

## Going Further

### @Home

- **Sacred Search**—Gary Thomas asks, “What if it’s not about who you marry, but why?” and casts a vision for building a relationship around a shared spiritual mission.
- **Between Now & Then**—Donny Mayo—A teaching series that takes a step-by-step approach to how a single desiring marriage can glorify God through singleness, dating and marriage. Go to [www.bellevue.org/youngadultsinglesmediaarchive](http://www.bellevue.org/youngadultsinglesmediaarchive) to listen online.
- **A Guy’s Guide to Marrying Well**—A short practical guide for men to help them become proactive about whether, how, and who to marry. Free download: [www.boundless.org/guys](http://www.boundless.org/guys)
- **A Girl’s Guide to Marrying Well**—A short, practical guide for women to help them become proactive about whether, how, and who to marry. Free download: [www.boundless.org/girls](http://www.boundless.org/girls)
- **Recommended website**—[www.boundless.org](http://www.boundless.org)—Webzine for young adults that includes articles about finding a godly spouse and dating according to biblical principles.

### @Church

- **Life Group**—Adults are invited to connect with others at 8:00, 9:20, and 11:00 a.m. Visit [www.bellevue.org](http://www.bellevue.org) for a current list of classes where you will experience biblical teaching, encouraging relationships, and fellowship opportunities.
- **Individual Plan**—Assess your level of intentionality over the last 90 days in a variety of areas—your walk with the Lord, your home and church life, your relationships, etc. This personal tool will assist you in planning specific next steps.

## Hope to Marry Proactively Pursuing Marriage



HomePoint

Pointers



# Proactively Pursuing Marriage

By Kurt Bruner, The Center for Strong Families

Most of us are called to marriage. It's the natural design for fulfilling our drive for companionship and sexuality. A significant priority for this season of your life is preparing for and moving toward a biblical marriage. An intentional path to finding a mate recognizes God is at work, but we have a responsibility to be faithful in the process.

## ***Step One: Seek direction within the Christian community***

We live in a day of hyper individualism where people feel very little sense of obligation to others. God calls us, however, to vibrant community within our families and within the body of Christ. That community is the source for much of our growth as Christians, and it's one of the best means for meeting a potential spouse and receiving guidance and support toward marriage. Even in a day of online dating, marriage experts still consider matches made by friends, family and churches to be among the best.

## ***Step Two: Move beyond recreational relationships***

One of the clearest messages for singles in the Bible is the call to sexual purity (1 Corinthians 6:13-18, Ephesians 5:3, and Colossians 3:5). Purity is proving to be a difficult challenge in a day when only a quarter of Christians are virgins when they marry. Sexual purity, however, is the primary means for intentionally moving toward marriage in a recreational relationship culture. Couples who stay sexually pure not only honor God but they avoid much of the confusion that plagues many of today's relationships and can push good marriages out of reach.

## ***Step Three: Seek the right kind of soul mate***

The National Marriage Project found 94% of young adults believe the person they marry should be their soul mate first and foremost. That pursuit leaves many looking in vain for the perfect person who is

specifically designed to complete them. The Bible and marriage research show the more important "soul" mate is someone who shares your spiritual commitment. Paul writes a potential spouse "*must belong to the Lord,*" 1 Corinthians 7:39. One pastor put it nicely when he said singles should seek someone with whom they are able to serve God better together than apart. Christians seeking a mate who shares his or her biblical values know "all have fallen short" so there's no sense in holding out for a perfect person. Further, they know instead of seeking someone to complete them, they are called to lay down their life for another. That makes for a much more realistic path to finding a good fit for marriage.

## ***Step four: Be proactive***

Living in purity and Christian community makes it easier to find a mate who shares your spiritual values, but there's more you can do as a steward of your future marriage. Titus 2 encourages young men and women to learn from older men and women. In addition to Christian discipleship, you can ask mentors for candid feedback about how you can improve in a variety of areas to be more prepared for marriage. There's nothing wrong with asking mentors to keep you in mind as they become aware of other singles seeking a godly spouse. Some of your best opportunities to be proactive will come out of faithful prayer. Men have distinct responsibility in proactively finding a mate. Genesis 2:24 says a man will leave his parents and cleave to his wife. Proverbs 18:22 says, "He who finds a wife, finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord." Notice it doesn't say "he who stumbles over a wife" as if it is a happenstance occurrence. God calls men to seek out women of character and show leadership in pursuing marriage. Specifically, men should be willing to take the risk of rejection. No one likes to hear "no," but it's a risk men of faith and leadership should be willing to face.