



Relating and Dating without the drama

Applying God's plan to your relationships

(A five-session youth curriculum)

PRESENTED BY:

Genesis 2-24 Ministries
621 South Chestnut Street
Seymour, IN 47274
Phone 812-530-7292
www.genesis2-24.net

Summary

The purpose of this study is to help participants understand God's plan for their lives. We will discuss how and why they were created; how much God loves them and His plan for their lives. Based on the Bible we will walk through the relationships they have and might have in the future. At the end of this study student will understand a Biblical way to value relationships. The goal of the study is to help them make healthy choices with regard relationships.

In the beginning, God created them male and female. He placed them in the garden and established the perfect relationship for a man and a woman. His creation worked perfectly and there was no shame. Then Satan showed up and perverted God's Word and led mankind into sin. Along with that sin came shame, selfishness and all sorts of evil desires.

God provides answers and solutions to any and all of our relationship questions and problems. The Bible teaches us to know him first, to accept his salvation and to live in the glory of his righteousness. Our first and most important relationship is to Christ. Once this is firmly established in our lives all other relationships become better, more enjoyable. This is truly the path to happily ever after.

The teaching style will be to present a lesson and reinforce the lesson with a takeaway. At the beginning of lesson 2-4 there will be a sharing time to help them with the application of the previous lesson.

The study will be presented in 5 sessions. One session a week for five weeks for example.

Proposed Audience

This study is appropriate for youth and college aged students. It is intended for single individuals. The youth minister and leadership of the youth group should attend with their students. The study can be presented as a part of the youth group's regular sessions or as a special set or lessons during a camp or other off-site type meeting.

Each student will be expected to have a Bible, pen and paper as they may want to take notes. At the end of each session an assignment will be made. The student will be expected to complete the assignment and bring it to the next session.

This study could be used as curriculum for youth leaders and parents in separate sessions from the youth. This is important because the youth will ask different questions and contribute to the discussions in different ways than the adults that supervise them. The leaders and parents could however learn Biblical principles to be taught to students in their care in a separate set of sessions.

Although the lessons taught are good for married couples, this study is not meant as a study for married couples.

Each of the five sessions will be about 40-45 minutes so leadership should determine how to best prepare the group for that length.

Sessions Outline

The description below are not the entire lesson plan but are meant to provide a high-level view of what will be taught. Depending on time, audience and guidance from the youth leader, ideas may be added or removed and presented in a different order. Each session will end an assignment so that each session can start with a discussion.

Session One – Who are you?

It is important to know who you are before you start any relationships at all. There are a number of things that define who you are. You are a son or daughter of two people. You may have siblings or not; you have a favorite food and ones that gross you out. You live in a house or apartment; you might have your own bedroom or share a space with others. You might like to play outdoors or you might be one that like to be indoors all the time. These are all things that are your preferences but they do not necessarily define who you are.

God knows you better than your preferences and has built you a certain way. The second chapter of Genesis describes the creation of humankind and gives us some clear direction about why we desire a relationship with others.

God created us male and female. This was and remains his plan.

- God said it is not good for man to be alone. This is where our desire for fellowship comes from. This need for fellowship of this kind is not a need that God can fulfil. (Genesis 2:19)
- Woman was never meant to be alone. The desire and need for fellowship is strong and is a part of the creation. The woman was created at the end of the creation story and for a specific plan.
- The Relationship Hierarchy. God was not kidding when he wrote commandment number one. He is first and he is jealous about it. He designed us for fellowship. First with him then with another human of the opposite sex, then with all others. When you have these in line, you will be happy.
- You are wonderful and God loves you. He is mindful of you and is always present—Psalm 139.

Session two – Am I loved?

The short answer is yes. The longer answer is that you are loved by many more than you know. God loved us so much that he gave his son. He loves us so much that he will take even our worse situations and make them turn out good for us (Romans 8:28). I like to celebrate Gay's Birthday and an example of how much God loved me. He created a miracle in 1959 that I did not receive until 1979.

Remember: God in his perfect love for you did a miraculous thing in that he loves you more no matter what.

Depending on the level of the group we will cover some of these topics:

- Discussion of Psalm 139 from session 1
- What is Love? Philos, Eros, Agape, (Sorga)
- God loved you so much John 3:16 – Romans 5:8. We will read these scriptures and personalize them to everyone in the room.

Session three – The sin problem.

Sin is so often something we do not understand and do not like to talk about. We may become angry or hurt when we see others sin. Sin is really a pretty simple concept presented. Sin is simply doing that which is disobedience to God. The source of all sin is our adversary, the devil. In this session we will take a look at the tricks of Satan and how we might avoid them.

Genesis chapter 3 describes when sin enter into the world. Eve ignored the Word of God and instead was tricked into taking a suggestion from Satan. Satan cause self (selfishness) to enter into the world on that day and continues to use the same tricks today. There are three areas sins described here:

- Lust of the eyes (Eve saw that it was pleasing to the eye)
- Lust of the flesh (it was good for food)
- Pride of life – desire for power (and that it was good for making one wise)

Being “Saved” does not keep you from sinning. You need to be saved because your sins make it impossible to please God and to enter into his rest.

Here are some common traps that Satan sets for us:

- Movies, TV and games presented to us
- Dating and the pressure to be in a couple before you are ready for a life-long commitment
- Language
- Competition
- “white lies” and “Little Cheats”

Session four – There is true happiness in obedience.

My 4 year old grandson wanted to help me with the campfire. I told him that those pretty little red things were too hot and to never touch them. His curiosity got the better of him and when I turned my head for a moment, he grabbed a coal. He did not hold it long and there was not a great deal of damage done to his fingers, but fun time was over. He was hurt and spent time crying instead.

Have you ever read instruction about how to do something and decided you knew better? Sometimes our Christian walk is like that. We read something in the Bible and it just does not make sense to us. So we ignore it. This rarely leads to peace, love, joy and happiness (Galatians 5:22) which are the fruit of the spirit.

- The war inside of you comes from your evil desires James 4
 - o What makes you mad?
 - o What makes you hate?
- Do you hear how things like jealousy and breaking of trust are among the worst offenses?
- What is dating?
 - o Might be described as practicing being with multiple partners
 - o Might be described as practicing divorce with all the hurt that comes with it
- Marriage is a covenant relationship so be careful dating does not become an imitation marriage relationship

Session five – How can I love this out?

We have been talking about how having a relationship with God with cause you to have better relationships with the people around you. Remember God asks us to establish relationships in the following order:

- 1) Relationship with Him. When we are saved he becomes “Our Father who art in heaven”. He loves us unconditionally. This is the example of a covenant relationship.
- 2) Relationship in a marriage. It is God’s plan for us to enter into a covenant relationship with a person of the opposite sex. Has been His plan from the beginning.
- 3) We will have other relationships on Earth, but they need to be third. This includes Moms and Dads and Kids and grandparents – everyone else on the planet.

Great so how do I live that in today’s world? No one said it would be easy, just worth it. Here are some ideas:

- 1) Have a source of truth. (Internet? Karate Kid? TV? Celebrities? Are all bad examples of a source of truth). The Bible is the only source that is never wrong, always on time and backed by God himself. Caution: You cannot follow the truth if you do not know what it is. **READ YOUR BIBLE.**
- 2) Be in fellowship and be brave about where that fellowship is. Go to church, attend a youth fellowship, look for groups to hang with that believe what you do but be brave enough to leave any of these if they are not rooted in the truth of the Bible.
- 3) Encourage one another to do as God says. You do not know what your friends are facing, but you know God is bigger than. Help them see God as their strength.
- 4) Draw close to God and he will draw close to you. Make it your habit to pray daily, read daily. Jesus said my sheep know my voice. The best way to know his voice is to listen often.
- 5) Have boundaries in your life. I am never alone with a member of the opposite sex. If there is no opportunity to sin Satan cannot tempt me. If there are things going on at a party that would cause you to sin - leave – you can be polite but leave.
- 6) If someone is teaching something new – check that teaching against the Bible.

Relationship fundamentals to be taught:

- 1) God love you and wants you to be happy. His word is designed for that purpose.
- 2) There are three kinds of love (Philos, Eros, Agape).
- 3) The Bible is true cover to cover
- 4) Relationship Hierarchy
- 5) Dating is not in the hierarchy and so must be approached with caution
- 6) Covenant – there are no conditions in a covenant relationship. God will always love you; even when there is no relationship between you.
- 7) Sex – Adultery – fornication (***Only taught with the permission and direction of the Youth leader***)

These are 3 words that are often confused in our language. We use the word sex to talk about all three. Well let me change your thinking. Sex is a marriage gift from God and is sanctioned only within the marriage covenant. Sex outside of marriage is one of the other two. We encourage you as married couples to take a stand against the confusion perpetrated in the world today:

- A. An affair is a party with your friends; like a back yard Bar-B-Que. If someone tells you that they are having an affair – ask them to be clear. Are they asking you over to put a couple of Shrimps on the Barbie, or are they telling you they are committing adultery?
- B. Sex before marriage is fornication. Make sure that when you have the “Sex Talk” with your children it includes the real definition of sex and fornication and the ramification of each.
- C. Sex is a gift to married couples on their wedding day. In Genesis it is quite clear that God told them to have sex with one another AFTER the wedding.