



Family Christian Center

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Family Life Development & Application {FLDA} Department

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CLASS NAME: Prep for Marriage – Marital Garden | Lesson 10: Ready or Knot?
CLASS SESSION: Sunday April 18, 2021 10:30 a.m. **LOCATION:** Zoom Conference
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Ready or Knot...Here I Come!

“Sometimes the person you fall for isn’t ready to catch you.”

-Author Unknown

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

New King James Version

Everything Has Its Time

3 To everything *there is* a season,
A time for every purpose under heaven:

2 A time ~~to~~ to be born,
And a time to die;
A time to plant,
And a time to pluck *what is* planted;

3 A time to kill,
And a time to heal;
A time to break down,
And a time to build up;

4 A time to weep,

And a time to laugh;
A time to mourn,
And a time to dance;
⁵ A time to cast away stones,
And a time to gather stones;
A time to embrace,
And a time to refrain from embracing;
⁶ A time to gain,
And a time to lose;
A time to keep,
And a time to throw away;
⁷ A time to tear,
And a time to sew;
A time to keep silence,
And a time to speak;
⁸ A time to love,
And a time to hate;
A time of war,
And a time of peace.

What does “Time” mean to you? A Reason, a Season, or a Lifetime?

Is this your time? So often, those in anticipation of marriage attempt to place a circle peg in a square hole; going to drastic measures to ensure a false sense of happiness or a false sense of “**fit**”. Not knowing timing is a critical spiritual character flaw. It causes you to move too quick and some instances to move too slow. This character deficiency also will not allow you to accurately weigh the cost of the journey ahead. Causing you to fantasize about what your potential marriage will be instead of looking at your mate for who they are right now and in that season. Our God is a God of order and all things are created by him with a Divine Purpose. Not recognizing your season means that you may not understand

the *Will of God* within your life. Determining the traits of the right mate is essential in understanding *Godly* timing. Anyone can find a mate or get married, but it takes courage & trust to wait on the Lord for your *soulmate*.

Psalm 27:14

New King James Version

¹⁴ Wait^a on the LORD;

Be of good courage,

And He shall strengthen your heart;

Wait, I say, on the LORD!

5 Things That Will Happen When God Does Not Want You to Wait for Someone | Author Mark Ballenger

*But one mistake that often happens to Christians is that they only rely on one means of hearing God. They feel like God says something to them in their heart but then they do not look for biblical and circumstantial evidence that would confirm they heard God accurately. The danger in basing big decisions only on what you sense God saying is that this way of hearing God is easily manipulated by our own personal desires. Certainly, it's possible that the Holy Spirit gives you a clear word in your heart that encourages you to pursue the very thing you wanted to hear him say. I don't think it is biblical to assume that God will always tell you to do the opposite of what you desire to do. But the fact remains that we can mislead ourselves by imaging we heard **God** but in reality we just heard our own voice and desires. So if you have no other good evidence in your life to wait for this person other than the one fact that you feel God said this to you in the past, oftentimes this means God did not say that and you should not wait for this person anymore. Again, I do believe God speaks to us personally in our hearts (John 10:27), but I also believe he will confirm what he says through his word and the events happening in real life.*

Moving out of God's Perfect Timing ***Deadlines, Boundaries and Lines in the Sand***

Habakkuk 2:3
Amplified Bible

3

"For the vision is yet for the appointed [future] time
It hurries toward the goal [of fulfillment]; it will not fail.

**Even though it delays, wait [patiently] for it,
Because it will certainly come; it will not delay.**

When you are tired of waiting on God's timing, there is a habit to exercise ultimatums in your relationship. Not willing to listen, but also not willing to wait. As prep for marriage instructors the hardest thing to endure is to watch an individual step out of God's perfect timing in lieu of their impatient timing. Creating harsh ultimatums, angry dialogue and a trail of disappointment, resentment, and bitterness in their wake.

7 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BOUNDARIES VERSUS ULTIMATUMS | Author J. Yuhas

Boundaries keep your self-worth and security intact allowing for choices to be made by each individual within the relationship.

On the contrary, ultimatums are about forcing things to be your way or the highway while trying to seek power over someone. You refuse to hear outside perspective and give others zero options to repair the damage and resolve differences. When you expect someone else to change, it's really an attempt to control the situation, leading to an impasse in the relationship. This can lead to destructive habits, resulting in the other person walking away, flipping the script, or passing the blame onto you creating a massive barrier to finding a resolution.

Stop Running Yellow Lights!

The Power of Discernment

While sitting at the intersection of life. We often come to a crossroad in life where we are waiting on a yellow light. Sometimes that yellow has an arrow with a suggestion of which direction we should go, sometimes it is a blinking yellow light and finally there is that yellow light that stands still not giving you a clear indication if you should go or not, but you feel this intense need to run the yellow light before it turns red. In these events, we ignore the purpose of the “yellow light” which is...to slow down-danger is coming and proceed with caution...because the red light is coming. That is the power of discernment. It is not indicator to speed up before key decisions in our life are made, it is in place for you to slow down and take a full account of your surroundings, your relationship and to ask God what your next steps are.

“God wants us to live by discernment—revelation knowledge, not head knowledge. It's difficult to exercise discernment if you're always trying to figure everything out. But when you're willing to say, "God, I can't figure this out, so I'm going to trust You to give me revelation that will set me free," then you can be comfortable in spite of not knowing. Trusting God often requires not knowing how God is going to accomplish what needs to be done and not knowing when He will do it. We often say God is never late, but generally He isn't early either. Why? Because He uses times of waiting to stretch our faith in Him and to bring about change and growth in our lives.”

When God's Timing Is Taking Too Long | Author Joyce Meyers

Red Flags *Before* & After Marriage*

“When we’re excited about a relationship, it’s easy to overlook the red flags that at least need to be explored. We want to be married; this special person makes us feel wonderful (at least most of the time). We know some things about this person, but we sometimes fill in the gaps with what we want him or her to be like. Yet we often don’t fill in the gaps with what we want him or her to be like. Yet we often don’t fill them in accurately.”

Red Flags in a Relationship | Author Glen Luttjens

It is Okay to Wait!

Waiting on the Lord is a difficult task for the impatient. In fact, hearing the word “wait” can cause a visceral reaction to those who want an answer **now**. Society has caused an imbalanced view of time. We hate to wait in line, wait for a proposal, wait on a home, wait on a new job, wait in traffic or simply wait for the right mate. Even the most devout Christians sometimes hate to wait on the Lord. Why? Our belief is that many of us do not understand what “waiting” looks like; we only identify what it feels like.

An Expectant Marriage

Micah 7:7

Amplified Bible

God Is the Source of Salvation and Light

But as for me, I will look expectantly for the LORD *and* with confidence in Him I will keep watch; I will wait [with confident expectation] for the God of my salvation.

My God will hear me.

Remember, Love is patient; Love is kind. One of the 9 fruits of the spirit is **patience**.

Galatians 5:22

Amplified Bible

²² But the fruit of the Spirit [the result of His presence within us] is love [unselfish concern for others], joy, [inner] peace, patience [**not the ability to wait, but how we act while waiting**], kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

God wants us to patiently examine ourselves-patiently examine our mates, examine the covenant that we are representing for him and consult him through prayer on the final decision prior and during nuptials.

- To some he may appear slow to answering our prayers, but God is **always** on time! Understanding that God is not governed by time as we know it will release the restrictions that we are bound by; remember our God is restricted by nothing.
- However, at times we put contingencies on God; on our love for him, on our communication through prayer with the Lord. Our time belongs to him-not the

other way around. This will help many to understand that what he intends for you and your soulmate was designed before you were put on this earth. However, our God gives us the freedom to choose. Jesus is so great that he gives us free will! But it is up to us to choose wisely. Taking the appropriate measures to develop pre-marital intimacy (into-me-see) will provide natural progression to reveal the true nature of the relationship and the true will of God for your marriage. Marriage is a ministry.

2 Peter 3:9

Amplified Bible

⁹ The Lord does not delay [as though He were unable to act] *and* is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, **but is [extraordinarily] patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.**

What is the Disposition of Impatience?

Impatience is the refusal to wait for development. It is the physical manifestation of displaying “lack of faith”. Anyone can display patience when things are going their way, but the true test is when you are irritated with an outcome, when your timetable in a relationship has been interrupted. Whether your marriage goal date is approaching or if your marriage goals within your relationship have come and gone-you are still to live in expectancy. ***God always keeps his word.***

Isaiah 55:11 (NIV) “So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”

The Disposition of Complacency?

The true spirit of complacency can cause you to wait too long. It is the refusal to progress especially if you receive no time limit, no ultimatum, and no need to move forward. To be clear the complacent spirit does not fear ultimatums. Actually, ultimatums cause this spirit to move slower. Why, you may ask? Because ultimatums are often just words with no actions. Verbal threats with no sting. There are no consequences, so the ***Complacent Spirit*** takes hold. Complacency is the thought process of, ***“I don’t need to move because my significant other doesn’t make it clear we have to move forward”***.

Based in pre-marital relationship settings; examples are:

- Not setting a wedding date or agreeing to a committed relationship that may last years without moving forward to marriage.
- Saying statements such as, *“If this relationship doesn’t move forward then I’m out!”* yet having premarital sex the following night hoping things will change.”

Ask yourself, would you believe you?! The truth is, it is often hard to make a clear decision because something is holding one or both parties back from making things clear and decisive. The answer is FEAR. Making it clear, does not mean verbally stating “this is it or else” but ensuring your actions line up with your words.

It is learning to V.O.W. (Validate Our Words).

Ready or Knot?

*Sometimes the person is not right for you but ready.
Sometimes the person is ready for you but not right.
~ Team Hollins*

Seek Wise Counsel

Did you seek permission from your Heavenly Father first?

Reasons you won’t consult God first...

- ✓ Already know the answer.
- ✓ Afraid of the truth.
- ✓ Already living together
- ✓ Fear of starting over.
- ✓ Do not want to be alone!
- ✓ Convenience
- ✓ Pride

Proverbs 12:15 (NKJV) “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise”.

“He who represents himself has a fool for a client” ~Abraham Lincoln.

Preventing “We to Me” ...Understanding 2nd Thoughts

Pre-wedding Day Jitters or 2nd Thoughts?

“Don’t ignore those pre-wedding jitters; they may warn of marital trouble ahead, according to a UCLA study published in the Journal of Family Psychology. Researchers asked 232 newlyweds in their first marriages whether they had “ever been uncertain or hesitant about getting married after they got engaged. The researchers followed up with the couples every six months for the first four years of their marriages. In a Huff Post blog, one of the researchers Justin Lavner, explained that premarital doubts predicted divorce rates four years later especially when the doubtful partner is the wife. 19 percent of couples in which wives had doubts were divorced four years later, but only 8 percent of couples in which wives did not have doubts ended up in divorce. Husbands’ doubts did not significantly predict divorce, although divorce rates were somewhat higher among husbands with doubts (14 percent) than husbands without doubts (9 percent).”

Still Small Voice

Do you know God’s voice? What does he sound like to you? If he told you to stop-not to marry the person you are with or stand still-would you listen; would you adhere with action? What did he tell you about your mate? Are you open to hear whatever he reveals to you about your mate- no matter the outcome? Do you hear a call to action or a call to re-examine?

John 10:27 (AMP)-The sheep that are My own hear My voice and listen to Me; I know them and they follow Me

Is it you or is it God?

“Sometimes the biggest lies that we tell are to ourselves”. ~ Ally Carter

Are you replacing God's voice with your own?

Do you know his voice when he calls? Do you know what he sounds like? How do you know it is the voice of God and not your own? Sometimes the desires of our hearts are so enticing that over time our wants outweigh even the voice of God. The bible says that God has a small still voice. Remember, the soul is our mind. The Lord, communicates with us through the soul (our minds). The still small voice is often the Lord; if we are willing to listen. At times, some question if they can even hear God. Or they question if God is even listening. However, why not question our own listening skills before we question the Lord? Those that question him must first ask the very same questions of themselves first.

- ***“Why can't I hear God?”***
- ***“Am I listening to God?”***

It is hard to hear him if we are not listening ourselves. It is hard to hear God if your thoughts are yelling your wants, your desires; above the small still voice (thoughts) of the Lord. Are you trying to change the voice and the thoughts of the Lord to your own? Are you trying to create your own outcome rather than hear the thoughts of the Lord on your relationship?

Isaiah 55:8 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts. Neither are your ways my ways.

Romans 12:2 “Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God”.

2nd Thoughts

There is a difference in anticipation, anxiety or living in expectancy for your pending nuptials. Excitement is normal, it signals that you are ready for marriage and understand the importance of the covenant you are making before God. However, 2nd thoughts indicate that you didn't give your mate a good first thought. It means that there are still questions left unanswered that require additional review. An unease or apprehension regarding your potential mate may be a call to action from the Lord to stop and re-examine your relationship. However, nagging suspicions may be an outcry in the spirit to halt and take a 2nd look.

Ephesians 1:17 “I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better”.

Prayer: Reveal, Seal & Unlock

“Heavenly Father, you are amazing! You are faithful, honorable and beyond worthy to be praised. I magnify your holy name! Thank you for being who you are! Thank you for the air I breathe so I may use every breath in my body to shout out how AWESOME you are! You are excellent! You never cease to amaze me. I can never run out of praise for you! You are a good and just father. Thank you for being Lord of my life. I am nothing without you and your grace. Thank you for loving me for me. Lord, I am sorry for trusting in myself; more than in you. For seeing what I wanted to see in a mate-not what you intend for me. I am so sorry for moving out of order and not consulting you first. I am sorry for the lack of faith in you and too much faith in worldly standards. Lord Forgive me and my motives. Lord, help me to forgive myself and those who have hurt me so I can learn to be more compassionate towards others. Help me father, for forgiveness is the key. Thank you, Lord, for allowing me to see the unseen-the hidden agendas and the true nature of this relationship. Thank you, Lord, I appreciate your wisdom and revelation in this and in all matters. Lord, please advise me if this relationship is for a season, a reason, or a lifetime? Lord, if I am not intended for this person please reveal this to me now. Lord, help guide my words to end an unequal match with peace and understanding. Jesus, please give me and the one I share this relationship with clarity on one another. I thank you Lord in advance! All these things I pray in your holy name. In Jesus name; Amen!”

Matthew 7:7-8

New King James Version

Keep Asking, Seeking, Knocking

⁷ “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

Ready or Knot Here I Come!

Call to Action! Let's Get Married!

Once it is clear, that you have received a word from God to proceed with a “call to action” begin looking for the next step in your progression towards the altar. Always make sure your footsteps are ordered by God. Have a prayer plan in effect not only to protect your marriage and your life-but your spiritual life. Pray effectively. Instead of asking God for a great wedding day; pray never to be divorced. Don't just pray for a bigger house; pray for the finances that support that new bigger home. Pray towards the outcome not the circumstance. When you involve God in every decision in your life you will see that your faith, favor, and wisdom will grow substantially. Obstacles in your life that at one time seemed unavoidable become insignificant when God is present. There is no time where this is skill is needed more than in marriage.

Matthew 17:20- (NLT) “I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, “Move from here to there,” and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.

Psalms 119:105-106 “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I have sworn and confirmed that I will keep your righteous judgments.

You Just Know...

“So how do you know for sure? I think my friends were partially right. In a sense, you do “just know,” but it isn't because of some magical feeling that all is right with the world. Just knowing comes from time spent contemplating your similarities, your differences, and how well you fit together. It comes from asking God in prayer if this is His will for you. And it comes from making the decision in your heart that you will remain committed to this person no matter what the future holds. When those three things combine and you sense God's total peace about the decision, then you can know for sure”. ~Belinda Elliot, CBN - Contributing Editor