



## Resource List: Premarital Materials (Dating or Engaged)

The resources listed here align with Focus on the Family's philosophy and mission. Call us at 1-800-A-FAMILY, or visit our online store at [store.focusonthefamily.com](http://store.focusonthefamily.com). (Information is regularly updated, but it's still possible that an item originally available from Focus on the Family is now unavailable.) You might also be interested in content posted on our website at [focusonthefamily.com](http://focusonthefamily.com).

### Included

[Books](#)  
[Broadcasts and Downloads](#)  
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### Books

**101 Questions to Ask Before You Get Engaged** by H. Norman Wright (2004) • 9780736913942 •

Wright offers a series of questions related to spirituality, finances, families of origin, past relationships, and habits. Learn about your potential spouse *before* you decide to get engaged.

**As Long As We Both Shall Live** by Dr. Gary Smalley and Pastor Ted Cunningham (2009) • 9780830746804 • (not currently available through Focus on the Family)

"Experience the Marriage You've Always Wanted"

**Before You Get Engaged** by David Gudgel, Brent Gudgel, and Danielle Fitch (2007) • 9780849919183 •

David, son Brent, and Brent's girlfriend, Danielle, discuss 12 relational indicators key to a healthy, lasting marriage. Know if engagement is the best next step in your relationship.

**Before You Live Together** by David Gudgel (2003) • 9780800725235 •

"Will living together bring you closer or drive you apart?"

**Before You Plan Your Wedding, Plan Your Marriage** by Dr. Greg and Mrs. Erin Smalley (2008) • 9781416543541 • (not currently available through Focus on the Family)

Your wedding is only one day. 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 •

60 devotions 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 •

"How Healthy Choices Grow Healthy Relationships"

**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 •

"A Drama-Free Plan for Pursuing Marriage With a Purpose"

- Define the Relationship:** by Jeramy and Jerusha Clark (2004) • 9781578565924 •  
“A Candid Look at Breaking Up, Making Up, and Dating Well”
- Doing Things Right in Matters of the Heart** by John Ensor (2007) • 9781581348422 •  
Ensor challenges the cultural trend among singles to hook up, shack up, and break up. He explores God’s design for biblical masculinity and femininity to help men and women pursue healthy relationships.
- Finding the Right One for You** by H. Norman Wright (2008) • 9780736921435 •  
“Secrets to Recognizing Your Perfect Mate”
- Get Married** by Candice Watters (2008) • 9780802458292 • (not currently available through Focus on the Family)  
“What Women Can Do to Help It Happen”
- 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 offers keys to an enduring relationship.
- The Meaning of Marriage** by Timothy Keller (2011) • 9781594631870 •  
“Facing the Complexities of Commitment With the Wisdom of God”
- Money Before Marriage** by Larry Burkett (1996) • 9780802463890 •  
“A Financial Workbook for Engaged Couples”
- The New Rules for Love, Sex & Dating** by Andy Stanley (2015) • 9780310342199 •  
“Are you the person the person you are looking for is looking for?”
- 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** by Ruthie and Michael Dean (2013) • 9781414386676 •  
“A New Approach to Dating”
- Reclaiming Intimacy** by Heather Jamison (2001) • 9780825429408 •  
“Overcoming the Consequences of Premarital Relationships”
- Right From the Start** by David and Lisa Frisbe (2011) • 9780834126046 •  
“A Premarital Guide for Couples”
- The Ring Makes All the Difference** by Glenn Stanton (2011) • 9780802402165 •  
“Hidden Consequences of Cohabitation and the Strong Benefits of Marriage”
- The Sacred Search** by Gary Thomas (2012) • 9781434704894 •  
“What if it’s not about who you marry, but why?”
- Sacred Sex: Embracing Your Sexuality As God Designed It** by Tony Evans (2014) • 9780802411556 •  
Evans takes a scriptural and scientific look at our God-given sexuality, the value of purity, and the importance of holding sex in a sacred light.
- Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts** by Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott (2015) • 9780310346289 •  
“Seven Questions to Ask Before – and After – You Marry”
- Starting Out Together: A Devotional for Dating or Engaged Couples** by H. Norman Wright (1996) • 9780764216565 •  
Stay focused on God’s will by spending time together and prayerfully working through important issues. This book contains two months’ worth of devotionals filled with wisdom and sound biblical advice.
- Things I Wish I’d Known Before We Got Married** by Gary Chapman (2010) • 9780802481832 •  
Chapman teaches engaged couples how to work together as a team. Learn communication and conflict resolution skills for topics common to newlyweds.

**When God Writes Your Love Story** by Eric and Leslie Ludy (2009) • 9781601421654 •

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

**Why Marriage Matters** by Glenn Stanton (1997) • 9781576830185 • (not currently available through Focus on the Family)

“Reasons to Believe in Marriage in a Post-Modern Society”

**Broadcasts & Downloads**

**Answering Questions Single Adults Ask** (Lisa Anderson) • 9781624716706 •

Anderson, Director of Focus' Boundless ministry, provides hope and encouragement for singles in the 30+ crowd. She briefly shares her story of singleness and how she's learned to trust God in her circumstances. She addresses questions dealing with disappointment, loneliness, how to meet other godly singles, and how churches can better come alongside singles.

**Building a Strong Foundation for Your Marriage** (Dr. Gary Chapman) • 9781624711220 •

Newlyweds are often surprised that marriage is different from what they expected. And they're sometimes discouraged to learn they don't know each other as well as they thought. Chapman offers insights and practical advice for engaged couples.

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

Stanton, a family formation expert, discusses the trend of cohabitation and debunks the myth that unmarried couples should “test” marital compatibility by living together.

**Dating and Pursuing Marriage With Purpose** (Lisa Anderson) • 9781624719295 •

Anderson talks about how singles can date with purpose, and the importance of forming a community to help you “meet and marry.” Anderson also discusses the pitfalls of online dating and the importance of the Church coming alongside singles.

**Dating Well: Wisdom for Single Adults** (Dr. Henry Cloud, Dr. John Townsend) • 9781624711879 •

Cloud and Townsend share tips for wise relationships: only date a believer, have a good support system of family and friends, set physical boundaries, and be emotionally and spiritually healthy.

**Engaged Couples: Building a Solid Foundation for Marriage** (Dr. Greg and Mrs. Erin Smalley) • 9781624712654 •

Sharing personal successes and mistakes, the Smalleys talk about the importance of covering the basics when preparing for marriage: communication, forgiveness, dealing with differences, and understanding each other's expectations.

**Examining My Past for a Better Future** (Dr. Louie Giglio) • 2350000006792 •

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.

**Finding Your Lifelong Love** (Pastor Dan Chun, Lisa Anderson) • 9781624718618 •

Chun, author of *How to Pick a Spouse*, and Anderson, director of Focus' Boundless singles' ministry, discuss how to intentionally search for a godly spouse. They talk about seven qualities singles should look for in a potential mate and about the importance of a supportive church community.

**A Fresh Look at Dating** (Gary Thomas) • 9781624714924 •

Thomas explores the difference between a “soul” mate and a “sole” mate, encouraging singles to live out Matthew 6:33 and “seek first the kingdom of God.” He talks about the need to focus on a person's character rather than romantic attraction.

**God's Blueprint for a Healthy Marriage** (Dr. Timothy and Mrs. Kathy Keller) • 9781624710759 •

The Kellers outline God's design for marriage. They offer stories from their marriage and remind listeners that marriage is intended to shape and mold each spouse and bring about their sanctification.

**How to Find a Good and Godly Spouse** (Gary Thomas) • 2350000010034 •

Thomas urges single adults (and their parents) to look for character attributes in a potential future spouse that are based on the fruit of the Spirit.

**I, Isaac, Take You, Rebekah** (Dr. Ravi Zacharias) • 2350000010454 •

Zacharias uses the story of Isaac and Rebekah from Genesis 24 to illustrate biblical principles in the process of selecting a mate. He challenges young adults to be people of prayer and to have the input of others in the selection process.

**The Path of Endurance** (Elisabeth Elliot) • 9781624719189 •

Elisabeth describes her courtship with Jim, their willingness to surrender their futures to God, their marriage five-and-a-half years later, their call to the mission field, and Jim's death in Ecuador in 1956. She stresses that the Christian life is a path of endurance, and she urges listeners to submit their longings to God and wait for His best, reserving intimacy for marriage.

**Practical Advice for Those Getting Ready to Wed** (Dr. Greg and Mrs. Erin Smalley) • 9781624718861 •

The Smalleys recommend premarital counseling, which is critical to building a healthy, godly marriage. They also address issues of commitment, leaving and cleaving, honoring your spouse, communication, managing conflict well, and more.

**The Search for a Godly Spouse** (Reverend Alistair Begg) • 9781683320401 •

Begg shares how to be prepared for the privileges and responsibilities associated with dating and marriage, and he offers specific suggestions to men and women about what to look for in a spouse.

**Set the Date: Embracing Young Love** (Pastor Ted Cunningham) • 9781624711435 •

Discussing the necessary *and* unnecessary reasons to delay marriage, Cunningham challenges the idea that marriage should only happen once you have an education, a career, and a plan.

**Shattering Marital Myths and Expectations** (Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott) • 9781624713149 •

In a discussion based on their book *Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts*, the Parrotts examine common misconceptions about marriage and offer practical solutions for moving beyond unfulfilled expectations to building a stronger marriage.

**Solomon on Romance** (Rev. Tommy Nelson) • 9781624718496 •

Nelson draws on the Song of Solomon's imagery to convey principles about dating and courtship. He also discusses the signs of healthy and unhealthy romantic relationships and lists several things that need to occur as a couple moves toward marriage.

**Understanding God's Sacred Design for Sex** (Dr. Tony Evans) • 9781624716546 •

Evans explains God's design for sex within marriage and addresses the cultural distortion of that plan. He also lifts up the sacredness of physical intimacy between a husband and wife, referencing God's Word as our guide.

**The Value of Marrying Young** (Dr. Albert Mohler) • 9781683320845 •

Mohler explains how our culture devalues marriage and why young people delay matrimony. He encourages Christians to avoid this societal trend by marrying young and pursuing adulthood as a couple.



**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)

The *Girl's Guide to Marrying Well* and the *Guy's Guide to Marrying Well* help men and women understand, embrace, and approach God's design for marriage.

**Curriculum**

**Ready to Wed™ Kit: Preparing Couples for a Marriage They'll Love** (Focus on the Family, 2015) • 235000000455 •

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 •

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 nine-session DVD, one copy of the Parrotts' 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](http://boundless.org)  
This site offers articles, a [podcast](#), and other resources on topics related to singleness, dating, and marriage.

**Preparing for Marriage**

- [focusonthefamily.com/marriage/preparing-for-marriage](http://focusonthefamily.com/marriage/preparing-for-marriage)  
Find articles, resources, and referrals for topics related to dating, courtship, and more.

**Ready to Wed**

- [focusonthefamily.com/marriage/promos/ready-to-wed](http://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](http://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](http://focusonthefamily.com/family-q-and-a/resources-and-referrals)  
Find recommended resources and referrals listed by topic, including the following:

- [Christian Growth for Adults](#) • RL022 •
- [The Early Years of Marriage](#) • RL069 •
- [Marriage Materials](#) • RL016 •
- [Materials for Men](#) • RL024 •
- [Materials for Women](#) • RL011 •

**Referrals**

**Focus on the Family Counseling Consultation Line**

If you need someone to talk to, [Focus on the Family offers a free phone counseling consultation with a licensed counselor](#). Call **1-855-771-HELP (4357)**, Monday through Friday, 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM (MT). Our staff may need to call you back, but they'd love to speak with you.

**Focus on the Family's Christian Counselor Network**

Search for licensed Christian counselors in your area: [FocusOnTheFamily.com/FindACounselor](http://FocusOnTheFamily.com/FindACounselor)

**PREPARE/ENRICH**

Life Innovations  
2660 Arthur Street  
Roseville, MN 55113  
800/331-1661  
[prepare-enrich.com](http://prepare-enrich.com)

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