

Coming this Fall to LBAC

## *Marriage Builders*

*"Helping Couples Build a Loving Relationship the way God Intended!"*

- **Now is the time to invest in your marriage.**
- **Develop Bible based skills which build strong marriages.**
- **Understand what God wants for your marriage.**
- **Get to know other couples.**
- **Build lasting friendships with other couples.**
- **Twice-a-month, Fridays 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM.**
- **Meet in homes of 4-6 couples.**
- **Sign-ups begin in August.**
- **Marriage Builders will begin Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup>**
- **Childcare will be provided!**
- **Only \$11.00 for the "Keeping Your Covenant" workbook.**
- **For more information, contact or call:**
  - **Greg & Annette Foo ~ 562/420-9318**
  - **Randy & Nancy Hovey ~ 562/596-1951**



# Giving Away Your Crunchy Apple

Long Beach Alliance Church • July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2006 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**DO NOTHING FROM SELFISHNESS OR EMPTY CONCEIT, BUT WITH HUMILITY OF MIND REGARD ONE ANOTHER AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOURSELVES; DO NOT MERELY LOOK OUT FOR YOUR OWN PERSONAL INTERESTS, BUT ALSO FOR THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS.**  
~PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4 (NASB)

### 1) Focus #1: Christ-Centered Relationships

- A) God's plan from the beginning (Genesis 2:24) is supporting, building and encouraging relationships which are Christ centered -- especially the family (Psalm 78:5-8).
- B) The Christ-centered family is an example to the world of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:31-32). In other words, the world sees Jesus in our (family) relationships!
- C) God has not abandoned us! Rather, God reveals Himself to us (e.g. Song of Songs, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians, Ephesians) through Christ-centered relationships. Begin with Jesus!

## 2) Relationship Focus #2: Patience For God's Best

- A) Rather than seek completion in others (What are you looking for in...?), the Bible calls on Christ-centered people to be focused on Christ first, and their own relationship with Him (1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:1-12).
- B) For those who are seeking a relationship (and wondering what God is up to...) -- **BE PATIENT!** For those who are dating, courting, or engaged (and are tempted to rush...) -- **BE PATIENT!** For those who are married (and are wanting for more...) -- **BE PATIENT!**
- C) Spend your best time becoming the person God wants **YOU** to be! Worrying about others and what they are becoming is a waste of your time! **BE PATIENT** as God changes you into the person He has designed (2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 12:9-10).

## 3) Relationship Focus #3: Purity In God's Eyes

- A) Purity should distinguish all Christ-centered relationships (1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:7-8). However, the call to purity is "nuanced" for men and women in the Bible.
- i. Men are called to "inward purity" in the Bible. For instance, Job's "covenant with his eyes" (Job 31:1). Men are not to "look" on women with lust (Matthew 5:28).
- ii. Why? Because Christian women are united with Christ **FIRST** (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:17-20). Lust (idolatry of a woman in front of God) is a clear violation of God's plan!
- iii. Men, **FLEE IMMORALITY** in your attraction and observation of women! To do so is active worship of God, and shows you are God's man (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18)!

## LADIES

- i. Women are called to "outward purity" in the Bible. For instance, women are called to dress modestly (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10). Women are called to be careful in their communication (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:11, 4:7, & Titus 2:3).
  - ii. Why? Because Christian men are united with Christ **FIRST** (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:17-20). Visual appearance is like wine in the Song of Solomon! While men are at least 51% responsible for what they "drink" (observe), women are at least 49% responsible for what they offer as a drink (appearance). Christian women don't let Christian men "drink" too much! Protect our men!
  - iii. Women, **SHOW RESTRAINT** in how you dress! To do so is active worship of God, and shows you are God's woman (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18)!
- B) The Christian who refuses to flee immorality and show restraint in their relationships is destined for destruction -- **DO NOT EVEN ASSOCIATE WITH THEM** (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5:11, 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3).

## 4) Relationship Focus #4: Embracing Servanthood

- A) Humility and service are biblical (John 13:5-16, Proverbs 16:18, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:5), but not popular in any culture.
- B) When a couple is dating, courting, or engaged -- serving the other person comes quite easily! However, over time the simple call of Philippians 2:3-4 can get lost.
- C) God's Word says that the way you treat others is actually how you are treating God (Matthew 25:31-46) -- especially in the marriage relationship (Ephesians 5:15-33). What "crunchy apple" will you give to express your love (to Jesus)?

## GENTLEMEN