'll talk some about a passion for God's word and how our story kind of flowed from what we believe God's word is saying about these things.

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We'll talk some tomorrow about finding God's will. If you're struggling with knowing if a person is right for you and if you should be in a relationship. And then also we'll talk some about compassion and extending God's grace. But right now, we're going to talk some about our story. And so I'm going to turn it over to my wife with a little bit of trepidation, because now it's her chance and but here she is. So thank you. It is just really great to be here today.

Alisa: We were so excited to get to come and do this because we love Biola and we love the Biola students since we have been here for nine years. Gosh, we came when I was twenty two years old and Chris was about twenty six. And so we spent a good portion of our our grown up adult life time here at Biola and just feel like a real family for us. So we are really honored to be able to be here and be speaking with you guys today.

One of the things that Chris and I kind of like to do when we get together and make new friends with some other couples, as we always like to hear stories about how they met, how did they meet each other. We're always asking people, tell us your love story, told us how you built, how you dated, how you got married, that kind of thing. Because these stories are all you need. They're all different and nobody has the same one. And sometimes they're really, really funny. In fact, I think there's been three couples so far here at Biola that have met in Chris's intro psych class and gotten married. So if you're looking for that special someone and it's time to register for spring up a like, maybe you can help me out a little bit there. But it's kind of funny because when people hear our story, they're always kind of curious because, you know, Chris teaches at Biola and I graduated from Biola just a few years ago.

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And they always come when they hear that, they always kind of look at us with raised eyebrows and they're asking, oh, really? You graduated from Biola. Were you in Chris's class? Was he dating you as a student? And in fact, when we met, we were going to the same college. We didn't attend the same college. We weren't living in the same city. And in fact, we weren't even living in the same state at all. So, in fact, it was that way up until the day that we got married and the day that we mapped our whole relationship was based on one three hour period and one day that we met in Colorado where he lives. So I'll go back a little bit in time and kind of start from the beginning and tell you a little bit about us and how that came about.

Oh, about 11 years ago, I had a friend. Her name was Christie Childers, and I was a junior at Texas Tech University at that time. And she needed somebody to run trip with her for the weekend up to Colorado because she had been invited to a wedding. So she called me, asked me if I wanted to go to the mountains for the weekend. And I thought, wow, I love Colorado. That sounds great. I'd love to do it. So we hopped in the car. We drove 13 hours after class going up to the wedding for the weekend. And I didn't know the bride and groom from Adam and Eve. I was crashing the wedding, essentially didn't know anybody there. They knew Christy and they knew that I was Alisa Christie's friend. They didn't even know my last name. So we're at the wedding. And afterwards they had a very nice sit down dinner. And it was the best. It actually was a buffet dinner, everyone sitting down about three hundred people. But before the wedding party got there, they had us all mingling with with our little snacks and beverages, waiting for the the wedding party to come in.

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And as we're sitting there mingling, visiting with people that we have no idea who they are, I noticed that across the room is this very tall, dark, handsome guy stand over there that that keeps looking at me and I keep looking at him. And every time I look at him and we meet eyes, he smiles and he looks down on the ground. So I'm thinking, you know, this guy's about 19. I was 21 at the time. He's a younger guy, but gosh, he's good looking. He's kind of cute. Anyway, they ended up the bride's the bride's mom had this great idea that she was going to sit all of the single people at the same table so we could mingle, which for my friend Christie may have not been such a bad situation, given that there was a table of eight and Christy and I were sitting seated at a table of six Christian guys.

So we were enjoying our time being the center of attention for a little while, talk on this side a little bit, talk on that side a little bit, and really it turned out that the guy that I was kind of making eye contact off and on before was seated at the table as well. But instead of by me, he was across the table by my friend Christie. Oh, shoot. So anyway, and I carried on and because he was kind of seated far away from me, we really didn't get to visit that much. But maybe for about five minutes, I ended up knowing that he went to Colorado State, that he was getting his master's in psychology and that he was involved in the navigator's ministry. That's all I knew. And after the dinner was over, they had a dance and he was nowhere to be found because I didn't know it. But he had to be at work at 11 o'clock that night as a security guard for Waterfit. So he's nowhere in sight. He's gone and they all shoot. Well, you know, I didn't really know him anyway and I don't even know his name, really. So we went on for the rest of the weekend. I ended up going back to Texas and about two weeks later, it was the end of the spring semester. My friend Christie was going back to Japan because her parents were stationed there. They were in the Air

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Force and she was going back to Japan for the summer and wanted to check her dorm room one more time, make sure she didn't leave anything. She said, let me check my mailbox one more time before we go to the airport. My so she goes in, opens it, and there's a letter in there. She pulls it out. And mind you, this is my hometown that I'd grown up in. And there's an envelope to her. Well, it's in her mailbox, but it's addressed to Alisa in care of Cristie Childers. I'm thinking, who would write me? This is my hometown. You're from Japan. How would they you know who would write me here? So I hurried and opened it up. And it was a beautiful little card. And it said, Dear Alisa, I really enjoyed meeting you at the at the wedding a couple of weeks ago. It was had a great time. I hope you enjoyed it. In case you don't know which one I am, I'm the one studying psychology. And then it closed with a verse who signed it..Chris. And he closed it with a verse that said, Let your light shine before men in such a way that they will see your good works and give glory to the father. And I'm thinking, Oh, man, Christie, which one was which one was it? She says, Please, he's the one with the big brown eyes that sat right next to me. And I said, Oh, man, a godly man. And he's good looking. I'm writing him back. I am writing him back. So I did. I took it. He didn't even know my last name. So I underlined my last name and my address so he could write me back. Oh, and there was a P.S., a very important P.S. On that card that said, P.S., I enjoyed your smile. So I was pretty hit by this time. I said, definitely need to write this, this young man back.

Chris:

So it wasn't even my idea to put that P.S in there. It was my roommates [audience laughs]

Alisa:

You need to explain that.

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Chris:

That way I meant what I meant was I meant this. I was talking to my roommate and I was saying, you know, this girl. She's just amazing. I mean, she was sweet. She was a believer. We talked about things. She had the most beautiful eyes I've ever seen and more and more so we'll just tell her that I said she's sweet, amazing and has the most beautiful eyes I have every seen. And I said, I can't say that. He said, well, just say you have beautiful eyes. I guess sound so corny. And he was like, just say you enjoyed her smile. That's what I'll do. So that's how that came about.

Alisa: And it worked. It worked because I writing back very quickly, very quickly, ended up we wrote back and forth throughout the summer and pretty regularly, probably one letter each week, back and forth. And at the end of the summer, I invited him to meet me in New Mexico with my college group for my church, because we're going to be spending a week at a camp for college students. And in fact, my mom, who worked with college students at our church, was going to be there, too. And I thought, oh, this will be a great time for her to get to meet him. And, you know, just get her opinion, see what she thinks to say. Sure enough, he came and met me for the week and we had a ball. Keep in mind, we'd only seen each other for that time at the wedding, one other time for a couple of hours. And that was it for the whole summer. And so in August, we met out at the camp for a week and just enjoyed each other so much. Boy, we knocked ourselves out because you're getting up at six in the morning, go into your seminars all day doing recreation in the afternoon. You go to your service that night. And then we would always stay up until like two o'clock in the morning. Just talking would be out in front of the cabin and everybody else would be sucked out of sleep. And we'd just be talking and talking and talking, getting to know each other. And it was wonderful. We have so much fun. And every night, two

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o'clock when I'm going and getting my make off, I'm going to bed. My mom's bunk was right beside mine. So every night she would ask me, did he hold your hand? [audience laughs] I said, no, mom, he doesn't. And she was like, well, why not? I don't know. I don't know. [audience laughs] She said, okay, okay. so then two nights later, I'm coming in at two o'clock in the morning, Did he held you hand yet? And I said, no, mom. Well, why not? I don't know. And she said, well, why don't you hold his hand? No, I can't do that. I would be humiliated. I can't do that. So the whole week, we're just having so much fun together and I can't figure out why the guy's not even holding my hand because we're really enjoying each other. And finally, the last night we were there, we went walking and we began to talk about, well, where do we go from here? Because you're in Texas and I'm in Colorado and it doesn't look like that's going to change, but we're really enjoying each other. So we said, you know, if we were in the same town, we would like to be dating each other and just each other. So maybe we should just pray about this and see if God will open up the doors. If he wants us to pursue this, then he'll open up the doors for us to be together. He'll keep the interest there. If not, then maybe that door will be closed and we'll just see what will happen. And so we decide, yeah, that's a that's a good plan. We'll go with that. We continue to walk around the campground prolonging saying good night because we knew in the morning we were going to have to say goodbye. And so we're talking and talking. And he makes some witty comment and I laugh and kind of just slide my hand in his. So I was determined by the end of that night, we were going to be holding hands and we did. And he held my back. So I didn't feel too bad about doing that at that point. So the next morning we said goodbye, determined to try and see each other as often as we could. He had he had only been to Texas one time and that was to see me for one day during the summer. He had never been to Texas before that time.

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So he the next few months he got to know Texas very well and the highways in between, because in September he came down for a weekend and I was living at home with my family, with my mom and dad. And so he would drive down from Colorado and get in late Friday night and would stay up talking and talking, go and do our thing on Saturday, hanging out, having a good time. Sunday he'd go to church, and met everybody at my church, all my friends and even a couple of times on Monday. If I had class, he would come with me and sit in class with me all this whole time, you know, other than holding my hand, nothing, nothing ever happened. And by the end of the weekend, after he's leaving, Mom asked me. So did he kiss you? Well, no. She said, he didn't? And I said, no, but that's OK. It's not a big deal. So my sister calls. Well, do you have a good weekend? I hear Chris is there. Yeah, we have so much fun. He's just wonderful. He's just Mr. Wonderful. And she said, well, well, did he kiss you? And, you know, it's like, why not? It's about oh no, but that's OK. And then probably within the next hour, my best friend, Gina Witkoff. Well, you have a good time. Yeah, he's wonderful. So did a kiss you. And I was like no. I don't know why, but it's all OK. Don't worry about it. Don't worry about it. So by this time it probably was another month until we got to see each other again and again. '

He came down for the week in October, brought his mom with him this time because her best friend happened to live in Lubbock, Texas, of all places. So I got to meet his mom that weekend. Wonderful, beautiful lady. She just is fantastic. And that weekend we again, we just had a great time. The more time we spent with each other, the more we got to know each other, the more we liked each other. You know how when you date sometimes if you're just getting to know somebody, the more you get to know them, the less the more you find out, the less you like them.

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It's kinda like going, yeah, well, it's not for me that this time it wasn't like that at all. There was nothing that I was finding that I wasn't liking. And I found that I wanted to be a better person when I was with him. He just encouraged me in that way and spurred me onto that, you know, the iron sharpening iron. And it was a great situation. And by the end of the weekend, we were getting ready to he was getting ready to go home the next day and he still hadn't kissed me. OK, we'd spent a whole week together during the summer, the whole weekend in October, I mean, September. And then here it was October. We spent the whole weekend together and I knew the questions were going to come after he left. I just knew they were.

And that night I could tell that he kind of had something on his mind. And I said, well, what's up? And he said, well, probably wondering why haven't kissed you yet so well. Yeah, me and my mom and my sister and my best friend. And there was the neighbor down the street she visited a couple of days ago. Everybody wanted to know. So could you please inform us all? Would be happy to know. So but actually, the next thing that came out of his mouth, he said, I just really want it to be that the next time I kiss a girl, I want to be able to say, I love you. Will you marry me? Yeah, that's kind of that's that's how I felt, too, was like, wow, that is so cool. I was really surprised because that's not what I expected, but it was really, really cool. And I really I really respected what he was saying. And to be honest, it was a great relief. It was a great relief to me, I knew that then that that was not something we're going to have to worry about the physical aspect of our relationship. It wasn't something we were going to have to fight and struggle with. And so it allowed me to feel very free, very secure in our relationship. I knew why he was coming there. I knew why he was driving 13 hours at a time on the way down and 13 hours back

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and in seventy two hours because it was just to be with me and see me because he cared about me. And that's what that really communicated to me.

And so after that weekend, I saw him the next month, in November, he flew me up to Colorado for a weekend retreat at Glan area up in Colorado Springs. There was a navigator weekend and he picked me up from the airport and we were on our way to the conference when he said, I have something I really need to talk with you about. Oh, OK. Well, what's going on? And says, well, have you ever heard of the pink elephant? Well, no, not really. Well, the pink elephant is when to a pink elephant walks into the room. Both of you see it standing there, but neither one of you says anything about it. And I think for us, that pink elephant is the M word marriage. You couldn't say it, but he said the M word. So, you know, he's approaching this very, you know, very mature, very thoughtful. I knew that he just really considered I knew that he must be taking this very seriously because he if you know Chris at all, he doesn't just talk. He doesn't just comment. He ponders things and thinks them through to the nth degree before he says anything. And so I knew the serious with seriousness with which he was saying this to me. So I was trying to be equally serious and and on one side and be very calm, very mature, saying, well, yes, you know, I would agree. I would think that that our relationship has the potential to lead to marriage. And then on this side of the car, I'm going. So, yes, I think that's very true. I was such a dork anyway, so we spent the weekend there at the Navigator retreat talking with some of Chris's mentor, some mature Christians and talking about our what we were thinking about.

And they asked us some questions to consider as we're thinking about our relationship leading to marriage. And then in December, we got to see each other one more time before Christmas. And

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we had been out with some friends that night at a Christmas event at Texas Tech with my best friend and her boyfriend. And we came home that night having a romantic handholding session in front of the fireplace. And you just can't imagine how intense and wonderful and exciting handholding can be when that's all, because it just really is great. [audience laughs]

And so I could tell that something was coming into his mind because all of a sudden he got kind of serious and just his whole demeanor changed. His face got real serious. And I said, Chris, I can tell something on your mind, but what's going on is there's something you need to know that we need to talk about. And he said, yeah, there's something I need to talk with you about. And he got real serious. And just by the look on his face, I thought, you know, I do not want to hear this because he's about to break up with me and break my heart.

I just wanted to I could just feel tears almost welling up in my eyes. And I just wanted to say, just forget it. I don't even want to talk about it. Just leave. Just leave before you ever says I know what you're going to say, just leave. And I don't want to hear it because you're going to break my heart. And the very next words out of his mouth were, I love you. And I just don't know if this is the time that that I'm able to say, will you marry me? Because I don't know if we're ready to do that. But I just wanted to tell you that I love you. Totally shell shocked. That was not what I was expecting him to say. But in fact, I was so shell shocked that we ended up going to bed [audience laughs] that he went in his room for the for the sake of our listening audience and my children that are in the back. He went to his room and I was. To my room and but seriously, I was so surprised by this whole thing that I didn't even say it back. So he's in his dreamland there in bed going, wow, what's going on? I've just, like, spilled my guts. And she didn't say anything back.

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So the next day, I properly took care of that. And and we spent the next the next day. The next evening we were in the car and we had been visiting and we were able to draw a little calendar out and talk about when is the date that we might get married. Well, keep in mind, we haven't done anything official enough to this point. We we just considered ourselves very special friends, and that's how we introduced each other to other people. This is my special friend, Chris, who's visiting from Colorado. And this is the Alisa, my special friend from Texas. You know, he hugs and hold my hand and that's all it happens. We're just good, good, good friends.

And so in January, he flew me out to Colorado once again. And that was supposed to leave from work that day. And my parents took me to the airport and I didn't know it, but that like a day or two before that, Chris had called my dad while I was at work and asked his permission to ask to marry me. And gosh, that was you know, that's why I love this guy is so cool and it's just so thoughtful, so respectful. So we went to the airport and my plane was delayed and it was delayed another half hour and another forty five minutes. But this time I knew that Chris would already have left Fort Collins because it's a 40 minute drive to the airport. And sure enough, my flight was canceled because something was wrong with the plane. I don't know what, but I booked the very first flight, 7:00 a.m. the next morning to head to Colorado. And he had driven all the way down from Fort Collins down to Denver to the airport. He got their three piece suit in his pocket, long still red roses. He had booked a table at a beautiful restaurant up on the cliffs in Denver, up in the mountains of the Overlook the city special table. And he gets there. My plane is not there. And it goes up to the counter and he says, Where's my passenger? And the ladies looked and she said, well, what's the deal? Is it a child that you're waiting for? He said, no, I'm supposed to get

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engaged today. Oh, no, that's too bad, I'm sorry the flights canceled, it won't come in until tomorrow, so. Well, there you go.

He drives, he gets the ring, gets the flower, drives back to Colorado. And I flew in the next morning and we drove from northern Colorado down to southern Colorado down to Pueblo so that I could meet his family. And on the way down there, we pulled over at this roadside roadside stop. That was a what do you call it, a scenic point, scenic overlook. And it was the peaks. There's about eight 14000 foot peaks in the middle of January, snow capped mountains with a big snow covered valley right in front of it. And we stopped to just enjoy and take in God's beauty. And while we're sitting there, he says, Alisa I need to ask you something again. And I love you and I want you to be my wife. Will you marry me? And he pulled out the ring, opened the box that I just said, yes, yes, yes, yes. And we hugged and hugged and I tried on the ring. By the way, this is his Honda. What is it?

Chris:

900

Alisa:

Honda 900 motorcycle.

Chris:

It was it was orange and black and it had little.

Alisa:

He is still kind of in mourning over it. But anyway, so slipped the ring on my finger. We bought that to get into the car and that's where we got to have our very first kiss. And my sister had been so worried about it the whole time, she said, please, what are you going to do if he doesn't know

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how to kiss? Oh, I'll have fun teaching him, I guess.. I don't know. It'll be great. And and it was definitely worth the wait. So we were just having a ball and got to go back and meet his family. And six months later, we got married there in Texas, having seen each other a total of fifteen times between the day we got, the day we met and the day we got married, we saw each other fifteen times. So here we stand before you ten years later and happily married. And that's our story.

Chris: When we talk about this story, it always brings to question a very simple question, and that is why. And her her mom would ask this question, why has he holds you held your hand yet? Why hasn't kissed you yet? She would say, in a sense, she's implying, what's wrong with him? That's kind of an interesting thing. You know, isn't it different? It's both funny and and very telling. It is. Why isn't it just you meaning what's wrong with him? But isn't it weird in our society that this is weird. Isn't it strange that it's either you're either a homosexual or a heterosexual because abstinence isn't part of the equation. And if you don't kiss, if you don't do other things, it's just natural to say what's wrong? I find that very fascinating. In fact, what they would say, what if he doesn't kiss good? You heard that. Others say really? Some people say, oh, that's kind of neat. But they also say to that's kind of neat.

Why did you do that? Why would that happen? I think what's very interesting is when you ask yes, why indeed. I think what's really amazing and what's very important is asking why they ask why. You tell me why do you think they ask why? Why should it be amazing that we didn't kiss? Let me ask you that question. Why is it weird or why is that strange? Anybody that has a good voice that can yell, why would that be so different? It's considered normal. What's considered

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normal? Yeah, to kiss. I mean, just to kiss somebody. There's not really a problem that actually, you know, we're going to talk about today. It's all about kissing. Kissing really isn't a problem. But why else is this considered weird? It's because today's culture and today's society is very different, isn't it? What's today's norm? The idea today that we get from our culture is very different. And much what we get from our culture is from Seinfeld Friends and 90210.

Oh, that is a very, very different kind of culture. It's a very different approach to this whole idea of standards in marriage, in fact, very much related to these. To talk this morning, the walls literally of Jerusalem and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down. That is, the walls for hundreds and thousands of years. Used to be that men and women. Now it happened. I mean, I'm not denying the fact that people slept together before they were married, you know, a thousand years ago. But even up to one hundred years ago when you were dating someone, there were standards that people kept. They were a very strong distance between them as far as the physical relationship is concerned. And that's changed. The wall has been broken down and it's now nothing but invaded and permeated by the 90210. Oh, I've never seen it. Never seen it before, but I kind of read about it, so I know a little bit about it.

What is the 90210 way? Adult premarital sex. It's not only OK and talked about but it's glorified isn't it? Would you agree that it's just part of it. You of course you're going to have premarital sex, sex before marriage and especially if you're adult's virginity is equated with oddness, isn't it? There was a Seinfeld commercial lease of life for the probably the first time maybe there was on the first season, really enjoyed it, really laughed. And we still find at times we watch reruns. Everyone smells funny. We probably haven't watched in two years or so, and one of the reasons

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why we turned it off, including friends, was just because of things like this today, because in this episode there was apparently he was dating a virgin and it was an extremely odd thing. People would say the first thing they say is she's a virgin and they wouldn't want to talk about it. It was just like the most salient feature about her.

It might as well just been stamped on her forehead and people treated her weirdly. And I imagine that's how it is in almost all of these programs. We know the walls have now caved in their rubble. While you and I don't believe this, it's starting to permeate our culture. I'll tell you what. You watch these things and you start laughing at him and you watch him every week. You're going to change. I'll guarantee you that the schemas that you hold about what's important in dating while you believe in the Bible and the biblical standards, this starts to play on us because when the walls are tumbled down, things start coming in. And the effects of this are amazing. First of all, there's almost in our society today. There's almost a total acceptance of adult premarital sex, isn't there? This is a quote is in yesterday's or Saturday's paper. Alisa showed it to me. So I know this is summer. She left her name. Even this is scary. I don't see the harm in living together. You can learn more about the other person that way. There may be a part of it doesn't maybe sound right? I mean, in some ways, which is kind of sad, maybe there's maybe even get to know somebody better that way by sleeping together or becoming influenced. How about this one, Chris Wilcox in the same article? I think that living together is the only way you can really know how I know the person is going to be. What's sad is look at the ages of these guys. They're your age and this is what they believe. They just date this four days ago, five days ago.

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The 1950's, nine in ten women married without cohabitating. Nine in ten. In the 1990's, one in three. Our world is changing. It's not necessarily because of television, but it is because probably of some other effects that have taken place in our society. Television just seems to have magnified that effect, as has the sexual revolution, and it's now given us very different perspectives of what should be expected. And it's why when I decided I'm not going to kiss this person until the day we get engaged, why that is considered weird. And this other stuff, if people are sleeping here, we don't even care or question it. It is just that's just the way you do. Of course, you kiss, of course, your pet. Of course you have sex. How would you even get to know anybody? We live in a sick, fallen world. Private matter. People say it's not affecting anybody else. I'm an adult, you know, see what's interesting. You'll find all kinds of politicians talking about it's terrible to have premarital sex. That's wrong. You'll even have him who's still a homosexuality is wrong and even adultery is wrong. But you'll never find anyone making a comment about adults who decide to have premarital sex. It's almost as if we say let it be the results of all this. This is a this is a US News and World Report. This isn't Christianity today. This isn't a pastor who said this nor who studied this. This is a secular article. You know what the article states in this 1997 article? It's not working. Cohabitating couples are 33 percent more likely to get divorced. Virgin brides less likely to divorce.

Here's a quote. Here's the 90210 way from Jennifer Grossman. She's a thirty year old single author and she says there's this all you can eat sexual buffet. She's not a believer, by the way, is leaving a lot of men and women feeling very empty. I see a pattern among my girlfriends. When they sleep with men, they cry, sleeping with a man you've known for a week. I love this... Is such an almost it's almost what you want, but a chasm away from what you really need. Isn't that

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amazing? It's such an almost. Another Harvard sociologist said this like smoking dope in the 1960's. Maybe it isn't so good for you after all. And I'm sure he probably smoked his share. This is the 90210 way, folks. Casual, physical intimacy, virginity. That's the oddness. An empty self.

We're going to talk a little bit later on about an empty self, but probably over the last hundred years we've lost something. Our main motive and goal in life is to get what we can to be satisfied. It's a narcissistic give me what I desire and what I need and I need. And I don't care about the other person. And it comes out of if you want this empty soul, it also then is a kind of love that cheats and defrauds. And there's a false friendship, intimacy. Speaking about people thinking, if I'm. Is he weird? There was a friend's article or a situation that happened in the sitcom with Friends. And it was also written up in the US News and World Report a couple of years ago, was about Phoebe. She's one of the characters on there. And apparently she her pills were commiserating with her because her boyfriend wouldn't sleep with her and and she was trying to get him to sleep with her. And they would say, oh, gosh, sorry about that. He must be gay. Isn't that interesting? That's what we think. Because it's odd if you don't or you're odd or something's different, false friendship, intimacy is also something we're going to talk about the 90210 way.

So today's norm is out there. And it's very much why we believe in why all of us agree with this, that it's important for us to set standards. So why we set a standard one, all of us, and you included in here are convinced that it's God's plan. And I think you just maybe need to hear this again. And some of you might need to be reminded of it because we don't hear it enough. It is God's plan for us, for this is the will of God, your sanctification that you abstain from sexual, not

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form, but from sexual immorality, that each of you know how to possess his own body and sanctify sanctification and honor, not in lustful passions like everyone else does that no man transgress and defraud his brother.

If you're having a physical relationship right now, folks, you're transgressing and defrauding your brother or your sister. Transgression means you're going beyond the limits set by divine law and you're cheating and taking advantage of them. We're going to talk about a little bit about what we feel is a good standard. Again, the issue isn't kissing. It doesn't matter if you're kissing someone or we don't find that a problem. It's just that we didn't want to open a door that we couldn't close. So we're going to talk about kissing as a standard per say. We're going to give you what we for some definite guidelines. The reason why it's important because guess who's the avenger in all of this? It's the Lord who is the Avenger. If you ever thought of the Lord in that way as the Avenger in these things, you defraud and you mess up in a dating relationship and it's God that's going to be the Avenger that should scare you.

We are convinced not only that it's God's plan. Others have written extensively Josh McDowell. He has written so many good materials and books on this, especially on teenagers and premarital sex. We need to read some of this. It's important for young people to be concerned about not violating the conscience of the other person. Don't light the fires of sexual passion in another person outside of marriage that you cannot put out. Not only we're convinced it's God's plan, but we knew the effects of premature intimacy. Just look around. You could see them. We didn't want to open doors. I mentioned that we couldn't close. We had both been in experiences and situations before in which we had kissed others. We both understood there are times in which

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you open that physical door and you start that in a relationship. You're like, it's going to be very difficult to close. Do you agree only 50 percent of engagements lead to marriage?

Have you ever heard people who are engaged now? It's OK, but do you realize what the implications of that is with this? Fifty percent of them never even lead to marriage. And yet engagement is a time in which people not only begin physical intimacy or else they begin to let down their guard. Most people fall in love three to four times before marriage. People say, well, it's OK if you're in love. It's fine to have a relationship.

I care for this person. We are madly, deeply in love. This ought to scare you as well. Didn't want for us the physical to ruin our friendship. Least I had developed something that was unique, we felt, and that was a solid, deep, caring friendship. We liked each other. We hung out and we knew that if you started a physical relationship, it would retard the growth of a friendship. In fact, it physical. If you have a physical, intimate relationship while you're dating someone, you're going to find it's going to create what you think is really an intimate friendship. And it's most likely going to be a false intimacy because what happens when you remove the intimacy out of that relationship? What happens is you're probably left with nothing.

It's what fire does. If a fire gets out of a fireplace, it burns the inside of a room out and you might have a shell standing. But probably when you step back, there's going to be hurt and pain and guilt. And it's doubtful because intimacy is something that's so important and so necessary in a relationship. God created it that way. But when you have it before marriage, it makes you think you're closer than you are. It makes you think that we've got everything going together. We

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know he knows me thoroughly. She knows me everything about me. We're intimate. We know each other. And you know what? You don't you can't. It's not designed that way. And if so, I think you're fooling yourselves. And we know this. It hides the fact that they're probably really isn't a friendship. Some of this is kind of hard for some of you out there, but we're not going to pull any punches because this is what we feel.

The Bible says we're going to talk a little bit. If you've messed up how we feel like you can get back on track. We are not innocent. We both have been in relationships before and which there were standards that were set, some that were violated. But it can be done. It can be done. You can do this. We did it. It's not an odd thing. Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes and not be burned? Memorize this verse. What can a man walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched? This is related to the idea of adultery and intimacy before marriage. We cannot take fire into a bosom without getting burned standards. We knew we're honoring to God and to each other. It's also why. We decided to set a standard because we knew it was honoring he who has my commandments and keeps them here it is who loves me. I valued Alisa so much when I saw her and when we hung out that I just knew that there is no way I wanted anything to get in the way of our friendship and ultimately what I hoped would be something more. I didn't know if God was calling it to us, calling us together. I do know I you know, you hear about love at first sight. I laid eyes on her at the wedding, and my first thought was I hit my roommate who told me to write. P.S., I enjoyed your smile. I hit her. I said, who is that? And he says, I don't know. I've never seen her. And I said, I want to meet her. And I almost knew back then that it must be some Cal Baptist soccer players trying to find their way. They're getting beat so bad. [audience laughs]

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But I knew I had valued Alisa so much that really what I wanted was to hold her needs, was to hold her up and to say I'm responsible as she is for this relationship, but I'm going to look out for her. If God calls us together, then it's going to be because he's going to create a friendship. That's a very important thing. I felt like it honored her and lifted her up and protected her. Guys, it's time to rebuild the walls.

Keith Johnson talked about that this morning. Didn't he endure? And Nehemiah, as I say, Jeremiah, last time in Nehemiah when the Walls was his name I was talking about in Jerusalem and fall. Guys, gals, it's time to rebuild these walls. We've let the 90210 way, come in and seep into our literally into our schemas, into what we believe about relationships. And it now permeates and it's starting to set the standards. It's time for us to rebuild these walls. It's time for us to say forget this. The 90210 way isn't the way. Come let us rebuild the wall and we will no longer be in disgrace.

If we can do it, we can rebuild this. We can make it better. Just let the six million dollars you get it. You guys probably don't even know what that is, right. We can rebuild. We can make it even better. It's called the Six Million Dollar Man. But anyway, we can rebuild this wall. We can make it even better. You know what it is? You need to set your standards and your expectations high. We need to be convinced that this is important. Set your expectations up there.

People may mock look at what they did to Nehemiah when he talked about building the wall. Hopefully he'll talk some more about this. But the idea they would come up and say, you're going to rebuild this wall, a fox can jump on top of this wall and crumble those rocks. They're

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going to mock us. But you know what? It's what people want. There are reasons to wait. Well, Alisa was talking to a parent of an 18 or 17 year old high school student, and she was saying that that her daughter was in this group of eight other people and they were talking about dating and sex and other things. And she said she was a virgin. She was the only virgin of all of of all 8 of them there. But what's most amazing is all eight of them came up afterwards and said, I really wish I was where you are right now. I regret so much what all eight of them on their own came up and said, we regret what we've done. We wish we had done what you had done. Isn't that interesting? They may walk it, but they want it. And we have the reasons for them guys. You know what? That's the 90210 way. I think we ought to do the 90639 way. What do you think? The 90210 way, by the way, if you don't know what 90639 is, that's the area code. The zip code only for Biola. Do you know we're the only ones that have 90639? I think so. Anyway, let's make the 90639 way. When people start looking at how do you date? What should your standards be? They ought to say lets not look at 90210 way. Let's look to 90639. 90210, it's casual physical intimacy. 90639, What is it? We postpone. We're we're not anti- physical intimacy. We got two kids sitting right there. [audience laughs]. You decide if we're anti physical intimacy. She's going to say it has nothing to do with being anti. It has everything to do with folks. This isn't part of the conference. I may regret that I said this, but if you want to have a great marriage and a great sex life, you hold off. Amen.

For some of you that are married, this is the way let's make it to 90639. Wait, what's the 90210 way? Oh, wait, it's virginity is auditing. What's 90639 way. It's this that this is God's plan. This is motivated to 90210 way for getting immediate gratification. What I can get now just let me have it. It's individualistic, it's self-serving. It's a desire to meet your own needs. The 90630 way is the

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altruistic way to look out and say, I am going to value this person so highly, I am going to honor them so much that I'm going to put their needs and this relationship above any of my desires. The 90210 way is to cheat and literally defraud. I will get what I want when I want it. Protecting and uplifting is our way. False friendship, intimacy again.

If you want to go that route, if you want to foster friendship, intimacy, if you would have looked at our relationship back in October or November that year, you would have thought there are no two people who know each other any better than we do. We didn't need to even need to touch. You don't necessarily live in the same state. And we have that advantage. We live in different states. And that kind of helped out for us to keep our standard. And I know some of who struggle in this area, but we had a friendship intimacy that rivaled none. It increases marital problems. We already talked a little bit about that. If you want to talk about increasing marital bliss, the 90639 way is the way to do it.

This is the way what Jesus wouldn't do is the 90210 way, and this is the way that Jesus would do the 90639 way folks. We believe this. We know we want it. And it's our prayer for you. We're here to tell you today it can be done. We can rebuild this wall. We can look back and say this is the way to have a relationship. The zip code that the world should know, folks, is the 90639 way. The God of heaven of will give us success. We his servants, we'll start rebuilding whom have I in heaven. But then, besides the desire, nothing on earth, my heart of my flesh may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. What we said today, I hope, is that there's a way in which we can and should hold dating relationships and standards. We don't necessarily

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feel that kissing is wrong, but we will tell you this much, something that we believe this is kind of a freebie.

We do believe that anything beyond that, especially when you start getting and talking about the idea of petting and other things, is definitely wrong. You're starting a process that you can't stop and that shouldn't be stopped until you get into a marital relationship. That's a very important standard. We also feel it's biblical or ready to not only to listen to questions. Unfortunately, we're out of time so you can talk to us tomorrow. We're going to talk about at least is going to spend some time talking about how to know God's will if you're in a relationship and also if you set standards and you've broken them and you started that cycle and you're trying to get out of it, but you want to maintain purity, we're going to talk about how you can go about doing that.

Father, I pray that today we would understand and follow who you are. The people would see that there's a better way. We're convinced of that. And this is Jim today, that there is a different way when people see relationships, Father, and they think of it, our praise and the prayers that they think about the nine or six three nine way way of uplifting, a way of intimacy in a way of friendship that you designed from your father. Thank you for your presence in Christ's name. We pray, Amen.