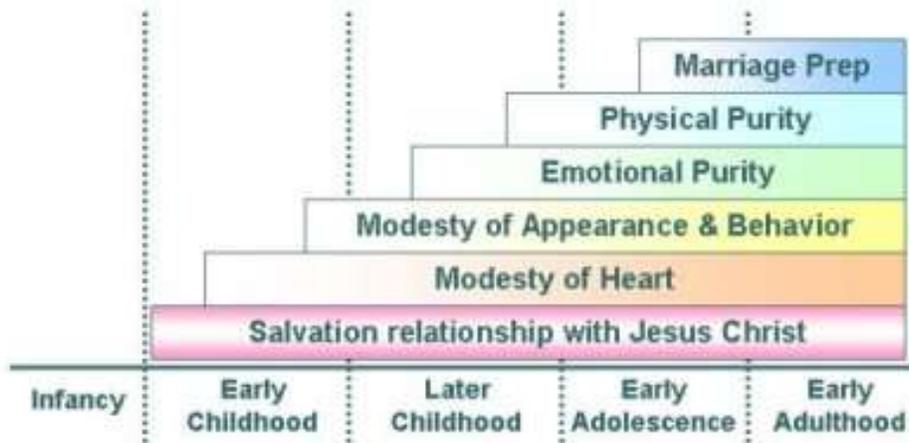


Between Modesty and Marriage: Marriage Preparation

Reviewing the Timeline

- Preparation for marriage is the natural culmination of all of the previous levels of preparation.



What is Marriage Preparation?

Definition:

"Wisely utilizing the young adult years in order to fully prepare for future ministry with a godly spouse."

A purpose for life provides

- Something to live for...
- Something to work for...
- Something to hope for.

Using Time Wisely

Reject the world's concept of the adolescent years as a time for:

- Having fun! (selfish pleasure)
- Avoiding responsibility
- A holding pattern before "real" adult life.



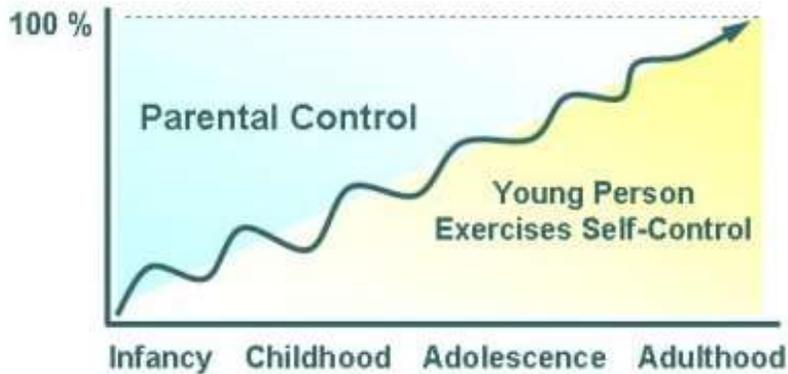
Replace it with a godly concept of the adolescent years as a time for:

- A vibrant personal relationship with Jesus Christ
- Putting the finishing touches on character training
- Gradually accepting adult responsibilities
- Developing poise & self-confidence



The Transition of Control

A transition of control occurs between parents and teens:



Approaches to Marriage Preparation



A tendency toward immodesty and worldly behavior patterns most often leads to a "dating" approach.



A focus on modesty and emotional & physical purity most often leads to a "courtship" approach.

Personal Preparation for Marriage

- Train sons and daughters to become the kind of person who would attract the caliber of young man or woman they desire as a marriage partner.
- Emphasize building and practicing a strong faith and Christ-like character.
- Discover the traits that would bring out the best in yourself, as well as harmonizing well with your own family.

Where Can I Develop These Traits and Skills?

Living in the context of a godly family is the best way to develop the qualities necessary for married life

- Patience and flexibility
- Communication skills
- Conflict resolution & yielding rights
- Sharing one another's burdens
- Unified team ministry

A Word About Daughters

Consider having daughters remain within the context of their own home and family until marriage:

- Under the father's protection and authority.
- Developing "helping" skills and attitudes required to make the home flourish.
- Cultivating a "gentle and quiet" spirit.
- Learning contentment



A Word About Sons

Consider having sons remain within the context of their own home and family until marriage:

- Under the father's guidance and influence.
- Developing familiarity with the routine life of early marriage.
- Practicing financial responsibility and vocational preparation.
- Learning how to comfort mother and sisters emotionally, and how to be a spiritual leader.



Practical Considerations

- Develop "qualifications" for a spouse. Use these as a basis for prayer. Involve parents in decisions regarding a future spouse.
- Discern the character of a potential spouse in the context of family relationships.
- Understand the stages leading up to marriage.

Stages Leading to Marriage

Mutual Interest

- Informal time of evaluation and prayer to discern the maturity, character, and goals of a potential spouse.
- Time to determine whether entering into a committed courtship is best for both young people.

"Courtship"

- Formal process in which a mature young man and woman (along with their parents) discern God's will for their future as life partners.
- Entered into with an understanding of eventual commitment to marriage.

Engagement

- Beginning with a formal proposal, this is the final stage leading up to the wedding day.
- A time for emotional honesty and planning a future life together.

Family Activity

- Use the last activity worksheet to evaluate what you think God would have you do in your family.
- Develop some "action points" that will guide you in putting your priorities into practice.