

Series: **Proud of Marriage**  
Today's Title: ***"Follow the Blueprint"***

June 9, 2024 – *Selected passages*

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**Objective:** To help people know the wisdom we find in Scripture regarding marriage and finding a spouse.

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Pastor Justin vote: 239 ballots cast = 69% participation / 232 'Yes' votes = 97.06% approval

Baby pics: Parents: Ben & Jessica Cajero – Jordan Ida Cajero – Born 6/1 @ 12:38 p.m.

### ***Opening prayer***

During the month of June – our culture / Western culture celebrates – and takes 'pride' in something the Bible says is "an abomination" (outrage / disgrace / eyesore) to the Lord (Proverbs 6:16-19).

Pride is also one of the 7 deadly sins, which Christianity has held since the early centuries of the Church (Pope Gregory formalized this list in the 6<sup>th</sup> century).

Jordan Peterson says, *"...you've reduced your identity to the most immature and hedonistic part of you..."*

(*"Jordan Peterson Rants About Pride Month"*, The Right Mind - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWDnLgYzDAY&t=28s>)

Our culture is outrageous in what it celebrates and honors.

Here is an example of how our culture takes the entire month of June – to celebrate – promote – to normalize what we know is a lifestyle and philosophy that God rejects.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GikfSszcBHE&ab\\_channel=Peacock](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GikfSszcBHE&ab_channel=Peacock)

Instead of looking to God – the Bible - science or biology to determine how we should live, we're being told to look at the animal world – and copy the behaviors we see in animals.

*But only certain behaviors of animals* – the ones that align with the dominant cultural view of our time.

(<https://listverse.com/2016/11/14/10-animal-behaviors-that-mimic-many-of-the-worst-behaviors-in-humans/>)

So, to give an alternative to what we'll live with this month – and the other 93\* days throughout the year which are designated to commemorate or celebrate all things LGBTQ+.

\* There are 123 days each year that are designated to commemorate or celebrate all things LGBTQ+.

(See: <https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2018/10/heres-complete-list-lgbtq-holidays-commemorations-just-time-spirit-day/>)

(<https://glaad.org/reference/calendar/>)

We are dedicating this month to something we should all be proud of: *the God-given blessing and institution of **marriage**.*

Marriage is a life-long covenant between a man and woman – *and it is so much more than simply a life-long union between a man and a woman.*

As Pastor Justin mentioned last week – marriage is a picture – a representation of God Himself – and a picture of Christ and His Bride, the Church.

For these 1<sup>st</sup> 2 sermons in the series, I've chosen to use the metaphor of a blueprint to illustrate that God has given us the blueprint – the architectural drawings – for how to build this thing called 'marriage'.

**Today**, I'm going to focus on the most important part of the blueprint – the most important part of the building process: *The preparation of the site and pouring the foundation.*

If the ground is not prepared correctly – and the foundation is not level or solid – the building is doomed.

The same is true in marriage.

Keep the metaphor going here... You are the ground – the foundation must be placed on you / in you.

If you don't prepare...and if the foundation is built poorly – then the marriage may be doomed...but at the least, it will not function as God intends.

**Build your marriage on a solid foundation.** *Genesis 2:24*

God, in His Word, the Bible, has given us some very concise and straight forward blueprints on how we can prepare for marriage.

We see the first instructions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of the Bible.

**Genesis 2:24**

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

There are 3 verbs in this verse – let's look at each one – because there is some great insight when we understand the power / action of this verse.

**Verb #1:** “leave” – *to leave, forsake, leave behind, depart from, abandon, forsake, etc.*

“a man shall leave his father and his mother...”

If you marry a man who has not left his father and mother – you've married what we call a '*Mamma's Boy*'.

You've married someone who is not matured into a man.

He may be independent from his parents in many ways – work – leisure – various interests.

He may physically be mature.

***But if he's not 'left' his parents, then he has not matured as a person.***

He is still under their power, authority, or influence.

A man cannot establish his own home and family – if he has not left his family of origin.

We're not talking about a man rejecting his birth family.

Not at all!

In fact, the commandment to “Honor your mother and father...” does not expire at 18 years old.

‘Honor’ doesn't mean ‘obey’ – not when a child becomes an adult – it means honor – to respect.

There's a part here for the mother and father that's not mentioned – but clearly implied: Mom and Dad must let go – release – bless.

This ‘leaving’ does not need to be angry or harsh, but it might need to be forceful if one or both parents don't let him go – don't release him.

**Verb #2:** “hold fast” KJV = “cleave” – *cling to, cleave, deeply attracted, fasten its grip, hold, joined together, keep close, pursue closely, overtake,*

“...and hold fast to his wife...”

The man doesn't “leave his father and mother” so he can do whatever he wants.

There is a purpose and focus to his leaving – **his wife**. He leaves the strong bond of his mother and father in order to create a strong bond with his wife.

It is for the sake of his wife – and their new home / family – that he has to “leave”.

Only then can he truly “hold fast” to his wife.

**Verb #3:** “shall become” – *to fall out, come to pass, become, occur, take place*

“...and they shall become one flesh.”

This final verb carries with it the promise – the potential – the payoff of the other 2 verbs.

Becoming one flesh is more than a reference to their physical intimacy.

It's also a reference to their souls.

The Greek word which translates this verb (*kollomenos*) literally means ‘glued together’.

This is the intent of God – for a husband and wife – that they have an unbreakable bond – a life-long bond.

I believe this *'becoming one flesh'* is a supernatural result of human sexuality – that it brings a man and woman together in the deepest way possible – beyond any physical pleasure – to the very core of who they are.

I believe this is one of the ways that the marriage bond reflects the reality of Christ and His Bride, the Church – the spiritual union each believer has as the Holy Spirit indwells their soul at the moment of their faith in Christ – as we become one with Christ – forever His – eternally His.

So, we have a good blueprint here in **Genesis 2:24** for a solid foundation for marriage.

**But let's get really practical here.**

Let's move from the spiritual truths and concepts – to the real-life actions or non-actions that will lead to building a solid foundation for your marriage.

1) Dating is to find a spouse.

Dating has a purpose – and it's not to have a great time with all sorts of women / men.

Dating is wife / husband try-outs.

*When I was growing up – they don't do this anymore because in our culture today – everyone gets a trophy for playing – everyone makes the team, etc.*

*But when I was 8 years old, I had to try out for Little League.*

*There were 3 different divisions / leagues – based on talent level.*

*They had try-outs – and as an 8-year-old – I had to be good enough to make it onto one of the ‘major league teams’.*

*If I wasn’t good enough – I would be placed on one of the other two levels of Little League – where kids that couldn’t play very well would start.*

Dating is a really fancy and nerve-racking try out. But dating can be a great joy – or a great frustration. It can be a frustration as your heart is drawn toward someone – but you realize they are not a good match. Your heart will really get torn up when you are a good match in most areas – but you know you’re not a good match spiritually.

If this happens, it’s your own fault.

When the Bible was written, arranged marriages were common.

Dating was not really a thing.

So, the Bible doesn’t really have verses on dating, but it raises the bar – and has verses that relate to the character of a person, wisdom in relationships, warnings of what to avoid, affirmations of what to pursue.

In your notes are a handful of verses that relate to these issues (below).

- If you're in the dating game – then take time to read them.

- If you're already married, then share these verses with those in your family or circle of influence who are dating.

Proverbs 3:5-6; Matthew 6:33; John 3:3-8; Mark 12:30; Philippians 2:5; 2 Corinthians 6:14-15; Colossians 3:5; 1 Corinthians 6:13, 18; 10:31; 1 Timothy 2:9; 2 Timothy 2:22; Romans 12:9-10.

## 2) Only marry a Christian. *2 Corinthians 6:14-15*

The implication here is this: **Only date Christians.**

I don't mean someone who slaps on the label 'Christian' and goes on living life like anybody else.

### **2 Corinthians 6:14-15**

“Don't team up with those who are unbelievers.

How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness?

How can light live with darkness?

What harmony can there be between Christ and the devil?

How can a believer be a partner with an unbeliever?

Don't just accept if they say, “*Yea, I'm a Christian.*”

Ask them:

1. Can you describe a specific time when you put your faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins?



2. Would you describe yourself as a committed follower of Jesus? If your answer is ‘yes’, then what evidence do you have?

If their answer is ‘no’, then ask, ‘*Why is that the case?*’

***If the answer*** to these questions is ‘No’ – then don’t date them!!!

***If you’re already*** dating them... then break up!!!

3. What is their family dynamic? How do they treat their mom – their dad?

What you observe will give you some insight into what kind of person they are – how they treat those closest to them.

You need to be picky – and choose someone who displays they are living by the Spirit and truth of God’s Word, and not just according to their own flesh and the ‘spirit of the age’.

You need to find someone who is committed to God’s Word – and who submits to God’s Word.

If you want to have a marriage that will not just survive, but thrive, both the husband and wife must be committed to living life as the Bible teaches.

*One of the most important decisions you make about marriage is often who you don’t date.*

3) Save sex for marriage.

It seems the stigma and shame of losing one's virginity before marriage is a relic from previous generations. In our culture, the idea that a person is a virgin until marriage is viewed as an oddity. But the Bible is clear on this topic.

**1 Thessalonians 4:3-5**

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God...”

And Paul tells the church in Corinth...

**1 Corinthians 6:18 - NLT**

“Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body.”

10 reasons for **saving** sex for **after** the wedding:

1. Self-control is an important virtue – needed in all areas of life – not just physical or sexual.
2. Sex will bias your wisdom about marrying this person. *Hard to think clearly when you're involved sexually.*
3. Followers of Christ must have the self-discipline and motivation to live holy lives.
4. Sexual sin is a unique sin – because the one it hurts the most is the person involved in the sin.

*The reason for this is God created sex to be the most intimate of all physical acts between 2 people, and when*

*we misuse this amazing gift, it affects you deep within your soul.*

5. Society is harmed and weakened when sex is casual.
6. Single parenthood – raising a child on your own.
7. Single parenthood – being raised by only 1 parent.
8. Unhealthy patterns passed on to the next generations.
9. Increased poverty when people have children out of wedlock.
10. It can weaken trust and intimacy in a marriage.

#### 4) Don't live together before marriage.

Couples living together – whether they plan to marry – or not – is becoming the new normal.

It may already be the new normal.

In many cases, people who live together before marriage are trying to be careful and to make sure they marry the right person.

After all, you don't buy a car without a test drive.

Why would you get married – maybe the most important decision of your life – without a little test drive first????

According to a recent Pew Research study (2019), it reveals the # of couples living together / cohabitation before getting married or who don't plan to get married – continues to increase.

A majority of Americans now find cohabitation acceptable.

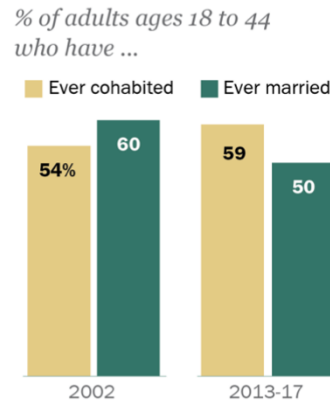
Here are some graphs that illustrate this shift.

**In 2002** – the cohabitation rate was 54% - marriage rate was 60%.

**In 2013-2017**

Cohabitation was at 59%

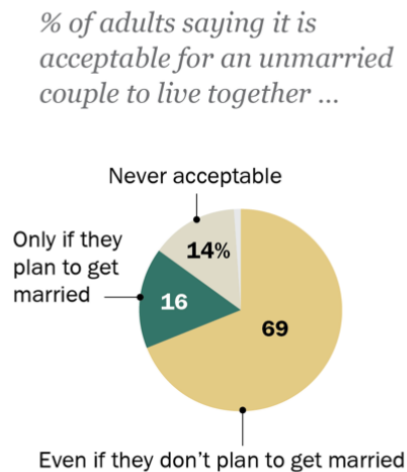
Marriage at 50%



The % of adults who say it is unacceptable for an unmarried couple to live together was only **14%**.

If the couple plan to marry – then **16%** say it's OK to live together first.

**69%** say living together is fine – even if the couple doesn't plan to marry.



Living together before marriage does seem like a logical step to take – to make sure the relationship will work. Aside from the physical side of the relationship, it can save money – 1 rent or mortgage payment is better than 2.

It gives each person a chance to see how day-to-day life works when they're sharing everything and managing the responsibilities of work, cleaning, cooking, sleep habits, etc.

**But don't believe the lie that** *'The best way to make sure you're compatible is to live together before marriage.'*

Over the years, countless studies have shown that couples who live together before marriage actually have a higher rate of divorce than those who don't live together.

*"A new study published in the **Journal of Marriage and Family** (2018) finds that the "premarital cohabitation effect" lives on, despite what you've likely heard.*

*The premarital cohabitation effect is the finding that those who live together prior to marriage are more likely, not less, to struggle in marriage.*

*It has a long and storied history in family science."*

(<https://ifstudies.org/blog/premarital-cohabitation-is-still-associated-with-greater-odds-of-divorce>)

(Journal of Marriage & Family study: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/jomf.12530?af=R>)

(See also: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/meet-catch-and-keep/202101/are-couples-that-live-together-before-marriage-more-likely-to>)

## **The problem with living together before marriage is...**

1. God didn't design it this way.
2. Living together (cohabitating) has been shown over the years to make divorce or separation **more likely** – not less likely.
3. It cheapens the marriage relationship – engaging the benefits of marriage without the covenant.

## **If you're already in a spiritually mixed marriage...**

- Don't get divorced. – 1 Corinthians 7:10-16
- Don't be annoying by 'forcing' faith or faith discussions on your spouse – have restraint.

**1 Peter 3:15**

"...in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect..."

- Live out your faith

It's very likely that you must live out your faith more than you talk about your faith.

**1 Peter 3:1-2** – The Message translation

"Be good wives to your husbands, responsive to their needs. There are husbands who, indifferent as they are to any words about God, will be captivated by your life of holy beauty."

NLT

"...your godly lives will speak to them without any words. They will be won over by observing your pure and reverent lives."

## ***Apply it...***

Follow God's blueprint for marriage.

He created and designed marriage.

Marriage is so much more than 2 people in a life-long covenant relationship.

Marriage reveals truths about the Triune God.

Marriage reveals sacred truths about Christ and His Bride, the Church.

### 1. Take your faith seriously.

Grow – live your faith!

Men... lean into your faith. Become the man Christ has called you to be.

### 2. Date and marry wisely.

The negative way for me to say this is:

Don't date stupid.

Don't marry stupid.

Be picky!!! You deserve a good, godly spouse.

### 3. Get married!

We've seen a growing disinterest in marriage – a delay in getting married.

There is a cultural belief that marriage will be the end of fun – life is over – it's all work and drudgery when you get married.

How ridiculous!

How ignorant!

How uninspired is their view and understanding of marriage!!!!

Apart from salvation, marriage is the greatest gift God has given us in this life!

Look forward to it.

Prepare yourself for it.

Look for a spouse that loves the Lord and lives their faith.

Then buy the ring – set the date – and get married!

And may the rest of your days be filled with the wonders and joys of marriage, and if God blesses, children, and a life of adventure as you serve God – and each other.

*Closing prayer*