Resource List: Premarital Materials (Dating or Engaged)

The resources listed below align with Focus on the Family’s philosophy and mission. We trust you will find them helpful. If you would like to obtain any of these items, call us toll free at 1-800-A-FAMILY, or visit our online store at store.focusonthefamily.com. (The information is regularly updated, but there is still the possibility that an item originally available from Focus on the Family might now be unavailable.) You may also be interested in the content posted on our website at focusonthefamily.com.

Included

Books
Broadcasts and Downloads
Curriculum
Websites, Q&As, and Resource Lists
Referrals

Books

101 Questions to Ask Before You Get Engaged by H. Norman Wright (2004) • 9780736913942
   Through a series of questions concerning spirituality, finances, families of origin, past relationships, and habits, Wright helps you seek God’s guidance in learning about your potential spouse before you decide to get engaged.

As Long As We Both Shall Live: Experience the Marriage You’ve Always Wanted by Dr. Gary Smalley and Pastor Ted Cunningham (2009) • 9780800725808
   This resource provides tools you’ll need to establish a lasting life together. Smalley and Cunningham teach you how to understand each other’s needs, express yourself honestly, and increase intimacy.

Before You Get Engaged by David Gudgel, Brent Gudgel, and Danielle Fitch (2007) • 9780849919183
   David, son Brent, and Brent’s girlfriend, Danielle, discuss twelve relational indicators indispensable to a healthy, lasting marriage. This book is designed to help daters know if engagement is truly the best next step in the relationship.

Before You Live Together by David Gudgel (2003) • 9780800725235
   Using real-life examples, Gudgel presents a compelling, loving, and biblical response to the question of cohabitation, detailing why God’s blueprint for marriage is the best.

Before You Plan Your Wedding, Plan Your Marriage by Dr. Greg and Mrs. Erin Smalley (2008) • 9781416543541
   Your wedding may be the most important day of your life, but it’s only one day. Afterward come years of potential contentment or conflict, happiness or heartbreak. Learn to make wise marital choices and build a loving, life-long marriage.

Before You Say I Do Devotional by H. Norman Wright (2015) • 9780736961103
   Filled with thoughtful questions, this journaling book features 60 devotions to help couples start off on the right foot and make Jesus the cornerstone of their lifelong bond.

Boundaries in Dating by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend (2000) • 9780310200345
   Setting healthy boundaries in dating will make the journey from singleness to marriage safer, more freeing, and more self-controlled. This book helps singles handle relationships in an honest and careful way, bringing joy rather than heartache.

Boy Meets Girl by Joshua Harris (2005) • 9781590521670
   Harris presents real-life stories of courtship to encourage readers to keep God as the focal point of any relationship as they consider whether marriage may be part of their future.
Countdown for Couples: Preparing for the Adventure of Marriage by Dale and Susan Mathis (2008) • 9781589974852 • Engaged couples can have stronger, more successful marriages if they participate in premarital counseling. Countdown for Couples delivers clear insight and tackles important questions for couples considering marriage.

The Dating Manifesto by Lisa Anderson (2015) • 9781434708878 • Anderson shares from her own experiences and from biblical wisdom to offer a “drama-free plan for pursuing marriage with purpose.”

Define the Relationship: A Candid Look at Breaking up, Making up, and Dating Well by Jeramy and Jerusha Clark (2004) • 9781578565924 • Every romantic relationship gets to the point where it needs to be defined. Learn to communicate your feelings and expectations in an honest, God-honoring way.

Doing Things Right in Matters of the Heart by John Ensor (2007) • 9781581348422 • Challenging the cultural trend among singles to hook up, shack up, and break up, Ensor explores God’s design for biblical masculinity and femininity to help men and women pursue healthy relationships.

Finding the Right One for You: Secrets to Recognizing Your Perfect Mate by H. Norman Wright (2008) • 9780736921435 • Wright helps people make choices leading to the kind of marriage they’ve always longed for and offers answers to questions singles ask: How can I know if I’m in love? Where do I find a lifelong partner? How do I recover from a broken relationship?

Get Married: What Women Can Do to Help It Happen by Candice Watters (2008) • 9780802458292 • Sharing her personal story and offering a biblical perspective, Watters encourages single women to anticipate and prepare for a God-glorifying marriage.

Love for a Lifetime Bible Study by Dr. James Dobson (2015) • 9781430033011 • Written especially for the engaged and newly married, this book highlights the fundamentals of a Christian marriage and reveals the keys to an enduring relationship.

The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment With the Wisdom of God by Timothy Keller (2011) • 9781594631870 • Keller discusses difficulties couples often experience and shows how God’s Word can provide a blueprint for a healthy, loving, lifelong relationship.

Money Before Marriage: A Financial Workbook for Engaged Couples by Larry Burkett (1996) • 9780802463890 • This workbook offers principles from Scripture regarding communication in marriage, budgeting, spending habits, and spiritual issues.

Passion and Purity: Learning to Bring Your Love Life Under Christ’s Control by Elisabeth Elliot (2013) • 9780800723132 • This is the story of Jim and Elisabeth Elliot’s meeting, friendship, courtship, engagement, and marriage. Elisabeth offers an encouraging message of uncompromised obedience to God and a total surrender of all passions to His will.

Ready to Wed: 12 Ways to Start a Marriage You’ll Love by Dr. Greg and Erin Smalley (2015) • 9781624054068 • This book explores important traits of a thriving marriage, including intimacy and managing conflict well.

Ready to Wed Couple’s Workbook • 2350000000318 • Ready to Wed DVD Kit • 2350000000455 •

Real Men Don’t Text: A New Approach to Dating by Ruthie and Michael Dean (2013) • 9781414386676 • The Deans share mishaps and success from their own relationship to offer other couples a healthy, godly approach to navigating love, sex, and dating.

Reclaiming Intimacy: Overcoming the Consequences of Premarital Relationships by Heather Jamison (2001) • 9780825429408 • Jamison honestly discusses the hindrances to marital intimacy caused by premarital sex and explores ways to overcome them. She details the steps that brought her into a relationship of intimacy with her husband years after their marriage began.

Right From the Start: A Premarital Guide for Couples by David and Lisa Frisbe (2011) • 9780834126046 • For couples serious about getting their marriage off to a good start and learning skills to keep it on track for life, this book offers real-life stories and advice. The authors help couples work through ideas, differences, and misunderstandings.

The Ring Makes All the Difference: Hidden Consequences of Cohabitation and the Strong Benefits of Marriage by Glenn Stanton (2011) • 9780802402165 • Does living together truly give people what they long for? Stanton offers a compelling, factual case that nearly every area of health and happiness is increased by marriage and decreased by cohabitation.
Examining My Past for a Better Future

Engaged Couples: Building a Solid Foundation for Marriage

Dating Well: Wisdom for Single Adults

Dating and Pursuing Marriage With Purpose

Building a Strong Foundation for Your Marriage

Answering Questions Single Adults Ask

Why Marriage Matters: Reasons to Believe in Marriage in a Post-Modern Society

Things I Wish I Knew Before We Got Married

Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts

Sacred Sex: Embracing Your Sexuality As God Designed It

The Sacred Search

Premarital Materials

past examples and marriage, such as communication, forgiveness, dealing with differences, and understanding each other. Sharing personal successes and mistakes, the Smalleys talk about the importance of covering the basics when preparing for family and friends, setting physical boundaries, and being emotionally and spiritually healthy.

Cloud and Townsend share tips for wise relationships that can date with purpose—“test” marital compatibility by living together.

Chapman shares practical tips and teaches engaged couples how to work together as a team. The discussion centers on communication and conflict resolution for topics common to newlyweds.

This is the story of the Ludys’ experience—from the pain of one failed romance after another to trusting God to author their relationship. They emphasize seeking hope, joy, security, wholeness, and fulfillment in Christ.

Drawing from 100 years of research, Stanton examines marriage in America today and gives readers solid reasons to believe in marriage in a postmodern culture that would have us think that marriage is old-fashioned, outdated, and irrelevant.

Answering Questions Single Adults Ask

Building a Strong Foundation for Your Marriage

Cohabitation vs. Marriage: Why the Ring Matters

Dating and Pursuing Marriage With Purpose

Dating Well: Wisdom for Single Adults

Engaged Couples: Building a Solid Foundation for Marriage

Examining My Past for a Better Future

Broadcasts & Downloads

Answering Questions Single Adults Ask – I, II (Lisa Anderson) ● 9781624716706 ●

Building a Strong Foundation for Your Marriage – I, II (Dr. Gary Chapman) ● 9781624711220 ●

Cohabitation vs. Marriage: Why the Ring Matters (Glenn Stanton) ● 9781624718335 ●

Dating and Pursuing Marriage With Purpose – I, II (Lisa Anderson) ● 9781624719295 ●

Dating Well: Wisdom for Single Adults – I, II (Dr. Henry Cloud, Dr. John Townsend) ● 9781624711879 ●

Engaged Couples: Building a Solid Foundation for Marriage – I, II (Dr. Greg and Mrs. Erin Smalley) ● 9781624712654 ●

Examining My Past for a Better Future – I, II (Dr. Louie Giglio) ● 9781624716508 ●

Giglio talks about the baggage all of us bring to relationships, especially marriage. He encourages you to stop working from past examples and to embrace new patterns learned from a relationship with God.
Define the Relationship Assessment (Boundless.org download)

The DTR can provide perspective and help couples learn to build and enjoy the connection and clarity that can come from a healthy relationship.

Guides to Marrying Well (Boundless.org downloads)

Premarital Materials …Page 5

Curriculum

Ready to Wed™ Kit: Preparing Couples for a Marriage They’ll Love (Focus on the Family, 2015) • 2350000000455 •
Encourage your pastor or mentors to journey through this 10-session series with you and other engaged couples. Covering finances, in-laws, intimacy, chores, and more, it includes DVDs, a leader’s guide, two copies of the couple’s workbook, a copy of Dr. Greg and Erin Smalley’s book Ready to Wed, and promotional materials for church launches.

Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts (Zondervan, 2006) • 9780310875734 •
Providing a firm foundation for couples stepping into an unfamiliar world, Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott focus on time-tested questions to debunk myths, bridge the gender gap, and help you develop skills you’ll need for a loving and lasting future together as husband and wife. (The kit includes a 9-session DVD, one copy of the Parrots’ book, a leader’s guide, one woman’s workbook, and one man’s workbook.)

Focus on the Family
Websites, Q&As, and Resource Lists

Boundless
• boundless.org
  This site offers articles, a podcast, and more on topics related to singleness, dating, and marriage.

Preparing for Marriage
• focusonthefamily.com/marriage/preparing-for-marriage
  This area of our website houses articles, resources, and referrals for topics related to dating, courtship, preparing for marriage, and more.

Ready to Wed
• focusonthefamily.com/marriage/promos/ready-to-wed
  Take four key steps to build a marriage that will last a lifetime.

Q&As
• focusonthefamily.com/family-q-and-a
  Browse our Q&As for advice and encouragement.

Resource Lists
• focusonthefamily.com/family-q-and-a/resources-and-referrals
  Find recommended resources and referrals listed by topic, including.
  
  Christian Growth for Adults • RL022 •
  The Early Years of Marriage • RL069 •
  Marriage Materials • RL016 •
  Materials for Men • RL024 •
  Materials for Women • RL011 •

Referrals

Hope Restored® marriage intensives—a ministry of Focus on the Family
2175 Sunset Inn Road
Branson, MO  65616
866/875-2915
hoperestored.com
• Our intensive programs are held in a retreat setting and are designed to rebuild and restore marriages experiencing significant hurt.
PREPARE/ENRICH
Life Innovations
2660 Arthur Street
Roseville, MN  55113
800/331-1661
prepare-enrich.com

- This online relationship inventory and skill-building program is uniquely tailored to each couple.