

Single & Single-Again TUES NITES Meal, Message & Mixer

Friendship, Romance, and Relationships That Work

Jane Stolz' video teaching, handout, and audio Mp3 file of this message will be online to share with others at www.christiansinglesindenver.com

The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being Genesis 2:7

What exactly does it mean to be a man? To most men, it means to be adventurous and untamed, constantly looking for something in life to overcome. When life is too easy, a man becomes bored. When life is too challenging, he gets discouraged. A man is capable of remarkable feats of strength and courage. He's equally capable of astonishing feats of laziness and neglect.

When God made man, He made him outside the garden, in the wilderness of life. John Eldredge, in his book *Wild at Heart*, captures the essence of what it means to be a man when he writes, "Adam, if you'll remember, was created outside the Garden, in the wilderness...Man was born in the outback from the untamed part of creation...Adventure, with all its danger and wildness, is a deeply spiritual longing written into the soul of a man." In the heart of every man is the love of adventure. He wants to conquer something, overcome something, discover something, kill something, or invent something. He's never interested in just keeping the status quo. God created him to subdue the earth and cultivate the ground. Man is designed to face the wild things of life and bring them under his submission. The last victory of his life is never enough to satisfy his soul. He needs a new horizon to discover each and every day of his life.

Men have natural confidence in their ability to find their way.

<p>Question: How many roads must a man travel down before he admits he's lost? Answer: No man is ever really lost. He just hasn't found his way out yet!</p>
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Men enjoy movies that are filled with danger! It's safe to watch a movie filled with dangerous scenes and outrageous adventures. The man who wins the woman's heart while defeating the enemy with death-defying stunts is the ultimate man because there is no limit to his success or to his ability to overcome the major challenges of life. They love the hero. James Bond, Superman, and Indiana Jones encompass all that they find exciting. Men long to find an adventure that will capture their hearts. They want to climb tall mountains, meet beautiful women that find them fascinating, conquer the masters of disaster, and figure out the impossible situation.

Men like to work on projects one at a time. He tends to get immersed in the project. He forgets that anything else is going on in his life, and he loses himself in the work. When he can work this way, he finds life to be very satisfying. When the project is over, he will stand back and admire his handiwork. He will probably find the people who mean the most to him and ask them to join him in the admiration. Every comment about the beauty of the finished product increases the sense of accomplishment. However; every criticism of the process deflates his pride and makes him wonder if it really was worth the effort.

So how can a man learn to handle the anger? How can he avoid addictive behaviors? How can he gain the strength and courage to stay in a relationship rather than abandon it?

Seek God – God knows what it means to be a man. He understands you're your love of adventure. He loves the aggressive part of your soul, and He knows how to channel that aggression into productive and healthy pursuits.

Find the dream that resides in your heart – Men were made for adventure. They look for excitement. If there is not a real challenge to face in life, they create one. When they can't fight a noble battle in life, you pick fights with people you love or you turn passive in an attempt to dull the pain of a boring life. A man without a dream to chase is much more susceptible to being angry than a man who is caught up in a great adventure.

Learn to look for options – Men get angry because they feel like failures. They have one solution to a problem, and that solution isn't working. Instead of looking for other ways to solve the problem, they get angry in an attempt to force their way to work.

Admit early when you are angry – Men feel weak when they admit anger. They feel they're giving up control and admitting they can't handle a situation. When a man learns to admit early in conversation that he's getting angry, those who care about him can help him find constructive ways to express his anger. The vulnerability raises his chances of having satisfying relationships, which increases his confidence and lowers his frustration.

A man at his best, is refined and wild at the same time. He can be professional and polished while dreaming of the rugged outdoors. He can maintain a responsible life, but he will never be captivated by it. His heart will always yearn for something bigger than life even though he must master the rigors of his daily existence. He's always looking to the horizon. He can be relied upon, but he can never be fully tamed. A man without a dream in his heart is a dead man walking.

"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life." Proverbs 4:23

The Lord said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." The Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

Eve got quite the response: The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man” Genesis 2:23

In the garden, Eve found herself. She knew her contribution. The garden needed tending. However; before the fall, we can't find any records of bugs or weeds, so tending was much easier! It was a case of the beautiful (Eve) creating more beauty (The garden). One of women's greatest roles in life is to bring beauty and order wherever they go. In one Gallup poll men said one of the top three things they appreciated about women is that they were well organized. Because women process life the way we do, we can see all the loose ends that need to be connected. We can create order out of disorder. Emotionally healthy women intrinsically desire to leave the world better than they found it. We want people to be glad we were here.

Although single men surveyed appreciated women's beauty and their organizational skills, the quality they admired most in women was their relationship skills. The respondents used many different words to describe it (kind, tender, empathetic, loving, nurturing, sweet, nice, a good listener), but all the descriptions fall into one main category: Compassion.

The woman God made was not taken from man's head to rule over him, nor from under his feet to be trampled upon by him, but from his side that she might be his equal, from under his arm that she might receive his protection, and from near his heart that she might own and command his love.

Let's look closer at the results of the fall:

Pain in Childbearing – It is what it is ladies. I think we can pretty well accept it.

The desire to control – Discontentment – a woman's desire to control life – that can be the ruin of many good relationships.

Women have the problem of wanting control. It's my way or the highway. Part of the curse is that we women have control issues. We naturally want to rule the universe. We tend to think our ideas are best, even when there is no moral or ethical reason to think so. We still want control over preferences

Male Bashing – Currently, we have a problem with male-bashing in our culture. Attacking the males seems to be one of the few politically correct slams you can get away with. It's open season on the men. Have women been trained to undervalue the contributions of men? Or have our experiences with a few men jaded our view of all men?

There are a few heroes – The deaths of the nearly 400 would-be rescuers at the World Trade Center disaster were men. The passengers who overpowered the hijackers on Flight 93 were men. Throughout history, men have been doing heroic things, saving countless lives. Think about the soldiers sent far away to Afghanistan to find Osama Bin Laden. They too were mostly men.

What do women want – Most appreciated were a man's strength and ability to protect. Next was his ability to cope or to step back and be objective. Ladies, we can't have it both ways. We

can't want men to be just like us and also expect them to step up and do the hard work, the rescue work, the dirty work. That's not fair. God created them to provide and protect.

Soap opera Syndrome – most likely created if you grew up in a home with a lot of conflict. Your perception is that conflict is correlated with love. It doesn't feel like love unless there is a bit of pain. The trouble with being a drama queen is that not many Kings want that kind of constant crisis. Most men want to know life will be easier, not harder, if they date you. If a guy is constantly on pins and needles, wondering if the smallest comment will set you off, you will have a quick turnover of men in your life. Or you will find a man to include in your drama of conflict.

Life feels out of control – At some point all of us ask ourselves – Who am I – Why am I here on earth – What do I do with this ticking biological clock? If we don't seek to answer these questions, our personal pain lures us into less healthy venues of life. We may become depressed. Or we may have suppressed anger, expressed through a sharp tongue or a sarcastic wit.

Some women develop a cynical view of their role with men.

Men are like fine wine. They all start out like grapes, and it's a woman's job to stomp on them and keep them in the dark until they mature into something you'd like to have dinner with.....

If you need for someone else to change in order to be happy in a relationship with them, you may be setting yourself up for unhappiness. We can all change and should seek growth in our lives. The key question is - does the other person genuinely seek the change for themselves? If they do, then there may be compatibility. However, if you insist upon their change and they aren't signed on, you may be walking in to a wall. This becomes more problematic of course when this occurs in a committed relationship or marriage. But if you're just exploring a new relationship and feeling they need to change, ask yourself the following: If I'm not happy with them as they are, why am I pursuing this relationship?

Ladies, it all comes down to this: Your security has to be in Christ – not your boyfriend. No man will be able to read your mind and tell you what you want to hear. No man will be able to always know when he did or said something to hurt you. No man will be able to protect you from every hurt and inconvenience. To expect a guy to come running when you feel panicked, hurt, or frustrated is unrealistic.

Identify who you are in Christ – As you see yourself and your life from God's point of view, you will begin to value yourself more.

Identify the core issue - by discovering why you fear failure, have a hard time releasing control, mistrust men, or choose unhealthy men, you will be released to grow in areas that were shut down emotionally.

Identify new tools - Good tools and resources to better equip you for healthy relationships. This may involve hard work. Don't fall into the "girls just want to have fun" syndrome. They run to parties, bars, clubs, and groups looking for fun only.

Why Change – We have a God in heaven who is our Daddy and who loves us! He loves us unconditionally, just for who we are, simply because He created us and He wanted a relationship with us. Recommit your life to Christ and God will transform you in so many ways in a very short time. Quit looking to men to fill your need to feel loved.

Resting and Relaxing Can be a Key to Love

Work hard, play hard. Successful couples find ways to rest and relax together. Stress is a daily part of relationships. Knowing how men and women deal with stress can save your dating life! Too often, people in relationships "share" their stress in unhealthy ways.

Romance – Her Style

Men, if you're looking to romance a wonderful woman, remember her need to communicate with you. Find a great place to talk, no - to listen to her heart. Long walks on the beach or near a lake, strolls in the moonlight, a cozy corner of a coffee shop, or a lingering candlelit dinner for two will all do. Make romantic sentimental connections. Listen to the woman in your life; take notes after dates. If she says she collects something or always wanted to try something – arrange it! If you forget, call her girlfriends – they will know every tiny hope or dream she ever had!

Romance – His Style

Keep it simple! Just tie together some of his favorite things – sports, good food, exercise.... A perfect day for him would include those elements. Keep in mind, guys like to dwell in places they are successful in. A day spent on one of his favorite hobbies, whether skiing or waxing his c

Good Counsel = Great Love

If God is leading you into a more serious relationship with someone, then deliberately answer the question together: Are we right for one another? Pre – engagement counseling always better than pre – marital counseling... Pre – engagement counseling will help you feel confident about making a decision to marry or not to marry. Once you're engaged, wedding plans are in the making.

Date God's Way –

Brian and I both have gone over things that give great example of why - If you haven't heard them, you can pull them up on our website – Great Material – Great Advice.

If you honor God, God will honor you. Running your relationships according to God's plan may or may not mean an "I do" is down your path, but it does mean God will guide you and bless you along the way.

Table Discussion Questions

1. **Discounting the opposite gender is a common malady in today's society. As a group, brainstorm together and see how many answers you can get to these questions:**

**What are positive qualities of the male species?
How do they benefit life?**

Women: What did you learn about men that will help you relate to them better?

Men: What did you learn, or what were you reminded of about your gender that will help you navigate relationships with women?

2. **As a group, brainstorm the answer to this Question:
What are the best qualities of women as a gender?
How do they benefit life?**

Women sense their worth easier when they pursue their character, compassion, and contribution. Which of these areas do you need to look more closely at? Your Character? Your compassion? Your Contribution?

3. **How would you encourage the men in your World to keep a sense of adventure?**
4. **What adjustments do you want to make that you think will improve your relationships?**

HELPFUL TIPS for Great Table Discussions Each table should have a designated Table Host.

1. **Use God's ear-to-mouth ratio:**

Listen two times more than you speak. 1 or 2 people should not dominate the time, and EVERYONE should contribute during the discussion.

2. **Smile and be friendly.**

Avoid excessive complaining about people or personal problems.

3. **God's grace rules the day**

Recognize that everyone will not always agree – be gracious and give grace to one another. People are at different places in their spiritual walk and in their life journey.

4. **Moving the discussion along.**

Table host/facilitators are to move the discussion along. They have permission to limit any negative comments, to invite people to answer a question, to ask someone for their perspective, to limit the amount of time some people speak, and to move on to the next question.

5. **Help for the hurting:**

This is a supportive group, but it is not a support group or a therapy session. But if someone is really hurting, take a moment and have