

Dover

Daily

DEVOTIONALS

Growing
Together in
God's Word!

Dover Devotions:

Sunday's sermon was a message about the importance of marriage in the eyes of God. It's clear that finding a husband or wife is not something to be taken lightly and that God should play a crucial role in the process. The story of Abraham and Isaac was used as an example of how important it is to find a spouse who shares your faith and values and the importance of being equally yoked with other believers. We concluded with a reminder that, just like in the story of Isaac and Rebekah, God is always pursuing us, and inviting us for us to respond to His call.

Monday 8/28: Trusting God's Timing and Guidance in Marriage

Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years. And the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh, that I may make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, but will go to my country and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac." - Genesis 24:1-4

Choosing a husband or wife is a decision that will impact your future in countless ways. Just like Abraham, who was determined to find the best match for his son Isaac, we too should be intentional in our search for a partner. God wants us to make wise choices in our relationships, and that includes finding someone who shares our faith and values. Abraham recognized the importance of this and carefully selected a wife for Isaac who would support and encourage him in his walk with God. So, take a page out of Abraham's book and be deliberate in your search for a husband or wife who will be your rock through thick and thin!

Questions:

1. How can Abraham's approach to finding a wife for Isaac teach us about seeking God's guidance in our relationships?
2. What are some ways in which shared faith and values can strengthen a marriage?

3. How does the principle of not being unequally yoked (2 Corinthians 6:14) apply to our relationships today?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for guiding us in our relationships. Help us trust in Your timing and seek partners who share our faith and values. May our marriages be rooted in You and glorify Your name. In Jesus' name, amen.

Tuesday 8/29: Seeking a Godly Partner

Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, taking all sorts of choice gifts from his master; and he arose and went to Mesopotamia to the city of Nahor. And he made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time when women go out to draw water. And he said, "O Lord, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham. Behold, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. Let the young woman to whom I shall say, 'Please let down your jar that I may drink,' and who shall say, 'Drink, and I will water your camels'—let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master." - Genesis 24:10-14

The servant's approach to finding a wife for Isaac was thoughtful and deliberate. He did not resort to disagreeable places like brothels, pagan temples, or wild parties to find a spouse for Isaac. Instead, he chose to go to the well, where diligent and hard-working women gathered to draw water and attend to household affairs. This choice speaks volumes about the servant's understanding of the qualities that make a good partner, such as responsibility, virtue, and industriousness. Sadly today, many people are looking for love in all the wrong places.

This story offers parents an opportunity to teach their children a valuable lesson about the importance of carefully choosing where to seek out potential partners. As Pastor Crowder said in the sermon, you can't spend all your time in McDonalds and expect to get filet mignon.

Discussion:

1. How can we ensure that we are looking for relationships in places where godly values are upheld?
2. Can you think of a personal experience where God's providence led you to meet someone unexpectedly.

Prayer:

Dear Lord, guide us to seek relationships in places where Your values are honored. Help us trust in Your providence and lead us to people who will support our faith journey. May our relationships bring glory to You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Wednesday 8/30: Specific Prayers for Guidance

And he said, "O Lord, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham. Behold, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. Let the young woman to whom I shall say, 'Please let down your jar that I may drink,' and who shall say, 'Drink, and I will water your camels'—let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master." - Genesis 24:12-14

Abraham's servant exhibited remarkable wisdom by not merely choosing the right location, but also by seeking the Lord's guidance through prayer. Just as the servant entreated the Lord for clarity and direction, we too are encouraged to approach our search for companionship with a heart inclined toward prayerful communion with God. When we lift our desires and hopes to Him, aligning them with His will, we open the door for Him to respond, guiding us with His wisdom and insight.

As we engage in the process of seeking relationships, whether for ourselves or guiding others, let us grasp the profound reality that God yearns to answer our prayers when they echo the desires of His heart. The servant's story prompts us to approach our conversations with the Almighty with specificity, seeking His clear guidance and aligning our desires with His divine purpose. In this, we find the assurance that God's plan is tailor-made for us.

Discussion:

1. How can specific and fervent prayers for guidance impact our decisions in relationships?
2. Share a time when God answered a specific prayer request related to relationships.
3. What are some practical ways we can grow in our ability to discern God's guidance through prayer?

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, help us pray fervently and specifically for Your guidance in our relationships. Give us the faith to trust in Your perfect plan and timing. May our prayers lead us to partners who honor You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Thursday 8/31 - The True and Greater Marriage:

Before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her water jar on her shoulder. The young woman was very attractive in appearance, a maiden whom no man had known. She went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up. Then the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please give me a little water to drink

from your jar.” She said, “Drink, my lord.” And she quickly let down her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink. When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.” So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw water, and she drew for all his camels. The man gazed at her in silence to learn whether the Lord had prospered his journey or not. When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring weighing a half shekel, and two bracelets for her arms weighing ten gold shekels, and said, “Please tell me whose daughter you are. Is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?” She said to him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor.” She added, “We have plenty of both straw and fodder, and room to spend the night.” The man bowed his head and worshiped the Lord - Genesis 24:15-26

The servant's unwavering dedication to finding a suitable bride for Isaac mirrors the lengths to which God goes to rescue and redeem His creation. God, in His infinite love, sent His Son Jesus to bridge the chasm between Himself and us, pursuing us despite our shortcomings. The servant's careful selection of Rebekah among many reflects God's personal and individualized pursuit of each of us. Just as Rebekah was chosen out of love, we are chosen by God out of His abundant grace, beckoned to receive the salvation and love He offers.

Rebekah's response of faith to Isaac's proposal beautifully echoes the call of the gospel. In embracing Isaac and entering into a covenant of marriage, she demonstrated her trust in the servant's account and her willingness to commit herself to a new life. Similarly, our response to God's invitation through Christ involves surrender to His love and grace. This acceptance of Christ's proposal isn't just a transaction; it's a life-altering commitment that shapes our eternal destiny. As we accept Christ's proposal, we embark on a journey of profound transformation, united with Christ in a relationship that offers eternal significance, unending love, and ultimate fulfillment.

Discussion:

1. How does the story of Isaac and Rebekah's marriage foreshadow Christ's relationship with His Church?
2. How can understanding the depth of Christ's love for us impact our relationships with others?

Closing Prayer:

Gracious God, thank you for pursuing us with Your unfailing love. Help us respond to Your invitation to be united with Christ in a spiritual marriage. May our lives reflect the depth of Your love to those around us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Friday 9/1 - Navigating Unequally Yoked Relationships

Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? - 2 Corinthians 6:14

If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. - 1 Corinthians 7:13

In the journey of relationships, we may find ourselves in situations where our partner's faith differs from our own. The Bible advises against being unequally yoked with unbelievers, yet sometimes we encounter this challenge through no fault of our own. Just as the Apostle Paul addressed this issue, we are reminded that if we find ourselves in such a relationship, our faith can still shine as a beacon of light. We're called to show Christ's love through our actions, pray for our partner's salvation, and create a godly environment for our family.

Discussion:

1. How can we balance our commitment to our faith with our commitment to our partner in an unequally yoked relationship?
2. What does it mean to be a witness of Christ's love in the midst of differing beliefs?
3. Share stories or examples of how you've seen faith influence positive changes in relationships.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, grant us strength and wisdom in navigating unequally yoked relationships. Help us show Your love through our actions and guide us in creating an environment that honors You. May our faith inspire change and draw others to You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Saturday 9/2 - God's Timing and Sovereignty in Relationships

"He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord." - Proverbs 18:22

God's timing and sovereignty extend to every aspect of our lives, including relationships. The Scripture reminds us that finding a spouse is a blessing from the Lord. Just as Abraham's servant trusted God's timing and found a wife for Isaac, we are encouraged to trust in God's provision. Whether single, married, or in the process of seeking a partner, we can rest assured that God's plan is perfect and His blessings are worth waiting for.

Discussion:

1. How does recognizing that finding a spouse is a blessing from the Lord impact our perspective on relationships?
2. Share personal experiences of how God's timing has been evident in your relationships or the relationships of those around you.

Prayer:

Gracious God, thank you for the blessings You bestow, including the gift of relationships. Help us trust in Your perfect timing and sovereignty as we navigate this aspect of our lives. May our faith grow stronger as we wait on Your plan. In Jesus' name, amen.