

Week 1 – Brian's journey, Operating Systems, the World's Road Map for Male-Female Relationships

Week 2 – God's High Road – A Road Map for Healthy Male-Female Relationships

Week 3 – 9 Phases of Relationships – How to Build on Solid Ground Instead of Shifting Sands

Week 4 – Ancient Wisdom for Our Modern World – Understanding Men, Women, & Relationships (#1)

Week 5 – Ancient Wisdom for Our Modern World – Understanding Men, Women, & Relationships (# 2)

SINGLE & SINGLE-AGAIN OPERATING SYSTEMS Time to upgrade?

- 1. Cocooning** Have a hard crust on the outside, but on the inside they're hurting and trying to heal. Their world is sometimes very dark and is without color. Minimal interaction with others. See Micah 7:8 *Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light.*
- 2. Cave dwelling** Living a lonely, cold, solitary, and barren life. Feel sorry for themselves. They've got everything they need inside their cave, and they don't need anyone. Only come out of the cave to get food, hunt (shopping = find what they want, kill it, drag it home), and go to work. Says as little as possible to people. See 1 Kings 19:9 *The LORD said, "What are you doing here?"*
- 3. Carousing** Pursuing people in bars, groups, public places/events/activities to try to fill their emptiness and fulfill their lusts. See Prov 7:21-27 *Destruction awaits you.*
- 4. Crisis & crying** Living life from crisis to crisis, always feeling needy, tears and crying, and crying out to a few to always be of help. See Ps 56:8 *God sees our sorrows and collect our tears.*
- 5. Cruising** Constantly on the lookout for "someone" or the "one" everywhere they go – at work, shopping, public places, church, or events. Attraction is based on people's physical appearance. Men see Judges 14-16 Women see Ruth 3:10-11
- 6. Crossing over** Pursuing unhealthy relationships with the same sex or different aged people because of hurtful or abusive relationships in the past. See Romans 1:24-28
- 7. Consuming focus** Over fixation with one aspect of life -- career, kids, possessions, projects, house, health, hobbies, sports, activities, church (keeps "busy" so they don't have time to feel, process, think, pray, reflect, focus). See Luke 10:41-42 *There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it.*
- 8. Constantly online** Virtual "relationships" – spending large amounts of time making connections with people you will never meet in person (or are very unlikely to ever meet) through live video games, chat rooms, online dating sites, fantasy world sites. See Prov 12:11 *Those who chase fantasies have no sense.*
- 9. Connections through concerned people** Meeting someone or several people through blind dates or setups through the encouragement of well meaning friends, family, and co-workers.
- 10. Christ-centered** Intentionally coming to Christ and connecting to the LORD through daily time in His Word, being in prayer about all things, experiencing His love, looking to God for His leadership and guidance, staying connected with good and godly people through church/groups/relationships, and seeking to be a blessing to others. See Eph 2:8,10 *God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God...For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

With God's help any tragedy can be turned into a triumph, a mess can become a message, pain can be turned into gain, scars can become stars, and sadness can be turned to gladness.

God's windshield for your future is bigger and brighter than the rear-view mirror of your past.

THE WORLD'S LOW ROAD(S) FOR MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS

Prov 14:12 Before every man there lies a wide and pleasant road that seems right but ends in death (destruction).

Matt 7:13 Wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction.

Door #1 – Worldly Dating

Focuses on physical attraction, chemistry, or availability.

Frequently starts out with little knowledge of the other person. Growing physical/sexual intimacy is expected. A person's Christian faith is often left out or left behind. Chemistry is more important than someone's character and Christian commitment. Hormones are more important than holiness. Feelings are more important than your faith. This type of dating relationship is like bath water – starts out hot, but after awhile it's not so hot.

2 Timothy 2:22 *Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.*

Recommendation: Sometimes temptation needs to be fought not with your head or heart, but with your heels (flee!).

Door #2 – Friends w/Benefits

Socially and sexually active with someone or several people.

1 Cor 6:9-11 *Don't you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin...or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God. Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

Door #3 – Bullet train to fantasyland

Any attention or time someone gives someone has the other person already planning the wedding in your life together. See Prov 30:18-19 Hard to understand...the way of a man and a maiden.

Door #4 – Physical flings and hooking up

Trying to satisfy your sexual drive and desires with anyone available.

1 Thess 4:3-5 *God wants you to be holy. You must keep away from sex sins. God wants each of you to use his body in the right way by keeping it holy and by respecting it. You should not use it to please your own desires like the people who do not know God.*

Door #5 – Pornography

Ps 119:37 *Turn my eyes from worthless things, and give me life through your word.*

Philippians 4:8 *Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.*

Door #6 – Playing house

Moving in with someone to “save” money, “test” the relationship (i.e. “people don't buy a car without first taking it for a test drive”), or have the attitude you don't need a wedding ring or a piece of paper to live with someone.

1 Cor 6:18-20 *Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.*

NEXT WEEK: God's High Road – A Road Map for Healthy Male-Female Relationships

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Ice breaker question (everyone to answer): What is something you're looking forward to in the new year?
- Group questions about the message.** Note: have 3 or 4 people answer each question (note: 1 or 2 should not dominate and everyone should contribute something during the discussion)
2. What was helpful about this teaching?
 3. Did you find anything confusing?
 4. What does this teaching show you about people?
 5. What does this teaching show you about God?
 6. How might this teaching cause you to live differently in the future?
 7. Is there someone you will you tell about this teaching in the next week? Why?