

The New Rules for Love, Sex & Dating

Week Three - If I Were You

BOTTOM LINE

Promises are no substitute for preparation. Every Saturday people all over the country make promises to other single people that they are unable or unprepared to keep—wedding vows. They are sincere and their intentions are good but they are unprepared. Preparation for the commitment is just as important as the commitment itself.

GOAL OF THE GROUP

Last week we explored how our view of women is defined by culture and not by God. Jesus' teachings about women were extremely counter-cultural in the first century. We took a hard look at how we can change our thinking. This week we'll look at how we can ensure we are as prepared as possible for a healthy marriage or relationship.

SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 14:8; 22:3; 14:15 and 1 Corinthians 7:2

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Remember, if you're *not single or dating*, you know someone who is! A single friend, relative, maybe the children you're raising. Process the questions below with those relationships in mind.

1. Have you ever made a promise to do something but then you were unable to follow through because you didn't prepare properly? (think of athletic, academic, professional, family, etc.) Share with the group.
2. Read Proverbs 14:15 and 22:3. Solomon addresses the fact that when it comes to marriage, commitment is over-rated. He says the paths we choose trump the promises we'll make. What signs might a couple ignore because they are headed down the path of the simple? How can this type of thinking be avoided?
3. Saying 'I Do' doesn't make you ABLE. It only makes you accountable. Being accountable for something you are unable to do will make you miserable. Share some specific consequences of bringing your unresolved past into your marriage?
4. Studies show that living together before marriage is actually detrimental to your marriage. Why do you think so many people make the decision to live together? How have you seen this play out in your own life or with your close friends and family? Why do you think it doesn't work?
5. What a fisherman uses for bait, is determined by what he is fishing for. Discuss how the way a woman dresses can be applied to this concept. Discuss the effect of a pornography habit on a relationship using this concept.
6. Read 1 Corinthians 7:2 The apostle Paul describes any activity outside of marriage as 'sexual immorality.' This includes sex before marriage. Purity before you are married trains you for faithfulness after you are married. Why is it so hard for people to embrace the idea that a physical relationship is something God created to be enjoyed under the covenant of marriage?
7. Instead of looking for someone to commit your life to...commit now to becoming someone who can keep his/her commitments later. What path can you make a commitment to that will prepare you for a long-term successful relationship?

Pastor Andy Stanley from North Point Church in Atlanta, GA originally created this series in 2011 and most of what Kensington is teaching and writing is based on that series. It's that good!



TRY THIS

If you don't want your marriage to be like the majority of marriages, then don't date like the majority of daters. You will not be in the majority now. But you won't be in the majority later, either. Think of one change you can make to prepare to commit so that when you do commit you will be in a position to keep your commitment. If you're already married and there is a commitment related struggle, consider one change you can make to overcome this situation. If you're unable to accomplish that first step on your own then reach out to Kensington's Marriage Mentor team for help: kensingtonchurch.org/marriage