To My Future Spouse

Discussion Guide
How to Use This Resource

This dynamic relationship series has two components: spoken word videos and a Discussion Guide. The 3 videos can be found online at www.fcacolorado.org under the Campus tab. The 3 accompanying discussions are in this Discussion Guide. Both components are designed with the collegiate student-athlete and the FCA huddle in mind. The spoken word was both written and performed by two college students, Mariah and Isaiah. We are grateful to God for His inspiration in their hearts that initiated this project.

You can use this study anywhere you have video capability. It is designed for a small group discussion setting; however, it can be utilized one-on-one or even by yourself. We recommend 8 people or so per discussion group, and that you allow approximately 4 minutes for the video and 25+ minutes for discussion.

Steps:

1. Set aside 3 meetings to complete this series in order and in full.
2. Encourage attendees not to miss.
3. Download the videos and Discussion Guide in advance.
4. As a group, watch one video (approximately 4 minutes).
5. Turn your attention to the corresponding discussion (Part One, Two, or Three).
6. Start by reading the paragraph summary out loud or identifying someone in the group to do so.
7. Facilitate conversation as directed using the questions under “Discussion”.
8. If time allows, continue to “Overtime”.
9. If not, supply attendees with “Overtime” as a resource for continued learning and reflection outside of the group.

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Part One - The Perfect Person

Watch video 1.

All of us in one way or another are waiting or searching for perfection. We are waiting for a partner for life, an answer to our need for companionship, and someone who will make us feel the way we have dreamed of feeling our whole lives. A desire for companionship is from God. According to Genesis 2:18, “It is not good for man to be alone…” God created us with an innate desire to be in relationship and to live life with other people. For many of us that desire expresses itself through a hunger for a romantic relationship, a powerful human connection beyond words. Let’s explore this very real desire for love, connectivity, joy, and fulfillment, and maybe how we have gotten it twisted... There’s a big difference between a companion and a provider.

Discussion:
1. What physical and emotional qualities are people looking for that perfect person to have?
2. Guys – What does culture say “her” physical beauty would add to your value as a man? Who would that met expectation really be beneficial?
3. Ladies – How does culture say “his” affection should make you feel as a woman? Who receives more benefit from that, you or him?
4. What deeper needs do people your age seek to be met in a relationship?
5. What are the differences between a companion and a provider?
6. Read Jeremiah 17:5-9. God tells us that our hearts are deceitful. He also warns us from placing our hope and trust in mankind. How does this apply to a romantic relationship?
7. God said it wasn’t good for man to be alone. Do you think by saying this He intended for all of our needs to be met in a perfect person?

Overtime:
1. Take 2 minutes to make a list on your phone or a sheet of paper of everything you are looking for “that perfect person” to be in all categories (ex: personality, physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually). We will not share this list.
2. Now, circle or highlight the items that are more about your needs being met than who they are as a person.
3. Were there items on your list that after reflecting were really about you? If you’re comfortable, please explain.
4. Do you think that perfect person to meet all of your needs is really out there?
Watch video 2.

Many of us never properly identify why we are searching for a perfect person. It’s too easy to look for our God-given needs to be met in “the one” without looking at the “One,” namely Jesus Christ. Yes, a romantic relationship does have a Biblical purpose – and it is primarily for companionship (Song of Solomon 3:1, Genesis 2:18), to point us and others to the Gospel (1 John 4:12), to help us grow in our faith (Col 3:16), and for a teammate in fulfilling the mission of God (Genesis 2:18), and in marriage, for procreation (Genesis 1:28). However, a romantic relationship is NOT designed by God to meet our deepest needs. God, who passionately loves us, reserves the meeting of those needs for Himself (John 4:13-14). He longs for us to come to Him in prayer and express our heart’s desires and hurts in this area.

If Jesus Christ is the Lord of your life, in His love God meets your deepest needs. Here are some needs we may look for in a relationship but can actually be found in Christ: power, sacrificial love, completion, affection, admiration, security, purpose, worth, respect, beauty, the delight of being cherished, and never being abandoned. God offers this love to us in: (1) who He is, His character, (2) who He says we are, our identity in Christ and (3) as His Bride, the Church (Ephesians 5:25-27).

This realization of what we really need and who is really perfect is critical for us to have healthy relationships with humans on earth and with God in heaven. Jesus Christ is the “One.” He is the perfect person to meet all of our needs. Therefore, romantic relationships should give us companions, not providers.

- If my needs are not met in Christ, I will be looking for the “right person,” a provider for my needs, focusing on how they make me feel. I am the center. My partner whether I realize it or not is a means to an end.
- If my needs are met in Christ, Jesus is the “right person” and has provided for my needs. That frees me to look for a companion in life, focusing on who they are in Christ. Jesus is the center. I am free in a romantic relationship to love as I have been loved by Jesus and forgive as I have been forgiven by Jesus.

Discussion:

1. According to the summary, what is a romantic relationship for? What is it not for?
2. How could using a romantic relationship for something it’s not intended for (like meeting our deepest needs) hurt us or the other person?
4. According to Psalm 16:2, Psalm 16:11, and Philippians 3:8 who is our ultimate treasure? Who then is really the “love of our life”? (See Jeremiah 2:13).
5. How does this revelation change the qualities of the person we are looking for?
6. Have you actually received God’s love and His meeting of your deepest needs?

Overtime:
1. How does this viewpoint compare to what culture tells us about relationships?
2. Why do you think people tend to find joy in another person instead of joy in Jesus?
3. What deeper need do you find yourself looking to be met in a romantic relationship?
4. Review the Scriptures above. Which verse, promise, or need met was most impactful to you?
5. How might receiving the Lord’s provision for our needs release another person from unrealistic expectations?
6. What unrealistic expectations or dreams of a potential romantic partner do you need to grieve and let go of? (Example: It’s not what I thought it would be, he/she won’t be perfect, the right relationship will not solve my problems, he/she won’t know me or love me perfectly etc.)
Part Three – A Strategy for Dating and Singleness

Watch video 3.

It’s easy to feel like we are on the outside looking in on those who seem to be “ahead” in the next chapter of life. If we aren’t careful, we will try to escape and can make an idol out of finding the perfect person, disregarding the value of where God has us now. It is critical that we involve the Lord in our singleness and dating! So how do we take advantage of the gift of singleness, actively wait, allowing God to handle our hearts?

1. Guard a Biblical view of relationships, and what they are really for: Jeremiah 17:5-9
   As Isaiah said, we cannot find “perfect love in an imperfect person.” While romantic relationships are good in their place (see Part 2), they are NOT the solution to everything missing in our hearts and lives. We must guard against lies and half-truths that say to find joy and fulfillment in a person, instead of ultimate joy and fulfillment in Christ. We must hold tightly to this Biblical truth in singleness and dating: People are companions; God is our provider.
   Discussion:
   a) What need do most people look for a relationship to provide, but only God can?
   b) How will you guard a Biblical view of relationships from culture? From yourself?

2. Receive from God daily what only He can give: 2 Peter 1:3; John 4:1-42
   Mariah says to God as she waits, “I will drink from Your well that never runs dry… I will soak in Your love and bask in Your glory.” Your Heavenly Father longs for you to pray to Him and share the desires of your heart in this area. We must engage Him through prayer, studying the Bible, worship, listening to Him, and meditation to express and receive our needs from God in places where, “only He can love me like He can.” In this venture of receiving our deepest needs from God, we must value commitment and choice over feelings. Our wholehearted dedication and commitment to Christ in this season will prepare us for the next. Will we love God for better or worse? Will we praise Jesus in sickness and in health? Will we trust Him, richer or poorer?
   Discussion:
   a) What are practical ways that you can receive love and truth from God?
   b) Do you allow yourself to be loved by God? Is it easier to do things for Him?
   c) You may love God and serve God faithfully. Is there fruit in your life that He loves you?
   d) What are some Scriptures that anchor you to God’s love and provision for you?

3. Live in a community of godly people to share life: Hebrews 10:24-25; Col 3:16
   In-person fellowship with a group of believers is a powerful way to navigate our needs for companionship, growth in Christ, pointers to the Gospel, and pursuing God’s mission together as we wait. We all have a purpose to fulfill on this earth, whether we are single or
married. We must engage in life-giving relationships with friends and live alongside them. Many of us exist on a starvation-diet of Christian community, and it does not have to be this way.

**Discussion:**

a) How could godly friends help meet our needs for companionship, growth, and teamwork in the Gospel?

b) What step can you take to have more godly community in your life? (Example: in depth, in number of Christian friends, how often you see them etc.)

**Overtime:**

1. Do you actually believe that the best love is only found in God? Or are you still expecting and desiring the love of your life to be a future spouse?

2. If love is actually a commitment, how have you actually been committed in your love life with God in sickness and health, richer or poorer, in good times and bad?

3. How might these spiritual commitment patterns transfer to a romantic relationship?

4. There are a couple of indicators that we are content in God in singleness. One is **peace**, a happiness and contentedness in where I am, growing in security in Him. Another is **patience**, the absence of desperation, not needing someone to be okay, trusting and enjoying completeness in Christ. How could being vulnerable with God and receiving from Him produce these fruits?

5. Which area do you need to grow in most when it comes to your strategy for dating and singleness: guarding the Biblical truth about relationships, receiving needs from God, or living life with Godly people? How will you do that?
Want More?

We hope that the Lord has encouraged you and revealed Himself to you through this study. If you are interested in other resources, here are a few that we recommend:

- “Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts” by Les and Leslie Parrott
- “Single and Free to Be Me” by Dr. Clarence Shuler
- “For Men Only” by Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn
- “For Women Only” by Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn