

THE SAINT PAUL'S BAPTIST CHURCH
GROW | PRAY | SERVE



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Welcome!

Series: First Comes Love

Message: Growing Through the Stages of Marriage
Dr. Lance D. Watson, Senior Pastor

PRAYER: God of grace and mercy, we thank you for the relationships you have permitted us to share. We acknowledge today that we need wisdom to live, to grow, and to succeed. We thank you that you are our source and can supply all we need. Fill our cups and let them overflow that we might be a blessing to everyone with whom we have contact. We pray for couples, bless them as they move through the inevitable stages of marriage. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

ICEBREAKER: You can only have three, which one do you give up? Beef, chicken, turkey, or fish.

INTRODUCTION: The scriptures give us insight and instruction for all of life—including our relationships. In this proverb, we are reminded of the critical importance of wisdom and understanding in building our relationships and our homes. More than furniture and fixtures, successful, lasting marriages require faith and fortitude.

BIBLE STUDY: Read Proverbs 24:3 (Good News Bible)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. **What was your biggest takeaway from the message?** What's one thing you learned? What questions came to mind as you listened to the message today? What points did you find most insightful? How did the message challenge you?
2. Pastor Watson described the first stage of marriage as “the happy honeymoon.” When you think about honeymoons, what comes to mind?
3. Based on the Song of Solomon, chapter 2, Pastor Watson suggested that the first stage of marriage is marked by intensity, idealism, indulgence, infatuation, and ignorance. Which one of those stages have you ever experienced in a relationship? Share your experience.
4. Stage 2 was labeled “The Party’s Over” and was described as dull, disagreeable, defensive, disapproving, disappointing and depressing. Have you ever been in a relationship (not just marriage) where those characteristics were present? If so, how did you manage? Did you overcome or succumb?
5. The final stage “Miraculous Maturity” was based on the characteristics uncovered in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Read the scripture. Talk about what love does. Which one of those features come easy for you? Which ones are difficult?

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CHALLENGE: Take a moment to reflect on your relationships: are you operating with integrity? Can your words be trusted? Are you reliable? Have you made a commitment to the people in your life? Take time to pray about these things right now.

SERVE: Pray over Proverbs 24:3 this week. **Praise** God for the power to grow through the stages of a relationship with grace. **Listen:** when you are quiet before God, it is amazing how clear things become. **Respond.** Write it down, live it out, give Him praise!

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Take this time to share group announcements. Church wide and campus specific announcements can be found at www.myspbc.org. You can also “find, follow and like” us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/myspbc) and YouTube (www.youtube.com/myspbc). Subscribe to our 7:14 prayers at 855.518.2394. Download our Mobile App from your App Store (myspbc).

CELEBRATIONS: Take this time to share praise reports (e.g. answered prayers, birthdays, anniversaries, promotions).

PRAYER REQUESTS & PRAYER: Take this time to share prayer requests. Close with prayer.

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NOTICE: PLEASE BE PATIENT AS WE REOPEN OUR CAMPUSES IN THE SAFEST MANNER POSSIBLE. As a small group leader, we depend on you to show members that we care. Here's a list of resources to help you.

FOR PRAYER:

CALL: 804.463.2472
EMAIL: prayer@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST A HOSPITAL VISIT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (For Emergencies)
EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO FIND A SUPPORT GROUP:

CALL: 804.643.6177
EMAIL: Barnabas@myspbc.org.

TO CONTACT MY LIFE STAGE PASTOR:

CALL: 804.643.4000 and Press 1 for the Dial By Name Directory

EMAIL:

- Imagination (0-10): Vernita Williams: Vernita.Williams@myspbc.org
- SMB (11-19): Martina Jones-Smith: Martina.Jones-Smith@myspbc.org
- Dreamchasers (20-29): Juan Shackelford: juan.shackelford@myspbc.org
- Aspire (30-39): Lance Watson, Jr.: lance.watsonjr@myspbc.org
- Fusion (40-49): Michelle Townsend: michelle.townsend@myspbc.org
- Encore (50-59): Jamie Duncan: Jamie.Duncan@myspbc.org
- Prime Time (60-69): Maceo Freeman: maceo.freeman@myspbc.org
- Refiners (70+): Roscoe Jones: roscoe.jones@myspbc.org

FOR COUNSELING:

CALL: 804.643.6177
EMAIL: Barnabas@myspbc.org

TO REQUEST FUNERAL SUPPORT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (Pastor On Call)
EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:

CALL: 804.643.4000
EMAIL: emergencyassistance@myspbc.org.



Small Group Leader Guide

Would you like to START or JOIN a Small Group at Saint Paul's?

Most existing groups are open to new group members, and new groups begin on a regular basis. If you have friends in a small group, ask about joining their group. If you are new to Saint Paul's and are looking for a place to connect, please feel free to contact us and we will do our best to help you find the right group.

Leader Tips:

The GPS document is a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you must use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through while others will be over in a few seconds!

1. Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was taught on the weekend. Just ask questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our small groups. So, have fun with the people in your group.

Agenda for a Small Group Gathering

Gathering Time

Take 5-10 minutes to welcome everyone, catch up and if planned, share some food!

Discussion Time

Here's a suggested format:

1. **Ice Breaker** – Lighthearted icebreaker question (5-10 min.)
2. **Discussion** - Discussion time, Bible study, application challenge (30-40 min.)
3. **Prayer** – Prayer requests and praying for one another (10-20 min.)
4. **Planning** – Remind the group of how we serve together (e.g. usher, sing, greet, pray, etc.)