

TRAINING FOR GUYS

How do I know if this is the right girl for me to marry?

Assuming you've done the basic checks (she isn't already married, etc) I'm going to suggest this mnemonic to help you.

G.I.R.L.

G - Is she **Godly**? We covered this last week, it's vital that you are both committed to following Christ together.

I - Do you share the same **Interests**? Broader than that, the same calling? If you sense God is calling you to high city financing to raise money for the Kingdom, but she is called to mission work in central Africa then one or other of you will have to give up the call on their lives.

You don't have to share everything as a common interest.. it's ok for you to sometimes go to see Accrington Stanley every few weeks whilst she goes to Crochet Club, but you should have common interests.

R - Is the relationship **Reciprocal**? Is she as committed to you as you are to her (or vice versa)? If one or other of you is trying to force things along, it is not a relationship that will last.

L - Is there genuine **Love** in the relationship? That's not ultimately about getting wobbly knees when you are with her or thinking about her, it's about being ready to make sacrifices to please her.

There might seem to be a tension between I and L above. Making sacrifices for someone doesn't mean you *should* give up the call on your life though. The fulness of sacrifice for each other comes after marriage, the readiness and willingness to do it is what you are considering beforehand. And again it should be a reciprocal thing. If you are always wanting her to be the one to make sacrifices, or she you, then there is an imbalance that will eventually destroy the relationship.

Of course, praying about it is important... but as we considered when we looked at guidance a few weeks back, God normally leaves decisions to us. If we are seeking to serve and follow him and entering into the process with a will to bring him glory then we can be confident he will be thrilled by our decision. Occasionally, even when both seem right for each other, He might step in and make it clear it's not his plan. But trust him to be blessing your decision if you have got the **G.I.R.L.** right.

Can anyone add to this? Post thoughts on the Facebook group or email/message me feedback for next week's edition.

Our Father, I dunno what this is all about, but....

At the National Day of Prayer at Wembley Stadium last week, there was a challenge to say the Lord's Prayer every day (at noon if possible) as a way of praying together for the nation. That's all very well, but what are we praying for as we pray it? Doesn't it just become a meaningless mantra?

The first line (in the modern usage) is *Our Father in Heaven*. We call him Father because we have been born into his family. John writes "*to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God*" (John 1:12). It's a family prayer, we pray it together. We start it off by saying "I am part of your family, I have brothers and sisters in your family, we agree about this and we are praying together".

We then remind ourselves where he is. In Heaven. Whilst the Holy Spirit dwells with us, the Father remains in heaven. Jesus prayed to his Father in heaven, and we do too. That reminds us that we have Jesus as a brother, and it tells us that God is in a place beyond all the problems and troubles we have. He is in the powerhouse of the universe, and he is our Father. He is *for* us, on our side, and in control.

Father is At Home. Our home, for we belong there too and have been 'set up' there by Christ. Our series on Colossians this week reminds us to '*set our hearts on things above*' (Colossians 3:1) and as we do so the things of earth become less important to us. It's a great place to start any prayer - which is doubtless why Jesus taught us to begin to pray in this way.

More on the Lord's Prayer next time

It's very sad that for the second week running the 'man in the news' featured this week is a failed one.

In his life Sir Jimmy Savile, OBE was considered to be a National Treasure. Famous for his charity work, outlandish clothing and making peoples' dreams come true.

But this week it has been reported that he was abusing young girls throughout all the time he was doing these good works. As the week has gone on more and more women have come forward to speak of the things that were done to them; there is little doubt that this 'National Treasure' was a very flawed individual.

The police will investigate and the story will run and run. There are so many ways we could consider this, but I want just to think about the people we have as role models.

Who are the men you look up to? Who are the men who inspire you? Who are the men who you like to watch perform or listen to?

We all need role models, people who inspire us - but we also need to realise as Christians that *everybody* is flawed in some way. Part of the 'overcoming' that John talks about: *"for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he*

who believes that Jesus is the Son of God." (1 John 5:4,5).

Of course, non-believers can live lives that don't sink into criminal activity. But only believers have the power given to them, by the Holy Spirit living in them, to make it possible to fully overcome their weaknesses.

Most of us don't, however, despite that. We need pray for each other and encourage each other to Godly living (1Thessalonians 5:11).

In particular we should pray for those who are our role models and leaders in the faith. The history of the church is littered with stories of fallen leaders. Some because of sexual sin, some who leave their wives for a member of their flock, some who get tempted with money or power. Virtually all of them started out to build God's Kingdom, but then fell.

We shouldn't be surprised by that. We're in a battle, and leaders are in the vanguard of it. The devil wants to make them fall (1 Peter 5:8). So stand guard for them... and be very wary of making role models out of non-believers too.

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FOR GUYS**

Assess Fashion House plc's choice to locate its factory near Birmingham. Is Birmingham the right location for this type of business?

No. People from Birmingham aren't very fashionable.

Must be doing something right...

I've had a podcast stream for several years with no problems. Since starting *Training For Guys* a month ago, firstly the feed stopped updating on iTunes and other 'podcatchers' then, once that was fixed this week the web hosting company I use removed all the files as they said there was a breach of their conditions. They've now said there isn't and put them back. So, apologies for any problems you've had trying to listen...at moment it is all working properly. I suspect it means the kingdom of darkness doesn't like this group, so that must be good news!

**Podcast this week:
Colossians 3:1 -11**

Set your minds and hearts on things above, and put to death the ways of the world.

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