

Catch 66 (22 X 3):  
The Loss of Marriage . . .

- . . . removes from the equation what is arguably the most powerful socializing force (ever) for responsible behavior in men.  
– (see Nock, 1998)
- . . . removes from couples the most potent symbol of a boundary around their union.  
– (see Stanley, 2002)
- . . . significantly lessens the likelihood that fathers will identify with their children.

Losing the Story of Marriage:  
Marline Pearson and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead have focused on this as a cultural phenomenon.

- In some communities, there are no marriages to be seen or touched.
- As part of a survey we conducted this year in TANF (Welfare) classes in OK, . . .  
**. . . only 6.6 % had parents who married and stayed married.**

God's Heart For Marriage

*Maybe it meant something to him.*

*And still does!*

Marriage is special to God.

- Genesis 1:27 *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.* (NIV)

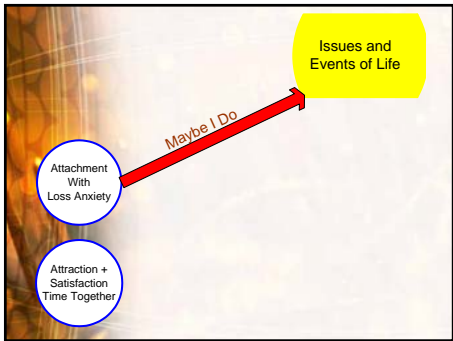
Foundational Themes

- Genesis 2:24-25  
– *For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.* (NIV)

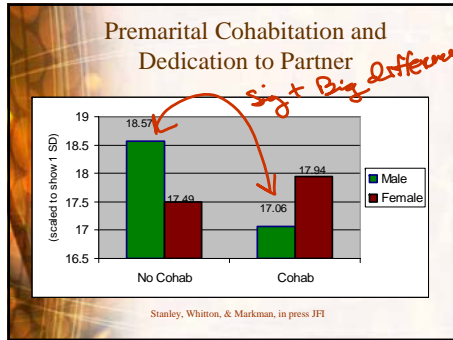
Oneness and the Great Commission:  
The Vocation of Marriage

- John 17:20-21  
*"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, [21] that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.* (ESV)

Let's Talk About  
Men and Women

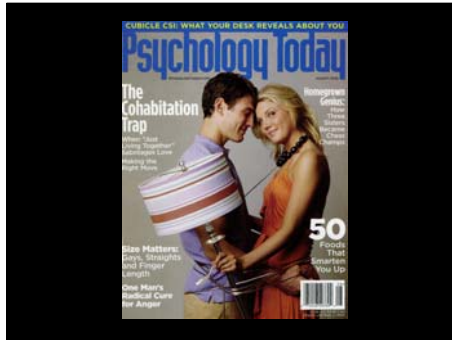


How did we get to that cool  
“Maybe I Do” Idea?



Initial Speculation about Inertia

- Are there a *subset* of cohabiters who marry someone they would not have married had they not started living together and thereby reduced their options by increasing constraints?



Inertia Suggests . . .

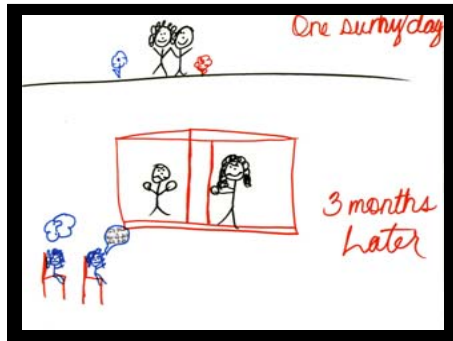
- It's not wise to give up options before you've made your choice.

Another Example: Unplanned Pregnancies  
Surra, Chandler, Asmussen, and Wareham (1987)

- Those couples who were pregnant before being engaged reported more conflict and more ambivalence about their relationships compared to couples who became pregnant following an engagement or marriage.

Sliding vs. Deciding

- A Hypothesis:*  
Regardless of income, race, and culture, *sliding* will be associated with more risk than deciding.
- Deciding will be universally associated with lower risk because of the mutual clarity and resulting follow-through.



Are Females at Greater Risk?

- Do females tend to over-interpret the level of commitment in their male partners?
- If so, why?

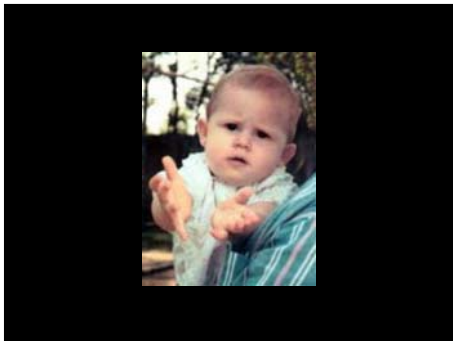
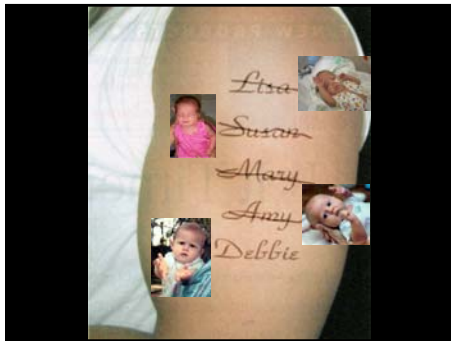
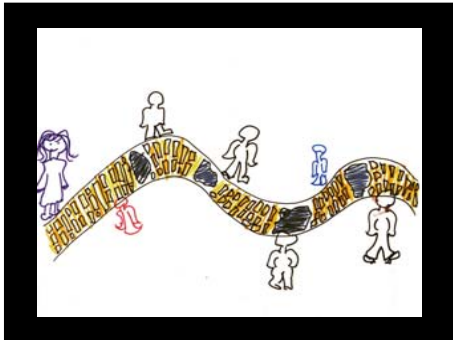
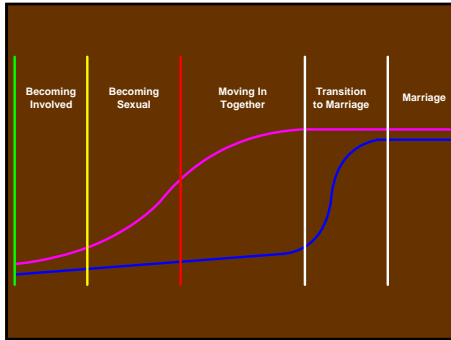
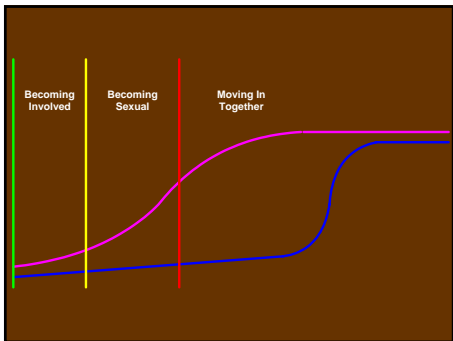
### A Compelling Hypothesis To Test

- Attachment to a partner triggers sacrificial behavior in females.
- Commitment to a woman for the future triggers sacrifice (without resentment) in males.
  - Whitton, Stanley, & Markman, (2002)

See my paper on men and commitment at [www.PREPinC.com](http://www.PREPinC.com) for research and theory underlying development of this hypothesis.

### Who Gets Burned Most By The New “Freedom?”

- Consider:
  - “Men see marriage as a final step in a prolonged process of growing up.” (Popenoe and Whitehead, 2002)
  - Marriage shifts men’s behavior toward greater responsibility and sacrifice. (see Nock, *Marriage in Men’s Lives*, 1998)



### Boys

#### Newsweek Boy Crisis Jan 06

- "Boys measure everything they do or say by a single yardstick: does this make me look weak?" says Thompson. "And if it does, he isn't going to do it." Michael Thompson
- That's part of the reason that videogames have such a powerful hold on boys: the action is constant, they can calibrate just how hard the challenges will be and, when they lose, the defeat is private.

### Wind Watching

- Ecclesiastes 11:4 (NIV)  
*Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap.*
- Commitment means making a choice to give up choices.

### Boys

- The punch line on billboard ad for "adult" store:  
• "It's cheaper than dating."

### Sliding: Implications for Reaching Your Goals

Your Goals

Sliding  
Risk = Moving Away From Goals

### Coasting: Implications for Reaching Your Goals

Your Goals

Coasting  
Risk = Not Moving Toward Goals

### Deciding on the Steps Toward Your Goals

Your Goals:  
"Within My Reach"

Deciding  
Benefit = Your Choices Move You Up Steps Toward Your Goals

### Jacob's Ladder

#### Genesis 28:10-15

Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 He came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place. 12 He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. 14 "Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." (NASB)

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### A Revival Waiting

- Malachi 6:5  
*"See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse." (NIV)*

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