

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this meditation and memorisation series you may learn how to build up the Christian Church. Two teachers will meditate on the meaning of a Bible verse about one characteristic of a believer in Jesus Christ and then memorise it together. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme.

In this sixth series, the Bible teaches how Christians prepare themselves for marriage. The topic of today's meditation and memorisation is: FOR A CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE BOTH MUST HAVE THE SAME LIFE GOALS.

(S) **POINT 1. MEDITATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

The new Bible verse that we will meditate and memorise is Amos 3:3. We will meditate the truths in the Bible together.

The memorisation verse is: Same life goals. Amos 3:3. ““Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?” Amos 3:3.

Just think about these words: How can two people walk in the same direction unless they agree to walk in the same direction? How can two people begin an important new activity, unless they agree to get involved in that activity? How can two people remain in the same activity, unless they agree to remain together? How can two people make an important change in their lives, unless they agree together to make that change? The only possible way to do all these things, is *first to agree* together, and *then to do* these things together! A boy and a girl, or a man and a woman can only continue to walk together throughout their whole life, when they agree about the goals they set for their whole life. A boy and a girl, a man and a woman should set specific goals for their friendship, their “dating” and their marriage!

(T) First. The man and the woman should have the same goals for their “friendship” relationship. “Friendship” is a special relationship between two or more people, in which they enjoy one another’s company and do things together in an unselfish way. Friendship is very much determined by how people think, feel and behave! People are not easy to understand. After all, God made people like himself (Gen 1:27). Since we cannot comprehend God, we probably don’t know much about ourselves either. To help our understanding of ourselves, we sometimes talk about our “spiritual-self”, our “emotional-self”, our “physical-self”, our “intellectual-self” and our “social self”. But it is important to keep in mind that these “selves” are not separate (Mk 12:30). We are one complete human being and we cannot separate for example our “spiritual-self” from our “physical-self”. How we behave “physically” will determine how we are “socially”, “intellectually”, “emotionally” and “spiritually”! And vice versa!

(S) Make it your goal that your spiritual-self determines your social-self.

All of life is sacred and precious in God’s eyes, whether we are working, studying, playing sports, going to church, making friends, etc. Therefore, how we make use of our senses and talents affects all that we are and do. We cannot do something to our “body” without affecting our “mind”. What we “think” affects how we “feel”. What we “feel” affects how we “look” and “act”. The health of our spirit affects how we relate to others. Friendship is no exception. What we “believe” and “think” determines how we “behave” in friendship relationships. And how we “behave” effects how we “think” and “feel” in friendship relationships. Therefore, a Christian man or woman should make it their goal that what they “believe” in the Bible should determine how they “behave” in this world. They should make it their goal that their personal convictions determine their values, their motives and their behaviour!

(T) Make it your goal to build up Christian friendship relationships.

Christian friendship consists of treating one another like Christian brothers and sisters. We live as if we are in the same family. This kind of friendship continues throughout your whole life, either in marriage or in remaining single. The objective of healthy friendships between men and women is to build up the Church, which is the body of Christ. According to 2 Corinthians 10:8, in God’s kingdom, Christians build one another up and they do not tear one another down! Developing healthy brother-sister friendships in the Church is the prerequisite for developing healthy “dating” or “special friendships” and eventually healthy marriages between men and women.

(S) How can you build up healthy brother-sister friendships?

According to Mark 3:31-35 it is your responsibility to do God’s will. According to Luke 9:23-26 it is your responsibility to obey and serve Jesus Christ. According to Hebrews 3:12-15 and Hebrews 10:24-25, it is your responsibility to love and do good works. According to 1 Timothy 5:1-2 it is your responsibility to treat the other person with purity and respect. According to 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 it is your responsibility not to associate with other women and men who call themselves “Christians”, but who behave like non-Christians. And according to Proverbs 27:5-6,17 it is your responsibility to correct your friend and to sharpen her or his personality.

(T) Second. The man and the woman should have the same goals for “dating”.

“Dating” is the special friendship relationship between one man and one woman, usually with a view to find out whether God wants them to get married. During the period of “dating”, the man and the woman should have the “same goals for dating”. Before they start “to date”, each one of them should make important decisions about seven important goals for their life.

Your first important decision.

You should consider whether God wants you to remain unattached or single for a certain period of time. This teaching is found in 1 Corinthians 7:1-7,32-35, Matthew 19:10-12 and Isaiah 54:1-5. According to these Bible passages, there are advantages to remaining unattached or single. By remaining unattached, single or unmarried for a certain period, you have the greatest opportunity to receive essential Christian training or gain experience in Christian service. Later, when God leads you to marry, you will be more mature as a person and more experienced in Christian living. Of course, God may call some of you to remain unmarried for life in order to fulfil a very special task for him.

(S) Your second important decision.

You should make a commitment only to “date” and marry another genuine Christian. This teaching is found in 2 Corinthians 6:14 - 7:1; 1 Corinthians 7:39; Deuteronomy 7:3-4; and Ephesians 5:22-25. According to these Bible passages, God has forbidden you to marry a non-Christian. Therefore, you may only “date” another Christian woman when you are a Christian man and only “date” another Christian man when you are a Christian woman. When God leads you to marry, you will be able to continue to develop your relationship in all the important areas of being a human. Christians who marry non-Christians, cannot be a unity in spiritual matters, and therefore cannot be a unity in the very important areas of beliefs, convictions, moral values and behaviour. In a mixed marriage between a Christian and a non-Christian, the two people will constantly have different opinions and fight. But when two Christians marry, they can become a unity on the spiritual, intellectual, psychological, social and physical level!

(T) Your third important decision.

You should agree to serve God together while you “date” and throughout your lives. This teaching is found in Philippians 1:27 and 2:2. Philippians 1:27 teaches, “Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ”. You and your friend should stand firm in one spirit and contend as one man for the faith of the gospel. Philippians 2:2 teaches, “Be like-minded, have the same love, be one in spirit and purpose”. It is important that you talk openly to all your friends about your beliefs, and convictions, ambitions and life-goals, and that you live them out in your daily life! Then you give other women or men an opportunity to see who *you* really are. When all Christians do this, *you* will be able to find out which woman or man has the same goals as you have in life. Such a person could be a possible marriage partner. However, if a woman or man does not want to serve God, she or he will not be a good marriage partner.

(S) Your fourth important decision.

You should make a commitment to exercise self-control in your relationship with all other people and especially when you “date”. Self-control is especially needed in the area of the physical relationship between a man and a woman. This teaching is found in 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8, Galatians 5:22-23 and Galatians 6:7-8. According to these Bible passages, each of you should *avoid* every form of “sexual immorality”. Both should commit themselves to *win* a woman or man to marriage only in a holy and honourable way, and never in passionate lust. “Self-control” is one of the clearest ways to see if a person is “Spirit-controlled”. When the Holy Spirit controls you, you will exercise self-control!

(T) Your fifth important decision.

You should strive to have a harmonious relationship with your parents at home. This teaching is found in Exodus 20:5-6 and Ephesians 6:1-4. Christians should *honour* their parents. However, when a man quarrels with his parents, he will probably also quarrel with his future wife and vice versa. When a woman respects her parents, she will also respect her future husband and vice versa.

In turn their own children will respect them in the future. People tend to treat their future spouse in the same way they treated their parents. Therefore, it is important that young people make it their goal to develop harmonious relationships with their parents. It is also important that they encourage their girlfriend or boyfriend to have a harmonious relationship with her or his parents. Of course, when your parents are unreasonable and unkind, you should not follow their unbiblical advice or wishes. You should not respect their sins, but you should continue to respect them as persons.

(S) Your sixth important decision.

You should make a decision to be patient and wait for God’s time to “date” and to marry. This teaching is found in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, Ecclesiastes 8:5-6, Isaiah 33:6; and 1 Corinthians 13:4. When a man or woman begins to “date” or marry too young, they carry many problems into their relationship. For example, they may still be immature and change very much as they grow to maturity. Later, when they are mature, they may discover that they had made decisions, which they now regret. The proper time for a relationship between a man and a woman is when they are *mature* physically, intellectually, socially and especially spiritually.

Therefore, it is wise for young people to first complete their studies, to be financially independent or to gain more experience in Christian training and service before beginning a serious friendship.

**(T)** Your seventh important decision.

You should be determined to get to know who the other person really is, before you marry her or him. This teaching is found in Proverbs 27:19,23 and 1 Corinthians 7:1-39. Proverbs 27:19 teaches, "As water reflects a face, so a man's heart reflects the man". It is not good enough to like the other person's face or outward appearance. You should get to know the other person's heart: his or her relationship to God, beliefs, convictions, moral values, motivations and behaviour. Proverbs 27:23 teaches, "Be sure to know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds." You should get to know the other person's condition in different circumstances. For example, how does this person respond to difficulties and suffering? How does this person react or behave when somebody else wrongs him? Etc.

**(S)** What can you practically do to discover who the other person really is?

In order to develop a good friendship resulting later in "dating" and marriage with one of your sisters or brothers in Christ, you first need to develop friendships with several of them in a group context. As you grow and serve together in a group, you discover personalities, strengths, weaknesses, how they get along with others and how they serve God. Being a real friend begins here. You need to learn to talk about your relationship with God and the things you learn from the Bible with your brothers and sisters. Later, when you begin a special man-woman relationship ("date"), then you will also want to talk about these things. You need to do all kinds of activities as a group. Spiritual activities like Bible study, prayer, evangelism, teaching children and youth. And social activities, like playing group games, going on outings as a group, having a meal together, etc.

**(T)** Third. The man and the woman should have the same goals for "marriage".

You should both be determined to set specific goals for your marriage. There is no purpose to "date" a woman or man when you do not have clear goals for your marriage. When you date and marry without clear goals, you still end up living a particular kind of life. May be your spouse remains an unbeliever, who opposes your attempts to live the Christian life. May be your spouse becomes a drunkard, who wastes all your income on pleasures. May be your spouse shows to be a lazy person, who cannot provide food and education for your family. May be your spouse turns out to be unfaithful and abandons you to a hard life of caring for your family, etc. Without specific goals for your marriage, your married life will definitely lack certain important spiritual, physical, social, intellectual and emotional aspects.

**(S)** Therefore, as a Christian you should set clear goals for your relationship to the opposite sex. For example with respect to spiritual goals for marriage: How will you both continue to *grow* as Christians during your marriage? What will be your *service* together for God? With respect to social goals for marriage: How do you both continue to *express* your friendship to one another? With which people do you *associate* normally?

**(T)** **POINT 2. MEMORISATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

Write the Bible verse on a card or in a notebook. The topic today is "Same life goals" and the reference is Amos 3:3. Let us memorise the Bible verse together.

**(T+S)** Same life-goals: Amos 3:3. Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so? Amos 3:3.

**(S)** Same life-goals: Amos 3:3. Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so? Amos 3:3.

**(T)** **POINT 3. REVIEW OF THE LAST BIBLE VERSES YOU HAVE MEMORISED**

Let us review the last 5 Bible verses that we have memorised without looking at our notebooks. Series "Christian character", verses 2-5 and series "Christian preparation for marriage", verse 1.

**(S)** Purity. 1 Peter 2:11. Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. 1 Peter 2:11.

**(T)** Love. Mark 12:30-31. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these. Mark 12:30-31.

**(S)** Faith. Romans 4:20-21. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in the faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. Romans 4:20-21.

**(T)** Humility. Philippians 2:3-4. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Philippians 2:3-4.

**(S)** Both believers. 2 Corinthians 6:14. "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?" 2 Corinthians 6:14.

(T) **POINT 4. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Daily review the last five memorised Bible verses once every day for 5 weeks.

Second. See the workbooks “Go and build Christ’s Church” and Internet on [www.dota.net](http://www.dota.net)

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to “Discipleship training on the air”.