**Intentional Dating, Starting the Pursuit**

Below is an excerpt from the Intentional Relationships Bible study, Chapter 11 on Intentional Dating. To read more on each point, order your copy today!

**Before you start dating:**

**• It’s important that you have spent the time working on yourself, including all of the relationships in your life, such as family, work, and friends.**

Note:Chapters 1-10 will help you in your walk with the Lord, reveal any areas of your relationships that need change, and discover red, yellow, and green flags.

*“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.” – Psalm 139:23 (NIV)*

**• Have you identified an accountability partner?**

Note:Throughout the study, we teach you the importance of having wise counsel from those you trust. This is important for all of your relationships.

 *“Plans go wrong for lack of advice; many advisers bring success.” – Proverbs 15:22 (NLT)***• Have you prayed?** Have you honestly spent time seeking God about this person, and whether or not you should move forward? Have you asked for God’s peace, His wisdom, and direction? The number reason our relationships struggle is getting ahead of God and his best.

Note:We talk more about this in Chapter 2, God, our first intentional relationship.

 *“If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.“ – James 1:5 (NIV)*

**• How is your health?** This means everything from physical, mental, spiritual to emotional health. Note:Chapters 2-6 talk about why our relationships fail, our identity, how God designed our genders and their differences, as well as blind spots. Often we are not ready to date because we are still struggling with our identity, emotional issues, holding on to our past, etc.

 *“Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.” – 1 Timothy 4:8 (NLT)*

**• If you have children, have you considered them?** When children are in the picture, they need to be protected from bonding with multiple people as potential parents.

Note:Having an Intentional Friendship™ (Chapter 10) can help protect not only your heart but the heart of your kids.

 *“Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.“ – Psalm 127:3 (ESV)*

**• Ask them out.** This may seem obvious, but we have found that people often send mixed messages or make assumptions about what they are doing when it comes to dating. So, make it clear you want to move from an Intentional Friendship to dating.

Note:Chapter 11 goes into tons of great detail about intentional dating, including the 2nd date and forward and, when it ends, the next step.

 *“So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” – Luke 11:9 (NIV)*

**• Who is paying, and who is driving?** This cultural question differs depending on how you were raised, your generation, financial ability, and what you may have already discussed in your Intentional Friendship.

Note:In Chapter 2, we talk about those unrealistic expectations that often lead to miscommunication. Would it be great to learn how to be realistic about ALL of our relationships, including family, work, and friends? Then when we get to the date part, we are experts.

 *“For we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord’s sight but also in the sight of man.” – 2 Corinthians 8:21 (ESV)*

**• Hygiene and appearance.** I know this should be something everyone knows, but to be honest, we don’t. As friends, we should help each other in this area, so it isn't an issue when we feel led to start dating.

Note:Chapter 9 talks about friendship and the importance of speaking the truth to each other.

*“Before a young woman’s turn came to go into King Xerxes, she had to complete twelve months of beauty treatments prescribed for the women, six months with oil of myrrh and six with perfumes and cosmetics.”*

*– Esther 2:12 (NIV)*

**• Be creative and have fun.** Nobody goes on a date to be bored, so plan ahead.

 *“A joyful heart is good medicine.” – Proverbs 17:22 (ESV)*

**• Talk less and listen more.** Continue to ask open-ended questions.

Note:At the end of the study, we have over 650 questions on every topic you can think of. While the questions are not meant to go in order or all used, they are a great guideline and help when spending time together. These questions could even be used in all of your relationships.

 *“Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak...” – James 1:19 (ESV)*

**• Mobile devices.** So what is more important, your phone or the person you are with?

 *“Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works...“ – Titus 2:7 (ESV)*

**• Set up boundaries.** Boundaries are needed for all relationships.

Note:We spend a considerable amount of time talking about them in Chapter 7.

Today, decide to date the way God has designed by being intentional in your relationship with Him first and then all others.