

# DO YOU THINK YOU'RE READY?

Class One

Teacher/Counselor Notes

## Opening question:

How did you as a couple meet and what was your first date like?

**A dating or engagement relationship, or ultimately a marriage, is only as healthy as the health of the individuals in it.**

- Relational health is vitally connected to individual health. It begins with you.
- That's why you need to first ask, "Would you marry you?" before you pop the "Would you marry me?" question.

"If you try to find intimacy with another person before achieving a sense of identity on your own, all your relationships become an attempt to complete yourself... Most of us tell ourselves, 'If I find the right person, my life will be complete'... The truth is, the **cause of our emptiness** is not a case of missing persons in our lives, but a **case of incompleteness** in our soul. In order to build healthy relationships, you must be well on your way to becoming whole or complete." Les and Leslie Parrott, *Relationships 101*, pages 20-21

## 1. Would You Marry You? (Chapter 1)

Neil Clark Warren and Les Parrott in their excellent book, *Love the Life You Live*, said personal health and wholeness has three hallmarks:

1. A right relationship with God – your purpose for living and the power to change is grounded in God's unconditional love.
2. A right relationship with others – you sacrificially love others by willingly meeting their needs.
3. A right relationship with yourself – you know who you are and live in congruence with your personality and God-given talents.

Of course Jesus boiled the essence of personal and relational health down to these same three relationships:

*Mark 12:30-31* – "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these."

Personal and relational health is vitally connected to the health of our relationships with God, others, and ourselves.

Three readiness considerations:

- **The Vertical Dimension**

Key question: Is your relationship with God healthy?

Key measure: Surrender (Romans 12:1-2)

- **The Horizontal Dimension**

Key question: Is your relationship with others healthy?

Key measure: Sacrifice (Romans 12:9-21)

- **The Personal Dimension**

Key question: Is your relationship with yourself healthy?

Key measure: Sanity (Romans 12:3)

1. Is your worth grounded in your value to God? (Eph. 2:10; Prov. 23:7a)
2. Are your emotions in check? Do you see signs of balance? (Gal. 5:22-23)
3. Are your thoughts constructive or destructive? Do you process your thoughts through a biblical grid? (2 Cor. 10:5)

**Key Idea:** Are you growing in Christ? I like to say, "Readiness for marriage isn't measured by perfection, but by direction." Is your life intentionally moving in the right direction?

## **2. Are you ALL Dated Out?** (Chapter 2)

If you get married before you're done dating, you will be susceptible to past and future dating dangers. You can be burned by an old flame or fall into a new fling. If you're not done with dating, you're not ready to get engaged or married.

- Are you ready to make a "one-man" or "one-woman" commitment?

*Genesis 29:17b-18 - Rachel was lovely in form, and beautiful. <sup>18</sup>Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel."*

- Are you ready to give up the possibility of a relationship with someone you might meet in the future?

*1 Tim. 3:2 - But there are preconditions: A leader must be well-thought-of, **committed to his wife**, cool and collected, accessible, and hospitable. He must know what he's talking about. (MSG)*

- When you see a woman/man you are physically or emotionally attracted to, what do you do? Do you entertain the thought of being with her/him, or do you react as if your heart is already taken?

**Key Idea:** Marriage is meant to be a one-man-one-woman “till death do us part” unconditional commitment – for life! If you are a person who still enjoys the whole meeting...flirting... dating scene, you may need to examine your motives and reasons for dating. You could be trapped in the two most common dating dangers: First, the view that dating is all about me. To gratify my desires. To fulfill my wants. My needs. Without a dating focus shift from *me* to *you*, you can fall into a second dating danger – endless spousal shopping. Stuck in the belief that somewhere out there is a perfect person who will satisfy *you*, you keep on shopping. If that’s what you want, you’re not ready to pop the question. Anyone who is truly done dating is ready to make a selfless commitment to one person for life.

### 3. How Does “Till Death Do Us Part” Sound? (Chapter 3)

Marriage is intended to be a lifelong unconditional commitment. This covenant commitment is clearly defined in a wedding ceremony when the couple looks lovingly into each other’s eyes and promises to be faithful for life. *For better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part.* Now that’s about as serious as commitments come!

- Are you ready to make a lifelong commitment to this person? No matter what happens or who you might meet in the future?
- How do you feel about Jesus’ view on how long a marriage is meant to last?

*Matthew 19:3-10* - Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?”<sup>4</sup> “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’<sup>5</sup> and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’?<sup>6</sup> So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.”

- How do you feel about the disciples’ reply?

*Matthew 19:10* - The disciples said to him, “If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry.”

- Are you ready to make...

1. An **exclusive** commitment? *To one person...*
2. A **lifelong** commitment? *For the rest of your life...*
3. A **covenant** commitment? *For better, or worse...till death do us part*

**Key Idea:** Healthy marriages are built on a lifelong unconditional commitment. Until you are ready to make that kind of commitment, you are not ready to get married.

**Key question:** What does a “for better, for worse” commitment mean to you?